

# THE LINK

A Resource of the DFW Alliance of Adoption and Orphan Care Ministries

<http://www.DFWAlliance.org>

Spring 2007

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## DFW Alliance Roundtable

**Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
Irving Bible Church**

The DFW Alliance will host an adoption, foster and orphan care ministry roundtable on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in Room West C at Irving Bible Church. This informal event is designed for all church adoption, foster or orphan care ministry leaders (volunteer or staff) – whether or not your local church ministry is established yet or not. We will hear brief updates from several local church ministry leaders in the areas of adoption/foster family support, international orphan care and foster care outreach. We will also devote the second half of our time to an interactive discussion focused

## Beginning Again

As you may recall, the DFW Alliance of Adoption and Orphan Care Ministries was launched in the spring of 2006. Simply put, the DFW Alliance is a network of local church adoption, foster care and orphan care ministries in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area that are committed to living out God's heart for the "fatherless" by loving and serving children in our community and around the world, and encouraging, supporting and providing resources to the families that God has called to love and serve them.

As you will read in Jeremy Pace's article *Together, We Are Making a Difference*, God is already using partnerships formed through the DFW Alliance to see local churches in our area become increasingly involved in adoption, foster care and orphan care ministry. And although much has already happened in the past year, in a real sense the DFW Alliance is beginning again. As we look to the future we see many more opportunities for church adoption and orphan care ministries to work together in order to make a greater impact in our community and around the world – all for the glory of God.

Many of the ministries represented in the DFW Alliance focus primarily on educating and supporting adoptive and foster families and those who are considering adoption or foster care, while others are called to reach out and become directly involved with orphans around the world or children in the local foster system. But we all share a common mission and a common passion – and together God can use us to make a tremendous difference both now and for eternity.

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## Together, We Are Making a Difference

FAM is the new Foster and Adoption Ministry at The Village Church. It was launched on February 26, 2007, after a three week emphasis during which we showed video testimonies in our services of some of our members sharing about their experiences relating to foster care and adoption. We also displayed

on how we can make local church adoption, foster and orphan care ministries in Dallas/Ft. Worth more effective.

Please make plans to join us and be sure to invite others from your church or other area churches that may be interested.

For more information contact Michael Monroe at [info@DFWAlliance.org](mailto:info@DFWAlliance.org). For directions to Irving Bible Church go to [www.irvingbible.org](http://www.irvingbible.org).

## Did You Know?

In 2002 the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption commissioned a nationwide survey to gauge what Americans thought about adoption. The scientific survey asked various questions concerning Americans' views on adoption and foster care, and in general the report found that Americans have relatively favorable views and attitudes concerning adoption.

But one finding was particularly instructive for local church adoption and foster care ministries. In response to the question "where would you be most likely to turn for information or advice concerning how to go about adopting a child," 52% of married couples indicated they would be most likely to turn to their "place of worship" (i.e., their local church).

the Heart Gallery in our lobby, where those who attended our weekend services were able to see the faces of some of the children in our area that are in need of loving, permanent homes.

The three weeks culminated with a "Meet the FAM" dinner that marked the official launch of our ministry. Over 80 people attended. We shared about the dream for FAM and described the various "baby steps" people could take in order to get involved. Dozens of people signed up to become part of our respite foster care network, become prayer sponsors, or begin the process to become licensed to foster or adopt. It was a wonderful response to a tremendous need and a truly blessed opportunity to serve these children in Jesus' name.

But the reality is that God made all of this possible through the help and partnership of an adoption and foster ministry at another local church. Tapestry, a ministry of Irving Bible Church, was such a blessing as they worked diligently on our behalf to put together much of the information offered during our launch. They also provided *much needed* advice and input based on their prior ministry experience. The Heart Gallery they provided helped make our congregation aware of the many children in our community in need of loving, adoptive families.

Nine months earlier we had tried on our own to get a foster and adoption ministry off the ground – utilizing various people in our church that worked for different area foster/adoption agencies. That previous effort taught us a few very important things. We realized that we could not launch this ministry on our own. We also realized that we did not want to start down this ministry path by ourselves. Instead, we came to the conclusion, and are now more convinced than ever before, that working together in this challenging, exciting ministry area is an important key in truly making a lasting difference.

Tapestry has continued to support our ministry in many ways, including helping us host foster and adoption events at our church so that we can begin to form a unique identity and community among those connected with FAM. As a result, we have seen firsthand how God can work in the hearts and minds of people when the local church raises the banner of foster care and adoption and gives voice to voiceless children. We are truly blessed to have had the opportunity to partner with another experienced local church adoption and foster ministry, and we look forward with great excitement to how the Lord is going to shape and use this partnership to see churches across our area transformed into beacons of hope for the "fatherless" in our community and around the world.

So this finding begs the question – how many local churches are ready and able to help one out of every two married couples that think of their local church as the best place to go for adoption information and advice?

