

CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY TIMES



VOLUME XLVI ISSUE III

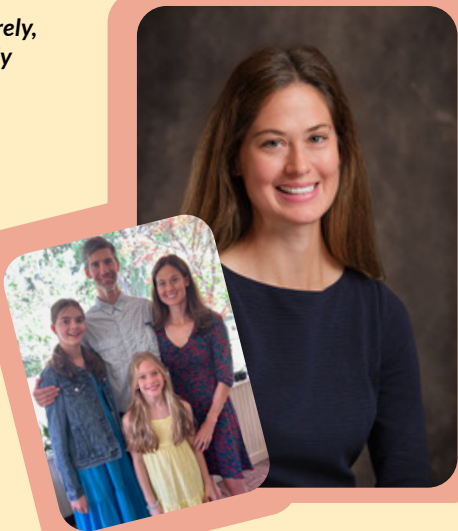
FALL 2024

INTRODUCTIONS

Greetings,

I would like to introduce myself as the new Executive Director of Christian Family Services. I am very excited to join this ministry supporting expectant mothers who are facing unplanned pregnancies. I spent the last eleven years working with the Statewide Florida Guardian ad Litem Office, serving as Managing Attorney for the Eighth Judicial Circuit since 2021. In that role, I encountered children and families who were part of a child welfare system that often could not meet their needs. I am eager to work with CFS to meet those needs, which range from counseling and support for mothers who wish to parent to an adoption plan and placement with an adoptive family. I am writing to all of you at the end of my first month on the job, which has included three placements and three opportunities to witness the love of a mother choosing an adoptive family for her newborn. In my personal life, I am a mother of two daughters, Lily (13) and Hannah (10), and a wife to my husband, Grant. God has blessed me with a loving family and I am grateful to be a part of the stories of other loving families through the gift of adoption and the CFS ministry. I want to thank Jerry for faithfully, skillfully, and compassionately leading CFS for the past 22 years, as well as for his guidance and generous spirit during this transition. I also want to thank Donna, Angie, Becky, and Katy for their warm welcome and patience. I am excited to partner with all of you in CFS's James 1:27 mission. I appreciate your continued support and look forward to sharing our stories and news with you.

*Sincerely,
Mandy*



Hello,

I am Angie Smallwood, the newest caseworker at Christian Family Services. I have been working with CFS for about four months now, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to join this ministry. During that time, I have helped facilitate six adoptive placements. I have had the privilege of counseling women with unplanned pregnancies as they considered their choices, praying with and for these women, and even holding some of their hands as they welcomed their children into the world. I have also watched families grow and relationships develop in the most beautiful ways. I am passionate about the mission of CFS, and it is an honor to come alongside the women which we serve. Outside of work, I am a proud mother of three children, Hannah (11), Maddie (9), and Neyland (7), and the wife of Ryan, who serves as Youth Minister at the Lake City Church of Christ. I want to thank each of you for your continued prayers for CFS. It is a privilege to be a part of this ministry, and I look forward to what the future holds.

*Sincerely,
Angie*



PRAYERS ANSWERED:

Your faithful prayers for the ministry of Christian Family Services were answered this summer.

A new caseworker joined the staff at the end of May. Angela "Angie" Smallwood came to CFS with relative work experience. More importantly, she brought a ministering spirit to the team. For less than a month, Angie shadowed Jerry. And time marched, no, more like sprinted, on.

At the same time, the CFS Board of Directors offered the position of Executive Director to Amanda "Mandy" Harrell. She visited CFS before beginning her new role. One such day, a call from a hospital stated a Safe Haven baby was in need of a family. Discharge was on the first day of Jerry's retirement! Jerry fulfilled this last responsibility for CFS. Then he set off on a vacation!

CFS entered a unique time "between the directors," with two full-time staff members. God supplied a caseworker who was able to handle the new role she took on, plus inherit tasks Jerry had been fulfilling during adoptive placements. Angie was flexible and learned quickly!

Angie continued to build relationships with the women she and Jerry had met with prior to his retirement. Two of the women delivered at two different hospitals over 4 days! Plans changed, new directions were taken by the two women who delivered, and still the focus was where it should be: the moms, the babies, and the families. Another mom chose to parent her child.

Angie continued to excel, assisting with home study preparations for adoptive placements and performing post-placement visits. The marketing we had invested in finally gained traction and more leads were coming in, which meant Angie's schedule was full! Therefore, when we welcomed Mandy to the staff, we continued to be busy!

On August 15, CFS welcomed an Executive Director. Within three weeks of her arrival, Mandy witnessed three more placements!

As we enter this new era at Christian Family Services, the mission remains the same:

Real, true religion from God the Father's perspective is about caring for the orphans and widows who suffer needlessly and resisting the evil influence of the world.

