SPRING 2018
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A quarterly publication
of Circle of Care, Inc.

Lifeline

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OKLAHOMA UNITED METHODIST
CIRCLE of CARE
for CHILDREN and YOUTH

OKLAHOMA UNITED METHODIST
CIRCLE of CARE
for CHILDREN and YOUTH

Ministering to Oklahoma's kids, youth & families through residential & foster care since 1917

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Lifeline

A Word From the President

DONALD R. BATSON

In God's Capable Hands

Don Batson: Over the past several months, Circle of Care has gone through our succession planning and screening to select my successor. Given the plan's acceleration due to the Legacy Campaign and our need to move forward faster than originally planned, I found myself anxious that we were proceeding properly. We formed a Transition/Succession Committee, examined the process, and hired a national search agency to help us through our endeavor. We've now gone through the process, have selected our soon-to-be new President/CEO, Keith Howard, who assumes leadership beginning in April, so as we say, "The die is cast."

Still, I was pleased and felt affirmed as I was recently reading a short article about succession planning entitled "A Christian Ethical Response to Succession Planning". The gist of the article was that like Moses and Joshua leading the Hebrews into Israel, leadership often changes, even in the process of moving forward. We cannot always know where God is leading us, but we need to trust in Him, and to follow His biblical direction.

Kevin Beery is area director for Southeastern Europe, Assemblies of God World Mission, and his article stressed five general principles of transition that I would like to share with you.

- The first principle is that recognizing and developing emerging leaders will continue to be a task of current leadership. However, the choice of successor remains in God's hands alone.

- The second principle of succession planning is to recognize and develop emerging leaders (Rothwell 2005). Existing leadership should keep in mind the competencies necessary (Metz 1998) to successfully complete the next step of God's plan.

- The third principle of Christian succession planning goes farther than the second. Not only are potential leaders to be developed, but they must personally be mentored by the existing leader (Ready and Conger 2007).

- The fourth Christian ethical response to succession planning is for the leader to recognize his/her limitations. All leaders will eventually leave their positions for one reason or another. The wise leader realizes that one day he/she will step down from leadership and passes off leadership when it is time.

- The final principle of succession planning is to share leadership.

Reverend Beery concludes by stating that succession issues and leadership transition are always a challenge. When succession is handled according to biblical principles, it can launch the organization into the next phase of God's purpose for it. A competent leader will carefully study the succession principles found in the pages of God's word to prepare for the inevitable transition to a new leader.

Continued on next page...

To provide **Christian help, healing and hope to children** and **families in crisis** to ensure a safe, healthy, and spiritual future.

Circle of Care Mission Statement

Now, the leadership of the Circle of Care is not one person, but an amalgamation of the CEO, the Board, the Conference and our many ministry partners. Still, I feel affirmed by this article that our succession planning was sound. Now I am one of those leaders who needs to recognize and accept that although my experience with the Circle of Care has been fruitful and rewarding, I will not finish the journey into the land of milk and honey. I know that soon the Circle of Care will indeed be seen, as our Vision Statement declares, as the premier provider of child welfare in the state of Oklahoma. I know also, that like Moses, I will have to be content to watch that next step from the mount. I use this farewell article to introduce to you our next CEO who will lead our ministry to the next level, Keith Howard.

Keith Howard: Almost three years ago I stumbled upon a job announcement for a position at Circle of Care. I had no previous knowledge of CoC, but I was intrigued and submitted my resume. From the moment I hit send, it just felt right. It felt as if my next steps were about to be laid out before me and God was going to guide the whole process.

You see, less than 24 hours earlier I had told my current employer that I would not be the one to lead my current agency into Oklahoma to start a new office for them. I was confused. Why would God clearly tell me in my spirit to say "no"? I knew I was about to go through a transition, why not make that transition with an agency I had been with for 9 years and go home, back to Oklahoma? Yet, that was not God's plan for me. Instead, he was intersecting my life with Circle of Care and weaving together the next chapter of my life with Circle of Care.

I stand here now on the cusp of becoming CEO in awe and wonder of how good God is. The gravity of leading such an exemplary agency with so much potential does not escape me, but instead of carrying it alone, I release it. I hand it back to God to carry the weight, guide my steps and lead us into this next season. I hand it to our staff to lead the way, use their talents, their voice and their passions to take us to new heights and achievements. I hand it to our donors, churches, and supporters to continue to lead the way in enabling us to do great ministry for children and families. I hand it to our board and leadership team to come alongside me and walk the journey together as we step into where God would have us go.

