

The Loving Shepherd

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The **HEART** of the matter

As the Frisbee faltered in the sun-soaked air and landed at the girl's feet, she had to choose: ignore the disc's invitation to play or live like a child and risk serious injury — even death.

She stood silently — a lonely spectator who could not frolic, jump or run — pondering her decision.

Meanwhile, her friends swarmed around, stirring up the arid, dusty ground. Back and forth, back and forth they had tossed the Frisbee, drinking in the joys of childhood amid bursts of giggles and shouts.

But they were now waiting for her to choose.

The girl picked up the Frisbee, accepted her fate with silent resignation, and tossed it back into the fray, once again exiling herself to the shadows of the sideline.

The girl, Haymanot, had grown up incomplete, but by the grace of God, funneled through a new Loving Shepherd program, Hay-

manot not only received a new chance at life, but also several months with something she had lost: a family.

Since her birth, she's suffered from patent ductus arteriosus — a hole in her heart.

With each beat, about 25 percent of her blood escaped to her lungs instead of feeding the rest of her body.

Because of this, her heart worked overtime to keep her alive. At 10 years old, her heart had al-

ready grown to the size of that of an adult's.

Doctors predicted her heart would fail in her early 20s without repair.

Then one day in January of 2007, Loving Shepherd President Ed Schwartz traveled to Ethiopia with the father of a family who was adopting a little boy.

During his stay, Ed met



Haymanot while visiting an orphanage managed by friends of his in south central Ethiopia.

After hearing her story, Ed decided that she might make a good candidate for Loving Shepherd's corrective surgery program.

"No question, God had His hands on Haymanot," Ed said.

Loving Shepherd's corrective surgery program helps at-risk children who otherwise would not receive the surgeries needed to improve their lives.



These surgeries will also make those orphans who receive them more likely to be adopted.

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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.

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Brian and Shannon Drayer pose with their son, Garek Alexander. The two traveled to Guatemala in late April to finalize his adoption.

With faith and help, couple adopts toddler from country of Guatemala

Come to the tan house on a quiet street in Bluffton, Ind., and you'll learn the following: telephones make great toys and footballs should be rolled, not tossed.

But you'll also learn a lesson in God's faithfulness.

Brian and Shannon Drayer, married in 2002, returned from Guatemala in May with their newly adopted son: 16-month-old Garek Alexander Drayer.

About three years before that, Shannon found herself touched from a message by Steven Curtis Chapman.

Chapman, an adoptive father, talked often about this world's orphans.

Shannon had heard

similar messages, but that night the thought wouldn't go away.

So she prayed about it, and when the thought still wouldn't dissipate after several days, she shared it with Brian.

Eventually, he opened the Bible to seek direction.

He opened to Romans 8:15 — "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

He was convinced.

Loving Shepherd helped them early on in the process.

Within days, Loving

Shepherd provided them with a list of countries from which they could adopt, as well as reputable agencies.

Unfortunately, their adoption was not without bumps, but even then, Loving Shepherd helped.

For instance, while in Guatemala to bring back Garek, the Drayers learned they would need to stay an additional week for an embassy appointment.

Loving Shepherd contacted Congressman Mike Pence's office for a Congressional Inquiry letter to the embassy. The result was getting the Drayers home a week early, saving them several hundred dollars in expenses.

From the Word

By Ed Schwartz

More than 140,000,000 orphans — lonely, abused and forgotten — live in this world. Sadness touches the depths of our souls as we think about them. Does anyone see them? Does anyone hear their voices? Does anyone care? Of course we do, but the numbers defy our ability to grasp the depth of their troubles.

Job 28 speaks of man's desire for wisdom and his efforts to find it. Job talks of the many things man can accomplish, but wisdom is still evasive. The task seems larger than our ability.

