Signs for Hope

Prayerletter *January 2016*

Bringing Christopher Collicott Home

Christopher leaving the orphanage, Monday, January 26, 2016.

It is such an honor and a privilege to walk alongside families like the Collicotts who are no different from any others except in what God has called them to do with His strength, His equipping and His leading them one step at a time. Brothers and sisters, we have a tendency to place others on pedestals that are involved in things that seem "impossible" for us to do. Be assured these things are impossible apart from God's call and His equipping those He calls to do whatever…and only for His glory! Make sure all the glory goes to Him and not to those He calls who just happen to be the willing vessels He is using to unfold His plan of salvation, reconciliation and adoption to a lost and dying world.

Christopher – September 2015

We leave here on Thursday, January 28th. God's plans for Christopher, plans to prosper him and not to harm him, plans to give him a hope and a future have been unfolding before our very eyes over the past 9 days and even prior to this trip. These promises were made to the Israelites in the midst of their captivity in Babylon (God had sent them into captivity, in case we forget, Jeremiah 29) and they were to be there an additional 70 years. Often we think of God's promises as having to be fulfilled in the moment we think we are in need of them, however that is often not His plan. His plan seems to always include whatever He knows to be exactly what we need in order to conform us to the image of His Son and to draw us closer to Him. If His promises were all instantly true for us, why would we need Him any longer and why would there be a need for FAITH, the very foundation of the relationship between God and us? Continued prayers for the Collicott family are greatly appreciated, as full evaluations will be made of Christopher at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston as soon as they arrive Thursday afternoon. Doug will go home to Austin to be with the rest of their children and Lynda will stay with Christopher for the duration of evaluations. For details about Christopher's future progress and for details about how he has amazed us here in Bulgaria check out **A Life for Christopher**.

Signs for Hope is accepting **donations** (checks, PO Box 460, Fairview, NC 28730) for the Collicotts' additional costs related to airfare since we are departing earlier than planned. Christopher is doing so well here, Nurse Lisa is ready for him to travel on Thursday the 28th instead of our original departure date on Saturday the 30th. All his paperwork is complete and he passed the TB test. The sooner he gets to Texas Children's the better.

Funds are still being raised for Christopher's PICU nurse, Lisa's airfare (~$1,500) and you may still send checks made payable to Lisa Friesen at: Anchorage Lutheran Church, 1420 N Street, Anchorage AK 99501

Update Friday evening, January 29, 2016

Christopher and Lynda were in the ER at Texas Children's Hospital for 24 hours, waiting for a bed to become available so he could be admitted. An EEG was performed and shows he probably has an ASD, Atrial Septal Defect. It is expected he will be released from the hospital within 2 -3 days after all evaluations are completed. Please continue to pray for Christopher & entire Collicott Family.

Christopher – January 26, 2016

2015 SFH Deaf Adoptions Recap

God places the lonely in families. Psalm 68: 6

I wish I could give you an accurate number of just how many families connected to SFH brought their Deaf sons and daughters home in 2015, but I cannot. Numbers fall below people in importance for me and there is little time to focus on the numbers, these days. Enjoy these pictures of some of those precious families and continue to pray for them in this life-long commitment called…adoption! Your prayers for these families are invaluable!

The Mixon Family
Hattiesburg, MS
China

The Coleman Family
New Orleans, LA
Colombia

The Farmer Family
Knoxville, TN
China, via the US

The Graham Family
Edgefield, SC
Poland

Ponton Family
San Antonio, TX
China

Morgan Family
Anna, TX
China

Nap Family
North Bend, WA
China

The Barsch Family
Forked River, NJ
Philippines, 2013
Ethiopia, 2015

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.
Matthew 9:37-38

Have you been wondering what you could do to make a difference in this world? Maybe you have a skill you are not currently using. Maybe you are fascinated with what God is doing through Signs for Hope and you would like to help and be more involved. Signs for Hope is an all-volunteer organization and we have many opportunities for additional volunteers. You do not have to live physically close to SFH (Asheville, NC) to volunteer for these positions. Check the list below, if you find something interesting and want to know more, call (828-691-2581) or email me (beckyblloyd@gmail.com) asap.

