

A Christian Home for Every Orphan

THE GOAL OF TWO ROANOKE AREA CHURCHES



Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

James 1:27

Sam^{*} now a student at Liberty University, began life as an orphan and got into a lot of trouble growing up. He eventually attended a public high school in the Roanoke area, where a teacher took an interest in his well-being. This teacher, who attended an SBCV church in Salem, became concerned with his situation and that of others like him. She began attending regular informational meetings about orphan care. She sought training and approval to become a foster parent, then an adoptive parent to this young man. During the process, which had to remain discreet, the young man talked with this teacher about the discovery of an adoptive family, not knowing it was her. One day, he came into her class and said, “There’s someone who wants me... and it’s you, isn’t it?” She confirmed it was, and thus began her family’s ministry through foster and orphan care.

Two SBC of Virginia churches in the Roanoke area are actively engaged in making a difference in the lives of children like Sam—orphans in need of foster care and adoption. The biblical mandate to do so is clear in James 1 and Psalm 82:3-4. The need is clear with more than 400,000 children in the US without families to care for and nurture them. In



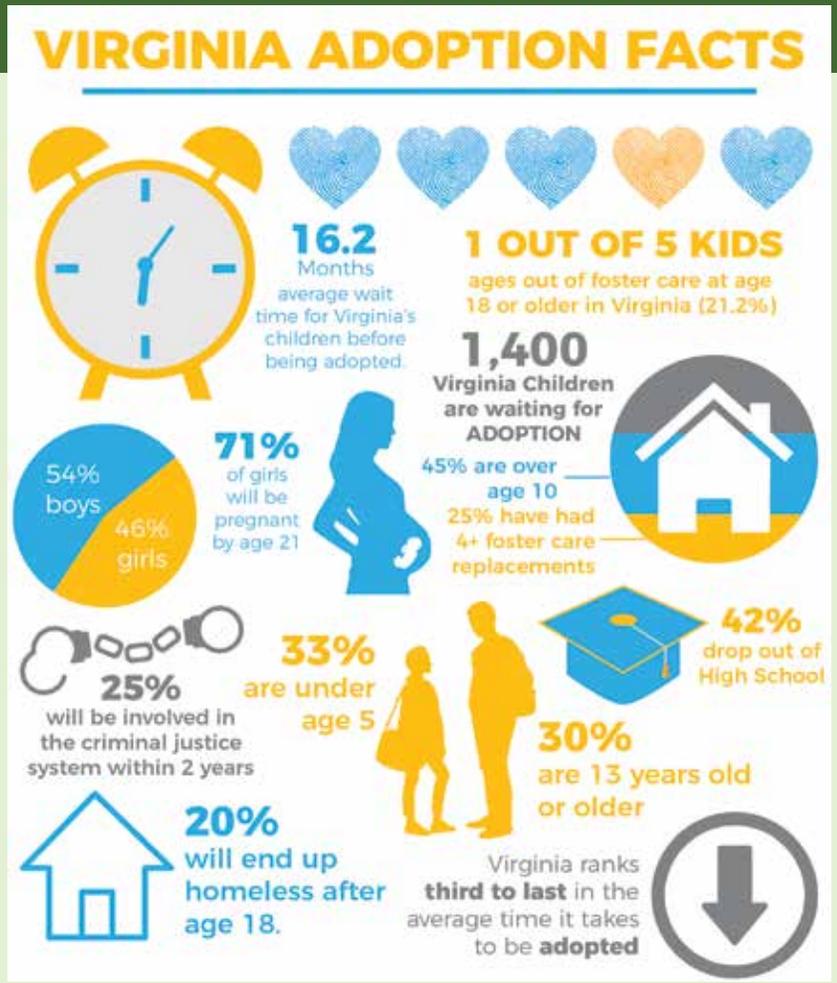
fact, as of April 2018, there were more than 5,000 in Virginia.

“This is a challenge the church can meet!” says Warren King, associate pastor at **Fincastle Baptist Church** (Fincastle, VA). “The body of Christ can fulfill the command found in James 1:27 and elsewhere to care for the orphan and provide for the least of these.”

This past spring, Fincastle began an Adoption/Foster Care Community Initiative. As part of the initiative, Fincastle developed resources and provides them to churches to help them begin their own adoption/foster care ministries. In addition, Fincastle is developing partnerships with the local Department of Social Services and foster care facilities to provide training and mutual support services. This kind of approach could be taken by any church that has a heart to minister through foster care and adoption.



Eight years ago, **Fellowship Community Church** (Salem, VA) began a ministry called The Empty Chair, which brought awareness to families who have extra room at their tables and in their hearts for children in need of a family. Led by Ray and Kelli Moore, The Empty Chair serves approximately 100 adopting and fostering families, has two global partnerships, and has an established mentoring program. This past spring, they created an independent non-profit called 127 Place, which recognizes the need to help other churches effectively engage and resource this kind of work. It is aptly named after James 1:27. The goal of 127 Place is to engage and support churches and individuals to answer God's call to serve the fatherless. It is the place where the church can come together to serve vulnerable children most effectively.



Fincastle and Fellowship are two churches demonstrating to their communities that children should not be alone. For one adoptive father, the Gospel summed up his own experience: “Becoming an adoptive parent has helped me understand the Gospel and my own adoption as a child of God.”

As one pastor put it, “The deepest and strongest foundation of adoption is located not in the act of humans adopting humans, but in God adopting humans—it is at the heart of the Gospel.”

When the time came to completion, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ~ Galatians 4:4-5



For all those led by God's Spirit are God's sons. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" ~ Romans 8:14b-15

More than 1,000 children in Virginia are ready but await adoption. Having been adopted into God's family, shouldn't Christians be on the front lines of this critical ministry?

All Scripture passages are from the Christian Standard Bible (CSB).

*Name has been changed

MORE INFO If you are interested in learning more about the SW VA Christian Alliance for Orphans, please go to: 127place.org