



2012 Annual Report



nightlight[®]
christian adoptions



From the President

By any measure, 2012 has been a memorable year – and it isn't over yet. I believe that "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28). But that doesn't mean that we always know the road that we will travel to accomplish our mission. Often, that road is littered with frustration, anxiety and delays – especially when involved in the highly emotional area of adoption.

After nearly 30 years working in adoptions, both as an attorney and the director of Nightlight Christian Adoptions, I remain an optimist and relish the miraculous stories we hear (and live) every day. There is not a day that goes by that I don't read about the exploits, accomplishments and hopes of our adoptees as they live, love and grow. They all bring a smile to me and act as a constant reminder of the long term impact we have on children's lives.

I literally have hundreds of stories I could share – each one guaranteed to tug at your heart and renew your commitment to adoption. But one story stands out above the rest. It is in some ways an unfinished story, but only because we don't know the details about twists and turns in the road that lies ahead. But it is certainly a story of victory. Her name is Juliana Carver and she is my hero.

Juliana was adopted in 2003 from Belarus when she was 1 ½ years old by John and Tammy Carver. The Carvers live in Maryland where John is the pastor of a small church and has an insurance agency. He is also a motivational speaker and has an inspirational radio program. But none of these callings turned out to be as important as John and Tammy being Dad and Mom to Juliana and their other five adopted children.

John and Tammy were not planning to adopt again when they saw a little photo of "Irina" in an orphanage in Minsk. But God had other plans. The question of how they could afford another adoption was way down the list when they made that life-saving decision to step forward and bring Juliana into their family. They knew that God would provide. And He did, in more ways than just financially.

In 2007 Juliana was diagnosed with Aveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma, a form of cancer. After months of radiation and chemo therapy, she went into remission. But following relapses in 2011 and again in 2012, Juliana is again going through chemo, radiation, transfusions and every test imaginable. We

are confident that God has more plans for Juliana besides being such an encouragement to her family and everyone who knows her for her positive outlook and sunny disposition. We know that if John and Tammy had not stepped up and brought Juliana home, she could not have received the life-saving treatment available in the United States.

So, as we approach the Thanksgiving season, let us thank God for His gift of eternal life as well as the opportunity to love and serve Him now. Whether you are in a position to add a child to your family or not, you can make a difference by praying and financially supporting Nightlight's mission.

Ron Stoddart, President



Hunter and Beverly's Snowflake

Hi, we are Hunter and Beverly. Our story began about four and a half years ago with a readiness and desire to grow our family. We thought that part would be easy, but God had other plans—a calling that has exceeded anything we've experienced together. After a year of trying to conceive with no success, we began seeking fertility testing and doctor recommendations. We completed multiple rounds of basic infertility treatments (i.e. medications) followed by intrauterine inseminations. Those attempts were unsuccessful, and we knew decisions had to be made in order to move forward with family planning. We looked

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How will you be *Used by God?*

A few years ago my son lied to me for the typical reason: to avoid getting in trouble. Eventually he told the truth, but a struggle like that is always exhausting. Shortly after the incident I got on my bicycle and went for a ride. Since I was frustrated, I spent some time in prayer. I began, "Lord, it would have been easier if you didn't give me a child who lied..." Please understand, I wasn't asking for a different kid, nor a different life. I was just pointing out the obvious fact that it would have been easier... But in one of those rare yet strongly clear moments where God speaks back, I heard Him distinctly say to me, "Easier for whom?"

The weight and significance of that reply has made a lasting, profound impact on me as a parent. My plea to God implied that it would have been easier for ME if my children didn't lie. But is my "easiness" really relevant for my role as a parent? Isn't it more relevant to ask "Would it have been easier for my son?" If he had been raised in another home, would his maturity and growth have been easier? Perhaps God knew which home would be the easiest place for him to grow and mature.