I'm excited about this new season, not because of what I can bring, but because of what WE all will bring as Circle of Care continues to build on our legacy and write the chapters of our next season of providing help, healing, and hope to children and families in crisis across Oklahoma. Let's do this together, because ***together we can do great things!***

Thank You!

Thank you to all the churches who lifted up our programs on Circle of Care Sunday this past December by hosting a guest speaker from our agency. The following churches hosted these amazing CoC speakers:

- **Weatherford First UMC** – Raquel Razien, ChildSHARE Family Specialist
- **Faith UMC, Tulsa** - Lauren Olvera, ChildSHARE Foster Parent Recruiter and Andrea Ware, Family Specialist
- **Eufaula UMC** – Don Batson, President/CEO
- **Lost Creek UMC** - Carlan Kendrid and Becky Hightower, ChildSHARE Family Specialists
- **Pawnee UMC** - Tasha Atcity, Church Relations Coordinator
- **Memorial Drive UMC** – Lauren Olvera, ChildSHARE Foster Parent Recruiter
- **Pauls Valley UMC** - Sarah Steffes, VP of Development
- **Guthrie UMC** - Tiffany Johnson, Regional Director of ChildSHARE
- **Antlers UMC** - Tod Bryant, VP of Support Services
- **St. Luke's Methodist, OKC** – Video interview with Sarah Steffes, VP of Development

We were also very blessed to receive $6,546.00 in special offerings.

SAVE-THE-DATE for the 2018 Circle of Care Sunday, December 16!

Josh Shipp is a best-selling author, global youth empowerment expert, and acclaimed speaker. A former at-risk foster kid turned youth advocate, he is renowned for his documentary TV series (A&E) that followed his ground-breaking work with teens.

He is a recognized teen expert for media outlets as MTV, CNN, FOX, The New York Times, 20/20, Good Morning America. He's worked with groups of parents, educators & mental health professionals plus has spoken to more than TWO Million teens and parents live.

His ultimate goal is to help as many young people as possible. He trains other speakers through Youth Speaker University and his online mentoring program One Caring Adult has a world-wide reach.

Get your tickets today for an evening of mission-focused fellowship, delicious food, and amazing stories of resilience!

SPONSORSHIP

CONTACT:
Sarah Steffes
Vice President of Development
Oklahoma United Methodist Circle of Care
405.215.1400
sarah.steffes@circleofcare.org

SUPPORTER
$500
- Recognition in event program
- Recognition on website and Facebook
- One time recognition in Lifeline Magazine (3,000 subscribers)
- 2 event tickets
- Reserved seats

BELIEVER
$1,200
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- Recognition on website and Facebook
- One time recognition in Lifeline magazine (3,000 subscribers)
- 8 event tickets
- Reserved table

SUSTAINER
$5,000
- Included in Press Releases
- Recognition in event slideshow & program
- Recognition on website & Facebook
- One time recognition in Lifeline magazine (3,000 subscribers)
- 8 event tickets
- 2 signed copies of Josh Shipp's book
- Reserved table

ADVOCATE
$10,000
- Included in Press Releases
- Recognition in event slideshow & program
- Recognition by speakers at podium
- Recognition on website and Facebook
- One time recognition in Lifeline magazine (3,000 subscribers)
- 8 event tickets (prime table)
- 2 signed copies of Josh Shipp's book

BENEFACTOR
$15,000
- Naming Opportunity -Select One
  1. Pre-Event Beverages
  2. Entertainment
  3. Event Photographs
- Included in Press Releases
- Recognition in event slideshow & program
- Recognition by Speakers at Podium
- Recognition on website and Facebook
- One time recognition in Lifeline magazine on full page, color thank you ad (3,000 subscribers)
- 16 tickets to event (two premier tables near stage)
- 2 signed copies of Josh Shipp's book
- 4 additional tickets donated to Circle of Care clients

