

HISTORY OF PCHAS

1903 – 2023



Leontine Hector Blaney,
Our first client



Presbyterian Children's
Homes and ServicesSM

Foreword



In the gospel of Luke, Jesus teaches his disciples the importance of remembering. The Bible tells us Jesus took a loaf of bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19)

Just as Jesus wanted his disciples to be mindful of his word, we must do the same. Remembering not only serves to teach us how we persevered despite trials and tribulations, but also how we triumphed through our dedication to Christ and service to God’s children. Our experiences, good and bad, are important life markers helping to guide us along a more righteous path.

It is for this reason we offer a glimpse into the 120 years of Presbyterian Children’s Homes and Services (1903-2023). These shared experiences of staff, supporters, volunteers, and trustees provide historical context of our humble beginnings rooted in hope, unwavering commitment to children and families in need, consistent growth aligned with faith, and our current success guided by the decision to serve like Jesus.

Through these past 120 years, our mission has remained the same, “To provide Christ-centered care and support to children and families in need.” It is a modern interpretation of the biblical call of James 1:27, “To care for orphans and widows in their distress.” While PCHAS has served thousands, its story began in 1903 with one brave mother! In full acknowledgment of her impending death due to tuberculosis, the mother asked her church to raise her children upon her death. Her courage to reach out and seek help started our PCHAS journey.

Our new History of PCHAS magazine tells the story of four agencies making the decision to merge their identities, skills, and passion for serving children and families. I hope you enjoy reading about each one, their historic mergers, where we are today, and what we imagine the future may hold as we labor together.

May God’s spirit continue to walk behind us, beside us, above us, below us, and always, in front of us, leading our way.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David Thompson
President

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Proverbs

16:9

In their hearts humans
plan their course, but the
LORD establishes their steps.

Chronology of Historical Names & Significant Mergers

Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services

1903

Presbyterian Home for Children

Established in Dallas, TX | Founded by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS)

1904 - Texas Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans (Dallas, TX)

1908 - Southwestern Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans (Itasca, TX)

1936 - Southwestern Presbyterian Orphanage and School (Itasca, TX)

1916

Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School

Established in Albany, TX | Founded by the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA)

1923 - Reynolds Presbyterian Home (Dallas, TX)

1914

Elmwood Presbyterian Orphanage

Established in Farmington, MO | Founded by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS)

1917 - Supported by the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA)

1930 - Presbyterian Orphanage of Missouri (Farmington, MO)

Chronology of Historical Names & Significant Mergers Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services

1953 - Presbyterian Home and School for Children (Itasca, TX)

1981 - Administrative office of Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency moves to Austin, Texas.

1956 - Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency (Itasca, TX)

1995 - Presbyterian Children's Homes (Itasca, TX)

1957 - United Presbyterian Homes (Dallas, TX)

1988 - Presbyterian Children's Services (Waxahachie, TX)



Homes of St. Mark

Established in Houston, TX | Founded by St. Mark's Episcopal Church

1942 - Presbyterian Orphanage of Missouri acquires the Kosky Farm and renames it the Sunnen Farm & Asher Lake (Farmington, MO).

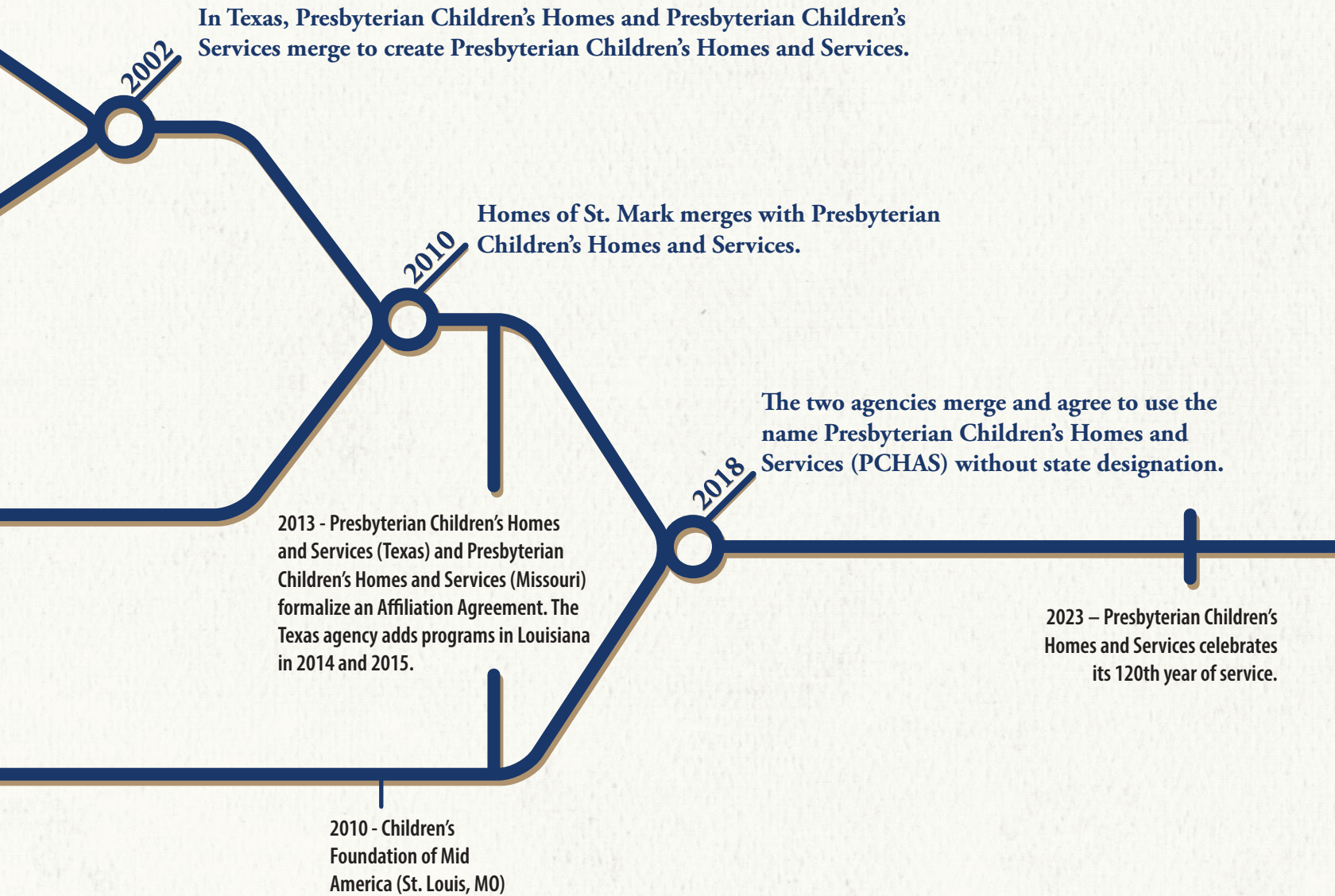
1948 - Individual church members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church begin a ministry for single women with unplanned pregnancies.

1983 - The Home changes its name to Presbyterian Children's Services and moves administrative offices to St. Louis.

1943 - Presbyterian Orphanage of Missouri acquires the neighboring Giessing Farm. The combined property is known as the "Farm Campus."

1952 - Orphanage changes name to Presbyterian Home for Children. Over time the informal name becomes Farmington Children's Home.

1977 - The Home establishes a St. Louis counseling office, Presbyterian Family Services.



History of Presbyterian Children's Homes (of Texas)

Founded in 1903 by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS)



Application for Admission to the Texas Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans
 Files, Hill County, Texas

No 1

Name of child? *Leontine Hector Blaney*
 Date of birth? *Sept. 1 - 1899*
 Father's name? *Frank E. Blaney*
 Mother's religious belief? *None*
 Her occupation? *Salvador*
 Date and place of father's death? *Dec 1908*
 Cause of father's death? *2*
 Mother's name? *Leontine Hector Blaney*

Application for Admission to the Texas Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans
 Files, Hill County, Texas

No 2

Name of child? *Winnie Mae Blaney*
 Date of birth? *May 25 - 1896*
 Name? *Frank E. Blaney*
 Religious belief? *None*
 Occupation? *Salvador*
 Date and place of father's death? *Dec 1908*
 Cause of father's death? *2*
 Mother's name? *Leontine Hector Blaney*

Leontine Hector Blaney contacted the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas, in 1903 because she was dying of tuberculosis and was concerned about the care of her four children. The Ladies' Missionary Society rented a house and hired a matron to care for the children. The Presbyterian Home for Children quickly filled with orphans. By the fall of 1903, the Society approached Dallas Presbytery and the Synod of Texas to take over the program. The Synod assumed control and began searching for a larger property so more children could be served.

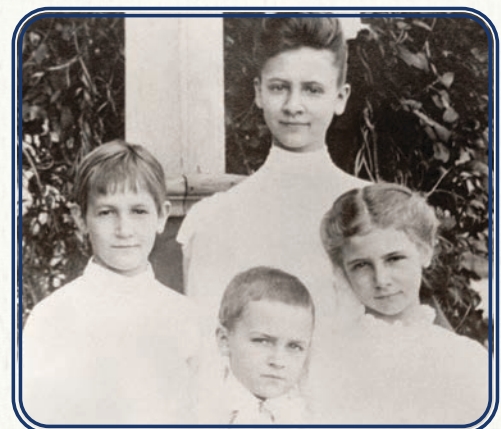
In 1904, the name of the home was changed to the Texas Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans. That same year, the Files family donated 342 acres in the Files Valley, east of Itasca, Texas. Construction on a new campus began in 1905.

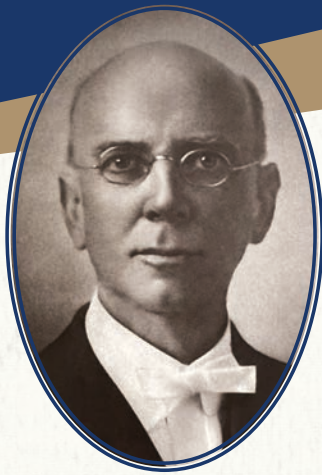
The original Files Cottage was built as a memorial to David Sidney and Sara Anne Files, the pioneer generation of the Files family in Hill County, Texas. The Files' sons, James Oscar and Francis, along with their spouses, a cousin and his wife, provided funding with a gift of \$5,000 and 250 acres of land. Another brother, Thomas Jefferson and his wife Susie Walker Files, contributed 92 acres in a separate tract near the Ellis County line.



The Box children were the second family of orphans to enter the home in Dallas. Their older sister brought the four children on December 28, 1904.

The Box Children - Winnie Mae, age 13, James, age 11, Hattie, age 9, Nelson, age 7





Rev. Dr. James D. McLean
*was the President of Texas
 Presbyterian Home and School
 for Orphans from 1906 to 1922.*

On November 25, 1905, J.D. McLean, of Tyler was elected President of the Home with a salary of \$1,800 and expenses including a house. Mrs. J. Tatum was re-elected Matron and Miss M.E. Pattillo was elected an additional matron, each to serve until November 1, 1906.



Picture of first children moved from Dallas to Files Home in 1905.

TOP ROW - Left to right

1. Frank Gillette
2. Winnie Mae Box
3. Mrs. Isabella T. Tatum - Matron
4. Hannah Griggs
5. Corrie Cowart
6. James T. Box

SECOND ROW

1. Ruth Smith
2. May Blaney
3. Hattie Box
4. Irene Griswold
5. Margaret Blaney

BOTTOM ROW

1. Jack Vines
2. Nelson S. (N.S.) Box
3. Walter Gillette
4. Hector Blaney
5. Carr (do not remember first name)
6. Frank Blaney

This picture was taken when we were living in Dallas at 229 Annex Avenue in 1905.

Picture was made from original which was furnished the Home, for purpose of making a copy, by Mrs. Winnie Mae Box Kelley of Crockett, Texas.

Original picture returned to her on *June 11, 1963*

Knox Cottage



In 1906, 22 children moved from the Dallas home to Files Valley, where the Grace Knox Home for Girls was built. Somewhat larger in square footage than Files Cottage, this home was a 12-room, two-story brick building, constructed at a cost of \$6,000. This was a gift of Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Knox of Dallas, in memory of their daughter. The organization believed that caring for children in several smaller homes, instead of one large institutional building, was in the best interest of the children.



Knox Cottage (side)



Miller Memorial Cottage for Girls

In 1908, the Miller Memorial School and Chapel Building was built in Itasca, named for Mr. and Mrs. A. Miller of Rusk, Texas. The Millers, who were Roman Catholic, left an estate of \$55,000 to be divided among four orphanages in Texas – two Catholic and two Protestant. The agency received \$13,500, with which the building was completed.



*Edna Monroe Knox
- First School Teacher*

May 19, 1908

Health has been good, all escaped the measles, mumps and smallpox which has been prevalent in the surrounding county. We have kept the children at home while all danger of contracting the diseases seems to be passed. The children are happy to get back to church and school again. Forty enrolled in school, 10-15 on the Honor Roll each month, making a grade above 90 in their studies. Some made a grade as high as 98.

In October 1908, the Synods of Arkansas and Oklahoma joined in support and the name was changed from Texas Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans to the Southwestern Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans.

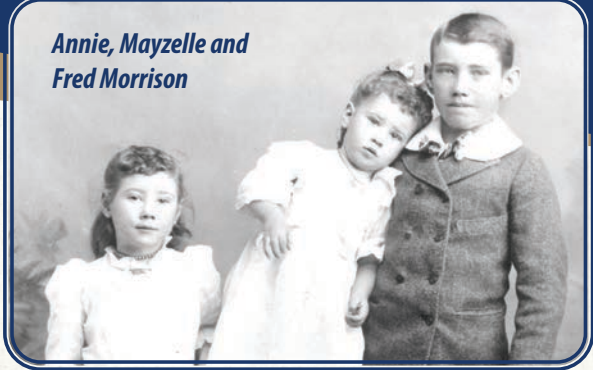


In 1910, a laundry building was built. Miss Andy Anderson was the laundry manager.





Annie, Mayzelle and Fred Morrison



In 1910, the Fred Morrison Cottage for Boys was built in Itasca. This home, built at a cost of \$6,500, was given by Mr. and Mrs. John E. Morrison of Graham, Texas, in memory of their deceased young son who wanted to help poor boys of his acquaintance.

1912 - By act of the Texas Legislature, the Itasca campus grounds were incorporated into an Independent Public School District. The Home would operate its own school until 1957.

In 1913, the Simon Fraser Annex was acquired to serve as a home for the president's family along with high school residents who attended public schools.