But even that is beside the point. God has a job to do. It is God's desire to mature and grow my son. God has asked me to do Him a favor by helping Him as He puts this young man on loan in my home. So the real question is, "Would it have been easier for God?" Would God's job of maturing my son have been easier if this young man were in my home, or in the home of another? Since it is God's main prerogative to mature His children, and since God is wise and powerful, I trust that He made the arrangements which would suit Him best.

My role as a parent is not to raise children who make me happy. I realized that day on my lamenting bike ride that my role as a parent is to be used by God to carry out an important role in His task of raising His kids. So ever since that day I have been mindful of a key question: "Who am I in the lives of my children?" The answer is that "I am a tool for God's use." So rather than be preoccupied with how my life could be easier, I am interested in, "How can I be used by God in my children's lives?"

My wife, Kristina, and I decided before we got married that we would adopt. We were unaware at the time that we would face several years of infertility. Despite a diag-

nosis that made conception nearly impossible, and then three miscarriages, we had three biological children: Micah, Rebekah, and Leah.

In addition, we adopted two children from foster care. Sonny was seven years old when he came to live with us. Tragically, his mother had died of breast cancer, and his father was incarcerated. Our experience was very positive, and we began to speak to families who were uncertain about adopting older children. Our message was that, "adopting older children can work!" Sonny is now 19 years old, and he has offered to represent Nightlight so that, in his words, "people will meet me and want to adopt."

Natasha entered our home when she was two years old. She had several medical conditions to care for, such as cleft palate, Beckwith-Wiedemann syndrome, and atrophy of her internal organs (outside of her body) at birth. Her biological mother was overwhelmed with the medical care she needed at the time, so she entered foster care. When our family has stood at pro-life rallies, Natasha has offered herself as a living testimony of a person who in many cases might have been aborted, but turned out to be the nicest person I have ever met.

With all five of our children, we are mindful that God has used us as his instrument of instruction. But we are also aware that God has used them to shape us. I have a friend who unashamedly admits that he adopted purely for selfish reasons. He adopted a young girl with disabilities from Russia. People often tell him he "did a good thing," but he flatly rejects that compliment, because he was not trying to help anyone. He just wanted this child in his family! The truth is, no matter how benevolently selfish our intent is in adoption, and no matter how easy or difficult it seems to be, God will use us in the lives of our children. And God will use our children as His instrument to shape us.

Daniel Nehrbass, Ph.D. | Director



Welcome Home!

Domestic Adoptions

Scott and Holly (Faith)
Paul and Gina (Sophia)
Erik and Leilani (Kekoa)
Erik and Donna (Sam)
Nicole and Bill (Manny)

Anonymous

(Jordan)
(Cassidy)
(Theodore)
(Kenton)
(Lane)
(Oswald)
(Sabella)
(Caleb)
(Harper)
(Jack)

Snowflakes Babies

Jon & Suzi (Thomas)
Jason & Kellie (Shiloh Hope)
George & Kristin (John Toan)
Brandon & Natalie (Harrison)
David & Joanna (Vivienne Elizabeth)
Michael & Stephanie (Hannah Katlyn)
Ted & Lisa (Grace Isabella)
Tim & Christine (Elijah and Benjamin)
Charles & Pauline (Carolina Elizabeth)
James & Carleen (Kanaan James)
Joe & Molly (Grace Humility)
Matt & Mindy (Katelyn and Jacob)
Matt & Ann Marie (John Jackson & Cade Allan)
Josh & Elizabeth (Joseph Michael)
Bryan & Tracy (Jace Andrew)
Chris & Janet (Benjamin)
Dale & Tracy (Louise)
Lee & Christina (Laura)
Regan & Milalyn (Christina and Christopher)
Michael & Kjersti (Charolette)
Jack & Karen (Abigail Rose)



Expected Snowflake Babies

Michael & Olga
Robert & Heidi (Girl)
Rick & Kathy (Boy)
Chuck & Beth
Gary & Denise (Boy)

