

BCV Voice | Summer 2020



Taking the good news of Jesus Christ to at-risk children and families.

A Summer Like No Other

As is true for most places around our state and our country, this has been a very unusual summer at The Baptist Children's Village. Perhaps your family can relate. A summer normally filled with summer camps and VBS and field trips was replaced with on-campus activities and lots of time together. Children have spent the majority of their summer sheltered on campus without visits from friends and family. Our staff have worked hard to provide a balance of structure and [fun activities for children and teens](#).

Some staff have planted gardens allowing many of our children to see how God provides vegetables and fruit. They have witnessed the miracle that occurs when sunlight and water are added to the seed and soil. Some of our staff have taught teenagers to play new sports and to appreciate new activities they never would have had the time to learn and enjoy together in a typical summer.

God, in his providence, has provided a very special gift to the ministry that has meant much to our residents and our staff during this unique COVID-19 season. John Adams joined the BCV team as our new Life Skills Specialist six months prior to the COVID-19 outbreak when our children were confined to their campuses. John spent some time getting to know staff and children on all our campuses which helped



prepare him to meet a specific need during this season. John has been able to plan and conduct day camps for our residents. This has been a lot of fun for our children. Happy, busy children also make the houseparents' day much more enjoyable. I am sharing a [gallery](#) of some of the summer day camp pictures I thought you would enjoy. Proverbs 16:9 says, "The heart of a man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps." We definitely had a plan for John to build relationships with our teens and teach them critical life skills. God knew we would have a more immediate need that John was uniquely equipped to meet. We are grateful for God's provision in John.

Going Back to School

School will look differently this year for all our children. The challenges our state, country, and world continue to face due to COVID-19 and other crises are especially hard on these little ones. You have a wonderful opportunity to help.

Robbie, Angelique, Amy, Chad, James, Mandy and Michelle* came to one of your campuses four months ago. They came to your Baptist Children's Village wearing what they owned; several just pajamas and flip flops. Not all even had flip flops. Thanks to several churches and a special group of people, these brothers and sisters were immediately provided new clothes, their own bed with new sheets, and their own blanket and pillow. Their houseparents say they eat everything set before them.



The children in your care come to us with various physical and emotional needs but with the same wants. They desire hope and to be loved and heard. [Your donation](#) helps give children hope. They will have plenty to eat, clothes to wear, and will be kept safe. Most importantly, children will be taught about the One who gives life and who will never leave them. Jesus said, "I have come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

These past few months have been a challenge for all your children and houseparents. To be kept safe, your BCV children have been "sheltered in place" on your seven campuses. Thankfully there has been plenty of both indoor and outdoor activities to keep them busy.

Now, like most children and parents across the country, they are all ready for school to start. We need your help to prepare them for the new school year — whatever it may look like. Please consider helping us provide necessary school clothes and supplies our children need. Some of our "tween-agers" had a pretty big growth spurt this summer!

[Take a moment to make your tax-deductible gift.](#) The Baptist Children's Village receives [funding](#) from only three sources, churches (47%), the Mississippi Baptist Convention (16%), and compassionate individuals like you (37%).

Thank you for your prayers and generous support. When school begins later this month, I know of some children who will have everything they need to face a new school year. I know for certain your donation is making a difference in the life of a child. You are giving them the opportunity not just for life — but for "abundant life."

Until He Returns,



Sean A. Milner
Executive Director

*Names and some identifying details have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the children.

COVID-19 Update

In March [The Baptist Children's Village](#) implemented significant protocols to protect our children and staff during the initial coronavirus outbreak. We limited access to all seven of our campuses, delaying all visits, tours and events. We have missed our friends and family, but we appreciate your understanding. Our children and staff have all remained safe and healthy.

With both the physical and emotional needs of our children and families in mind, we have developed new protocols that allow BCV children and families to now enjoy modified visits with each other. While other visits continue to be restricted, families may have on-campus visits that include a number of safety guidelines. Consistent with professional recommendations, family who visit on campus do so in a designated area and must submit to a temperature check, complete a COVID-19 Visitation Screening questionnaire and sign a waiver. Masks are required by all adults and teens during the visit, and social distancing is encouraged to the greatest degree practicable. While certainly not ideal, the opportunity to visit with loved ones, albeit with restrictions, is a welcomed gift.



We continue to be mindful of recommendations and regulations of national, state and city authorities. We believe God has provided protections through state and national officials that we agree are in the best interest of our children and our staff (Romans 13). We are, therefore, following closely and keeping all such recommendations in mind as we make decisions moving forward.

We have sought to use wisdom in our response to this crisis. While we continue to be hyper-vigilant in our efforts to keep children and staff safe, we are conscious of, and grateful for, the protection and provision that our great God affords us even today—much like He has done every day since 1897, when we took our first child into care. As we have faced all the uncertainty associated with the coronavirus pandemic, we have seized the opportunity to model for our children our confidence in the strength and steadfast love of our Heavenly Father. We are resting in God's peace and working hard to avoid the temptation to act in fear (2 Timothy 1:7). It is our desire that in us children will see that peace and experience it for themselves. Please pray that this will be true for each of our children.

Staff Spotlight

John Adams

Life Skills Specialist

God has equipped John Adams perfectly to serve as Life Skills Specialist for The Baptist Children's Village. John is an active member of Pinelake Church and has served as a small group leader for children. John is trained in Conflict Resolution and Intentional Conversations; and has served several years as a summer camp counselor. John has worked as a Mental Health Technician, assisting patients with hygiene and personal needs. John has a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Mississippi College and a Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling.



As Life Skills Specialist, John is called upon to build relationships and consider interests and aptitude of our young people as well as their needs. After he surveys their needs, he works with staff to develop an individual plan to equip the children and teens with the skills necessary for their success; some of which we just wish our parents had taught us and some of which are basic skills that are deficit for them that we often take for granted.

John is grateful for the opportunity to work with BCV youth where he feels he can make a difference in their lives. "Changing one life at The Baptist Children's Village changes generations." John is in a perfect position to indeed make generational change in a child's life by equipping them with life skills for success. We are so grateful for his life and his willingness to serve with the BCV team, taking the good news of Jesus Christ to at-risk children and families.

Tribute Gifts

The Baptist Children's Village has, for some time, published gifts of honor and memory on "The Village View" page of *The Baptist Record*. Some of you may be aware, *The Baptist Record* has made the decision to publish only digital issues of the paper. In light of that decision, The Baptist Children's Village is herein publishing the list of honorees and donors recently received in our office. The Baptist Children's Village has many thoughtful donors who elect to [pay tribute](#) to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature in the *BCV Voice* will, hopefully, further honor those who are, and have been, important to our special friends.

[View Tribute Gifts](#)

Personal Reflection

It has finally arrived—the first issue of our *BCV Voice* newsletter. I have anticipated this day with great excitement and am profoundly grateful for the technology and staff who now make it possible for me to regularly share with you some never-ending blessings of our Heavenly Father. The Baptist Children's Village has, without interruption, cared for Mississippi hurting children and families since May 12, 1897. Even this format does not allow me to accurately communicate the generous provision of our God through the years. We certainly will attempt, however, to glorify Him and celebrate His good work in this ministry. It cannot be overstated that much of His work at the BCV has been accomplished through staff, donors and friends—His people. Thus, we will herein celebrate that work and the testimonies of those whom He has and is using to accomplish much, even today, at [The Baptist Children's Village](#). Welcome to the first issue of the *BCV Voice*. Please email me, Chrystelle Thames, *BCV Voice* Editor, at cthames@bcvms.com with suggestions if there are things you would like to see in this publication.



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