Source: National Adoption Attitudes Survey, June 2002. To view the survey visit [www.davethomasfoundationforadoption.org/](http://www.davethomasfoundationforadoption.org/).

## The Heart Gallery – A Faith Connection



### Heart Gallery

A special photo exhibit of children waiting for a loving, adoptive family.

The Heart Gallery is a unique photographic exhibit that introduces children in our local community who are waiting for a loving, adoptive family to welcome them into their hearts and lives. In fact, several DFW Alliance church ministries (including Lake Pointe Church, Christ Chapel Bible Church and The Village Church) have hosted the Heart Gallery as a way to help raise awareness among those in their congregation about the needs and opportunities to serve the thousands of children in North Texas in the foster care system.

To find out more information about the Heart Gallery or how you can host the Heart Gallery

*Jeremy Pace is the Local Missions Pastor at The Village Church in Highland Village. You can contact Jeremy at [FAM@thevillagechurch.net](mailto:FAM@thevillagechurch.net) or for more information visit [www.thevillagechurch.net/adults/missions/adoption.html](http://www.thevillagechurch.net/adults/missions/adoption.html).*

## The Ethiopian Orphan Crisis – How One Church is Responding

When you think of the orphan crisis, what comes to mind? Is it a child with hungry eyes, seemingly abandoned sitting alone in a sandy desert? That was my mental image when God first called me to go to Ethiopia.

While in some very real ways that is a realistic image of the crisis throughout Africa, God began to reveal to me the many images, and the many faces, of the orphan crisis. And once I traveled to Ethiopia the images in my mind, resulting from television portrayals of the famine in Ethiopia in the 1980's, were quickly replaced with pictures such as the one below.



The two girls on the left in red on the front row are the “faces” of the orphan crisis that now come to my mind. One of these girls is being raised by her 16 year old brother because her parents died. Her brother shines shoes and struggles to find odd jobs to provide a meager existence. Her brother shines shoes and struggles to find odd jobs to provide a meager existence. The other girl lives with the man in the top right of the picture. He is her step-grandfather. Both of her parents and her grandfather died, so she went to live with her grandmother, who then died, leaving her with the step-grandfather. He is elderly and has no income.

Upon meeting the girls and the step-grandfather, I asked if I could take a picture of him and his granddaughter...a family

exhibit at your church visit [www.irvingbible.org/index.php?id=1004](http://www.irvingbible.org/index.php?id=1004) or email us at [info@DFWAlliance.org](mailto:info@DFWAlliance.org).

## Check Out the DFW Alliance Website

In the coming weeks be sure to visit the DFW Alliance website at [www.DFWAlliance.org](http://www.DFWAlliance.org). We are in the process of updating the website to add new features and information. In addition, please let us know if you would like to include information about your church ministry (such as upcoming events) on the website. You can contact us at [info@DFWAlliance.org](mailto:info@DFWAlliance.org).

## About the DFW Alliance

The DFW Alliance of Adoption and Orphan Care Ministries is a network of local church adoption, foster care and orphan care ministries in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area that are committed to living out God's heart for the "fatherless."

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photo of sorts. He asked me to wait and then hurried to gather all the other people you see in this picture.

"This is my family. Without these neighbors we would not survive. We all share what we have." A touching moment when all the images from my mind were replaced with the reality of children without parents surviving with former strangers as families – coming together out of necessity and loss to form a family. This is the image of the orphan crisis that is now in my mind.

God has called Christ Chapel Bible Church's "HisChild" Orphan Care Ministry ([http://www.cbcfamily.org/orphan\\_care/index.html](http://www.cbcfamily.org/orphan_care/index.html)) to address this crisis and help change the future for children like these. He has called us to build a transition center which will receive orphaned infants and children, and to help place these children as quickly as possible with loving Christian families through in-country foster programs/adoption and international adoptions.

The transition center is called Kidmia which means "Priority" in the Ethiopian language of Amharic. Kidmia will partner with existing Christian organizations in Ethiopia to resource foster families in various ways, including job training, small business loans, teaching trades, supplying farm animals and improving farming techniques.

We have been blessed with an opportunity to follow God's heart in caring for the orphans in our world. We are moving forward and are excited that the first Kidmia center will be operational by the end of 2007. We still have much to do, but as we seek God's direction for the next steps, He continues to provide us with answers – bringing us the right contacts and allowing us to be His hands and feet in responding to the orphan crisis.

Please pray with us for Kidmia. Pray for the orphans of Ethiopia and across Africa to receive the gift of a loving Christian family and to know the unfailing love of God through Jesus Christ our Savior.

For more information about Kidmia or to learn more about "HisChild" Orphan Care Ministry contact Joe and Caren Robertson at [orphancare@christchapelbc.org](mailto:orphancare@christchapelbc.org).