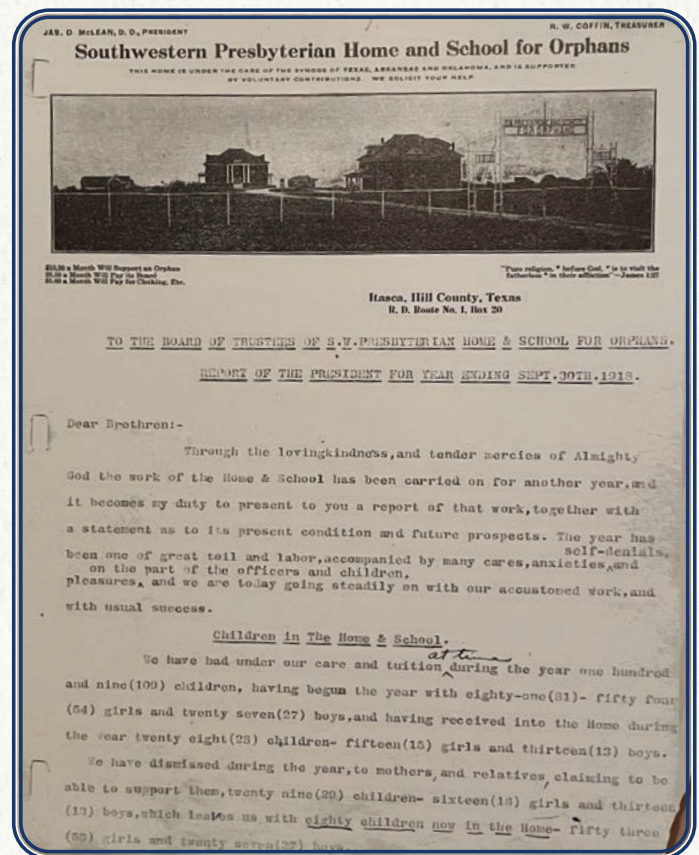
January 28, 1915

Adopted that 'practical orphans,' that is, such as had parents living who had as well or better be dead as far as the children were concerned, might be admitted to the Home if there were room, and if in accordance with the judgement of the president in the particular case.

Excellent teachers, three literary and one music teacher. Added a room to the Steward's Home, building paid for by Ladies Aid Society of Amarillo Presbyterian Church, Investment for Demaree Cottage for boys.

President takes entire oversight of and directs all the affairs of the institution attending to all the correspondence, makes purchases, passing on reception and dismissal of children, visiting the churches, and homes of applicants as found necessary and practicable.

Steward (now Dr. Tenny) lives at the Home and represents the president in conduct of Home and school carries on the work of the Home locally.



Milking Barn



Report of the President of the Southwestern Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans, for the Year Ending September 1, 1920

Dairy, Farm and Garden:

The Steward, with his limited number of small boys, has done all that could be expected, considering handicaps, with the dairy, farm and garden.

He is milking 12 cows and getting a nice lot of milk, which greatly aids in the support of the Home, as well as being of such value to the bodily growth and development of the children.

While the expense of running the dairy on account of the high cost of feed is heavy, the milk and butter received, together with the increase of the herd, computed at a fair and reasonable price, far outweighs the expense and justifies the outlay.

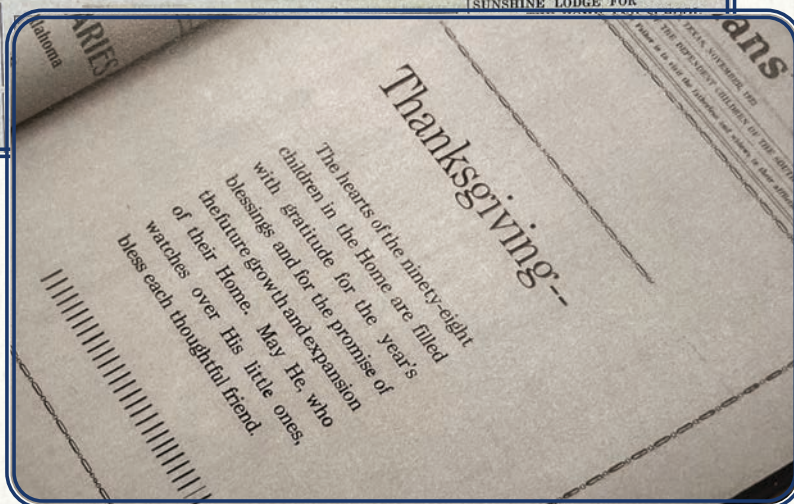
The storm last spring blew down the silo, and we have not felt justified under the synod's instructions to replace it with another, so we will be without silage this winter, thus making our feed bill much heavier.

Owing to the fewness of boys, and the smallness of their stature, we have not been able to accomplish much with the farm, more than saving some oats and hay, etc. for the cattle. We are preparing to sow a good field of small grain, and the ground is broken with the tractor and disc plow.

January 1922 - President Dr. J.D. McLean died suddenly. The Trustees voted the residence of future presidents be designated the McLean Memorial Home.



Rev. John E. Watts was President of Southwestern Presbyterian Orphanage and School from 1922 to 1932.



The Little Red Schoolhouse



Prince & Majesty



In 1923, Hooks High School was built. Affectionately known as the Little Red Schoolhouse, it was a one-story, brick veneer building funded by brothers Pat and Will Hooks of Itasca, in memory of their mother. It contained five large, well-lit rooms, two of which connected by folding doors and could form a larger assembly room for chapel and study purposes. In addition to the classrooms, it contained a small library with a large closet for text books, a laboratory and a small office, which was used temporarily as an exam room by the visiting dentist. A century later, the schoolhouse serves as the administrative offices for The Foster Care Village.



Uncle Archie, Aunt Georgie, Marguerette and Dorothy in 1925.

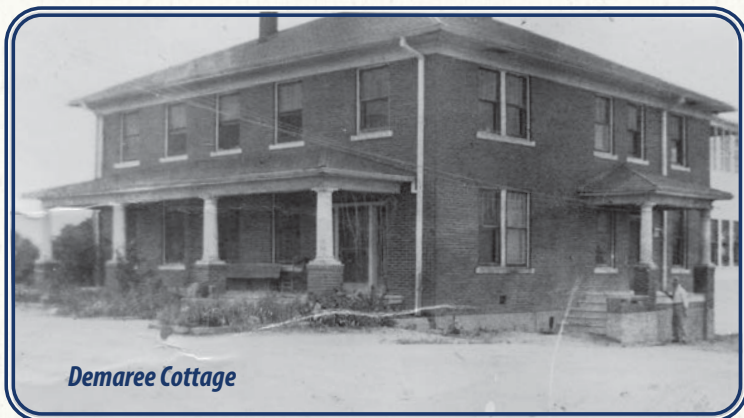
Marguerette Minor Boren

Marguerette Minor Boren was seven years old in 1925 when her Aunt Georgie and Uncle Archie took her and her five-year-old sister Dorothy to live at Southwestern Presbyterian Homes and School for Orphans. Marguerette's father had died, and she had no contact with her mother for more than five years.

Marguerette had fond memories of Ms. Tadlock, the matron, and remembered the girls "never left the house without kissing her goodbye." She considered her housemates sisters and at age 75 still corresponded with Gladys, Bobbie, Martha Lou, Faye and Nadine. She said, "We were all one big family; we really were." Marguerette became the mother of two children, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



Marguerette and Dorothy as young adults in 1932.



Demaree Cottage

In 1924, Mr. S.W. Demaree of Morgantown, Indiana, contributed \$12,500 for a two-story building. Named Demaree Cottage for Boys, it stood for more than 40 years before fire destroyed it.



The J.D. McLean Memorial Building was erected in 1928 to serve as the teacher's cottage and infirmary. It was funded by friends to honor Dr. James D. McLean, the first president of the home.

September 29, 1927

Article II – Purpose and aim is to provide a home and school for needy orphan children, caring for and training them during childhood, and thus preparing them for self-support and the greatest usefulness in this life, and for salvation in the life to come. This is to be accomplished by teaching and training them in domestic, literary, industrial and Biblical studies, giving special attention to their moral and religious natures.

Article V – Reception and Dismissal Section 1: Orphan children between the ages of three and fourteen without sufficient means of support irrespective of the religious belief of parents or guardians, are eligible for admission, provided such children have not developed extreme criminal habits, nor contracted contagious or incurable diseases, nor are of unsound mind.



"Honey" Velma Hughes
Matron of the Itasca girls' home

She was a really nice lady . . . from Waco and was a real Christian type.

I had really high standards and my housemother set those standards for me.

She taught us all the etiquette of eating when you have guests, like who sits on your left and who sits on your right and where to place your forks and where to place your cups.

She allowed me to spend as much time as I needed on the piano; she'd sit in her room and she'd listen.

We'd say, Honey, pass the honey in the bottle."

I put all my hopes and dreams of a mother into Honey because obviously my mother couldn't fulfill those and she just loved me.

I had a housemother that substituted for a mother and I was close to her because obviously I couldn't be close to my mother emotionally.



Itasca Boys with Car



Itasca Graduates





Rev. Nelson R. Hawkins, known as Pop Hawkins, was president of Southwestern Presbyterian Home and School from 1936 to 1956.



January 15, 1937 - President Hawkins was authorized to buy a bus for the Home and allowed \$12.50 per month to pay J.H. Robertson for the use of his automobile in the service of the home. Hawkins reported the start of personal records on all children admitted to the home for which he was commended.

September 21, 1937 - The Educational Fund was established to serve as a revolving loan fund for the college students of the Home. A historical committee was appointed: Mrs. Pat E. Hooks and Rev. N.R. Hawkins.



In 1937, a gift from D. Hargis of Taylor, Texas funded a new dairy barn as well as a dining hall and community center. The Hargis Memorial Building was erected the next year.

Hargis Buildings



New Fred Morrison Cottage

In 1940, a fire destroyed the original Fred Morrison Cottage from 1910. The building that replaced it used the same name.

Arthur and Gene



In 1929, six-year-old Arthur Strickland and his four-year-old brother Gene traveled, unchaperoned, by train to the Southwestern Presbyterian Orphanage.



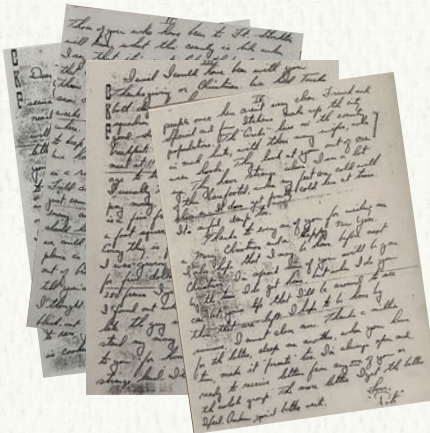
Art went on to college, served in World War II, then returned to Texas to attend seminary. He served as a Presbyterian minister for 35 years. Art is the oldest living former resident of the Itasca Group Homes. He remains an active friend of PCHAS and attends the annual Itasca Reunions as often as possible.



First Lieutenant Arthur Strickland

Maurine Briley Wheeler, along with her sisters Christine, Jeanette, Helen and brother James, came to the Itasca group home on September 9, 1934. Nelson and Clara Hawkins, affectionately known by all as "Mom and Pop" Hawkins, and others at the home provided love and guidance. After graduating from high school, Maurine elected to attend nursing school in McKinney, TX.

Maurine Briley Wheeler - Nursing Corps



Clarence Pete Fuller

Like many alumni, Clarence Pete Fuller considered his Itasca friends his true family and kept in touch. As a member of the Army Air Corps (which became the U.S. Air Force), he was killed in action on January 20, 1944, in North Africa.



Tom Wilson also served in the war. He lost his life in the pivotal Battle of Midway. In 1946, Mr. and Mrs. E. Hall of Pecos made a generous gift to the Home, which built tennis courts and named them for Tom. Many years later, the courts are still enjoyed by Itasca's children, who sometimes use them for basketball.

Itasca Memorial Prayer Garden

Itasca Memorial Prayer Garden Groundbreaking

In June 2017, Itasca group home alumni, current residents, home parents and PCHAS staff members gathered to break ground on a very special project.

The idea of a memorial prayer garden emanated from alumni wanting to create a peaceful place where former students, those who died in battle serving our country or while in care, could be remembered. Alumni spoke on behalf of those former residents who paid the ultimate sacrifice during World War II. Mr. Bill Galiga led the tribute by speaking of his friend James Van Ness and their time serving in the Marine Corps. Mr. William Cammack remembered classmates Clarence K. "Pete" Fuller and Thomas William "Tom" Wilson. Rev. Art Strickland ended the recollections by reading a poignant letter Tom had sent to Itasca residents in 1943 while he was serving.



William Cammack, Rev. Art Strickland and Bill Galiga



As we break ground today, we give thanks for the women of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas who made a promise to take care of children in need. We give thanks for Mom and Pop Hawkins and all of the committed staff who have provided love and care in the homes on this campus. We give thanks for all of the children who have lived here. And we remember those who have died. We remember our time with them, their happiness, their sorrows, their sacrifice, and the joy they brought to us. And finally, we give thanks to God for this special place in Itasca, Texas.

– Chief Operating Officer David Thompson

1940 Itasca Fly Hat Boys



1944 Boys Harmonica Band



Davis Cottage



Tea Party



In 1950, the Home built a president's residence and Davis Cottage for intermediate boys. M.T. Davis of Covington, Texas, funded the building of the latter.



Hargis Dining Hall



First Presbyterian Church
Board of Deacons,
January 1952

This pick-up truck is the 1951 Christmas present to the Southwestern Presbyterian Home at Itasca Texas.
Purchased with their share of the 1951 Deacon's Annual Christmas Offering for the benefit of our two Presbyterian Homes.





**Carolyn Cottar, November 1961,
Future Homemakers of America
Style Show**

Carolyn Cottar Draper

Carolyn Cottar Draper came to Itasca at the age of eight-and-a-half with her three brothers, Thomas, Ronald and Paul. Although she prayed that her divorced parents would get back together (they never did), Carolyn described her first feeling about the home as a safe and happy place. She felt fortunate that the staff supported her musical talents. She took piano lessons, participated in a traveling singing group with several housemates and played the piano and organ in the chapel for Vespers. Carolyn graduated from Itasca High School in 1962. A massage therapist, she continued sharing her musical skills with her community and church.



In 1953, the Southwestern Presbyterian Home and School changed its name to Presbyterian Home and School for Children.

Files Cottage, built in 1953, replaced the original Files Cottage that was razed after more than 45 years of use. Both were erected as memorials to David Sidney and Sarah Anne Files, the pioneer generation of the Files family in Hill County. The new cottage became home to 10 girls and their cottage parents, plus a temporary home for two girls during the reception and intake process.