International Adoptions

Anonymous (Ava)
Chris and Christa (Artem)
Yelena and Gennady (Alexander)
Brian and Joanne (Elijah, Katiana, Alina, Julia)
Ted and Fang-Hsuan (Katie)
Ronald and Sheryl (Kendal Monroe)
Lloyd and Debbie (Ya-Ling)
Joshua and Juli (Rebecca)
Chris and Nicole (Jin)
Kevin and Rebecca (Gabrielle)
Richard and Lori (Chloe)
Kevin and Dianne (Ava)
Darren and Sarah (Evelyn)
Dale and Beth (Bella)
Amador and Alexis (Melody)
Thomas and Aniko (Mianna)
Allen and Amy (Lucy)
Brett and Cristy (Sparrow)
Phil and Rhonda (Caelin)
Josh and Haley (Lydia)
Tony and Megan (Theo)
Stephanie and Granden (Zlata)

Expected to Arrive Soon:

Lauren and Jeremy (Nadia)
Jim and Kris (Kirill, Kristina)
Terrance and Kimberly (Anton)
Paul and Paula (Aleksandra, Ivan)
Jeanna and Kent (Anna, Ivan, Marina)
David and LaVonna (Karina)

A Helping Hand

International

Joe & Vanessa (William)
Kurt & Genevieve (Lilliah)
Steven & Emily (Sadie)
Clay & Angela (Alexander)
Nancy (Ruth)
Leaf & Joan (Mia)
Henry & Anna (Kathryn)
Douglas & Colleen (Winn)
Wescott & Jennifer (Fei & Matai)
Tim & Amy (Jack)
Gregory & Shawn (Charles)
Gary & Kimberly (Abigail)
George & Diane (Madeline, Hector, & Javier)
Mike & Libby (Susan & Benjamin)
Chad & Sarah (Viola & Bridget)
Jonathan & Danielle (Ron)
Daniel & Sarah
Raymond & Sherri (girl)
John & Lori (girl)
Lana (Layla)
Stephen & Kayla (Callan)
Kevin & Katherin (Zoe)
Patrick & Elizabeth

Domestic Adoptions

Michael & Jennifer (Nora)
Sean & Darlene (Zoe)
Dan & Sarah (Raegan)

Real Children

One of the children from this summer's tour from Kyrgyzstan stayed in our home. After the children returned to their country, our four-year-old, Leah, looked deep in thought. We asked her what she was thinking, and she said, "Tania is a real person." It dawned on her that orphans are real. Before the summer tour, orphans were Oliver Twist, Annie, Timothy Green, and Stuart Little. But once the children entered her life, they became real. Now that they have returned to their orphanage, they are still real.

Many of you have already made an impact on the lives of adopted children. All of us can still make an impact on those who are waiting for homes, whether in other countries, here in the US, or as embryos in storage. This year Nightlight will receive applications from parents who want to adopt, but they don't have all the funds they need. Your gifts to Nightlight help ensure that there will be many homecomings for these very Real Children.

—Daniel Nehrbass

Real Love

Last December, I received a call from one of our families. After waiting seemingly 'forever,' but actually only a few months, they'd received the phone call and email, describing the referral of an 18 month old little girl from a foreign land. They were very nervous! She'd had some exposure to stuff we don't like to imagine, in-utero, so there were questions about long term effects. After much discussion with a physician, me, and extended family, the family decided to proceed.

They were anxious but excited as they prepared their home for the addition of a two year old child. In some ways she was more independent than they'd imagined and in other ways, seemed like a small baby. She was completely compliant for the first week and then by the second week, had quickly learned the word, 'NO' and was having frequent tantrums! Nap time was miserable for all of them and night time wasn't much better! Fortunately, things soon settled down in their home. They began holding, rocking and 'doing' for their little girl. They encouraged her regression, treating her like a newborn. She began settling into their arms instead of pushing away. Rather than argue over naptime, they would rock in the rocking chair with



their small daughter, singing to her and reading her a story. After the story, they'd lay her in her bed, sitting next to her in a chair, while they read a chapter of one of their own books. She easily fell asleep. It was easy to see the beginning stages of attachment when I visited three weeks later.

