

BCV VOICE

SPRING 2023



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baptistchildrensvillage.com



All These Things for God's Glory



“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

BCV alumnus Ashleigh Bragg recently competed in the Miss Mississippi USA Pageant. She launched into this journey with her best friend who she met at Hinds Community College. While she did not place, she said that it was an amazing experience—one she plans to pursue next year with the value of new knowledge and confidence.

Today Ashleigh is grateful for The Baptist Children's Village and her Houseparents in particular, who made a profound impact on her. She explains, however, there was a time, “the devil made me feel ashamed of my time at The Baptist Children's Village.” The Lord used her friend to challenge her to think about all the benefits she enjoyed as a result of her time at the BCV. As she reflected on that season of her life, she recalled many blessings, not the least of which was the passion for God that she saw in her Houseparents. It was through those relationships she learned two important things—that she is God's treasured daughter, and what it means to put Him first. She acknowledges that she came to The Village broken but she is now confident that God called her by name and gave

All These Things for God's Glory *Continued*

her new life. She wants to pursue everything God has for her.

Entering the pageant was one example of her obedience. At a recent event, Ashleigh shared with staff and residents, "Don't be afraid of change. Step out of your comfort zone to pursue your dreams." She explained that she has had to overcome great fear to reach her goals. While she does not know all the reasons why God allowed her to pursue the pageant, (especially since she did not win) she does believe that she is created to be His disciple and that He orchestrated all the details of her journey. Through this experience she says both her faith and her confidence grew.

Through this new platform she now has a passion to tell her story hoping it will impact others. "I am using all these things (life experiences) for God's glory."

Like Ashleigh, a young lady who currently lives at the BCV has been profoundly affected by Village staff saying, "I am more than thankful for The Baptist Children's Village who took me into their care, and are raising me to be a follower of Christ and know what a family truly is."

This BCV sister shares Ashleigh's passion to make a difference for others by sharing her story. She writes in a local newspaper that after hearing the testimony at her school of a Columbine survivor, and reflecting on her

own challenges, she determined then to share her story at church and was encouraged to pursue other similar opportunities.

How exciting to see Him using these young ladies to help take the Good News of Jesus Christ to children and families. We celebrate God's work in their lives and in the lives of other BCV children.



Staff Spotlight *Wanda Bricker*

Wanda Bricker was only 21 and fresh out of college when she had her first taste of houseparenting at The Baptist Children's Village. She was approached by former Executive Director Paul Nunnery to help with a special child who was sick

at the time. Wanda says, "I just fell in love with it while I was there." Today Wanda is in her second season of service as a BCV Houseparent Missionary so we had a few questions for her about her then and now experiences. Here are some of her thoughts:

I fell in love with the kids. I loved what I was doing. . . . I kind of felt like I could identify with the children who were there because I had lost a parent when I was an infant. I had also gone through having a stepmom who was very good to me. She took very good care of me but she still was not my mom. So I thought I could kind of relate to a houseparent not being the mom but still providing care. And I was young enough that I could still kind of remember what my childhood was like and the things that I liked to do when I was a kid, and how I wanted to be treated when I was a kid.

So I got there and fell in love with it. Stayed for a long long long time. I met Bill during that time. I had some of the kids I had been working with in my wedding. I thought that was really cool. Then Bill joined the staff and I went from a single housemom to a cou-

ple and that was a lot of fun too. Several years later we felt like God was calling us to Texas. We really really prayed about that. Soon after we got there we realized that's where God wanted us to be for that season. We went through some wonderful experiences in Texas and some very trying experiences in Texas and we felt like God said it is time to go back to Mississippi.