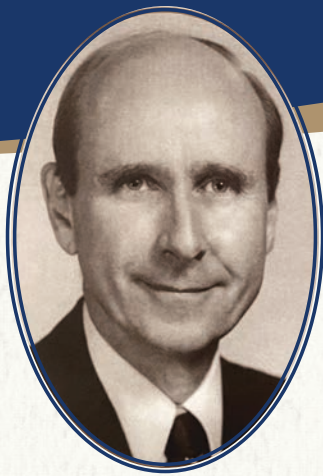
"Mom & Pop" Hawkins

In 1954, the Hawkins-Long Cottage was constructed in honor of President Nelson "Pop" Hawkins and his wife Clara. The home was made possible by Joe and Edith Long, members of First Presbyterian Church of Longview. It housed 10 girls and their cottage parents.



**Bertram
Memorial Chapel**

In 1955, the Bertram Memorial Chapel was constructed on the Itasca Campus. The Sara Hunter Cottage was built.



Rev. Dr. Jerry M. Newbold was president of PCH&SA organization from 1956 to 1973.



The Synod of Texas had established the PCUS' first adoption agency in 1953: Presbyterian Child Placement Agency. It was in Dallas. In 1956 the adoption agency and Presbyterian Home and School for Children merged administratively to form the Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency (PCH&SA).



In 1957, the on-campus school was closed and residents began attending public school. The building was turned into administrative offices, still in use in 2023.



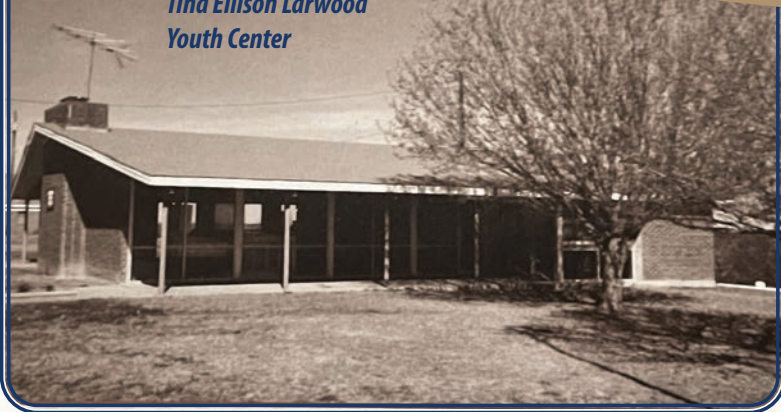
Irene and Aleta, Itasca

In 1960, the agency dedicated a new cottage in memory of Mary Moore McMillan and her son, Bruce McMillan, Jr., whose foundation in Overton, Texas funded it. Prior to making the gift, Dr. Bruce McMillan, Sr. took a personal interest in the plans and blueprints. Dr. David Stitt, Austin Seminary president, represented the McMillan Foundation at the dedication of the cottage since Dr. McMillan was too ill to attend. "M.C." was home to 10 boys and their cottage parents, plus a reception center for two additional boys during the Home's intake process.

In 1961, a new swimming pool was constructed on the Itasca campus and named in memory of William and Kathryn Bruce.



**Tina Ellison Larwood
Youth Center**



In 1962, the Tina Ellison Larwood Youth Center was built.



Valentine's Dance held at the Youth Center, Itasca

In 1964, the first annual lecture at Itasca, Texas was hosted with Dr. Alan Keith Lucas giving the opening address. The following is an excerpt from that address:

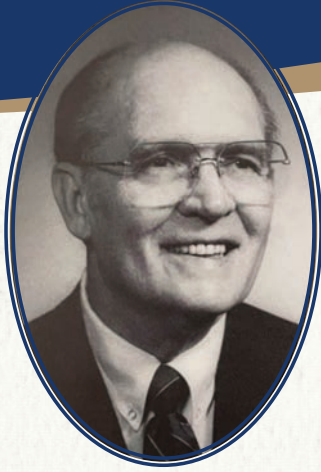
This brings me to my second reason why the Church should be involved. This century has seen the growth of a large number of helping professions. These professions have largely grown up outside the Church, although many of them have proved often more Christian (with a small 'c') than the Church itself. But they lack something. They lack the true humility that comes from knowing oneself a sinner and just as much in need of God as the man one is trying to help . . . It is this very humility, this very hope for even the most unlikely, that has enabled so many Church Homes to do the kind of redemptive work with people that some of them now do: whereas the social scientists are turning more and more to methods of controlling people, to labeling them "ego-deficient" or "psychopathic," to giving up hope that people can be helped. The Church's leadership is needed, as it never was before, to reaffirm man's true nature . . .

***"We do not know what is right for another; we are fortunate if we know what is right for ourselves . . .
We are not facing what they are facing and pray we will not have to." – Alan Keith Lucas***



In 1969, a landmark plaque for Southwestern Presbyterian Home and School for Orphans was celebrated. It read:

Orphanage originated in Dallas when First Presbyterian Church women arranged care for four children of a deceased member. Church then decided to found a statewide orphanage for which D.S. Files family gave this land. Home opened in 1906 with Rev. J.D. McLean as first president. From beginning, Home has used modern "cottage plan" and has maintained reputation for its outstanding staff, facilities, and program. Home school was closed in 1957. Orphanage now part of Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency.



Rev. M. Ralph Weedon was president of Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency from 1973 to 1979.



The 1973 edition of "the children's herald," published by the Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency



Ed Knight became a social worker on the Itasca Campus in 1973. Later, he was campus director. He went on to work for Presbyterian Children's Services in Waxahachie. When the two agencies merged, he became the first President of PCHAS and played a pivotal role in the agency's growth.



Ed Knight



In 1976, five tornadoes ripped through the region on May 26. Forty-five years later, former resident Judith Steed Chason vividly remembered the F4 tornado that destroyed one of the Itasca cottages.



The Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency expanded to **San Antonio** in 1976. There, it established *Nuestra Casa*, a foster care group home for boys.



In 1978, new buildings built in Itasca included Bryce-Flato Cottage, to replace the cottage destroyed by the 1976 tornado, the Maxwell-McLean Educational Building and the Purcell-Shoap Gymnasium.

In 1979, the Fred Morrison Cottage burned for the second time and was not rebuilt.



Su Casa de Esperanza

Rev. Jerry R. Tompkins was President of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Service Agency from 1980 to 1996.



In 1981, Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency established a bilingual program, *Su Casa de Esperanza*, near McAllen, Texas to work with families, schools and churches in an effort to prevent institutional care.



Also, in 1981, the Administrative office of Presbyterian Children's Home and Service Agency moved to the historic Robinson-Maken House in Austin, Texas.

Robinson-Maken House





In 1983, PCUS and UPCUSA merged to become PC(USA) at the national level.

In 1984, the Hargis Dining Hall is renovated.



Hargis Dining Hall

Presbyterian Children’s Home and Service expanded again in 1988, this time to the coastal city of Beaumont, about 85 miles northeast of Houston. It opened Crockett House, a latchkey program for 25 middle-school children which operated after school and during summer. The program offered supervision, tutoring, enrichment programs, recreation and other opportunities for personal growth.



1983 state champions in basketball



Crockett House

The fall of 1990 brought the opening of Gateway, a Home for Transitional Living, in College Station, for former residents who wanted to pursue advanced education. In 1993, the Advanced Education Program was expanded to include students in additional approved sites. Gateway closed and the agency distributed its resources around the state.



Boys' home in San Antonio



Girls' home in San Antonio

For 15 years, San Antonio's *Nuestra Casa* had been home to boys in foster care. In 1991, the agency purchased an 18-acre tract of land which included two large houses. One home was remodeled and opened for 12 girls ages 10-18 in the spring of 1993. The boys' home moved onto the site later in 1993 and expanded its facilities to care for up to 12 boys.

In 1995, The Presbyterian Children's Home and Service agency changed its name to Presbyterian Children's Homes (PCH).

The agency also closed its Dallas Family Center office, transferred the family care services to other denominational agencies and purchased a home in Duncanville for use as a foster care group home for girls. Following remodeling and expansion, the Duncanville site opened in 1996 with rooms for up to 12 girls, an office building and a greenhouse.



Duncanville Home



The **Therapeutic Horse Program** began in 1995 on the San Antonio campus. This program targeted the emotional well-being of young people, helping them develop a better understanding of themselves. Since horses are sensitive by nature, they act as a mirror by sensing one's feelings and reflecting them back in their behavior.





Rev. Charles "Chuck" Mendenhall was President of Presbyterian Children's Homes from 1996 to 2001.



Austin Girls' Home



In 1998 The Austin Girls' Home opened.



Melissa and Don Faulk, Director of Advanced Education Program

In 1999, the **Advanced Education Program** was created. This was the first collaborative program between Presbyterian Children's *Homes* and Presbyterian Children's *Services* and is still operating today. It grew out of the Transitional Living programs in Waxahachie (Bridge House) and Itasca (Hunter Cottage) that began in 1991.

The importance of education has long been an emphasis of Presbyterianism. This program provides preparation and financial support (tuition reimbursement, room and board) for residents interested in pursuing higher education, vocational, technical or job/apprenticeship training.

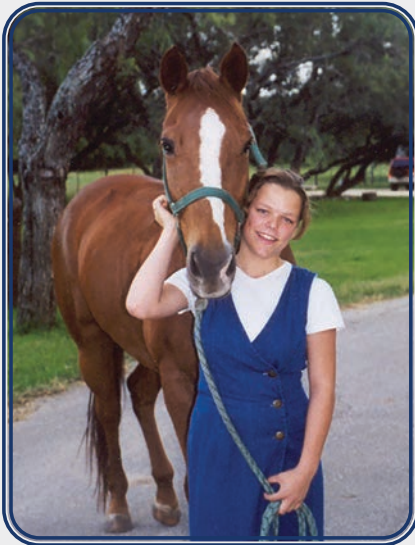


The forerunner of the **Single Parent Family Program** was a three-year collaborative effort of Presbyterian Children's Homes, Marywood Child and Family Services and The Casey Family Program. Known as Stepping Stones, it provided 18 months of shelter for up to 14 young, expectant and/or single mothers and their children.



David Gibson, vice president of community services, envisioned the **Child and Family Program** as a way to assist families who did not meet criteria to receive help from social service agencies. From the start, the agency hired Child and Family specialists for major cities and rural areas. In May of 2000, the first Child and Family specialist was hired for Houston and in July the second was hired for Corsicana.

While stabilizing families who were in crisis, the agency prevented them from being separated, strengthened their relationships and improved economic self-sufficiency. The 'friendly visitor' approach offered free, preventative in-home services. Today, this program empowers families in more than 20 locations and many churches support it with financial gifts and by providing office space for the specialists.



Brandy Pillow

Brandy Pillow chose to come to Presbyterian Children's Homes in San Antonio at the age of 16 with a cry of "give me somewhere to begin again." She realized home was not a healthy environment anymore; she cried frequently and felt her life was going nowhere. Brandy remembers a tough adjustment period but says that her house parents did their best to support her and be understanding. Brandy realized the benefits of change and experienced growth in social skills, relationships and spirituality. Brandy was a cheerleader, a member of the drill team and president of her church youth group. She went to work in a medical clinic in Bryan, Texas.

***Brandy with a horse from our
Therapeutic Horse Program***



Gayle, 1980 senior year of high school

Gayle Rawlinson Jordan

Gayle Rawlinson Jordan was 14 when she and her sister arrived at the Itasca campus. Gayle's mom was a single parent and working 12 hours a day to support her girls. This left two young teenagers unsupervised. Gayle and her sister lived in Hawkins-Long Cottage with several other sister groups who became like family to her.

Gayle says, "The home didn't change who I was, it just gave me the freedom to be who I was." She describes herself as "insecure, quiet and not very social" then, but eventually she attained self-esteem, character and responsibility. In high school, Gayle was a cheerleader, homecoming queen and Miss Hill County. Later, through the support of the Advanced Education Program, she obtained her bachelor's degree. Gayle continued her education later in life and obtained her master's degree.

After a decade as a classroom teacher, Gayle joined PCHAS as a professional school counselor, assisting students to enroll in college and begin their career pathway upon graduation. She now serves as the agency's Director of Advanced Education.



Gayle on Wear Blue Day

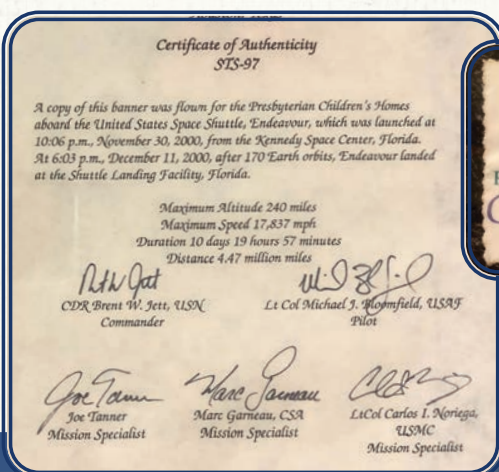


On November 30, 2000, STS-97 launched into outer space and took PCH along for the ride! One of the astronauts, Lt. Col. Carlos I. Noriega, was also a PCH volunteer and carried one of our flags on the shuttle Endeavour. Noriega spent hours working with children at the campus in Itasca, Texas, and graciously invited them to witness the takeoff from Kennedy Space Center, Florida.

"Attending this launch was an amazing opportunity for me and our PCH kids. It allowed them to bear witness to a historic event and opened their minds to dream of something greater in their own lives. Seeing both the launch and the excitement from our kids made it an unforgettable day."

– David Thompson, vice president of administration

Lt. Col. Carlos I. Noriega, USMC & NASA Mission Specialist, and PCH children with the returned PCH banner



Crew of Space Shuttle Mission STS-97



Rev. William S. Stinson

Rev. William S. Stinson became superintendent in 1919. One of Stinson's 1922 reports explains that he asked the oldest girl there to name "an outstanding fact concerning our home. She exclaimed at once, 'It is a home and not an institution!' We are surely doing our best to make this true." Under Stinson's leadership, the orphanage began serving children who were either orphans or not properly cared for by their families.

Rev. Stinson fell ill and died in 1930. His wife assumed the role of superintendent for that decade and was succeeded by Rev. Peter W. Fischer.