- **Help develop a database of strong ASL interpreters and help coordinate the ASL translation process for the National Center for Biblical Parenting resources, serving along-side Jonathan Walterhouse.** ***Good people and organizational skills would be a great fit. No ASL knowledge needed.***

- **SFH Liberia Deaf Teacher Training Teams, phased trips over the next 5- 10 years. ASL-fluent teachers and strong ASL users. These volunteers will serve along-side Steve Farmer.**

- **ASL-fluent Trust-based Relational Training® (TBRI®) Educators. This training will benefit families adopting deaf children and the Deaf community at large.** ***Some pastors, counselors, caseworkers would be a good fit for this.***

- **Assist Dana Martin and others in developing a *SFH Early Intervention & Deaf Mentor* program for families adopting deaf children and beyond.**

- **2016 SFH Fall Awareness Fundraiser in Asheville - Coordinator and team members.** ***Any one can help with this.***

- SFH DeafAdopt Families Directory & DeafKidsWaiting FB page updater - SFH (Becky) has fallen behind in keeping good records on those who have connected to us via our FB page. As we begin developing resources for these families, we need to know some vital information about them to better serve them. In addition, SFH is partnering with Deaf adopting families to maintain another FB page that shares up-to-date detailed information about deaf/HOH children "waiting" to be adopted. This position will need to be filled by someone who will see these precious faces day-in and day-out and not be overwhelmed by the need, but instead recognize God has a plan even for the least of the least of these, one by one. Note: This could be two volunteers working together. *Any one who can type and has basic computer skills for connecting with these families and checking websites would be a good fit.*

- **SFH Marketplace FB Page - Help develop and maintain this "store" for SFH. All proceeds go to support deaf children and/or their families. IF this volunteer is local, it could include the physical shipping of items sold. If not, Charles and I will continue doing that.** ***Some computer and FB knowledge will be beneficial.***

- **Update the SFH Adoption Funding page on our website.** ***Basic computer skills for searching current listings to make sure they are all still active and locating new ones to be added. Becky will serve alongside this volunteer.***

Opportunity to Join SFH in Liberia!

March 24 – April 11, 2016

It will have been two years since I have been in Liberia this coming April. I have sought God's plan for the past 9 months for returning. In November, He made it clear I should set the dates and pray for those He desires to join with me, not knowing in advance who it will be. This trip will be a reconnecting trip and one where we assess the impact of Ebola on the Deaf schools across Liberia, granting us a better ability to reconfirm SFH's role in partnering with them in the future. Yes, this is a long trip but this length is necessary to accomplish the goals. Yes, I am flexible and will work with those who cannot be there for the duration of the trip, but I do need at least two team members with me at all times for the entire trip. This time period could be divided into two different teams with their time overlapping in Liberia briefly for briefing and debriefing and at least one male team member is needed to traveling with the team at all times. This trip is not for the faint of heart. We stay in decent quarters, but it will be HOT and unless we have generators with fuel we will not have running water or electricity. Travel incountry is also challenging. Pray! Ask God if you are one of these SFH Liberia 2016 team members. I do not have exact costs, but typically the trip costs in the past have been approximately $3,500 - $4,000 per person for the entire trip. Deduct $600 if you stay only one week. This does not cover your needed vaccinations or malaria preventative medications. Please join SFH in praying for God to touch those He wants to join us for this vitally important trip to Liberia! If God is touching your heart to join us, let me know. beckyblloyd@gmail.com 828-691-2581

From my heart to yours…

I am so overwhelmed by your prayers for me, this morning, our last scheduled day here in Sofia, Bulgaria. Rarely, do we truly realize or comprehend the full impact prayer can have on others and us, reciprocally. At the same time, not only are we praying for those we love, we are also connecting with the God who so loves us and wants to hear from us. This prayer-relationship, dependency on our Father develops over the years, as we are willing to surrender our loved ones and ourselves fully to allow His plan to be accomplished, no matter what, on a daily basis. The result is a stronger bond with those we pray for and with the One we pray to, for them and ourselves. My prayer-life is woefully lacking and as I sit here and ponder the fringe benefits of such a powerful endeavor I am convicted, once again. LORD, forgive me!

Praying with someone else on a regular basis is one way to improve our prayer-life and our prayer-relationship with God. I am so thankful God connected me to Judy Sullivan almost 4 years ago to do that by phone, for an hour every Monday morning (8:30 – 9:30) when we are both available. This commitment by Judy has been such a positive influence for me and I know it is for her, as well. Brothers and sisters, may our prayer time out weigh our worry, our wondering "what if", our doubt and our complaining and our frustrations over "waiting". Instead may our prayer-life infuse our faith to allow the light of Jesus Christ to shine through us un-deflected by the above. ONLY GOD!

I do love you, but He loves you so much more!

Becky

P.S. The Signs for Hope blog is receiving many views these days. Please pray God will bless those who read His truths there. I decided to share the four Facebook "Ponderings" I shared while here in Bulgaria on the blog, too. **"Ponderings, While in Sofia, Bulgaria January 2016!"**

STAY IN TOUCH WITH SIGNS FOR HOPE …

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