

The Loving Shepherd

Spring 2006

Volume 4, Issue 1

Loving Shepherd unveils new program

Loving Shepherd Ministries is moving forward with a new and exciting pilot program that will provide corrective surgeries to international orphans and match the children with adoptive parents.

In determining the need for this program, LSM considered the following:

— Orphans suffer due to trauma in their lives...

— Orphans in a third-world country endure more

trauma...

— Orphans with a physical defect in a third-world country endure much more trauma...

— Orphans with a physical defect in a third-world country who do not know Christ endure the most trauma.

Anyone traveling to a third-world country will see the outcome for these children: They linger on the street corners, at the airports

and on the sidewalks, their empty hands outstretched. Society has abandoned them as virtual outcasts with no hope. Their uncorrected physical defects, whether visible or not, make them unadoptable and, in most cases, render them homeless and hopeless.

To give these children homes and hope, the new LSM pilot program will target third-world orphans who are available for adoption

and have a physical defect requiring surgery.

While healing their bodies, we want to assist in the healing of their hearts and souls. Along with the surgery, Loving Shepherd will recruit Christian families to adopt these children so they may live in Godly and loving homes.

To begin this program, LSM is working with

See "Program" on pg. 2

Families across United States thank LSM for its adoption services



Hammell sisters Emilie (left) and Nikole (right) pose in their native Chinese dresses. Loving Shepherd has helped hundreds of families like the Hammells in its four years of operation.

Who We Are

Loving Shepherd Ministries is a Christian, not-for-profit organization providing objective, no-cost advocacy, resources and direction to the faith community for the direct benefit of children and families who find themselves at risk or in need.

Oklahoma — We received your packet in the mail. It has been so helpful. In fact, some information is a bit alarming. One agency we were looking at actually is suffering financially. Thanks so much. It helps us make a better decision.

Indiana — I was adopted and experienced a loving and secure home. We would like to continue this experience and share our love with a child who needs a home.

Florida — We have a passion for the people of China, and we feel the Lord leading us to add to our family by adopting a Chinese orphan. We have been adopted by God, and He calls

us to take care of orphans.

Louisiana — I am so grateful for all your help. Thank you so much for your ministry.

New York — We would love to find a Christian agency, but finding a reputable, reliable and secure agency is most important. If you would have any recommendations for us, that would be great. Thank you so much for your help. It was great to see a Christian agency willing to help out.

Hand in Hand Adoption Agency — Thank you for the work you do in helping families decide what path to pursue.

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Jen Schwartz: Resource for families

Editor's Note: Loving Shepherd wants to introduce our nationwide family to the faces that work to fulfill God's plan for Loving Shepherd. Each newsletter will contain a new story that offers a behind-the-scenes look at Loving Shepherd's staff.

For this issue, we talk to Jen Schwartz, Loving Shepherd's family resource specialist.

Jen Schwartz didn't know it at the time, but when her first child was born, God would lead her to a career that would help many families and children.

With the birth of a new boy, Jen decided not to pursue her master's degree in psychology. Instead, God opened the door to Loving Shepherd Ministries and to thousands of orphaned children.

Today, Jen and her husband, Rick, have three children, but God has used her in the past three years to help an average of approximately 75 families a month.

"I am very touched by the high number of families who feel led by God to provide a loving home to an orphan," Jen said. "I pray for each family and child waiting to be adopted that God's will would be done and their lives would be touched by love."

In a given week, Jen talks to approximately 20 families, telephones eight to 10 adoption agencies and dedicates two hours just e-mailing information to people.

But while it may take Jen days to research, she is saving families not only money, but also potentially



Family Resource Specialist Jen Schwartz

months, and sometimes years, of unguided wandering.

When potential parents first call Jen, she says she can hear the frustration and discouragement. Many families are wrestling with infertility and overwhelmed with too much information about adoption.

"They didn't even know where to begin, so they were happy we could lead them," Jen said.

But Jen doesn't spend all her time talking to families. The adoption world can change daily, with more than 50 countries with multiple laws and more than 350 agencies with unique family requirements.

To stay informed, Jen spends three to six hours a week online researching many countries and organizations.