Mrs. Stinson

Superintendent Report:

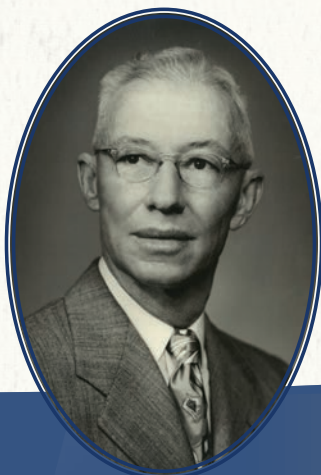
The responsibility of running the heating plant and steam sterilizer is placed on one boy; the care of the kitchen and laundry fires on another. Five girls wash dishes and four care for the dining room while two boys run the dumbwaiter. Four boys 12 years of age care for the cows and do the milking. Two boys feed the hogs. A farmer who sees our hogs every day says he never saw any do better. The older girls do their own mending and that of a younger sister or some other little girl assigned to them. Under supervision, both boys and girls make beds and sweep dormitory halls.



Rev. Peter W. Fischer

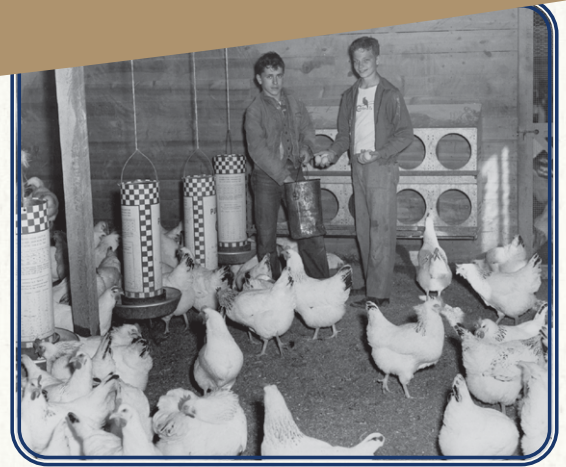
To reflect its service to a wider region, the home name changed to **Presbyterian Orphanage of Missouri**. It weathered the Great Depression with resourcefulness and the generosity of regional donors. When, in 1932, it received a generous contribution of stock in the Peters Shoe Company, it began raising funds for an administration building with a larger kitchen and dining room. This was completed in 1940. Another major donation funded the Holmes Hospital, also completed in 1940.

Administration Building



Rev. Fred A. Walker

When Rev. Fischer accepted a pastorate in Illinois, Rev. Fred A. Walker became the fifth superintendent from 1945 until 1948. He returned to the position in 1951 and would provide stability and steer expansion until 1968.



The poultry operation eventually housed 20,000 chickens

Because the orphanage rented eight acres for cows and a garden, the children enjoyed fresh dairy products and vegetables. By the start of World War II, the acreage netted a worthwhile profit, and the home's newsletter reported: *After a thorough investigation of the facts concerning costs of produce, meat and dairy feed, we found it would be a paying proposition to own a farm... The farm committee ... settled on the Kosky farm, a little less than two miles from the Orphanage... It consists of 85.9 acres, quite level, all of which are under cultivation and pasture. The 25 acres of pasture are sufficient for our herd and is well watered by a spring... The orchard consists of 75 fruit trees and a grape vineyard that last year produced 2,000 pounds of grapes. The buildings consist of one six-room house in perfect condition; a barn large enough for a dairy herd of 21 cows, four horses and a winter feed shed with a loft that will hold 50 tons of hay...*



This 1942 purchase was made possible by gifts from Joseph Sunnen of St. Louis. By the fall, farmer Lewis Asher moved onto the property and joined the staff of the Orphanage as farm manager. He and his wife stayed 36 years. A residence on the property still bears their name.



A neighboring property was the Giessing Farm and soon the Orphanage acquired it as well. Carl Harris used its 120 acres to generate a hog-raising program. This would not only feed the residents but also teach farming to the boys. The combined properties were known as the "farm campus." During the next couple of years the older boys moved to the farm and the orphanage built two log cottages there. The "town campus" opened a fireproof dormitory for small boys and another for the girls, both in 1946.



Girls in front of Dearing Hall Girls Home "Town Campus"



Harlan Hall Boys Home "Town Campus"

Staff and trustees continued to adapt to society's needs with foresight. A committee evaluated the home's admission policy and formally stated that any child without an adequate home could enter the orphanage. Accordingly, **in 1952, the Presbyterian Orphanage of Missouri became the Presbyterian Home for Children.** It began collaborating with a state organization of child welfare agencies and considered options for hiring social services caseworkers.

Maude Asher was 'Mom'

100th birthday party this Saturday at

By JANET DOUGLAS

Maude Asher never lived in a shoe. But there were surely times when she had so many children she didn't know what to do. Maude and her husband, the late Louis Asher, managed the Presbyterian Boys Farm for 36 years, and Maude cared about every boy who came there as her own. That was a lot of caring as during that time Maude raised three of her own children and stood as a surrogate mother for more than 100 boys, as well as several girls who lived at the Presbyterian Children's Home in Farmington.

Maude celebrated her 100th birthday Saturday, June 16, at Ozark Manor Care Center in Fredericktown where she now resides, but she still remembers "her boys" and life on the farm. Maude keeps photo albums filled with their school pictures within reach and often pages through them, smiling and



MAUDE ASHER

The Ashers raised three of their own children and were surrogate parents for more than 100 boys, and several girls. When Maude Asher turned 100 in 2012, a newspaper article mentioned that she still enjoyed photo albums of the children. Her daughter said, "Mother always made sure each of them had a birthday cake and kept a list of the dates and their sizes. For Christmas each of the boys received a box of homemade divinity and fudge from her."

One time several siblings were sent to the Home. The town dormitory did not have a suitable place for the youngest, a four-year-old girl, so the Ashers kept her in their own family until she was old enough for the dorm. When Mrs. Asher was asked to fill in for a cook, it became her regular job. "I pretty much cooked all three meals for them from then on. There were always between 30 and 36 hungry boys to feed." Her biscuits and gravy, made from scratch, were a staple for breakfast and her dinners included cornbread.

My name is Martha Jane Hays. I am 14 years old. I have been in the Home for eight years. I think it is a wonderful place for children to be raised. We have the best of food, the best of care and a lot more privileges than the town kids have. It is a swell place, but I have one thing against the Home. I don't like so many people to tell me what to do. There are at least seven people to satisfy and doing everything they want I consider a hard job.

– The Children's Voice newsletter, December, 1950



Camp Jennings

Growth continued. In 1957, B.H. Jennings gave 10 acres in Madison County, providing the children with a country retreat, Camp Jennings, for the next 30 years. In 1958, the Home built three more cottages on the farm, naming them in honor of Carl Harris, Grafton Lothrop and Mr. & Mrs. A.P. Green.

Two degreed social workers joined the staff part-time in 1965. The next year, the Home hired its first full-time caseworker.

At the farm, the teenaged boys welcomed the addition of a gymnasium in 1967. It included shop areas for woodworking and handicrafts. However, major changes in federal and state laws governing child care, child labor, fundraising and fire safety codes caused a sharp increase in operating costs for the Home. These changes had a notable impact on the numbers and kinds of children served during the late sixties. The farming program eventually ended due to the changes.

Residents were arriving with more intense emotional, physical and spiritual needs than before. The Home focused more and more on the adolescent rather than the young child. With these changes in mind, the board of trustees began planning to hire more highly trained staff.



Harold Showalter became Executive Director in 1970. His experience in residential treatment, social work, education and psychiatry positioned the Home to evolve into a multi-service agency and to expand into new locations.

Harold Showalter served 26 years as executive director and president.

Parents, welfare departments, ministers and courts made more than 100 referrals to the Home in 1971. All of those youth were over age 10 and most were in their mid-teens. The treatment team reported that “a community-based home for adolescents preparing to return to their homes or to a foster home has now become necessary.” The Home also added a classroom program for youth unable to attend public school and began helping them earn their General Education Development (GED) certificate.

Expanding to the St. Louis area, the organization established a family counseling office known as Presbyterian Family Services in 1977. Two years later, it expanded to southwest Missouri, where concerned citizens had recently founded Springfield’s Regional Girls Shelter. Presbyterian Home for Children added the shelter as a program. For more than 40 years, it served teenage girls who had survived abuse and neglect. While the current program is named Transitional Living, we call the location Ashley House.



Ashley Cottage Dedication - To the left is Harold Showalter



Lyn Meyer was first president of the Regional Girls Shelter Board of Directors and a longtime trustee of PCHAS.

Transitional Living

Homeless teenaged girls were a concern in Springfield, Missouri where, in a span of two months, 55 girls needed shelter. In 1973 Church Women United learned that the Ozark Area Community Action Council wanted to fund a long-term project for community members experiencing homelessness. With help from The Junior League, community volunteers established the Regional Girls' Shelter for teens who lacked family support and traditional social safety nets. They rented a house for up to seven girls, hired two house parents and welcomed the first teens in September, 1974. That first year, 23 survivors of abuse and neglect lived at the home.

Early shelter fundraisers included bake sales, garage sales and bazaars. In May of 1977, the first annual Cards 'n' Cuisine luncheon raised \$1,300. Two months later, the state Division of Family Services awarded funding to the shelter. By September of 1978, it had housed 78 girls.

To stabilize and strengthen its program, the home's board voted to become a program of the Presbyterian Home for Children (PCH) in the fall of 1979. When a regional study reported that facilities could house only 41% of homeless children and youth, the board of PCH undertook a capital campaign to purchase a larger shelter. In August, 1982, the agency moved into Cindy Ashley Cottage, named in memory of the donor's daughter. This expanded its capacity from seven to 12 girls. Six years later, it acquired a neighboring property and named it Ashley House.

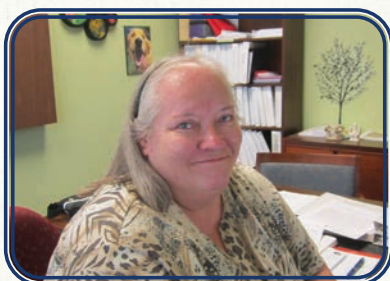


Lyle Gramling and Mr. Stubbins' niece hold a painting of John R. Stubbins, whose major gift founded the Stubbins Memorial Regional Family and Youth Center in Moberly, Missouri.

The success of residential care in Farmington and Springfield permitted the Home to establish a residential treatment center in northeast Missouri. A major gift from John R. Stubbins founded the **Stubbins Memorial Regional Family and Youth Center**. Serving both boys and girls, the Center began providing treatment for abused or neglected youth and counseling for families in 1981.

That same year, The Presbyterian Home for Children moved its accounting, development and executive offices from Farmington to St. Louis, Mo. It became a program of the newly named Presbyterian Children's Services (PCS).

Farmington's Transition to Independent Living Program grew into a full-fledged operation in October, 1987. Having a stable home and guidance assisted young adults in crossing the bridge from dependence to independence. Cindy Lively, who started with the agency as a cottage houseparent in 1984, became the coordinator of this program in 1988.



Cindy Lively

By 1994, more and more children with severe emotional problems were admitted to the agency. The board, seeing a need for more diagnostic and intensive psychiatric treatment, approved a capital campaign to create the **Midwest Learning Center**. It provided classrooms for 100 children from both the campus and surrounding school districts. It included a large gymnasium, library and food service wing, as well as a secure unit for 22 severe-needs children and offices for therapists and administrative staff. Cindy Lively was the campus executive director for 12 years.



Rev. Lawrence Jackman, Arlene Sullivan, Dick Stange, John Yates, Harold Showalter, Jim Thurman, Torrey Berger
– Midwest Learning Center Groundbreaking, 1996

Former resident Sandy Jordan & U.S. Representative Joanna Emerson
– Midwest Learning Center Dedication, 1997



James Winston Thurman

Presbyterian Children’s Services (PCS) collaborated with the Missouri Coalition of Children’s Agencies to revise standards of care and the state’s funding methodology. PCS also joined with nine other providers in 1997 to form the Missouri Alliance for Children and Families, LLC. They responded to the state’s request for a “managed care” approach to child welfare and established a continuum of care: intensive inpatient care, step-down care, in-home and “wrap-around” services. This alliance remains the largest case management provider in the state of Missouri.

When Harold Showalter retired after 26 years as president, long-time vice president of development Jim Thurman was appointed president. At PCS, a combination of continuity and flexibility ensured stability, permanent homes and success for children.

The St. Louis office began offering community-based services, distinct from residential care, in 2002. Funded by tax-based grants, these used a holistic, “wrap-around” approach to support children and families when children experienced serious behavioral challenges or mental illness. They were the roots of two long-lasting programs that PCS would launch in 2010: **Therapeutic Mentoring** and an in-home family counseling program, **Family Solutions for Kids**.



Kathy Morrison was the first coordinator of community services such as mentoring and family support, (pictured here with her family in 2002).



Robert Giegling, who joined the staff in 2005, steered the balance of programs to community-based services and became Executive Director in 2013.

In 2005, Presbyterian Children’s Services (PCS) received a state contract to manage specialized foster care cases in the St. Louis region. By the decade’s end, this developed into the **Foster Care Case Management Program** in Springfield, Joplin and the greater St. Louis area. PCS did not license foster parents but could (as PCHAS still does) manage children’s placements, visits with biological family, court appointments and so forth. Later the agency also created a position to focus on the medical needs of children in foster care.

Once again, the agency responded to changing community needs as well as changing regulations and positioned itself as a leader in compassionate, effective care.

PCS continued caring for children in need at its two residential treatment centers. But state funding for treating mild and moderate needs decreased. For financial reasons, PCS needed to close its Stubbins Youth Center after 25 years. It rented a duplex for transitional living in nearby Columbia. This was a home and life skills program, similar to Springfield’s Ashley House, for young adults making the transition from foster care to independence. It operated for about eight years.

Meanwhile, the agency developed two programs to strengthen families and improve resilience. Both still have strong ties to St. Louis County’s tax-based Children’s Services Fund, created in 2010 to address child safety and family mental health.



Jason Beard, director of Therapeutic Mentoring since 2005, earned the 2018 MLK Dignity Award for his community involvement.



Jason Beard, U.S. Representative Lacy Clay, and Jonathan LaGrone

Mentoring

National research shows that mentoring is one of the most promising programs for children at risk, especially when paired with other supportive services. Mentored youth have fewer absences, better attitudes toward school, fewer incidents of hitting others and less alcohol and drug abuse. They show improved relationships with their parents and more positive attitudes toward other adults. They participate constructively in their communities.

An elementary school principal wrote to PCHAS about improvements in her students, particularly a six-year-old. "I have seen a drastic change with Montrell," she says. "He is in first grade now and he has positive interactions with classmates and adults. He has decreased his discipline referrals. You can even catch him smiling!"

The parent of Jay, an anxious teenager, commented, "Because of his mentor, Jay really opened up and learned to trust people. The mentor helped Jay land a part-time job and kept Jay on track to finish school. We are all more optimistic about his future now."



"The change was dramatic. We were a broken family and now we are truly happy."