It seems the same for the orphans of the world. The magnitude of their numbers seems beyond comprehension: 143,000,000. It seems larger than anything man can deal with, but there is hope. Job 28:9-10 says, "He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; **and his eye seeth every precious thing.**"

God does not quit at the end of the day. He doesn't rest. He doesn't shut His eyes or ears to the cries of the orphans. He is there — **and His eye sees every precious thing.**

We as people get overwhelmed by sheer numbers or massive problems. We cannot provide homes for every orphan, but we can help one child at a time.

What is the most profound thing we can do for the orphans of the world? Pray that God will be a Father to them. James 5:16 says, "...the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."



Loving Shepherd Project Coordinator Kathy Meyer

Kathy Meyer helps keep LSM prepared

As a court stenographer, Kathy Meyer often heard about the irrevocable damage of child abuse. She heard the stories — stories of black eyes, burns and more.

The more she heard, the more her compassion for these children grew.

But she didn't know at the time that God would eventually funnel this compassion into a new job — one in which she would not only hear about the results of abuse and neglect, but also work to prevent it.

"The most rewarding aspect of working at LSM is knowing that the work we do makes a difference in the lives of children," Kathy said.

Kathy spent the majority of her first months at Loving Shepherd paring down a list of thousands of child-serving organizations. She then created a database of private foster care agen-



LSM Quick Facts

Full name: Kathy Marie Meyer

Born: Sept. 17, 1962

Family: Married to Denny Meyer (42). Three children: Alyssa, 16; Paige, 14; and Jenna, 11.

Education: Associate's degree in applied science. Majored in court reporting.

cies that Loving Shepherd could then use to help churches work to prevent abuse and neglect.

Currently, she is researching all of the children's hospitals in the United States for Loving Shepherd's corrective surgery program.

But as rewarding as working part time is, Kathy also finds joy in spending time with her three daughters and her husband, Denny.

"Some of my fondest memories come from spending time with my girls."

Heart: Haymanot experiences the joy of family while waiting for her heart surgery to take place

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After LSM received approval from an American hospital, Haymanot embarked on a three-month journey, starting at her orphanage and ending on the steel tables of St. Francis Children's Hospital in Peoria, Ill., on Tuesday, April 17.

But during the odyssey, Haymanot received a gift that affected her heart just as much as the surgery.

Suddenly, she had many Bluffton Apostolic Christian families who cared about her and children who played with her. She was loved!

Children the church accepted her like a long-lost sister, and after the doctors repaired her heart,

no longer was she condemned to watch others play.

"Two weeks after her surgery, while she was playing soccer with our grandkids, she ran over to me and said, 'I'm happy.' I asked her why," Ed said.

"She put her hand on her heart and said, 'I'm OK.'"

After many tearful hugs and goodbyes with many people, Haymanot returned to Ethiopia on Monday, May 21. She needed to return to fulfill that country's visa requirements. However, everyone hopes she can return for a future adoption.

Haymanot's successful journey is because of the giving of Loving Shepherd's supporters and God's grace.

Safe in the arms of Jesus

Jude - 6 years old. Jude lived with eight other orphans in a 10'x15' room on a mountain-top in southwest Haiti. He passed away on May 11 at 10:35 p.m. from a medical condition. He is survived by his brother, Job, and his mother, who is unable to care for them.

For the past year, Loving Shepherd donors have financially supported Jude and the other eight orphans through their giving to Loving Shepherd.

Their giving provided food and clothing to make life more comfortable for him, as orphans in Haiti usually end up as street children or slaves.

Jude, the youngest of the eight orphans, was going to move in September to the new Loving Shepherd group



home at Kpoux being built by the gifts of love from Loving Shepherd donors. Now his home is a mansion on streets paved with gold.

Please continue to pray for Jude's friends at the orphanage.

Loving Shepherd is accepting memorials in memory of Jude to directly assist the remaining eight orphans.

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Mission Statement

The Mission of Loving Shepherd Ministries is to care for abandoned, orphaned, and at-risk children around the world and to help others to do the same.

Our example is 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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