

TRUE TO LIFE

An Evangelical Child and Family Agency Publication



For ECFA's 36th annual Bike & Hike, we were encouraged to cherish both babies and their mothers through this year's verse in Philippians 2:3b-4, "In humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others." Each of our volunteers and participants gave of their time and resources to look to the interests of the mothers and their children, whom ECFA serves.

God gave us a warm breezy day, which was perfect for biking and walking the Glacial Drumlin Trail and fellowshiping together at the Bethesda Park Shelter afterwards on Saturday, September 10th. A total of 98 individuals were involved with 13 new participants. We also had 7 people who were new to an ECFA event. Over \$22,000 was raised including a \$3,500 match to support ECFA in serving our Pregnancy Support Services Clients.

Wisconsin District Coordinator, Dana Hauser, shared the work God has been doing through the Pregnancy Support Program, this past year, in the lives of over 20 clients God has brought to ECFA. As everyone enjoyed a lunch of sandwiches and homemade cookies, Dana picked names to receive the generously donated prizes.

The event ran smoothly thanks to the 32 volunteers who served to set up, act as crossing guards, register participants, serve food, and finally clean up. ECFA is especially grateful for our Bike and Hike Committee, Brian and Nancy Farrell and Sue Carlson for all of their tireless work in planning and organizing this event.

ECFA is thankful for the following sponsors who partnered with us on this year's Bike & Hike event:



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Prize Winners

Kathy Misany
David Cottrell
Carol Yule

New Participant Prize

Christina Wolf

Most Sponsors

Linda Carlson

Cherishing Both

Relaunching a Vital Option

From 1984 – 2016, there were over 15 families who regularly put their own lives on hold in order to accommodate a newborn infant in need of a temporary safe and stable home. Each home was located throughout Wisconsin in a number of different counties. All the families underwent a lengthy home study by an ECFA social worker, received approval by the State, and became officially licensed. This permitted them to be available for the temporary placement of ECFA clients, specifically infants and minors.

Unique to ECFA, these foster homes and families were set aside to provide the most loving care for the clients in the Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) Program. Hundreds of newborns, a few toddlers and older children and even some minor-aged birth moms were well-loved and cared for during a difficult time in their lives. There were usually four major reasons the foster families were often full to capacity with the newborns.

These included:

- 1) Birth parents torn with a decision whether to place their baby for adoption or parent their child often used this option after delivering their baby. This option of a loving home gave the birth mom and also birth dad extra time to determine the best plan for the baby's future in their personal circumstances.
- 2) On occasion, the need for respite care would arise when the delivery of a baby became more complicated with unexpected medical issues. This often necessitated a period of recovery and healing for the new mom. Moms would be able to heal and become stronger knowing their baby was well cared for.
- 3) If a birth mom was proceeding forward with an adoption plan, Wisconsin law requires a 30-day waiting period for a court date. This four week interim period created an awkward situation for birth moms who wished to move forward in their lives by returning to work or school. For many women it was not feasible to be responsible for the daily cares of a newborn, nor emotionally possible. The foster parents were there to care for the baby 24/7 and also welcome the grieving birth mom for healthy closure visits.
- 4) A number of infants were born suffering from drug and/or alcohol withdrawal. Child Protective Services would be notified by hospital staff prompting birth moms to consider a private adoption plan where they would have a future open adoption with a family they chose through ECFA instead of the county choosing an undisclosed adoptive family with no future contact possible.

The Foster Family placement option was always available at no cost to every client in the PSS Program. Once again this vital option is being offered and was relaunched in August 2022.



Meet the Lazaris Family

Over a year ago, a lovely young family sensed God was calling them to serve Him together as a family in some capacity. Previously, they were licensed for foster care and accepted an opportunity to open their home and be part of the Safe Families Program. They provided temporary respite care to a young child for 75 days and really enjoyed this experience. This connection prompted them to call Dorinne Geldon at ECFA to see if there was a need for a similar ministry opportunity for their family.

Dorinne was a Youth Leader for many years at Campus Way, a Bible-based high school ministry, where she met both Julie and Mike before they began dating a number of years ago. Dorinne knew conversations to relaunch the Foster Family program were ongoing so the licensing process of the Lazaris Family of five began. However, during the process, Julie became pregnant with their fourth baby so the licensing was placed on hold.

Julie and Mike have been married for five years. They have been blessed with twin daughters, Vivian and Eliana age three, Mike age one, and Baby Robbie who was welcomed by the family at the end of July. Mike and Julie let Dorinne know they adjusted to Baby Robbie and wanted to finish the licensing process to be ready for any newborn placement whom God directs for temporary loving care. Julie shared they have, "plenty of cribs and arms available".

