

TRUE TO LIFE

An Evangelical Child and Family Agency Publication



39th Anniversary Celebration

ECFA held its 39th Anniversary Celebration by once again hosting a brunch at the Marriott Milwaukee West Hotel in Waukesha on April 22nd. One hundred and eleven guests were in attendance to commemorate the occasion, and fifty-one of those guests were new to the event and twenty-six were new to ECFA.

Emcee, Pastor James Hauser, introduced Kinga Smutek who provided instrumental worship and a few vocal performances throughout the celebration. Pastor Jonathan Misirian of Southbrook Church gave the morning invocation. After fellowship was enjoyed over brunch, Wisconsin Advisory Council Chairperson, Sharon Fuller shared about the ECFA Foundation and an update of the projects, programs, and events that the foundation has funded in the past year.

Wisconsin District Coordinator, Dana Hauser shared about how an ideal partnership between those in attendance, ECFA, and Embrace Grace can have an eternal impact on clients and their families. Glory was given to God for the thirty-nine

Pregnancy Support Services clients and forty-four adoptive families served this past year as well as the twenty successful adoptive placements, which included eight domestic and twelve international adoptions.

Pregnancy Support Services Caseworker, Mary Marquardt, introduced a video testimonial of her client Haydee, who shared how ECFA supported her throughout her pregnancy, in transitioning from homelessness to her own home and helping to furnish her new home for herself and her children, and overall providing emotional and tangible support throughout the relationship.

Next Dana introduced her client, Brittany, who shared her story of coming to ECFA to pursue an adoption plan for her unborn son, Ezekiel. Adoption Social Worker Dorinne Geldon introduced

the pre-adoptive family, James, and Bonnie, whom Brittany had chosen to place her son with after he was born. They each shared why they chose ECFA and what their experience has been developing an open adoption relationship with one another. Next Dorinne invited Alex and Ellen to share about baby Micah, who many supporters had been praying for due to health complications from his delivery. (Please see this story on page two.)

Our featured speaker Amy Ford, Co-Founder and President of Embrace Grace inspired attendees with stories of women who were loved by their local church while facing an unplanned pregnancy. Amy shared that pregnancy centers, such as ECFA are the first responders and local churches are the hospitals. If local churches are willing to host an Embrace Grace ministry, such as Fox River Church in Waukesha, ECFA can connect their pregnancy support clients with a local church to love on them and become a family of support even after the client has completed services with ECFA. Amy ended with sharing how partnering financially through an offering would help ECFA continue to offer its services to families in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Pastor James Hauser concluded the event by giving the benediction. We would like to thank everyone who came to this year's Anniversary Celebration, and we look forward to celebrating 40 years serving Wisconsin next spring and hope all our friends and supporters will join us.



Are you on our email list?

In addition to our True to Life newsletter that is published four times a year, we now have an E-newsletter, ECFA Heartbeat, that is published twice per month with current ECFA updates! You won't want to miss client impact stories, announcements, prayer requests, event info, and special needs.

Send a note to Sue Carlson at suec@ecfawisc.org and we'll add you!



Micah and the Power of Prayer!

Ellen and Alex have always desired a larger family. They had talked about adoption and were open to this option of growing their family since before they were married. Alex's father was adopted, and Ellen has cousins who were adopted. After experiencing a difficult labor and delivery during the birth of their biological son and experiencing subsequent postpartum depression, they felt that God was calling them to pursue the avenue of adoption. They knew two families at their church who had adopted through ECFA, so they decided to contact ECFA.

After completing their home study and waiting for 1 ½ years, an expectant, placement-minded mother who was working with Mary, chose to meet them after looking at various profile books of potential, adoptive families. Mary and I facilitated that initial meeting this past December at ECFA. Both parties were very nervous to meet one another, but God orchestrated a connection between them and solidified the birthmother's decision to place and choose Alex and Ellen as the parents she wished to have raise her child. That relationship grew over the next several months, and Alex and Ellen had opportunities to spend time with the birthmother and meet her extended family who were all supportive of her decision to place her baby.

The birthmother wanted Alex and Ellen at the birth, so when she went into labor just before her due date in March, they traveled to join her at the hospital. After 36 hours of labor and not making any progress, the doctor decided to perform a c-section. Baby Micah was born not breathing, not moving, and with a very faint and low heartbeat. The doctor performed CPR immediately after birth and soon Micah was put on a ventilator to stabilize his condition and right after that, a feeding tube. At that time, the doctor could not give a positive prognosis and was concerned about damage to his brain. The doctor immediately decided on a three-day hospital protocol of cooling Micah's body to try and protect his brain and promote healing. That is when we reached out to you to pray – the day of his birth – and God heard your prayers and the prayers of many others! Miraculously, after three

days, Micah went off the ventilator and eventually his feeding tube was removed. He left the NICU 10 days after his birth, amazing all the NICU nurses as well as his doctor who called him "our little champion."

Baby Micah currently is doing amazingly well and is described as an easygoing, happy, and content baby who is eating, sleeping, and bonding well with his new family. He is being closely monitored by his doctor and neurologist for any developmental or brain issues, but none have been discovered thus far. The Termination of Parental Rights hearing occurred this month, so Micah is now in his "forever" family – a family who dearly loves and treasures him.

Dorinne Geldon, Adoption Social Worker



Dual Perspective on Mother's Day

As May 14th approaches many of us are planning on how we will celebrate the mothers in our lives or anticipating being celebrated by our spouses and children. Having served with ECFA for the past fourteen months I have new perspectives on Mother's Day than what I have personally experienced. For our prospective adoptive mothers, many will be experiencing another year with empty arms, continuing to wait to be chosen to mother a child they have been praying for. For our pregnancy support clients, many may not be able to experience the joy and appreciation that comes with this holiday. This may be due to an unplanned pregnancy that is causing them great distress due to their circumstances or due to being a single mom with no significant other to plan a special day to honor them.