While in Mississippi recovering from surgery Bill and Wanda made the decision to move back to his family home place. Bill had retired but Wanda felt God was calling her back to The BCV. After talking with Executive Director Sean Milner she returned to the houseparenting role that she loves. This time the role was to serve in a floating relief capacity, giving other Houseparents a needed respite. "It is so much fun working with Christian Houseparents, with Christian Support Staff. I just love having that support." She explains that her job now is to help a couple who is struggling or who is new or who just needs some time away with family. Floating houseparents allow a time of rest for those who are tired or sick. This unique Houseparent Missionary helps others who are called to this work avoid burnout and continue longer in the work.

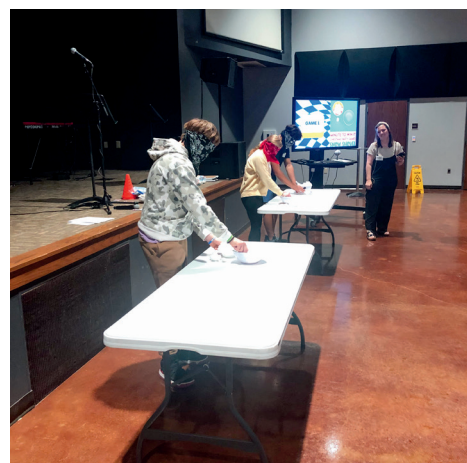
The long hours and the teaching are worth it. I have learned that what we do is a blessing. We do help children. We do what our mission statement says we do. We never quit because God's love for us never quits. God just expects me to do my best to love them unconditionally and to help rear them the way God wants me to rear them.

Enriching and Equipping Event



BCV campus staff and children from across the state came together for some fellowship and Bible study. Morrison Heights Baptist Church staff and volunteers provided lunch, praise and worship and activities for children and teens. Former Houseparent Troy Carter introduced guest alumnus Ashleigh Bragg who spent the day with her Village

family offering a few encouraging words and presenting door prizes. BCV ministry pastor led a Bible study for adults. A good time was had by all. Our Morrison Heights partners were critical to the success of this important day and we are grateful for their investment in our children and our staff.



A Day in the Life of a BCV Houseparent



The Baptist Children's Village has a special group of heroes who work on the front line listening to heartaches, encouraging the frustrated, consoling the lonely and frightened, guiding, teaching, disciplining, and so much more. These Houseparent Missionaries make sacrifices to live in cottages with children from a variety of backgrounds. Perhaps you have wondered what a day looks like on the BCV mission field. We thought we would give you a glimpse. We asked our staff to capture each other in their daily tasks. Turns out, their days look a lot like many of your days, with the exceptions of a few more children, a few more meetings and a few more tours. As you peruse this gallery, maybe you think you might be interested in being a part of this mission work. If so, contact HR Director Karen Rikard at krikard@bcvms.com or visit bcvms.com/become-houseparent to get more information.





BCV TRIBUTE GIFTS

January 16, 2023 through April 15, 2023

Throughout the year, families memorialize and honor family members and special friends with a gift to The Baptist Children's Village. Small groups honor teachers and the special people in their lives. For each tribute gift received, the donor receives an acknowledgement letter and receipt. A personal letter is sent to the honoree informing them of the gift given in their honor. Family members are informed of a gift given in memory of their loved one. The BCV is herein publishing the list of honorees and donors recently received. We are grateful to the many thoughtful donors who pay tribute to the special people in their lives.

You can visit baptistchildrensvillage.com/give or use the enclosed envelope to give a gift of honor or memory for your loved one(s) to The Baptist Children's Village.



