

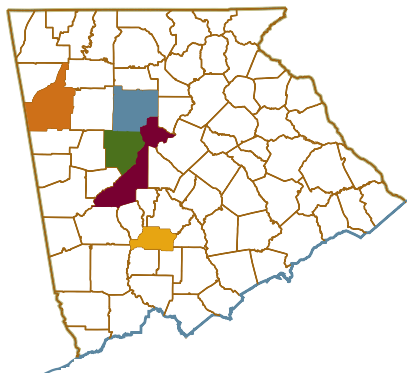


SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER

A NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW INTEREST IN FOSTER CARE MINISTRIES AND NEW PLACEMENT RECORD

It's been a busy first quarter here at FaithBridge Foster Care. We launched two new counties, hosted seven orientations at three partner churches and had our most productive placement month ever.

In March, we had our most active placement month yet, placing 15 children with FaithBridge foster families. As our ministry matures, we're finding that more families are expanding their accepted placement criteria and opening their homes to older children and sibling groups. This means that we're better able to meet the needs of our county DFCS offices, and in turn, help more children find loving families.



ADDITION OF TWO NEW COUNTIES ADDS TO STRONG FIRST QUARTER ORIENTATION RESULTS

We also began the year with two new ministry launches: one in Floyd County and another in Spalding. Both represent new counties of service for FaithBridge.

In Floyd, a coalition of six churches came together to form Project I27Rome. Getting six new churches of different denominations for a common purpose was quite an achievement. The six founding church partners include First Presbyterian Church, Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, Hollywood Baptist Church, Lakeview Baptist Church, Three Rivers Community Church, and Seven Hills Fellowship. Since its launch in January, Project I27Rome has added two additional churches, West Rome Baptist Church and The Church at Northside Rome, to the coalition, bringing the church total to eight. Together, these churches have a weekly attendance of more than 2,400 and aim to address the needs of the 200 foster children in Floyd County, the Georgia county with the most foster children per capita.

FaithBridge also welcomes Griffin First Assembly of God and Spalding County to the movement. Griffin First is a dynamic community-focused church of whose senior pastor

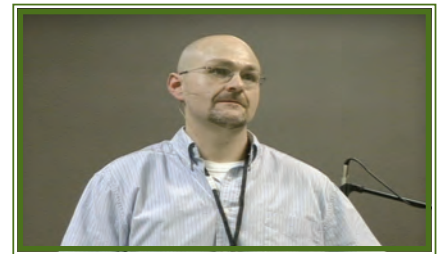
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FaithBridge's Project I27Rome Event



Upcoming Training Events

FaithBridge hosts orientation events and IMPACT training for prospective foster parents each month. Please visit our website to find a training event in your area.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

May is National Foster Care Month (www.fostercaremonth.org) and we'd like to offer several suggestions on how best to celebrate. The following are some ways you can bring attention to the needs of foster children across the country:

- Tell your friends about your foster care experience and encourage them to attend an upcoming FaithBridge orientation.
- Contact the Community of Care Resource Coordinator at your church to see if there are items they need that you can help procure.
- Schedule a "movie night" and watch "The Lost & Found Family" (see below) with friends and family. Spend some time after the movie discussing it.
- Pray for a foster family in your community or hold a prayer vigil during the National Foster Care Prayer Vigil (May 16 -23). Visit www.cryoftheorphan.org to get resources or learn more.



ABOUT THE LOST & FOUND FAMILY



The Lost & Found Family is a touching story of hardship, change and the faith that God can make things better, no matter how difficult the situation appears in our eyes.

In this inspirational family drama, the luxurious lifestyle Ester Hobbes leads is shattered by the death of her husband. Left with nothing but a house rented to a foster family, Ester soon finds a deeper purpose in life. Forced to move in, she plans to sell the home, but her growing faith and attachment to troubled teen Justin and the others lead her on a divine journey as all their lives are transformed.

The Lost & Found Family reminds us that God brings out the best in us when we show His compassion to those in desperate need of love.

You can order the movie online or purchase a copy at your nearest Christian retailer.

*****If your church would like to host a screening of the film, please contact FaithBridge's marketing department at 678-690-7107 to discuss. We have permission from the studio to use the film in recruitment and training of foster families.*****



GEORGIA LEGISLATURE PASSES FOSTERING CONNECTIONS COMPLIANCE BILL (HB 1085)



On April 19, the Georgia Senate joined the Georgia House in passing House Bill 1085, and the bill is now on its way to Governor Sonny Purdue for his signature. House Bill 1085, also known as the Fostering Connections Compliance bill, was sponsored by Rome Floyd County State Representative Katie Dempsey and strongly supported by FaithBridge Foster Care.