– Margot and Maddie, Family Solutions for Kids

From its 2010 inception, the Children's Services Fund has funded Family Solutions for Kids, a PCS program highly effective in changing behaviors and eliminating cycles of harm. Our therapists help thousands of families cope with emotional disorders, high-risk behaviors or trauma. Sessions usually occur in the family home, which is more convenient than going to an office and lets the family interact more naturally. By 2017, this program was also funded by the Jefferson Foundation in Jefferson County.

Also in 2010, the County's tax-based Children's Services Fund began supporting another early intervention at PCS. The Therapeutic Mentoring Program worked with children of all ages, guiding them to regulate their emotions, solve problems and improve behaviors both at school and home. The agency paid and trained these mentors, at no cost to families. By 2018, after success with more than 600 youth each year, the program expanded to Boone County, Lincoln County and St. Francois County. The program expanded to Texas in 2021 and is now called **Elevate Mentoring**.

For a few years, the agency held a different name, Children’s Foundation of Mid-America, but wanted to re-establish its Presbyterian identity. President Jim Thurman met with Ed Knight, the president of a similar Presbyterian agency in Texas, to discuss the compatibility of their programming and administration. Both had expanded geographically and programmatically and now managed foster care cases, residential care and community-based programs. In 2013 they formed an affiliation in which they could lean on each other’s strengths.



Jim Thurman and Robert Giegling



Robert Giegling

Thurman retired in 2013 and Robert Giegling became Executive Director. He continued the affiliation with the Texas agency, which culminated in a friendly merger on January 1, 2018. The combined agency became Presbyterian Children’s Homes and Services (PCHAS).

PCHAS was steadfast in its mission and made no significant changes in the first year of the merger. Missouri’s Foster Care Case Management model remained the same, as did the Transitional Living Program in Springfield. Family Solutions for Kids would resemble an in-home counseling program in Texas, but remain distinct enough to keep its own name. Eventually, the mentoring program would change names to Elevate Mentoring and inspire the agency’s first such program in Texas.



Centennial

2014 was the centennial of the Missouri agency. Former residents of the Farmington orphanage returned for a family reunion. Ida Taylor did not travel far: As a child she had lived in the girls’ dormitory. Decades later, after that building was converted to senior housing, she moved into the same room where she grew up.

Former residents Herb Beck, Ida Taylor and Herb’s wife Janet Beck celebrated its centennial in 2014.

History of Presbyterian Children's Services (Texas)

Founded in 1916 by the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA)



On February 15, 1916 the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School, started by the Presbytery of Abilene, opened in Albany, Texas. The Rev. J. Gilmore Smith was secured as superintendent of the Home with three children. Applications came fast and within a few years the enrollment was more than 100 children. The Rev. J. Gilmore Smith served as superintendent of the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School from 1916 to 1923.

In 1919, the dormitory at the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School in Albany was destroyed by fire.



1920 delivery of "The Messenger," newsletter from Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School





In 1923, the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School moved from Albany to Dallas and the name changed to Reynolds Presbyterian Home.



Rev. H.M. Frank

That same year, Rev. H.M. Frank was named Superintendent of Reynolds Presbyterian Home where he served until 1927.

Admissions agreement for the Reynolds Presbyterian Home

Reynolds Presbyterian Home

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
 HENRY MARSHALL, PRESIDENT
 JEROME C. BOSTON, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT
 A. B. JONES, SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
 A. T. HESTER, SECRETARY
 JOHN R. JONES, TREASURER
 A. H. GIBB

H. M. READ, SUPERINTENDENT
ROOMS BOWLING HALL 9
 TELEPHONE TRACONT 7-1724
 Dallas, Texas

In the event my child _____, is taken into the care and custody of the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School, I

Herby agree that I will visit _____ only when I have permission to do so from the management of the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School.

I further agree that all the gifts that I make to _____ while _____ is in the care and custody of Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School will be made through the said orphanage.

I also agree just as soon as I am financially able to do so, I will make regular contributions to the maintenance fund of the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School. I will do that in recognition of my obligation and duty to support my child.

I furthermore agree that in the event I re-marry, I will immediately notify the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School of my action and that I will be bound by that action to remove my child from the orphanage.

I furthermore agree to remove my child from the orphanage as soon as I am financially able to do so; and I promise to give to the management at any time they may request it a true statement of my financial status, and also the name of my employer at that time.

I furthermore agree to keep the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School advised of my address at all times.

And- In the event I fail to comply with any of the above agreements The Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage and School may ask the Juvenile Courts to take the custody of _____ as a neglected and dependent child.

Signed _____
 Address _____

Witness _____



Wichita Falls Dormitory

In 1925, the Wichita Falls Dormitory was built in Dallas at the Reynolds Presbyterian Home. The dormitory contained four separate units (one for older boys, one for younger boys, one for older girls, and one for younger girls), the main kitchen and dining room, living quarters for staff, a library and an assembly room used for chapel services.



Otto Schultz

One of the early residents was Otto Schultz. He was adopted as a baby by a couple whose marriage ended in divorce, leaving a single mother unable to care for him. He was three or four when Rev. Smith escorted him and two other boys to the Orphanage. Otto considered many of the other children at Reynolds his family and these relationships stood the test of time. He learned the trade of printing while at the home, which became his career after attending the University of Texas. Eventually, he wrote a book about his experience at the Orphanage.



Otto Schultz



In 1926 the Synod of Texas accepted ownership and became officially responsible for the support and direction of the Reynolds Presbyterian Home. The Regan P. Wofford Memorial Nursery was built. This was a one-story, brick fire-proof building costing \$28,000, a gift from the heir of the late Regan Wofford.

The Family of One Hundred and Twelve

This is the brief story of a large family, a family of 112 sturdy, healthy children of the Reynolds Presbyterian Orphanage at Dallas. Yet, though this is its corporate name, it is as the great Reynolds family that the children, the teachers and the church like to think of it. It is ever our endeavor to hold the idea of an institution in the background overshadowed by the love and care and influences of a Christian home.

Our location is ideal -- nine miles from the center of Dallas and adjacent to paved State highway and electric interurban. Our buildings, the gifts of loving friends, are modern and splendidly adapted to our needs. A fine supply of artesian water and an adequate sewerage system and dispersal plant give us those modern developments which are so essential to health. Our seventy-two acres of land, with its five-acre orchard of unusually fine fruit, its fifteen acres of Bermuda grass pasture for the grazing of our herd of twenty milch cows, its many additional tillable acres where the boys raise quite a bit of food and foodstuffs, could not be surpassed for our purpose. Dairy and poultry barns complete the needed farm improvements.

However, here as elsewhere, it is the children who make the home and it is in their care and training for Christian citizenship that our great work lies. While the children of Presbyterian homes are given preference, only a few such applications have been made since the Home was founded. In the case of ninety-five percent of the children, neither parent was connected with any church.

All children past the second grade attend the Vickery public school, one-half mile from the Home, while those of high school age attend the Dallas schools. The high scholarship of many of the children has been most gratifying.

In the Home each child is taught the importance of work and of doing each task well. The older children have regular duties to perform and are trained in some vocation to which they are adapted. Through all this mental and physical training there is carried on the even more important work of building character and developing these children into fine Christian citizens. The many boys and girls who have gone out from the Home to successfully take their places in the world, their sustained interest in church work, their thrift and understanding of those things which constitute good citizenship encourage us to strive even harder in the home of our great Reynolds family.

The Home is owned and controlled by the Synod of Texas, U.S.A., and has no endowment, supported entirely by freewill offerings of those interested in the care and training of dependent children. Mail address Motor Route C, Dallas, Texas.



In 1929, the Poston Memorial Hospital and Ward Memorial Vocational Buildings were built at Reynolds Presbyterian Home in Dallas. The Poston Memorial Hospital consisted of a 14-bed hospital, complete with operating room and sterilization equipment. The Ward Memorial Vocational Building had a shop, storage and clothing supply rooms.

Superintendents of Reynolds Presbyterian Home

Albert R. King
1927-1928

Odie Minitra
1928-1931

James H. Read
1931-1937

W.L. Mitchell
1937-1941



James H. Read



Reynolds Presbyterian Home Easter Egg Hunts



**Reynolds Presbyterian Home
Dallas, Texas | September 1936 Board of Trustees Report**

Last Thanksgiving, large quantities of food and other supplies were sent to the Home. But comparatively little food has been received since that date so that the shelves in our store room are barren. The children are looking forward to this Thanksgiving with the hope that the contributions will be increased in order that a sufficient food supply will be sent to last from one Thanksgiving to another.

**The Messenger
August 1938 edition
(published monthly in the Vocational School of the Reynolds Presbyterian Home in Dallas, Texas.)**

On Sunday, August 21, six of the most recent entrants of the Home underwent the operation for the removal of their tonsils. They all stood the operation well and are on the road to recovery. Dr. Guy Tittle, the Home physician performed the operations. He was ably assisted by Dr. Worley, who administered the anesthetic. We appreciate the medical services of these two men who donate their time and talent that the children may have the best attention rendered by the most efficient physicians of the city of Dallas.

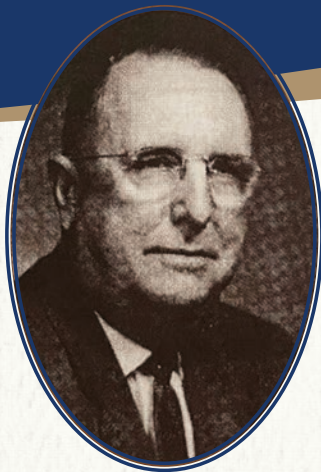


\$5.00 From you will help complete their new fire proof dormitory before winter.

The building is half complete and your \$5.00 will keep the workmen on the job.

If you have not already done so, won't you PLEASE mail your check today.

REYNOLDS PRESBYTERIAN ORPHANAGE
Roland Martin, Treas., Box 1667
Dallas, Texas



Ralph M. Read was the Executive Director of Reynolds Presbyterian Home from 1940 to 1971

Superintendent's Report for the Year 1941-42

The morale of the children was low during the summer. We think their unrest was caused by several things. First: Unstable world conditions have had a marked influence on the thinking of the workers and the older children. Second: a number of changes were made in the staff of the Home. That always upsets the children in an institution. Third: The superintendent erred in failing to plan enough detailed activity for the children during the summer. Fourth: Activities in Vickery and surrounding the Home are such that some of our children resent restrictions that they must be under while in the Home. The first three of these causes can be and are being taken care of. What, if anything, can be done about the fourth is yet to be determined.

- R.M. Read
Superintendent
Reynolds Presbyterian Home



In 1943, the Reynolds Presbyterian Home in Dallas paid debt in full. July of the same year, Reynolds Presbyterian Home recieved a new bus.



1943 Diane Garner, her four sisters and adoptive mother

Diane Garner Todd

Diane Garner Todd and her four sisters, Donna, Deborah, Mindy, and Nikki, came to Reynolds Presbyterian Home in Dallas at the ages of nine, five, four, two and one. Their grandmother recognized their chaotic home environment that included their mother being incarcerated and their father dealing with alcoholism. Diane describes their grandmother as being their "guiding light" during their whole life. She was a charter member of Hemphill Presbyterian Church. A widow with health issues, she was unable to care for the five girls, but visited them every Sunday.

Diane recalls a meaningful relationship with a campus choir teacher, Miss Marty Brooks, who confirmed her musical talent and told Diane, for the first time, that she was pretty. Diane became an accomplished singer and taught herself to play the piano, organ and zither. As an adult, Diane served as a nurse care manager and worked with children with catastrophic illnesses at Cook's Children's Hospital in Fort Worth.



Reynolds Presbyterian Home Boys Dorm



Kids playing outside, 1949, Reynolds Presbyterian Home

Superintendent's Report for August 31, 1947

Reynolds Presbyterian Home cared for 71 boys and girls during the year ending August 31, 1947. Eight children were received into the Home and 13 were dismissed. Three girls graduated from high school and are now employed in Dallas. One boy who finished school is working in Fort Worth. Six boys and three girls were dismissed to their families who had become able to care for them.

Our religious education program was carried out with good results. Worship and Sunday School services were held at the Home each Sunday morning, after which groups of the boys and girls attended services in some nearby Presbyterian Church. Members of our Primary and Junior groups attended Vacation Bible School and most of the Intermediate and Senior folk attended Summer Conferences. Short devotional services are held by the boys and girls each evening in the dormitories.



Reynolds Presbyterian Home laundry



Reynolds Presbyterian Home Dining Hall

In 1951, Reynolds Presbyterian Home celebrated its 35th anniversary with 84 children in care.



In the Home each child is taught the importance of work and doing each task well. We endeavor to instill into each regular habits of good work and good thinking. Through all this mental and physical training there is carried on the even more important work of building character and developing the children into fine Christian citizens. The many boys and girls who have gone out from the Home to successfully take their places in the world in the making of their own homes and rearing their children, in their thrift and understanding of those things which constitute good citizenship, encourage us to strive even harder in the work of Reynolds Presbyterian Home.



1951 Reynolds Presbyterian Home Car and Milk Wagon



2 Boys with Speck, the Home's dog. Reynolds Presbyterian Home 1952



1951 Kathy, Yollie and Edith



Kids and a Mule



Reynolds Presbyterian Home Girls Dorm



Yolanda "Yollie" Beavers

Yollie is a former resident who has continued to help organize our annual Exes Day reunions on our Itasca Campus.





October 19, 1956 Ringling Bros. Clown Visits Reynolds Presbyterian Home



Reynolds Presbyterian Home "Watermelon for Everyone" Event



Reynolds Presbyterian Home Easter Egg Hunt



The Messenger - December, 1953 newsletter of Reynolds Presbyterian Home

ARTICLE II
OF THE CHARTER OF
UNITED PRESBYTERIAN HOMES

"The purpose for which this Corporation is formed shall be to care for people of all ages, including orphans and helpless children, provide for their care, nurture, educate and train into Christian manhood and womanhood as well as to care for older citizens and to provide for their needs and comforts in their declining years, and may provide for all the necessary medical care and treatment by building and establishing a hospital for such services which will be made available to the orphans and helpless children as well as to the older citizens, all of whom are members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and also such other persons as the Board of Trustees of such Corporation may determine and to build and maintain houses and buildings and to furnish and to equip same with the necessary equipment to render such services.

In 1957, Reynolds Presbyterian Home became United Presbyterian Homes.

New Waxahachie Campus Groundbreaking



United Presbyterian Homes was chartered in 1957 in Dallas to care for people of all ages. The organization built a home for youth three years later. This new campus was in Waxahachie, about 30 miles south of Dallas and about 40 miles northeast of Itasca.