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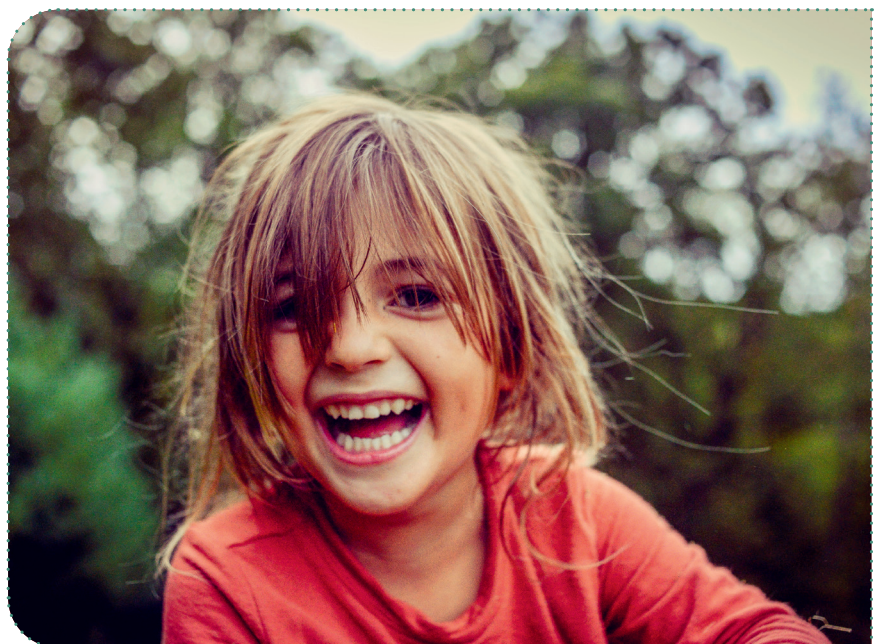
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Mr. and Mrs. James Bell



Personal Reflection



I am so grateful for the variety of people God places in my path to challenge and encourage me in my journey to live a life that honors Him. Lately I have been enjoying a sweet time with some friends (some longtime friends and some new ones) reviewing a powerful book entitled *In My Father's House* by Mary A. Kassian. The book is saturated with scripture and explores our relationship with God the Father. Repeatedly the author challenges us to allow scripture to form our view of our Heavenly Father instead of our experiences with our earthly fathers. For some in the group this is a bit more challenging than for others. We all agree, though, that even the best of earthly fathers who are seeking to model Christ for their families miss the mark. They are, of course, only human. Some of us experience lasting pain of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Some experience an abundance of love and protection that feeds our souls and points us to a loving and righteous Father. Regardless of where on the spectrum you find your relationship, we can experience at least the occasional sting of an imperfect relationship while living in this imperfect world. This is true also for many of our BCV children who have a distorted view of their Heavenly Father because their only reference is of an earthly father who is either absent, abusive or just broken. BCV staff understand, as do the ladies in our group, that the truth is we can all find healing and our true identity in God's Word. May we seek to fill the voids in our hearts with the truth of scripture and not in the frailty of man-and may

we teach our children to do likewise. I am with you on that journey understanding it will take some of us a little longer to embrace those truths than others, but we are committed to the fight.

“Looking past the portrait of our earthly father into the eyes of our Heavenly Father.”

Chrystelle Thames

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chrystelle".

Director of Communications

The Mississippi Legislature has initiated an opportunity called the Children Promise Act that allows Mississippi residents the opportunity to redirect a portion of their state tax liability to The Baptist Children's Village.

You may receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit - not a deduction but a credit - of up to \$3,000 if you file jointly and up to \$1500 if you file singly, if you gift that amount to the BCV.

EXAMPLE: If you file jointly and generally owe \$5,000 in state income tax, you could receive a \$3,000 tax credit if you gift that amount to the BCV. The amount you owe the Mississippi Department of Revenue would then be \$2,000.

Consult your CPA or tax advisor if you have any questions regarding your state tax situation.

HERE'S HOW:

1. Download and complete the 2023 MSDOR individual application at baptistchildrensvillage.com/promise
2. Mail the application and your check to The Baptist Children's Village, PO Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060.
3. The BCV will forward your application and proof of donation receipt to the MSDOR. We will also send you a hardcopy for your tax records.
4. MSDOR will send you confirmation of your application and donation.

For more information contact Tim McWilliams, Director of Partner Ministries, at tmcwilliams@bcvms.com.



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CLINTON, MS 39060-0027

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Child's Life!*

Become a Houseparent!

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