James 1:27, The Voice

Continue in prayer, knowing that God has heard and answered.

-Donna



Angie enjoys holding a newborn as the adoptive family completes their placement paperwork.



Mandy looks on as Angie reviews consent paperwork with a recent mom.



Mandy at her 2nd placement.



Donna holds Chandler after completing consent and placement paperwork.

PLACEMENTS



Wren Robert placed July 1, 2024



Katie Raelyn placed July 20, 2024



Carter Lewis placed July 30, 2024



Rowan Levi placed August 23, 2024



Faith Lashey placed August 31, 2024



Chandler Atlas placed September 10, 2024



FINALIZATIONS



Lucia Jean received her final decree of adoption on May 28, 2024. *John and Alisa* were pleased to add another daughter to their family, and *Elianna Grace and Ava Joy* were happy to have another sister.



Micaiah Noble received his forever last name on May 28, 2024. *Joe and Kate* were happy to welcome a son to their home, and *Alexandra* became a big sister!



John Michael became the second son of *John and Nicole*. Their day in court was on June 4, 2024. *James* is now a big brother.



Jessie Anna and Ruth Adrienne are double the love for *Jon and Elizabeth*, who finalized their adoption on July 24, 2024.



The destination was worth the journey for **Harley Grace Roux**; the joy she has in her forever home can be seen on her face! Two big sisters (*Lillian and Tyler*), one big brother (*Luke*), and parents *Hannah and Blake* have surrounded Harley with love and understanding. They made it official on August 27, 2024.



Cali Jean, her parents *Kara and Abel*, and big brother *Avry* were able to Zoom into the finalization hearing from their home on August 27, 2024.



Katie Raelyn is welcomed to her family by parents *Jason and Kiesha* and big brother *Easton* on August 27, 2024.

MAY - AUGUST

IN MEMORY OF

Rick Brannan

Deana Brannan

Kenny Coleman

Bill & Mary Freeman

Nola Cucheran

Linda Case

Lee Gunter

Linda Case

Jim Ingram

Linda Case

Rita Ingram

Linda Case

Carl & Annie Ruth Jacobsen

Linda Jacobsen

Gary Turner

Linda Case

Mary Lynn Turner

Linda Case

Richard & Martha Whitehead

Carolyn & Bob Harrell



God Bless your service to
The precious Babies. Thank
you & God Watch over you!

*Deana and Bunta
(Toni)*

YOU'RE INVITED

*Celebrating
the
Retirement
of*
JERRY CALLENS



Date:
October 12, 2024

Time:
4:00 - 6:00 pm

Address:
Matheson History Museum
513 E. University Ave.
Gainesville, FL 32601

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to info@cfsfl.org or call 352-378-6202, no later than October 10.



What one CFS Board Member does when there isn't a board meeting!

Jackie Collins serves in many ways in her community. At the opening of a health center, she took a moment for a photo with Albert & Alberta, the University of Florida mascots. Because Jackie lives near the main office of CFS, she assists with mail outs and Game Day Parking needs.



It's fall, which means football season is in full swing! At Christian Family Services, that means the Game Day Parking fundraiser is well underway. Hosted by CampusView Church, volunteers assist patrons on the lot, beginning six hours prior to kickoff. A new website was built this summer, solely for this fundraiser. Look us up or refer football fans to this event. www.gamedayparkingfl.org

MAY - AUGUST HONOR TO:

Jerry Callens on his retirement

Deana Brannan
Ronald & Carole Eugene
Samuel & Janet Gardner
James & Zimmie Harris
Edward & Karen Oliver
Hill & Cherri Raines

Debbie & Jerry Callens

TWIGS - of Timberlane Church of Christ

"Thank you, Debbie & Jerry, for all you have done and continue to do."

-Marilou Heckman

Mandy Harrell

"Welcome Mandy! As the first secretary of CFS way back in the '70's, I'd like to make a special donation in honor of this continuation of such a special ministry."

-Ben & Cheryl Breon

All Birth Mothers

"In honor of all Birth Mothers who make tremendous sacrifices in placing their babies for adoption."

-Karla & Doug Amos

Bill & Lyuba Wharton

"Thank you for your work in the Ukraine."

-Bob & Carolyn Harrell

OTHER WAYS TO DONATE TO CFS...



Staff

Mandy Harrell, Executive Director
Donna L. Brooker, Ministry Assistant
Angie Smallwood, Caseworker
Becky Barclift, Bookkeeper
Katy Horton, Social Media & Graphic Design

Board of Directors

Jimmie Brunson
Jackie Collins
Sherri Daume
Holly Garvey
Ramon Osejo
Rick Worley

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