“This is a tremendous victory for foster children in Georgia,” said Bill Hancock, CEO of FaithBridge Foster Care. “When this bill is signed into law, it will bring Georgia into compliance with federal foster care and adoption legislation.”

The Fostering Connections Compliance bill goes a long way in addressing the stability and well-being of Georgia’s foster children. Its primary provisions include requirements that siblings be placed into foster care together, that foster children be allowed to remain in their current school (if possible) and that DFCS provide counseling to young adults who are aging out of the foster care system.

“This is an important piece of legislation that gets to the heart of the work we do in child welfare. Not only does this bill support us in the improvement of our existing practices, but it strengthens the relationship between the Division of Family and Children Services and the court system which can only result in improved outcomes for children,” added Mark Washington, assistant commissioner, Georgia DHS/DFCS



MEET THE FAITHBRIDGE FAMILIES

CINDY IRISH



If a couple's decision to become foster parents is a difficult one, you can only imagine what it must be like for a single woman. But for 27 year-old Cindy Knight, the decision just felt right. Despite concerns from family and friends that she was underestimating what fostering involved, Cindy trusted her faith in God.

Today, Cindy is a foster mother to two young boys and her life has definitely changed. Although she was nervous at first, her fear was eased by the outpouring of support she has had from family, friends and fellow churchgoers at Orange Hill Baptist, who arrived at her doorstep shortly after the placement with diapers, food, clothes and toys and who have been there for her ever since.

Although she has plenty on her plate these days, Cindy is encouraging other single women to consider fostering.

THE BOTTOMS



When James and Marissa Bottom first became foster parents, they felt that they would be best suited with a placement of an infant or toddler. This request isn't unusual with first-time foster parents, many of whom are concerned about their ability to manage the needs of an older child.

After waiting several months for a placement, the Bottoms decided to welcome any child that needed a home – regardless of age, and they soon received two brothers, ages five and seven. While the older child was eventually placed in a facility better equipped to deal with his needs, the younger child thrived with the Bottoms. He was ultimately reunited with his biological mother.

With this first placement, God showed the Bottoms their capacity to love and support a child of any age. When the Bottoms received their second placement of a toddler and newborn twins, it was as though God was saying, "Trust in my path and I will show you the way."

FAITHBRIDGE FAMILIES SHARE THEIR STORIES

Last fall, several FaithBridge foster families agreed to share their foster care experiences with us on camera. These videos have now been edited and are available online. We're also using these stories when on-boarding and for training new church partners and new foster



families. We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Daphnie and Mike Farmer, Robin and Greg Freeman, Naomi and Todd Holloman, Cindy Irish, and Kelly and Ron Polhamus for the generosity with their time and their willingness to participate. We also would like to thank Crystal Williams, a Georgia foster care alumna who touched our hearts at the Raise Me Up event last fall and donated her time to share her life story with us.

Want to see the videos? Go to www.faithbridgefostercare.org/resources/videos or visit our Facebook and YouTube pages.

Would you be interested in sharing your story? We're always looking to highlight how God works through the churches, families and children we serve. Please contact Susan Crain at scrain@faithbridgefostercare.org if you'd like to participate.



THE ACE FUND PROVIDES TAX CREDITS FOR EDUCATION



Georgia individuals and corporations may

be interested in a relatively new tax credit that directly supports the educational needs of underprivileged children. Accessing Choices in Education (ACE) Fund is a student scholarship organization that operates in Georgia with the mission of providing scholarships to economically disadvantaged K-12 students so they can have access to a quality education in the school of their choice.



Sponsored by The Student Scholarship Foundation of Georgia, ACE was launched in response to House Bill 1133 which was passed by the Georgia

General Assembly and signed by Governor Sonny Perdue in May 2008. The scholarship program allows individual corporate citizens to receive a dollar for dollar income tax credit for donations to us. Tax credits are preferable over tax deductions because they reduce the tax bill, rather than reduce taxable income. The ACE Fund will use these donations to grant scholarships for public school students to attend the qualified private school of their parent’s choice.

Ken Graves, Chairman of the ACE Fund talked about what the tax credit scholarship might mean for Georgia, “Ten years ago, Florida began a three-pronged approach to change K-12 education in Florida, and tax credit scholarships were one of those prongs. In 2000 Florida was 38th in the nation in quality of public education. Today they are 8th.”