In 1960, the United Presbyterian Homes moved to Waxahachie, Texas.

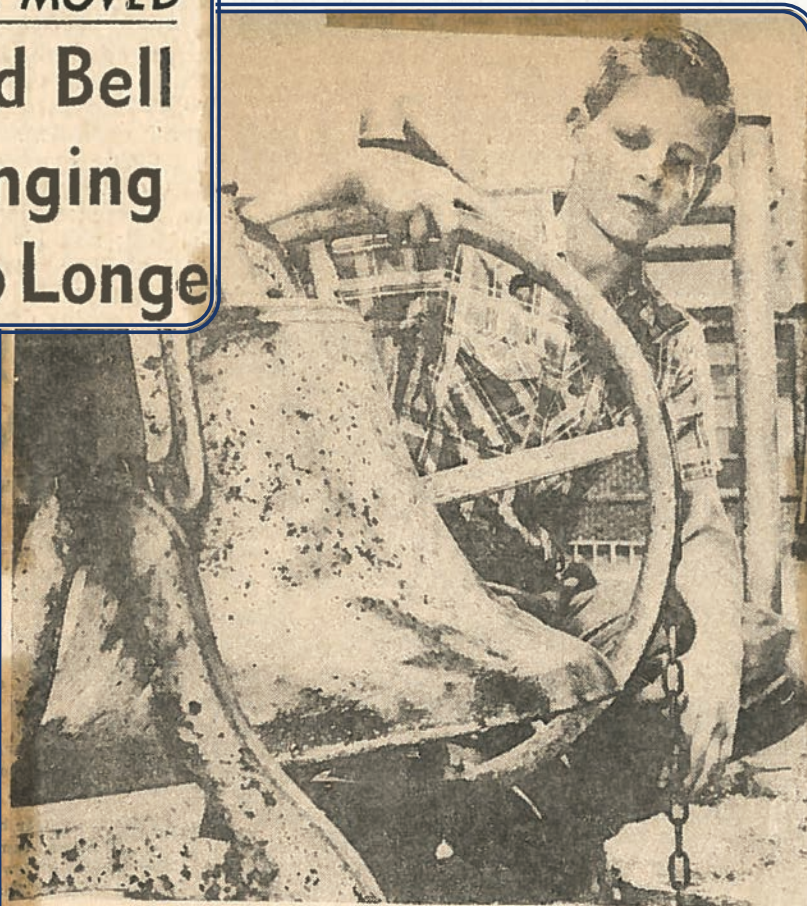
In 1961, the sale of United Presbyterian Homes Dallas property to Presbyterian Hospital was completed. Net proceeds: \$355,835.85.

Reynolds Home Kids on New Playground



HOME MOVED

**Old Bell
Ringing
No Longer**



FAMILIAR SOUND FADES AWAY

Thirteen-year-old Gene Autry Burch examines the bell that has been ringing seven times daily at the United Presbyterian Home, 7447 Greenville, for more than 30 years. The bell and other possessions of the home (formerly Reynolds Presbyterian Home) were loaded into vans Friday and moved to a new 277-acre site just west of Waxahachie. Gene was one of 55 youngsters who made the move.—Staff Photo by Andy Hanson.



In 1960, the move to Waxahachie included the familiar bell which called the children to meals. It remains there today as part of the Ralph M. Read Memorial Garden.

Today, this bell is the symbol of the Ed Knight Heritage Society, which acknowledges those who have included PCHAS in their estate plans or as the beneficiary of a planned gift.

1963 - Because of state public welfare regulations requiring the use of Grade "A" or pasteurized milk in licensed homes, the dairy operation was discontinued and the Home began purchasing dairy products.

In 1964, the dedication of the Dot and Arthur Herring Shop Building on the Waxahachie campus was held.



1971 Waxahachie children and adults



In 1967, the dedication of a new swimming pool at Waxahachie, was named in memory of William and Kathryn Bryce.

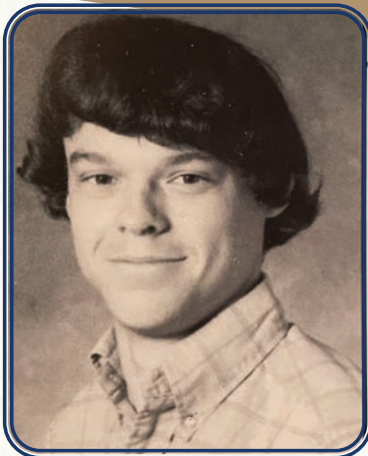


Mr. Alfred M. Travis was the Executive Director of United Presbyterian Homes from 1971 to 1986.

January 31, 1971

**Executive Committee Meeting of United Presbyterian Homes
Mr. Travis, Administrator of Child Care, reports:**

The boys and girls had an active and enjoyable year. The combined efforts of the staff to work more as a team aided the children in being more individualistic and yet still gaining the benefit of group living. A number of highlights: Individuals accomplished opportunity to go to France for six weeks during the summer through the Lions Club exchange program. Twelve boys and girls had part-time jobs throughout the community. One of the four graduates had a successful fall on the freshman Rice University football team. The music program under the leadership of Mrs. Paul Cooper involved the majority of the boys and girls in piano lessons, guitar lessons, voice and singing groups.



Daniel Burgess

Daniel Burgess became a ward of the state of Texas at the age five when his mother and father divorced. Because his father was abusive and both of his parents suffered from alcoholism, Daniel's grandmother petitioned the court to take custody of the boy. Daniel lived in the Tarrant County Children's Home before coming to the PCH Waxahachie campus in 1968 when he was 10 years old.

He lived there until he graduated from high school. Daniel never received the structure, basic necessities and nurturing relationships of a family before coming to Waxahachie. He built some strong relationships while in care. In particular, he says Al Travis, the executive director at the time, was like a father to him. Upon graduation, Daniel attended Navarro Community College through a scholarship from the Home and earned his associate Degree. Daniel was a city police officer for about 30 years before becoming a Deputy in Ellis County Sheriff's Department.

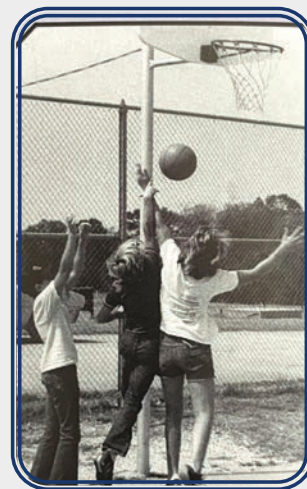


Daniel with fellow seniors Russell and Tracey



February 23, 1979 Report to Executive Director, United Presbyterian Homes Campus Activity

The boys and girls in the project barn were very successful with their rabbit program as the Homes won first place for satin rabbits in the nation in the youth division for 1979 and first place in the state in the adult open division for 1978. We have trophies "out our ears" in both rabbit shows and athletic championships. The children take great pride in all the awards.





Vu Le

At age 14, Vu Le came to United Presbyterian Homes after escaping from Vietnam in 1984 and then living on his own since he was 11. Vu admits that the adjustment to living with a group of other kids was rough at first, but with time and encouragement his social skills improved greatly. Vu had the opportunity to take tennis lessons and became an outstanding member of the Waxahachie High School tennis team. Vu became director of undergraduate admissions at Dallas Baptist University.



In 1983, PCUS and UPCUSA merged to become PCUSA.

In 1988, the United Presbyterian Homes changed its name to Presbyterian Children's Services.

From 1988 to 1990, Thomas K. Lockhart was the Executive Director.



Vu Le and friends at Christmas



Ann Byers
Executive Director
1990-1996



1991 Transitional Living/Preparation for Independent Living

Central Presbyterian Church in Waxahachie provided an off-campus Victorian home to PCHS. Known as the Bridge House, it began providing older youth the opportunity to learn independent living skills, just as Hunter Cottage did on campus. It covered skills in budgeting and money management, cooking, health care, advanced education, employment and driving. The agency closed the church's residence and opened a new Bridge House on campus in 2002.



Bridge House - Waxahachie Campus



Charles "Ed" Edwin Knight was Executive Director of Presbyterian Children's Services (Waxahachie) from 1997 to 2001.

Family Based Services

A three-year collaboration between Presbyterian Children's Services (Waxahachie) and Harmony Family Services in Abilene provided in-home services to children and families.



The Ropes Challenge Course was created on the Waxahachie Campus in 1999 to develop and strengthen relationships, leadership skills, teamwork, problem solving, communication skills and self-esteem in a nurturing atmosphere.



Advanced Education Program

The first collaborative program between PCH and PCS was the Advanced Education Program, formalized this year. Current and former residents who were in care for at least one full academic year were eligible. It continues to assist residents interested in pursuing higher education, vocational, technical or job/apprenticeship training.

The H.O.P.E. Program

Since its founding as an orphanage, PCS served children of all ages in group homes. In 1999, it broadened its scope with a state contract. This was an opportunity to place children, from infancy to age 18, with families in state-licensed homes. PCS christened its new program Homes Offering Positive Experiences (H.O.P.E.) The program was designed for children with therapeutic needs and provided stable home environments lasting six months or more. Two children could be placed in each H.O.P.E. foster home. The foster parents received extensive training along with intensive case management.

The H.O.P.E. Program employed a treatment team approach to caring for children. Each care team collaborated within the first 30 days of placement to establish a child's individualized service plan and aid in assessing that child's permanency plan. In 2001, the H.O.P.E. Program had 35 foster homes, serving up to 70 children.

This innovation was instrumental in charting the agency's direction for the 21st century. It allowed PCS to meet the changing needs of society and still honor its mission to provide Christ-centered care and support for children and families in need.



Judge Jackson presides over the first H.O.P.E. adoption.

Calle

The H.O.P.E. Program was just what Calle needed. Behind her tough exterior, marked by depression and behavioral problems, was a young woman who longed for a family. She knew the pain of abandonment at the age of three. She was adopted at age 10 by a grandmother who did the best she could. A few years later Calle ran away, living for a time in a shelter for teens.

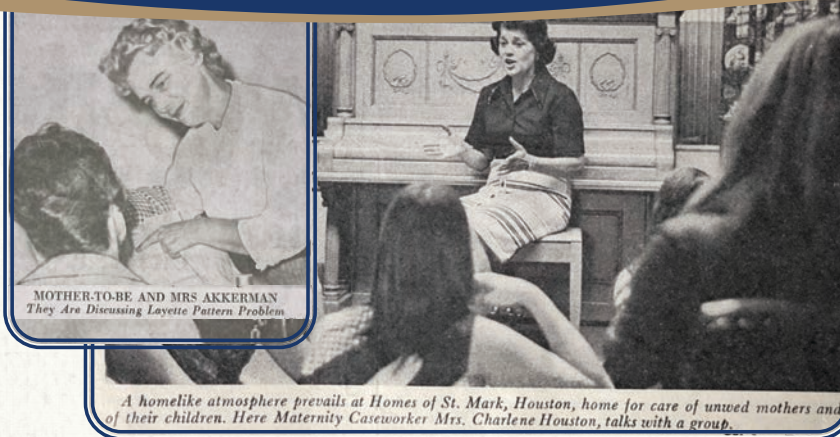
When she entered the H.O.P.E. Program at age 16, Calle's defiant and oppositional behaviors were her way of protecting herself in case this new family just didn't work out. The foster family persevered with love and acceptance through some very tough times as Calle learned how to be part of a family.

History of Homes of St. Mark

Founded in 1955 by St. Mark's Episcopal Church



Mrs. W.H. Akkerman



Mrs. Charlene Houston

In 1948, Dr. and Mrs. W.H. Akkerman were asked to provide care for an unwed woman who was pregnant. The young woman had no place to live and did not want institutional care. The Akkermans provided care for her until delivery. At that time, the birth mother decided to place her infant with a relative of the Akkermans who wanted to adopt a child.

This situation prompted Margaret Akkerman to join Charlene Houston in providing options for more women with unplanned pregnancies. They took women with unplanned pregnancies into their own homes and provided normal family living through delivery and several months thereafter. They found a great demand for these services and, by 1954, other families wanted to assist them.

In 1955, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas helped develop this organization to offer medical care, education and a family setting for expectant mothers. In 1958, after a great deal of community effort and work with the Child Welfare Board in Austin, Homes of St. Mark became licensed to provide maternity services and adoption placement. It was agreed that the expectant mother would decide the preferred religion of the adoptive family.

Some principles of Homes of St. Mark were (1) Expectant mothers would enjoy as normal a life as possible, (2) Expectant mothers would have a say as to characteristics of the family who received their specific child, (3) The agency would be available to all members of the adoption triad

after placement (Post Adoption services), (4) Clients' needs were best met in normal family settings with community resources (5) Lifelong plans were a priority for all clients and (6) Professional and personal services were provided.

At the outset, Charlene Houston set up record keeping on her dining room table. Then, Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church provided office space. But soon Homes of St. Mark needed space of its own. It purchased a house for a day school, group activities and social activities. Later, the agency owned a two-story house in the Montrose area. Eventually Homes of St. Mark leased space in a five-story office building, centrally located in Houston.

Over time, the society became more accepting of unplanned pregnancies and Homes of St. Mark promoted "open" adoption as healthier for children and families. As infant adoptions decreased, the agency saw a growing need for children in custody of the state. In 1993, it signed a contract with the State of Texas to provide foster care and adoption services for such children. It continued its mission of normalizing the relationships between children and their post-adoption families.

Homes of St. Mark Picnic





Braeswood Home Office



Marshall Street House



Patsy and Malcolm Bailey

The Mark
MEMBER OF ST. MARK • ONE MARSHALL ST. • HOUSTON, TEX 77004 • (713) 512-2800 • SUMMER 1992

Homes of St. Mark 5th Annual Golf Tournament

Thanks to the co-chairpersons, Pat Coldeley and Richard Barren, the Golf Committee, the HSM Auxiliary volunteers, donors and participants, it was a wonderful day! We especially enjoyed the young folks who joined us since it was on a non-school day. Our appreciation to Sheriff and Mrs. Klevenhagen for their participation. Bentwater was a beautiful setting and a very accommodating staff served us.

Fashion show raises funds for Homes of St. Mark
By FRANCES PALM

What a wonderful array of gowns gathered as "The Mark" Auxiliary presented a fashion show for the benefit of the Homes of St. Mark. The show was held at the... (text continues)



Annual Picnic at Marshall Street House

The support of volunteers, including adoptive families, was quite meaningful and vital to the life of the agency. During the 1980s and 1990s they were instrumental in more than 20 galas and 21 golf tournaments and conducted both luncheons and breakfasts in the 2000s. Volunteers also aided the small staff in writing grant proposals. Still, the staff found that fundraising and other administrative duties took time away from their mission. They began meeting with larger agencies to explore a merger.