CHAMPION
$25,000
- Official Book Signing sponsor
- Event signage with your company logo
- Included in Press Releases
- Recognition in event slideshow & program
- Recognition by speakers at podium
- Recognition on website and
- One time recognition in Lifeline magazine on full page, color thank you ad (3,000 subscribers)
- Co-branded event ad in the *Oklahoma United Methodist Contact* newspaper
- 16 tickets to event (two premier tables near stage)
- 4 signed copies of Josh Shipp's book.
- 8 additional tickets donated to Circle of Care clients

CHILDSHARE

Jennifer Solis became a parent when her only parent passed away suddenly in January 2014. Her parent had been caring for Jennifer's niece. Jennifer was finishing a graduate degree in Oklahoma City and was 100 miles from her hometown of Tulsa when a series of circumstances and fountains of change beckoned her into new life.

I knew I couldn't do it alone. But I didn't know what to do.

Sitting around a friend's dinner table, the suggestion was made for me to get involved with the local ChildSHARE program. I knew of the organization having supported it through youth mission projects during my time working in youth ministry in Tulsa.

That suggestion, and my friend's subsequent phone call, were game changers for the new life my child and I were building. This community and network of resources provided support and community during a time of grief, disillusionment, transitions and joy.

There were material resources, like the big-kid bed we obtained when my little one outgrew her toddler bed; the Pull-Ups and diapers that got us both through her potty-training experience. The most important resource ChildSHARE offered us was the invitation into community.

Jennifer Solis with her handprint at the Frances E. WIllard Campus in Tulsa.

My child had the opportunity to meet other children who had experienced trauma, loss and significant change. I was offered the opportunity to break bread with fellow travelers on the journey. We spent quality time with foster families of diverse origins and composition. Families who were rallied around common goals: doing what love requires, working for healing, resisting injustice and oppression, making the way for hope to live and breathe.

This was the heart of God beating in our life.

This was the church alive in my world. This was a tangible Easter in the doldrums and whirling dervish of grief. It was what we needed.

Recently, while standing in the gym on the Frances Willard Campus in Tulsa during the annual ChildSHARE Christmas party, a staff person said to me, "Didn't you say your handprint was on this wall?" I did some quick research on my phone, located an old photo and noted the color of paint that were on my hands. I went to the wall and lined up my fingers with the print. It was mine. Twelve years before, I had stood there as a giggling church intern, slinging paint during a middle school youth mission event. My spirit stilled. I immediately recognized the multiple ways I had both been there before and just arrived as myself. In that moment, the significance of time and journey was profound.

I reflected on the things that had changed. I recalled how I had stood in that space, at a different time in my life, with a community that looked different than present company, in a building that was serving a different purpose and left my mark. In 2005, I was a college intern who lived for late night philosophical conversations, books with tiny print and folk-rock bands so alternative few would recognize names. In 2017, as a single foster parent, my lexicon was punctuated by early night-night, reading logs, The Book With No Pictures and KidzBop.

So much had changed. Yet, so much stayed the same.

There are still empty chairs but always new friends. Laughter still rings in the air. It sounds different, but is as medicinal as ever. Play dates, carpools and dance rehearsal supersede lingering coffee talks, late night concerts and impulsive travels. The joy we sip is the same. It just looks and sounds different.

Above all, God was, is, and will be. Through the powerful and transformational ministry of ChildSHARE, we are able to experience the continual work of God in our lives as creator, nurturer, sustainer, teacher and parent.

Back to School Drive...Already?

The 2017-2018 school year isn't even over, so why think about school supplies for next year? Because we would like you to consider supporting a Back to School Drive for Circle of Care between now and July 1, 2018.

Circle of Care has once again partnered with Citizen's Caring for Children to provide school supplies for children in foster care.

Students from Moore United Methodist Church VBS at the 2017 School Supply Drive.

Here are a few ideas for helping Circle of Care send foster children back to school with the supplies needed for success:

- Do a drive as a MISSION for Vacation Bible School
- United Methodist Women's DRIVE
- Sunday School class drive
- Church wide donation

If your church would like Circle of Care to shop for the school supplies, we will gratefully accept monetary donations. Please write 'school supplies' in the memo section of your check.

To arrange a drive or get more info, please contact Denise Ebersbach, Development Specialist at Circle of Care, 405-613-2276 or denise.ebersbach@circleofcare.org.