Prior to donating to the ACE Fund, you must fill out a preapproval form that must be approved by the Georgia Department of Revenue. The form and other details of the program are available on the website www.studentscholarshipsofgeorgia.org.

Information for foster families

If you are a foster parent, you have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship on behalf of your foster child or children. The ACE Fund provides tuition scholarships to children in grades K through 12 for use at private schools throughout Georgia. Only students who are Georgia residents enrolled in a Georgia secondary or primary public school or are eligible to enroll in a qualified kindergarten program or pre-kindergarten program are eligible for the ACE Fund Scholarships. For more information, contact the ACE Fund directly at (678) 765-6600.

NEWS BRIEFS

THE THIRD ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 8



Calling all golfers! FaithBridge Foster Care will host its Third Annual Charity Golf Classic on Tuesday, June 8th at Bridge Mill Athletic Club in Canton, Georgia. Proceeds from this year's tournament will fund academic and enrichment scholarships for FaithBridge foster children. In addition to golfers, we're looking for sponsors and in-kind donations for door prizes. If you're interested in donating or serving on the Golf Classic committee, please contact Wayne Stolz at (678) 360-8169 or westolz@bellsouth.net. If you're interested in playing in the tournament, please visit our website and look for the golf tournament page in the Events section – www.faithbridgefostercare.org/news-and-events/events.aspx

FIND FAITHBRIDGE ON YOUR FAVORITE SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

FaithBridge Foster Care is embracing social media with a presence on three of the most popular social networking tools. To stay up to date on the latest news and information:

facebook

Become a fan: www.facebook.com/FaithBridge

twitter

Follow us: [@CommunityofCare](https://twitter.com/CommunityofCare)

YouTube

Visit our channel: www.youtube.com/CommunityofCare





2009 AT A GLANCE

In 2009, FaithBridge expanded its reach and deepened its roots. Several milestones are highlighted here.

95 
**CHILDREN
SERVED**

12 
**NEW
CHURCHES**

12 
**NEW FOSTER
FAMILIES**

4 
**ADOPTION
FAMILIES**

WELCOME TO FAITHBRIDGE FOSTER CARE

The following foster families have joined FaithBridge since our last newsletter was published in November 2009. Please join us in prayers of thanksgiving and intercession on behalf of these caring individuals.



- Cliff & Beverly Bartow** – Fellowship Bible Church
- Kelly & Loretta Phillips** – New Hope Baptist Church
- Todd & Lisa Nickell** – Grace Bible Church
- Stuart & Amelia Green** – St. Stephens Overcoming Church of God
- Noel & Chelsea Taylor** – Corridor Church
- Fernando Ramirez & Claudia Patino** – North Point Community Church
- Kevin & Alisa Fineis** – St. Clements Episcopal Church
- Scott & Heather Richardson** – First Baptist Church Woodstock
- Victor & Dana Yeargan** – First Presbyterian Rome
- Chuck & Katrina Campbell** - Liberty Church
- Jay & Donna Vana** - First Baptist Church Woodstock
- Jason & Heather Willis** - Lakeview Baptist Church
- Aaron & Dawn Hayes** - First Presbyterian Rome
- Kirby and Laynie Jones** - First Baptist Church Woodstock
- Greg & Tomo Shaw** - First Baptist Church Woodstock
- Tony & Elizabeth Klaus** - First Baptist Church Woodstock
- Chad & Lauren Crouch** - Northwest Christian Center

A NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW INTEREST AND NEW RECORD

(cont'd from front)

has a heart for orphans, having been adopted himself. Their congregation will create foster family capacity and Christian support for the 100 foster children of Spalding County.

As for the seven orientation events, attendance is usually strong for these but even the FaithBridge staff was surprised at the turnout. Project 127Rome hosted its first orientation at the end of January and had over 350 attendees. First Baptist Church Woodstock and Griffin First Assembly had orientations with 75 and 30 people, respectively.

“We’re excited by the interest and hope that it’s a sign of things to come this year and beyond,” said FaithBridge CEO, Bill Hancock. “I can’t tell you how inspiring it is to walk into a room filled with people, all of whom want to learn more about the biblical mandate to care for orphans and the role they can plan in helping our society’s neediest children.”

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Bill Hancock
FaithBridge CEO



The orientations brought together a diverse group of people with varying levels of familiarity with the foster care system. Some were currently fostering or had fostered in the past, while others were there to learn more about the foster care ministry. Those families who were familiar with the foster care system were impressed by the church-based model and the level of support it provides. Attendees also appreciated the fact that they could become involved with the ministry as a volunteer if they felt they weren’t able to become a foster parent.