

The Baptist Children's Village

Annual Report 2021

Sean A. Milner, Executive Director

The Baptist Children's Village exists, as part of the Mississippi Southern Baptist Church, to take the good news of Jesus Christ to at-risk children and families. We do this through the residential and non-residential ministries of the Mississippi Southern Baptist Church. The following is a summary of the number of children and families to whom the good news of Jesus Christ was taken in 2020 and how it was delivered.

- 80 adults were served.
- 179 doctor visits.
- 77 Psychiatric appointments.
- 48 eye doctor appointments.
- 187 children were served in the Mississippi Southern Baptist Church's residential and non-residential ministries.
- 107 dental appointments.
- 2 emergency room visits.
- 1 hospitalization.
- 3 psychiatric hospitalizations.

In 2020 you celebrated 12 professions of faith and 3 baptisms.

We must continue to fervently seek new ways to deliver the gospel of Christ. To do so, we must diligently observe and analyze the opportunities presented by cultural, philosophical, and political changes. Longtime Executive Director Paul Nunnery wrote, "The survival and usefulness of any service agency is dependent, in large measure, upon its capacity and willingness to change."

The Baptist Children's Village started as the Baptist Orphanage in the early 1890s. The "mode" of delivering the gospel was through "orphan care". The effort began with one set of house parents in one house. However, the needs of orphaned children grew and demanded a larger home. To deliver the gospel of Christ required a change, so Mississippi Baptists built a large campus to provide a home for the growing number of orphans appearing at their door. The orphanage built its own school and church. The campus also included its own animals and gardens. Many orphans were saved physically and spiritually.

The needs of the children and families seeking help did not stay the same and Mississippi Baptists, through its Baptist Orphanage, changed to meet those needs. Children who were not orphans as we generally define that term, but nonetheless in need of help, began appearing in need of help. Children who were abandoned by their parents and children who could not live at home because of abuse or neglect began crying for help. And the Baptist Orphanage began to change to meet the needs of these children. In fact, the Baptist Orphanage changed its name to The Baptist Children's Village to communicate the church's broader service to Mississippi's at-risk children and families. The needs of children and families continued to change, and Mississippi Baptists changed to continue to meet their needs.

Mississippi Baptists sold their location and moved to a new campus in west Jackson that was built to be less institutionalized. The children began going to public schools and attending local Baptist churches. Life was more "normal" and less institutional.

Mississippi Baptists continued to change. New smaller homes and campuses were built in different areas of the state. This was done to keep children closer to their families and to make home life at the "Village" even less institutional and more like home. This has been extremely successful with the children being very involved in school, church, and their respective local communities. The needs of the children and families we serve and those we want to serve continue to change. We will continue to change to meet their needs.

Change can be interesting, challenging, exciting and scary. Things are new and different. New beginnings and a chance to start over. However, what does not need to be overlooked or ignored is the fact that the mission of Mississippi Baptists did not change during the changes of the models employed. We did not change or compromise our message or beliefs. The Baptist Children's Village is a part of the Mississippi Southern Baptist Church. Its purpose is to take the good news of Jesus Christ to at-risk children and families. Every model used is designed to accomplish that purpose.

Like all that served before us, we are experiencing changes that require us to evaluate our models of care and service. The changes are coming very fast and sometimes aggressively. Social, political, and cultural changes demand that we work to make sure we remain a Christian force to serve at-risk children and families.

The Baptist Children's Village is an effective and successful effort of the Mississippi Southern Baptist Church to deliver the good news of Jesus Christ to at-risk children and families. How do we deliver that news? Look at the number of children and families we have served. How many doctor visits have Mississippi Baptists provided? How many homes and beds? How many families have we reunited? How many families have we prevented from being disrupted? This is a fantastic demonstration of God's love for the lost and Mississippi Baptists' obedience in "going."

We will continue to "go." We are looking now at the changing trends and changing needs of those families to whom we need to take the good news of Jesus Christ. We are exploring new models of service and care. It may be that next year's report has additional models of care upon which to report.

Please continue to pray for and support us as we heed the wonderful words of former Executive Director Paul Nunnery. Our actions will show that we will not simply survive, we will excel. We will be more than useful, we will be needed and demanded. We have the capacity to meet the new challenges. Our willingness to do so will be seen as passionate desire. All for the glory of God and for His purposes.

Sean A. Milner



Executive Director of
The Baptist Children's Village



baptistchildrensvillage.com