THE SPIRIT OF **CHRISTMAS**

Circle of Care Christmas Parties hosted nearly 500 children, parents, volunteers and staff at 4 different locations across the state. Christmas was made possible by 103 volunteers contributing 264 hours along with countless in-kind donations and Angel Tree gifts from United Methodist Churches, individuals and community partners across the state. Every child in our care across the state also received a filled stocking, a new pair of pajamas and a new book.

BE AN **AMBASSADOR**

Circle of Care is seeking Methodist church members in all corners of the state who are able and willing to serve as Ambassadors for our mission in their local church. Very little time is involved, and is mostly passing along information. Here are some examples of the Ambassador role:

- **Attends a one-time Ambassador Orientation.**
- **Presents Circle of Care information and announcements to the church in a timely manner.**
- **Promotes church engagement on Circle of Care Sunday.**
- **Encourages and supports volunteers to engage with Circle of Care campuses or programs.**

Ambassador Orientations (a.k.a. Lunch & Learn) are scheduled for **March 6**, **April 10**, **September 6** and **September 13** in various parts of the state. To learn more, please contact our Church Relations Coordinator, Tasha Atcity, at (918) 402-3247.

Tasha Atcity, Church Relations Coordinator

Lifeline

An Escape for Pearl's Hope

Thank you to Pastor Mark Whitley of Meadowcreek UMC and Pastor Susan Whitley of Skiatook UMC who graciously donated their vehicle to the Frances E. Willard Campus for use by Pearl's Hope Transitional Living program.

Learn more about Pearl's Hope at **www.circleofcare.org/ministries/pearlshope**

Honors & Memorials

SPRING 2018

Circle of Care sincerely appreciates the following who support this ministry through the Honors & Memorials program.

We regret any errors or omissions. Help us correct our records by writing Circle of Care, 1501 NW 24th Street, Suite 214, Oklahoma City, OK 73106, or by calling (405) 530-2078.

IN HONOR OF

Country Kitchen Volunteers, Altus FUMC
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Jerry & Nancy Cotton

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our 3 Great Grandchildren
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Grady & Joan McCullough

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Janey Moore

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Raymond Dixon

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Susan Murray

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Clark Nutting

O.D. & Mattie Nutting, Jr.
Clark Nutting

Gladys Rena Nutting
Clark Nutting

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*This creates no additional cost to you and converts spending into giving!

Legacy of Care

100 YEARS OF HELP, HEALING & HOPE

FIRST *LEGACY OF CARE* SIBLING HOME BREAKS GROUND

Circle of Care, Alva United Methodist Church and the Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation came together January 31, 2018, in Alva, OK, to break ground on the first of eight Legacy of Care sibling homes. Also in January, we received the largest “non-Foundation” gift so far in the campaign from an anonymous couple of $300,000! We plan to break ground on the next home, which will be placed at the Holsinger Home site in Enid, very soon.

For more updates, please visit legacy.circleofcare.org.

(RIGHT) Dr. Carol Cook Moore, Senior Pastor of FIrst United Methodist, Alva, leads prayer as the Legacy Task Force prepares to break ground.

BELOW) Don Batson, President and CEO of Circle of Care and Keith Howard, incoming CEO usher in a new era for Circle of Care.

JOIN CIRCLE OF CARE'S FRIENDS OF CHILDREN

Friend - $500
Leader - $1,000
Sustainer - $2,500
Cornerstone - $5,000
Legacy - $10,000

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Oklahoma City, OK 73106

Online
CircleofCare.org

Social Media
facebook.com/OKUMCircleofCare

SITES

Administration
1501 NW 24th St, #214 OKC, OK 73106
405-530-2078

Children's Home
549 Mathes Park Drive Tahlequah, OK 74464
918-456-6166

Boys Ranch
PO Box 999 Gore, OK 74435
918-487-5281

Frances E. Willard Campus
1616 N Gilcrease Museum Rd Tulsa, OK 74127
918-583-9506

Holsinger Home
Enid, OK 73703

Oh Be Joyful Farm
Coweta, OK 74429

PROGRAMS

Child SHARE – Foster Care Services
720 W Wilshire Blvd, # 117 OKC, OK 73116
866-978-2956

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549 Mathes Park Drive Tahlequah, OK 74464
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