A trustee, Malcolm Bailey, knew a PCHAS trustee, Carol Harris, and introduced the organizations to each other, but they did not reach a decision. Celeste Ross, then Homes of St. Mark CEO, says she prayed for a sign. Soon thereafter, she received a phone call from Dr. Ed Knight, PCHAS president, asking if she wanted to talk more.

HOMES OF SAINT MARK GARAGE SALE MARCH 12-13

Houston Chronicle
Auxiliary sets fund-raising sale

Homes of Saint Mark Auxiliary, a non-profit agency which provides maternity and adoption services, is holding a fund-raising garage sale from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. March 12 and 13 at Palmer Memorial Church, 422 Main. Donations will be accepted, and income tax receipts. www.houstonchronicle.com



Celeste Ross

The merger of Homes of St. Mark and Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services went into effect January 1, 2010. Celeste Ross, Michelle Hovker and several other staff brought their experience to PCHAS and are still helping children and families. PCHAS embraced the well-developed adoption program and still adheres to the philosophy of open adoption.



Michelle Hoevker

What is Positive Adoption Language?

"People mean well, but sometimes the language they use about adoption has negative connotations," says Michelle Hoevker, program director for PCHAS foster care and adoption programs in Houston, Texas. "For years, people have said that unwed mothers 'give up' or 'give away' their babies, which is insensitive to both the birth mothers and to the children."

Another expression, 'put up for adoption,' dates from the 1800s. Orphan trains brought children to stations and they were literally put up on a platform to be viewed and selected. Now, there is a movement to re-frame a birth mother's decision as careful and thoughtful. PCHAS staff say she is 'placing a child in adoption' or 'making an adoption plan.'

Hoevker has a passion for working with birth moms, adoptive parents and adoptees of all ages. She points out that individuals can make a difference in how they speak with and about their extended family.

If relatives are in the process of adopting, for example, they can be encouraged without implying a second-best family or that they are "special people" to consider it. An adoption should be celebrated just like a birth. Afterward, there is no reason to distinguish family members as "real" or "biological." They are all family.



"I Always Wondered If They Looked Like Me"

"The worst part of being adopted is going to a doctor without knowing your family's medical history," says Dianne. She was adopted when closed adoption was the norm. She never met her birth father, who died when she was in her teens. At age 19, she met her birth mother, who lived only two more years.

Dianne was the youngest of six. Her mother had tried to keep them together after her husband left, but could not earn enough income and was charged with neglect. She lost custody of all the children. Placed in different homes, Dianne and her sister Cathy lived at opposite ends of Houston for 20 years.

Closed records can affect adoptees profoundly. "I knew I was adopted as a baby and that I had sisters, but nothing else," she says. "I always wondered if they looked like me." Once, in school, she became angry about drawing a family tree. "It felt like a lie."

Cathy, meanwhile, was raised with one birth sister. She never knew there were other siblings until she was a young adult. Speaking for both sisters, she says, "The people who adopted us, we couldn't have asked for better parents. They were absolutely amazing." Still, meeting her birth mother and the rest of the family helped her understand her own story.

PCHAS continues to provide services to those individuals from a past closed adoption, searching for answers about family. For adult adoptees who inquire, the agency will reach out to their birth parents, but is legally obligated to honor the parents' wishes. PCHAS offers post-adoption services to its own clients and those from Homes of St. Mark, which merged with PCHAS a decade ago.

Dianne and Cathy encourage adoptive families to make as many connections with birth family as possible. They talk nearly every day and one is building a house near the other. "God has restored us," Cathy says. "We could have been destroyed by our circumstances, but he restored us. God has done amazing things."

PCHAS post-adoption services are for adoptees, adoptive parents and birth parents who worked with PCHAS or Homes of St. Mark. Birth siblings may also initiate a search. PCHAS can assist birth parents and prospective adoptive families in making joint decisions about adoption plans. If you have any questions as to whether we can help you with either of these services, please contact us.

Historical Mergers of PCHAS



Charles "Ed" Knight became President of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services in 2002.



Ed Knight with Graduates

In 1983, the "southern" Presbyterian Church of the United States (PCUS), with strong ties to **Presbyterian Children's Homes** and its main campus in Itasca, Texas, merged with the "northern" United Presbyterian Church of the US (UPCUSA), which had strong ties to **Presbyterian Children's Services** and its main campus in Waxahachie, Texas. The two denominations became one and are still known as the Presbyterian Church (USA). After they merged, the idea of combining the two non-profit agencies became a frequent topic of conversation.

When Presbyterian Children's Services interviewed candidates for president in 1997, the front-runner was Ed Knight. He had worked for Presbyterian Children's Homes in Itasca, so they asked him, "Are you going to try to merge us together?" He prudently answered, "Not unless you want me to." And he was hired.

By 2001, talk of a merger became more than an idea. One factor was that Rev. Dr. Charles "Chuck" Mendenhall would be stepping down as PCH president to move with his wife, Laura Mendenhall, to Atlanta, Georgia, where she would serve as president of Columbia Theological Seminary. Another factor was the economic advantage of combining resources and expertise.

Both Boards of Trustees, after extensive conversations, agreed that their main concern remained children and young adults in need. The two ministries had succeeded with various initiatives that expressed their missions. They could serve significantly more children, youth and families together with a better organized, more complete continuum of care.

PCH and PCS formed a joint fundraising effort starting in May, 2001, with the goal of a complete merger by year's end. On January 1, 2002, to honor the rich heritage and respected names of the two organizations, the new name became **Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services**, and informally started using the nickname **PCHAS** ("peach-az").

As the two ministries became one, the new organization remained dedicated to its Presbyterian roots and long-term Covenant Agreement with the Synod of the Sun. In 2003, PCHAS celebrated 100 years of service to children and families in need throughout Texas. Board members and staff pledged to keep an open mind, seeking God's will for the future of the new agency.

Child & Family Program and Locations

One of the distinguishing features of this program includes encouraging parents to not focus on their past, but rather to set goals for the future success of their family.

PCHAS Specialists meet with families in their homes (or location of their choice) to gather information and provide an assessment of the family's needs. Our professional staff are trained experts in Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®) and excellent at listening, helping parents identify strengths and creating a service plan toward a roadmap for future success.

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Abilene, TX | Keller, TX | Temple, TX |
| Austin, TX | Kilgore/ | Wichita Falls, TX |
| Corpus Christi, TX | Longview, TX | Columbia, MO |
| Corsicana, TX | Lubbock, TX | Farmington, MO |
| Dallas, TX | Midland/ | Baton Rouge, LA |
| Fort Worth, TX | Odessa, TX | New Orleans, LA |
| Houston, TX | San Antonio, TX | |

TBRI®

A combination of Christ-centered care and evidence-based methods has served the agency well throughout the years. In 2011, PCHAS staff started training in Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®). This research-backed parenting model, specifically crafted to nurture traumatized children, was developed by the Karen Purvis Institute of Child Development at Texas Christian University. Not only is the model effective in residential and community-based programs, but it also succeeds for biological families who are at risk of breaking apart.

TBRI® is designed for children from "hard places" such as abuse, neglect and/or trauma. Because of their histories, these children have changes in their bodies, brains, behaviors and belief systems. For example, they may have a fight-or-flight response to something that seems ordinary to most people.

Children from hard places often live in day-to-day survival mode, unable to express themselves and unsure of how to connect. So the intervention teaches three core values:

- Empowering principles to meet physical needs
- Connecting principles for attachment needs
- Correcting principles to help children get needs met

The agency was already developing community-based programs that strengthened families and prevented the removal of children from their homes. By 2008 the Child and Family Program added specialists in Dallas and San Antonio as well as Kilgore, Temple and the West Texas towns of Lubbock and Midland. PCHAS hired a Child and Family specialist in Longview and also opened a foster care office there. Local churches supported the PCHAS mission by offering free office space to many of these employees. In 2008, PCHAS started its Single Parent Family Program in Weatherford.

Historically, PCHAS had operated large orphanages and then smaller group homes. It adapted its services with the H.O.P.E. Program in the Waxahachie area which, in 2001, placed 70 children in 35 licensed foster homes. As the social mindset about foster care evolved, PCHAS considered other opportunities to care for children and families in need.

2010 marked a second major merger, this time with an adoption agency, **Homes of St. Mark**. It was located in Houston and had ties to the Episcopal Church. After merging, its name was changed to PCHAS' Foster Care and Adoption program. PCHAS was able to extend adoption services throughout Texas, especially through its foster care

programs in Dallas-Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, Austin and Houston. A long-reaching outcome of this merger was that PCHAS invested more in cultivating connections between biological and foster parents for the benefit of the child.

Soon after this, with its penchant for collaborating, PCHAS entered into an agreement with a Dallas organization. The 2011 agreement implemented a foster care program funded by Juliette Fowler Homes, now known as Juliette Fowler Communities.

PCHAS was committed to remaining nimble in a quickly changing world, all the while holding fast to its mission to deliver Christ-centered care to children and families in need. In 2012, the Waxahachie campus opened the agency's second Single Parent Family site, modeled after the one in Weatherford. The same year, PCHAS broke ground on a new Itasca group home. At its dedication the next year, it was named after Mrs. Billie Bradley of Eastland, TX, who was the lead donor of the project. She attended the ribbon-cutting with her son, E.T. Bradley, who became very supportive of PCHAS in the years to follow.

In 2013, PCHAS entered into an affiliation agreement with the Children’s Foundation of Mid America (see Chapter 3). The two had similar histories, founded as orphanages and trending over the years toward a mix of residential and community-based services. The two agreed to work together to further their shared mission. They adopted similar names and began serving children and families respectively as **PCHAS of Texas** and **PCHAS of Missouri**. Within the unique affiliation agreement, three members of each board served on the other agency’s board, and Ed Knight, president of PCHAS of Texas and Louisiana, became president of PCHAS of Missouri’s Board of Trustees. Linda Bishop, vice president of Finance and Administration, was asked to oversee finances of both agencies and Rev. Peter D. Crouch, vice president of development, was asked to oversee their fundraising and communications programs.

Growth continued with the Child and Family Program expanding eastward to open two programs in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the following year, in New Orleans. PCHAS of Texas added “and Louisiana” to its name.

Meanwhile, in Houston, PCHAS dedicated a Single Parent Family program on the campus of St. John’s Presbyterian Church. In Austin, PCHAS elected to sell its local group homes to start another branch of its Foster Care and Adoption Program. In San Antonio, while continuing its Child and Family Program, it re-purposed its group homes to open a Single Parent Family Program and a Transitional Living Program.

As of 2011, Presbyterian Children’s Homes and Services operated 19 group homes for children ages 6-17 on its Texas campuses in Itasca, Waxahachie, San Antonio, Duncanville and Austin. Each Christ-centered home had six to eight children who lived together in a family-style environment. Full-time staff lived in each home, providing the love, guidance and nurture that every child needed. As in any good home, all basic needs of the child were provided, along with spiritual guidance, individual counseling, psychiatric and psychological assessments, medical and dental care, specialized tutoring and preparation for advanced education such as junior college, trade school or university.

In 2016, with the help of E.T. Bradley, PCHAS was able to upgrade the Itasca campus’ gymnasium, tennis court, pool deck and add a disc golf course. But the agency also recognized a growing demand for its other services. PCHAS decided to fully transform its Waxahachie location into a campus for 16 single-parent families as well as five young adults transitioning to independence. Then, in December of 2016, PCHAS received a significant donation from Les and Brenda Staples towards future expansion of its San Antonio campus. It would serve as the lead gift of the “Epiphany: Standing in the Presence of Christ” capital campaign (see page 64).

In November, 2018, PCHAS entered into a unique three-way covenant agreement with the Synod of the Sun and the Synod of Mid America. That same year, PCHAS also entered into a mission agreement with the ECO Presbytery of Texas.



E.T. Bradley - San Antonio Campus Memorial Prayer Garden



Ed Knight and David Thompson try out the new client playroom in the Austin office.



David and Ed talking to children at a staff event - 2008

President Ed Knight announced he would retire at the end of 2017. Trustees from both agencies who had approved the affiliation now met to consider a full merger. Each board met separately and voted to merge PCHAS of Texas and Louisiana with PCHAS of Missouri. The merger culminated in a special celebration honoring Dr. Knight, who served the agency for a total of 30 years, the last 20 as president and CEO.

Effective January 1, 2018, the merged agency became Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS). David Thompson, formerly PCHAS of Texas and Louisiana's chief operating officer, became the merged agency's new president and CEO.

One of President Thompson's first tasks was overseeing changes to Texas group homes. A 2019 federal lawsuit against the state of Texas required all group homes in the state, including those operated by PCHAS, to have staff on duty and awake 24 hours a day in each home. The requirement would have been costly and ran counter to the agency's commitment to raise children as part of a family setting. So, PCHAS converted most group homes to single-parent family and transitional living homes. The exception was the historic Itasca campus, which became The Foster Care Village.

A Labor of Love

This will be my final newsletter article as the PCHAS CEO. Earlier this year, the winter edition of From the Heart announced my intention to retire at the end of this year. That time is growing more near with each rapidly passing month, and these months have been a time of contemplation. As I reflect on the body of work that makes up my 40 plus years of professional service to children and adults, I feel especially privileged that 30 of those years have been at PCHAS.

Simply put, I know of no other similar organization that does a better job of fulfilling its mission with genuine zeal to show Christ's love in concrete ways to hurting people. This is a tribute to the board of trustees who have engendered this culture and to the donors who enable our programs to exist, expand, and increase in scope. There is a palpable sense within PCHAS that we must do all we can for those we serve.

As you read the articles in this newsletter, you will see updates from across the spectrum of our services reflecting what I am talking about. I give thanks that the scope of PCHAS services has grown so wide, because today's diverse needs of children, young adults, and families demand to be to be addressed in a variety of ways. For 30 years at PCHAS, I consider myself very fortunate to have been surrounded by skilled and committed colleagues.

In closing, I thank God for you and the opportunity I have had to be a part of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services. It has been a labor of love.

— Ed Knight

From the Heart

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 Sara Newell, Communications Supervisor
 Margaret Barry, Director of Communications
 Chris Perez, Communications Manager
 Alyssa Raeter, Communications Coordinator

President Ed Knight Announces Retirement Board Names President Elect



By Rev. Peter D. Crouch, Vice President for Development

Dr. Ed Knight, President and CEO of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS) since 1997, has announced his retirement, effective December 31, 2017. His past 20 years of service, combined with ten prior years from 1973-1983, will mark 30 years of service to PCHAS upon his retirement.