When I came to their home again after a few months, I was excited to see their little girl was far more cautious with me, going between mommy and daddy, sharing hugs and kisses. Daddy had recently gone back to work, but mommy was there, to cuddle, reassure and be with their daughter. It was such a pleasure to see this family. They'd been so cautious, anxious about how their life would change once they brought back a child from the other side of the world. They were nervous, could they ever truly love her, this little stranger they were bringing into their family? I knew the answer was "yes," as I'd seen it so many times before. As I saw the mom holding and kissing her little daughter it was clear, they certainly could love and did love this precious little girl.

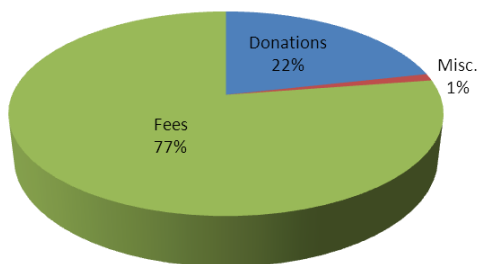
If we think of love as a capacity (an ability), rather than a commodity (a thing), then we find that every relationship affords us the opportunity of Real Love.

—Rhonda Jarema

Financial Information

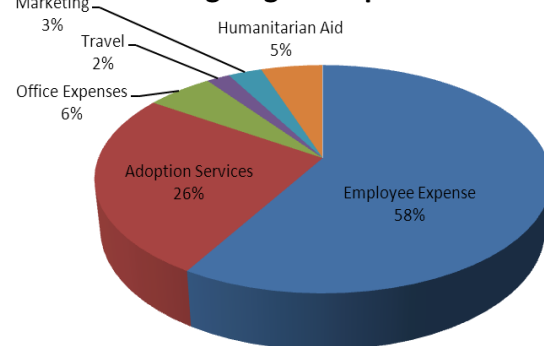
The Nightlight budget for last year was \$2,747,888. Below is a graph explaining where our revenue comes from, excluding grant income and matching expenses. You can see below that only 77% of our revenue comes from adoption fees, which means we are **dependent upon donations to help subsidize the cost**. Thanks to your generous ongoing support, we are able to help more families adopt by making it a little more affordable.

Nightlight's Income



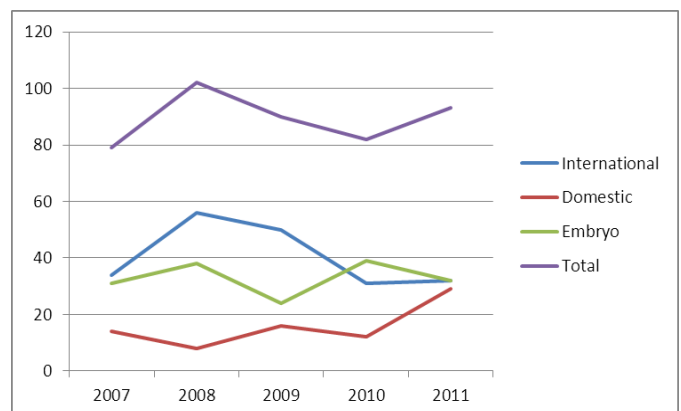
People often wonder why adoption is so expensive, and whether Nightlight is able to lower the fees. As you can see below, 26% of our expenses are paid directly to other companies, organizations, or governments as a part of the adoption. Nightlight incurs these costs with each adoption, so a large portion of the fees we collect are not retained as operating expenses. The majority of our remaining fees are for the salaries of our 32 staff members who work tirelessly to complete adoptions.

Nightlight's Expenses



Nightlight Christian Adoptions is blessed to have connected thousands of children with loving parents for fifty-three years. Below are some statistics for our adoptions in each program. Because international adoptions are the most costly, they have declined nationwide since the economic crash a few years ago. But there is a new wave of momentum, fueled by compassion and awareness. Many of these new applicants do not have the ability to finance adoption alone, and it has become very common for them to ask friends and family to donate through online fundraising campaigns.