Mike and Julie feel they have been blessed with a large home and the capacity to welcome many children into their home and hearts. Both have "a passion to serve the most helpless person in the world (a child)." Julie is a full-time mom and has a teaching degree. She is excited to use her skillset when she homeschools her own children. Mike is a third shift Patrol Officer for the West Allis Police Department. The family is also active in their church and enjoy daily family and home life.

No one but God knows how often we will be using the Lazaris Family for a temporary loving placement in the near future. We are excited, ready, and delighted to be offering this option to our Pregnancy Support Services clients and community connections.

Thank you to the Lazaris Family for saying YES to becoming our first Foster Family of 2022. If this is a ministry you as an individual, couple, or family may consider, please contact **Dorinne Geldon at 262-789-1881** for more information.



WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

There is a continual outpouring of blessings received by this ministry. As a result, there are many individuals to be grateful for in each quarterly newsletter. *"I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds."* Psalm 9:1

Serving at Our Office:

- Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers who assembled mailings in July & September
- Faithful delivery of our bulk mail to the post office by Marvin Engle
- Beautiful painting of our new shed by a friend of ECFA

Pregnancy Support Services:

- Nice bags, baby clothes, wipes, blankets, carrier, wrap, rattles, socks & bibs from Roy & Karen Griffith
- Packs of diapers from our new volunteer, Pat Johnson
- Baby outfits, onesies & bibs from Pat Miller's family
- Diapers & wipes from Lori Cottrill
- New highchair for a client in need, from John & Christi Reinsch
- Gift cards for clients from Grady, Hayes & Neary, LLC
- Baby formula from Noelle Klement
- Stroller/car seat combo, diapers and a car seat from Laura Pulda & Mackenzie's Love Fund
- Potty trainer/stepstool from Judy Iwinski
- Car seat for a client in need and a preemie outfit from Betty Buckheit
- Pack 'n play for a client from Betsy Madsen

Miscellaneous Gifts:

- Wonderful pictures taken at our Bike & Hike by Cindee Re
- 24 Donors who gave over \$10,000 through United Way this past fiscal year

Memorials

In loving memory of: My dear sister, Mary Bousman
From: Carol Yule

In loving memory of: Our friend, Mary Bousman
From: Mike & Linda Oberbrunner

In loving memory of: Our friend and "Champion for Life", Dr. Alma Labunski
From: Mike & Linda Oberbrunner

In memory of: Our Daddy, Carl Mangerson
From: William & Christy Schuyler

In memory of: A lovely ECFA encourager and friend, Pat Murphy
From: Mike & Linda Oberbrunner

In loving memory of: My husband, Alex Muza
From: Betty Muza

In fond memory of: Our fun-loving stepmom and mother-in-law, Millie Oberbrunner
From: Mike & Linda Oberbrunner and John & Nancy Schatzman

In loving memory of: My husband, Ewald Sawall
From: Eva Sawall

In loving memory of: My parents, Lyle & Irene Zink
From: Lylette Smith

Tributes

In honor of: My granddaughter Audrey C. Jensen's 1st birthday
From: Suzanne Jensen



DONATIONS TO ECFA

Each year, ECFA receives donations through United Way. These gifts assist us in our outreach to expectant mothers facing unplanned pregnancies in our Pregnancy Support Services Program.

If you would like to donate to ECFA through United Way you need to list our agency name, address and EIN (Employer identification number). Thank you!

Evangelical Child & Family Agency

1617 S. 124th Street, New Berlin, WI 53151
36-2229573

Please note: For United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County the gift total must be \$50 or more or it will go to United Way's general fund.

COME TO THE

BENEFIT AUCTION

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

at the Sheraton in Brookfield
RSVP by October 21st • \$25 per person

Visit ecfawisc.org/events/auction
for more info and to register!

Taking new item donations until October 17th
Call Sue for more info



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& Family Agency**

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New Berlin, WI 53151

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**YOU'RE
INVITED!!**

5th ECFA Benefit Auction – November 4, 2022

Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel
Accepting new item donations


**The Benefit Auction
is right around the
corner!**

39th Anniversary Celebration Brunch – Saturday, April 22, 2023

With Amy Ford, Co-Founder and President of Embrace Grace Ministry
Marriott Milwaukee West, Waukesha

37th Bike & Hike Fundraiser – Saturday, September 9, 2023

at Bethesda Park, Waukesha

For more information about these events, contact Sue at 262.789.1881 or suec@ecfawisc.org