"I have been blessed to work with Ed during almost the entire 30 years he has held the reins at PCHAS. Throughout his time as President and CEO, Ed has been both the glue and the guiding light that has propelled PCHAS to where and what it is today," said Robert "Bob" Farris, chair of the PCHAS Board of Trustees. "Ed's dedication to the children we serve inspires everyone who comes in contact with him. What a providential blessing his presence has been to this agency!"



Dr. Knight knew all his life he wanted to be in a "helping profession," especially one that empowers people to overcome dysfunctional family origins. He studied psychology in college and earned master's degrees in both counseling and social work. Later in his career, he earned a doctorate in management and organizational development.

When he was drafted after college, he became a U.S. Army social worker. Following his service in the army, Dr. Knight began his distinguished career at PCHAS' predecessor organization,

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Today and Tomorrow



The historical merger of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services of Texas & Louisiana with Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services of Missouri became effective January 1, 2018. It also marked the conclusion of Ed Knight's presidency from 1997-2017 and the beginning of David Thompson's presidency. Members of Thompson's executive staff were Linda Bishop, vice president of Finance and Administration; Rev. Peter D. Crouch, vice president of Development; Robert Giegling, vice president of Programs and Randy Spencer, vice president of Organizational Impact.

The new Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services collectively serves 4,500 children and families each year with 12 programs and 27 locations throughout Texas, Missouri and Louisiana. The agency remains nimble and steadfast: nimble enough to pivot to meet the ever-changing needs of children and families, and steadfast in striving to serve like Jesus.

PCHAS in the 21st century stays true to its mission by focusing on permanent homes for children and self-sufficiency for families. It has evolved from the days of orphanages and believes that it is not enough to serve children only after they have been mistreated. As Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa said, "There comes a time when we have to go upstream and find out why children are falling into the river."

The San Antonio campus, for example, operates both community-based and residential programs. In 2016, PCHAS decided to launch the silent phase of a capital campaign. Brenda and Les Staples donated a significant gift towards the campus expansion that December. The campaign's public phase began the next year with a goal of \$4.6 million under the title "Epiphany: Standing in the Presence of Christ," a capital campaign co-chaired by Sara Craig, Banner Huggins and Rev. Peter Crouch.



Linda Bishop



Rev. Peter D. Crouch



Robert Giegling



Randy Spencer

PCHAS programs, utilizing Christ-like compassion and evidence-based interventions, strive to prevent and break generational cycles of trauma. The Growing Together Program is another example of this approach. In 2019, PCHAS created the Growing Together Program for families with children under age six. That led to co-founding the Navarro County Early Childhood Coalition, which earned a 2020 award from the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Also in 2019, PCHAS closed its Residential Treatment Center in Farmington, Missouri. PCHAS had joined a national alliance to re-design residential care but state funding for residential care kept declining. Meanwhile, Farmington's poverty and drop-out rates were rising. So PCHAS again adapted its programming to meet a community's needs, this time focusing on education, employment and family stability. It launched the Farmington Service Center with residential programs for single-parent families and rented an apartment building for a Transitional Living Program. It launched community-based, early-intervention programs such as counseling and mentoring, too. Within three years, the Community Counseling Center became the model for counseling services in other regions.



Steve Mullenix, MIS director, solved countless "Work From Home" problems during the COVID-19 transition.

Then, in March, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic erupted. The agency quickly formed an Emergency Response Team and authorized many employees to work from home. Within days, staff learned to meet "virtually" and continue their work without interruption. Resourceful case managers, counselors and mentors met clients on front porches and driveways. They arranged phone and video calls. Without a vaccine available, residential campuses practiced social distancing and mask regulations. The development team pivoted to online luncheons and volunteers created cards to lift the spirits of clients in quarantine.

The pandemic stretched into 2021 and 2022 with variants rising and waning. PCHAS continued following CDC guidelines. Masks became optional as vaccinations increased and cases dropped considerably. All the while, staff provided care and support to children and families in need. And PCHAS' clients continued to inspire staff and donors with their resilience.



In the midst of this chaos, PCHAS brings comfort to families who are more anxious than ever before. We see an ever greater need for our programs and services which specialize in helping children and families heal from traumatic experiences. People who feel lost and unsure are still able to turn to PCHAS for comfort and guidance. We are taking every precaution recommended by the CDC to keep our staff and those we serve safe and healthy. – David Thompson, President

COVID-19 and Volunteers

Many PCHAS clients, because of their losses, do not have a strong support network. Their connections with volunteers are invaluable. As PCHAS staff wondered how to help families through the stress of social isolation, they organized a “care letter” project via email. The project grew to include clients who had never met a PCHAS volunteer but might appreciate a note of encouragement. Staff provided first names of clients: young children, teens and parents. Volunteers took friendly selfies to go with messages of support. Then staff forwarded these to case workers, who shared them with clients.



At the final Trustee meeting of 2021, the Board honored Lyle Gramling upon his retirement. He faithfully served PCHAS for 48 years, the longest tenure of any known staff person. Asher Cottage, where he once served as a young case worker, was re-named the Asher-Gramling Cottage.

David Thompson, Judy and Lyle Gramling

After 19 years with PCHAS, Vice President of Finance and Administration Linda Bishop retired in the spring of 2022. The agency hired Crystal Kirby as vice president of finance and promoted two existing staff members: Cindy Lively became vice president of administration and Jeanine Watson became vice president of human resources.

During the recession, PCHAS’ friends remained faithful and generous. The agency completed its San Antonio “Epiphany” campaign and followed up with a “Home Sweet Home” campaign, eventually raising \$5 million total. Construction began on eight duplexes for single-parent families, an enrichment center, five efficiency apartments, two playgrounds, a memorial prayer garden, an open-air pavilion and several other additions. On April 30, 2022, PCHAS hosted the dedication of the expanded campus. State Senator José Menéndez provided the agency with a Senate resolution.

Whereas, founded over a century ago, PCHAS provides faith-based care and support to thousands of children and their families in 28 locations in Texas, Louisiana and Missouri . . . the improvements to its San Antonio campus will amplify its impact significantly in the years to come; now, therefore, be it resolved that the dedication of its expanded San Antonio campus be commemorated and that all those associated with the organization be extended sincere best wishes for continued success.

– José Menéndez, State Senator, District 26



The Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services recognized the agency's Wichita Falls office as Community Organization Staff of the Year.



Pam Crawford receiving the Outstanding Leader Award

In 2021, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services honored Pam Crawford, a PCHAS regional director (now retired), with its Outstanding Leader Award.

PCHAS provides extensive training to all of its foster parents. In five of the past six years, agency families were named Texas Foster Parents of the Year.



2022 Foster Parents of the Year Gary and Amy Moore



In 2021, the national Council on Accreditation approved PCHAS again for accreditation, recognizing best practices in administration, accountability and organizational capacity.

The national Council on Accreditation first recognized PCS during the 1980s. The Council on Accreditation (COA) is now known as Social Current. It sets high standards for social service agencies and administrative departments to increase organizational capacity and accountability. This whole-organization approach ensures that everyone—from human resources to finance to direct care and clinical staff—is working together to carry out the agency's mission.

During each generation of PCHAS' life, one can see how God has inspired generosity in numerous people and ministries towards PCHAS' mission. Space prevents us from listing everyone we would like to thank, but PCHAS is grateful for the significant gifts it has received from the following families, churches and foundations:

Beth Adams, Mary F. Barrett, Ray and Mildred Bell, John L. Boal, Billye B. Bradley, Carla and E.T. Bradley, Bernice Brown, Wendell C. Carter, John and Mildred Cauthorn, James A. Chapman, CIOS Foundation, Thomas Craig, The Dallas Foundation, Ross L. Daniels, Ruth Decker, Phil and Polly Diebel, Charline Dore Downs, Margaret Frazier, Claudia Gill, Clifford Grum, H.D. Hassell, Willie C. Hassell, Bessie I. Hofstetter, Jean R. Kindle, John Knox, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation, John P. McGovern Foundation, Hal Henry and Beulah Hale McHaney, The Middleton Family, W. P. Newell, Liane and Marty Phillips, Walter Puls, J.W. Rogers, Augusta Shivers, Brenda and Les Staples, Margaret G. Stuart, Mary S. Waller, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Corsicana, Russell Wischmeyer and Ben W. Young.

– Rev. Peter D. Crouch, Vice President of Development

PCHAS Programs & Locations

HELPING CHILDREN



Elevate Mentoring (TX, MO)

Mentors meet weekly with children at home, school or in the community to implement customized plans for overcoming a crisis or long-term struggles.



Transitional Living for Young Adults (TX)

Young adults, ages 16-24, who have experienced moderate trauma receive customized support as they grow into independent adults and develop sustainable plans for their future. Clients, who are in school or employed, are provided residential care in an on-campus apartment or residence.



Transitional Living for Youth in Foster Care (MO)

Youth still in the state's foster care system are eligible to receive residential care and support as they transition to independent adult living. Clients, who are in school or employed, are provided residential care in an on-campus apartment, residence or scattered site.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES



Child & Family (TX, MO & LA)

This in-home family preservation program stabilizes families during a crisis such as poverty, abuse, neglect or homelessness.



Counseling Centers (MO, TX)

This program provides mental health services for children, families and groups. Our Farmington location is also able to provide substance abuse counseling and education.



Family Solutions for Kids (MO)

Experts visit families in their homes to change behaviors and eliminate cycles of harm, allowing families to provide loving and nurturing environments for their children.



Growing Together (TX)

Growing Together is open to any pregnant parent or parents with a child 0-5 years of age residing in Navarro County who desires a stronger attachment with their child. Specialists promote child welfare and early childhood education. Families learn to build closer relationships and reduce parental stress.



Single Parent Family (TX & MO)

Struggling single parents gain the chance to raise their children in a safe, nurturing environment while strengthening their self-sufficiency.

BUILDING COMMUNITY



Foster Care and Adoption (TX)

Our expert staff screen, train and support caring families who give children in foster care a stable and loving home. Some foster parents, through adoption, create forever homes. Further support is provided through church-based initiatives.



Foster Care Village (TX)

This program serves 30-35 children of all ages through seven foster homes on the agency's historic campus. Children live with foster parent families, attend church on Sundays and public schools and engage in numerous extracurricular activities. Amenities include the youth activity center, swimming pool and gymnasium.



Foster Care & Medical Case Management (MO)

In partnership with the Missouri Alliance, PCHAS foster care case management experts place children in loving foster homes and supervise their continued care to permanency. Specialists ensure that children in foster care receive medical, dental, vision and hearing screenings, as well as all required immunizations.



Education (TX)

The Foster Care Village campus in Itasca provides tutoring, college and vocational school preparation.

TEXAS

1. Abilene



2. Austin



3. Corpus Christi



4. Corsicana



5. Dallas



6. Fort Worth



7. Graham



8. Houston



9. Itasca



10. Keller



11. Kilgore/Longview



12. Lubbock



13. Midland/Odessa



14. San Antonio



15. Temple



16. Vernon



17. Waxahachie



18. Wichita Falls



25. Springfield



26. St. Louis



27. Troy



21. Columbia



22. Farmington



23. Hillsboro



24. Joplin



LOUISIANA

19. Baton Rouge



20. New Orleans



MISSOURI

21

27

26

23

22

24

25

2023 Executive Staff

Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services



David Thompson
President and CEO

David joined the PCHAS (Texas) staff in 1999 as vice president of administration and general counsel. In 2014, he became the general counsel and chief operating officer, supervising all program staff in Texas. After the 2018 merger, he became the president and CEO.



Cindy Lively
Vice President of Administration

Cindy joined the PCHAS (Missouri) staff in 1984 as a direct care worker. Since then, she has served in many capacities, including director of cottage life, recreation director, case manager, therapist, executive director and director of quality assurance. After the 2018 merger, she became the director of risk management. In 2022, she became the vice president of administration.



Rev. Peter D. Crouch
Vice President of Development

Peter joined the PCHAS (Texas) staff in 2011 as vice president of development. In 2014, he became the vice president of development for PCHAS (Texas) and PCHAS (Missouri). After the 2018 merger, he remained the vice president of development.



Randy Spencer
Vice President of Organizational Impact

Randy joined the PCHAS (Texas) staff in 2008 as vice president of residential programs. After the 2018 merger, he became the vice president of organizational impact.



Robert Giegling
Vice President of Programs

Robert joined the PCHAS (Missouri) staff in 2005 as director of programs. In 2013, he became its executive director. After the 2018 merger, he became the vice president of programs.



Jeanine Watson
Vice President of Human Resources

Jeanine joined the PCHAS (Missouri) staff in 2014 as human resources manager. In 2015, she became the director of human resources. After the 2018 merger, she became the director of human resources. In 2022, she became the vice president of human resources.



Crystal Kirby
Vice President of Finance

Crystal joined the PCHAS staff in 2022 as vice president of finance.

2023 PCHAS Board of Trustees

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Sonta Henderson
Director of Marketing and Communications

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Vice President of Development

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Today and Tomorrow

PCHAS, despite its challenges, grew stronger. Recent corporate innovations include leadership training, a wellness initiative and the formation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team. PCHAS continues to earn high honors from non-profit watchdogs GuideStar and Charity Navigator.

Programmatically, the long-term success of Missouri's mentoring program led in September, 2021 to PCHAS establishing its first Elevate Mentoring program in Temple, Texas. This was a joint effort by First Presbyterian Church of Temple, Grace Presbyterian Church of Temple, Grace Presbytery and Ken Whipple. First Presbyterian Church members donated proceeds from the sale of their church to fund 50% of the program's first eight years of operation in memory of their long-time and beloved member, Kate Dimmitt. Ken Whipple donated 50% of the program's first eight years of operation in memory of his late wife, Ingrid Whipple, a long-time and beloved member of Grace Presbyterian Church of Temple.

In 2022, the agency also broke ground in Cypress, TX for the Houston Foster Care and Adoption office. This is also the site of one of the agency's new Counseling Centers.

This year, 2023, marks another milestone in the life of Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, as it celebrates with you its 120th anniversary. From the very beginning, people of faith responded to the biblical call in James 1:27, *to care for orphans and widows in their distress*. PCHAS is still responding to this biblical call today.

In 1903, homes were built to care for children who didn't have families. Since then and today, as the needs of children change, PCHAS continues to evolve to provide them with the services they need most. As you've just read, four agencies collaborated and merged. More communities were served. Creative new programs were offered. In the years to come, PCHAS will continue meeting its mission to offer Christ-centered care and support to children and families in need. Thank you for being a valued member of "the PCHAS family."



David Thompson,
President

James

1:27

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress.



Presbyterian Children's
Homes and ServicesSM

HISTORY OF PCHAS



120
YEARS OF SERVICE