And if that wasn't enough, Jen works as the book reader, meal cooker and more



LSM Quick Facts

Full name: Jennifer Schwartz

Age: 27

Family: Married to Rick Schwartz (30). Three children: Spencer, 5; Mason, 3; and Keegan, 1.

Education: bachelor's degree in psychology from University of Saint Francis.

for her three children.

Yet, despite her busy schedule, Jen doesn't want it any other way.

"Through my work I see how many parents have such a desire to hold a child in their arms and for a child to understand the meaning of 'family' and 'love,'" Jen said.

Her diligence in caring for families, her dedication to the ministry of adoption and her attention to details has made her a major part of the Loving Shepherd mission.

Program: LSM to send more information

adoption agencies, orphanages and airlines, as well as U.S. hospitals and surgeons.

In its research, Loving Shepherd could not find any U.S. organizations providing corrective surgery to international orphans for the purpose of adoption into Christian families.

Initially, the LSM pilot program will provide corrective surgery and adoption for a limited number of children. With the successful completion of the pilot program, we will move forward to a full program and, Lord willing, many more children.

We will send a separate bulletin within the next two months outlining the program and providing more details. LSM will continue providing adoption support to families as before, but we are thankful for this opportunity to broaden our services.

Membership

The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability - This organization requires high levels of donor accountability.

Joint Council on International Children's Services - The JCICS monitors adoption news and events worldwide.

National Association of Christian Child and Family Agencies - The NACCFA links Christian agencies together.

North American Association of Christians in Social Work - This organization helps Loving Shepherd to stay connected to social workers.



Sold!

Loving Shepherd raised more than \$65,000 through the sale of approximately 200 items donated to the fourth-annual Benefit Auction. More than 600 friends of Loving Shepherd attended. Loving Shepherd wants to thank all those who donated or bought items and those who worked so hard to ensure that everyone enjoyed the evening. Loving Shepherd will hold its fifth-annual Benefit Auction in the spring of 2007.



Kathy Meyer joins Loving Shepherd

Loving Shepherd Ministries is excited to have Kathy Meyer join its staff as project coordinator.

Kathy, who has an associate's degree in applied science from Illinois Central College, will coordinate and monitor the many projects within Loving Shepherd's multiple ministries.

She will also assist in expanding Loving Shepherd's adoption support databases. Through its many databases, Loving Shepherd helps hundreds of families a year make an appropriate adoption decision, and Kathy's work will ensure these families get the relevant information to make an informed adoption decision.

For instance, Kathy is working on building a database of private foster care agencies in all 50 states, a valuable resource for families wanting to help hurting children.

Kathy is married to Denny Meyer. They have three daughters: Alyssa, Paige and Jenna.

"It is my desire to help LSM achieve its mission of aiding at-risk children and families needing adoption services," Kathy said.

Loving Shepherd to release new CD

Loving Shepherd is preparing another volume in the "Picture of Love" series. The series features songs from new and established Christian groups. Like the first volume, all profits from the CD will go to Loving Shepherd.

For volume two, Loving Shepherd is asking groups from different states and with different talents. A group of young ladies, a choir and a quartet have already agreed to sing, and Loving Shepherd has contacted several other groups.

From the Word - By Ed Schwartz

Recently someone shared a verse with me that had a great impact on his life, and I've come to appreciate it as well: "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands..." from Isaiah 49:16.

In thinking of the 143 million orphaned children around the world, it's comforting to know a perfect Father has engraved their faces and names on His hands. This verse gives promise and comfort for little children waiting for someone to tuck them in at night, for babies waiting for a mommy's good night kiss, for children waiting for a hug

and for children wanting to belong.

Most of us will not adopt these children, but we can continually bring their needs before the Father in prayer. His Holy Spirit can warm their hearts and provide comfort, safety and security.

As we look at our children and grandchildren in their safe, secure, warm and nurturing environments, it's easy to feel great sadness for the non-parented children around the world, but remember James 5:16: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much!"

The official newsletter of Loving Shepherd Ministries

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Mission Statement

The mission of *Loving Shepherd Ministries* is to bring honor to God by providing objective, no-cost advocacy, resources, and direction to the faith community for the direct benefit of children and families who find themselves at risk or in need.

This is accomplished by following the example of Jesus Christ as the loving shepherd in [Isaiah 40:11](#) - "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young".

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