Nightlight has a "Babushka Fund" designated to offer scholarships for financially needy couples. Contact our office if you would like to donate to the Babushka fund, or if you'd like to hear about a financially needy couple that you may be able to help.



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into completing an in vitro fertilization (IVF) cycle; however, we ultimately did not feel IVF was the right decision for our family. After research on various types of adoption, many prayers, and counsel from our pastor, we decided to move forward with embryo adoption in June 2010. Through

prayerful consideration and time, we became comfortable with the fact these would not be our genetic children. It ultimately gave an embryo(s) a chance at life and allowed Beverly the chance to experience pregnancy and birth.

Our first match came on January 31, 2011- a month before Hunter's deployment to Afghanistan. We prayerfully and excitedly accepted the match of four embryos and planned to move forward with a transfer in July 2011. Preparation for the transfer went exceptionally well, and we had our first frozen embryo transfer on July 18, 2011. Unfortunately, this initial attempt was unsuccessful, and the grief associated with this type of loss is difficult to put into words. We felt blessed, however, to have given those embryos a chance at life. We decided to move forward with another transfer in October 2011 at which time we experienced a different type of grief and emotions when Beverly was called the day before the transfer and told the embryos had not survived the thawing process. This particular loss was hard because we were letting go of a genetic family who had given us this incredible opportunity and gift. Those four babies will always be in our hearts.

After discussing the events of the previous transfers, we still felt led to attempt another match. If the transfers for this match were not successful, we would likely pursue a different type of adoption. We received a potential match on January 5, 2012. Again, we prayerfully and excitedly accepted the match of four embryos who had been frozen almost 10 years. Beverly decided to name this set of embryos the "little mustard seeds" after the Matthew 17:20 verse because faith is such an integral part of this journey. Hunter returned home from his deployment in February 2012, and we planned our next transfer for April 23, 2012.

We were ecstatic he would be able to experience the process leading up to and including the actual transfer. Once again, Beverly responded well to the medications and the transfer of two embryos in April went smoothly. On May 2nd, Beverly heard the words we longed to hear for the first time ever, "you are pregnant." Sadly the HCG bloodwork numbers began to drop over the next few days indicating this pregnancy was a chemical pregnancy or early miscarriage. It was very difficult for both of us to process being so close to a successful transfer yet having to deal with another loss. We knew we were making another military move in just a couple months but thought about the two embryos in storage at the local clinic. We decided to move forward with a final transfer in June 2012 even though Hunter would be away for training. Beverly's mother and sister accompanied her to the transfer on June 16, 2012, and the day couldn't have gone better. On June 24, Beverly took a home pregnancy test. The second line was so faint she didn't think much of it but something urged her take another test that afternoon. She immediately called Hunter but remained cautiously optimistic. Bloodwork was completed on the following day and the HCG level indicated a positive pregnancy test. Although the initial number was on the lower end it began to rise over the next week, and we were thrilled. We had our very first ultrasound at 8 weeks 1 day pregnant, and words can't describe the miracle we saw on the screen with a strong heartbeat. It was difficult to process that one embryo hadn't made it, but we were rejoicing the baby we were viewing on the screen was thriving and alive after being frozen almost 10 years!!! We will always be grateful to the genetic family who gave us this selfless gift, and remember the three babies from this match who didn't survive the transfer process.

We are now half way through our pregnancy and recently found out we are having a sweet baby boy! We love him so much already. His name is Zane, which means "God is gracious," and we believe it fits him well. We have experienced many prayers, love, and support from Nightlight, Love Basket, our family, and our friends. We pray God will continue to use our "little mustard seed" to reach others as He has graciously provided for our needs every step of the way. We never dreamed this would be the path for our life, but now we can't imagine anything different.



Zane, at 20 weeks and 3 days



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...because every child deserves a loving family