I share all of this with you because I think of Jesus' words to his disciple John while he hung on the cross. When speaking of his mother Mary, he said to John, "Behold your mother." I pray, as the church, we ask for eyes to see the mothers and mothers-to-be in our lives, who experience this holiday with pain. I pray we will ask God to show us ways to honor those mothers on this day in a way that is compassionate and displays God's love for them. I have often thought what a redemptive work is done when an unplanned pregnancy results in an answer to prayer for an adoptive mother. This year we will have 20 children who have been placed with their forever mother but let us not forget those grieving the loss of the brave and selfless decision they made and for those still waiting to celebrate Mother's Day.

Dana Hauser, Wisconsin District Coordinator

True to Life is published four times a year by Evangelical Child and Family Agency and can be viewed online at www.ecfawisc.org. Please direct your comments to Dana Hauser: (262) 789-1881
Email at: danah@ecfawisc.org.



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:

- Flower beds cleaned out and ready to go for spring by Tina Wienss
- Sorting of baby clothes and creating Mother's Day cards for our clients from the Heritage Christian School group

Pregnancy Support Services:

- Ladies items, baby dishes, diapers, wipes, clothes, blanket, scarf and bear from Grace Community Church
- Wagon for client from James & Leah Valentine
- Girls clothes for a client need from Allison Hoff
- Four boxes of kids clothes shared by Lake Country Caring
- New baby swing for a client need from Cheryl Dable
- Baby shampoo, baby wash and wipes from Terry Arenz
- Dr. Brown baby bottles, sleepers and pants from Linda Babcock
- Diapers, clothes, hangers & Dr. Brown bottles from Carl Muenzmaier
- Many special items for our moms for Mother's Day from Angela Horneber, Martha Knurr, Zachary Koch, Mary Marquardt, Jacob Moeller, Matt Strommen, and Friends of ECFA
- Baby carriers, and cases of diapers from anonymous friends of ECFA
- Diapers from Betty Buckheit
- Baby wipes from Linda Lasch
- Baby clothes, blankets, diapers, wipes, diaper bags, hat & headband sets, crib sheets, knit hats, bibs, socks, shoes, hangers, snow suit, wash cloths, hygiene kits, baby pool floats, stroller net, bassinet, and car sunshades from Roy & Karen Griffith
- Spanish Bibles from friends of ECFA
- Diapers, hangers, baby bottles & clothes from Pat Johnson
- Gift card for a client from Ginny Hughes
- Baby clothes from a client wanting to share with another mom
- Baby formula from Lori Anderson
- New baby swing for a client from Laura Pulda
- Lots of baby clothes from Tom
- Diapers from Carmen Otto
- Diapers, wipes, clothes, monitor, blankets & chocolates from Frieda Kamentz
- Diapers and baby clothes from Jill
- Aldi gift cards for clients from Don & Kathy Valentino
- Dr. Brown baby bottles, nursing accessories, baby carrier, training pants, crib bumper, stroller, playpen, and baby gates from Linda Hansen
- Cases of formula, baby bottles and sippy cups from Catrina Mulloy
- New crib mattress for a client from Todd & Ellie Kisch

Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers who assembled a mailing for the Agency in January & February:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Cathy Bogdanovich | Sally Kronshage |
| Joyce Dankert | Kelley McDougall |
| Char Duranceau | Gail Moses |
| Ruth Engelhardt | Barbara Schmidtkunz |
| Marvin Engle | Carrie Serbian |
| Sharon Fuller | Marcia Smith |
| Pamela Grande | Darleen Snyder |
| Bonnie Gruber | Scott & Karen Snyder |
| Rita Hoffman | Nancy Stone |
| Carol Honeyager | Jan Story |
| Ginny Hughes | Margo Whitcomb |
| Pat Johnson | Friends of ECFA |
| Anita Julius | |

Memorials

- In loving memory of: Our son, Chad Bainbridge
From: Doug & Lana Bainbridge
- In loving memory of: Jerry & Shirley Bray
From: David Stagner
- In loving memory of: Patricia M. Murphy
From: Renee Mazour, Brendan Gallagher, Bob & Judy Fiandaca, Carol & John Kissane & anonymous friends of Patty
- In loving memory of: My wife, Janet Schley
From: Gerald Schley
- In loving memory of: Our friend, John Spongberg
From: Mike & Linda Oberbrunner
- In loving memory of: Jennie Tietjen, our former WI District Director
From: Evangel Baptist Church, Brian & Nancy Farrell, Gladys Ramsey, Maureen Riordan, Carl & Jean Schwerman, The Susan Soldin Family, Chris & Marie Steege, David Tietjen
- In loving memory of: Our dear mother, Gloria Williams
From: Sally & Richard Boya
- In loving memory of: My parents, Lyle & Irene Zink
From: Lyllette Smith

Tributes

- In honor of: My special friend, Nancy Farrell for her birthday
From: Carol Honeyager
- In honor of: Our mother, Nancy Farrell for her birthday
From: Micah & Ruth Knapp
- In honor of: My good friend and neighbor, Margo Whitcomb
From: Alice Laukert



**Evangelical Child
& Family Agency**

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**YOU'RE
INVITED!!**

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

Bethesda Park/Glacial Drumlin Trail, Waukesha

Beats for Heartbeats – Saturday, September 9, 2023

*ECFA will be represented at this event and proceeds from the event will
benefit ECFA and three other Christ-centered organizations*

Washington County Fairgrounds, 3000 County Hwy PV, West Bend WI

Benefit Auction – Friday, November 3, 2023

Sheraton Milwaukee/Brookfield Hotel

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