

*And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches
of his glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19*

Friends of Cherish All Children,

On behalf of the board of directors, I am delighted to share with you some wonderful news about the future of Cherish All Children. At the board meeting October 26, the board unanimously voted to continue our mission by becoming part of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS). This change will be completed by the end of the year, with work already taking place to transition staff and resources and complete the legal requirements. The primary goal of the board members after Amy Hartman's departure as National Director this summer was to again secure strong leadership and greater financial stability to continue to fulfill the important mission of Cherish All Children. We feel very strongly that we, along with your continued support, will be able to accomplish this through our partnership with LSS.

I am also very happy to share that the board has selected Joy McElroy to lead Cherish All Children as Executive Director. Joy has over 25 years of leadership experience in business, education, and church organizations, most recently working on a contract basis for Cherish All Children supporting the St. Paul Area Synod. In this role, the board had an opportunity to observe not only her leadership skills, but also her passion for this ministry, especially serving those most vulnerable to sexual exploitation - children and youth.



Joy McElroy,
Cherish All Children
Executive Director

I want to thank the Cherish All Children community for your patience and dedication to this work everyday, and especially through this time of transition. I ask you to continue to pray and support Cherish All Children into the future.

A sincere thank you to LSS Chief Executive Officer, Jodi Harpstead, and her team for the inspiring work that they do and for their commitment to build on our work to prevent the sexual exploitation of children. We all look forward to working together and seeing how God will work through us next!

Look for more information on the attached Q and A and to follow soon from Joy and LSS.

Grace and blessings,

Gwen Kuhrt - Board Chair, Cherish All Children

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What was the process the board used to reach this decision?

At our strategic retreat this summer, the board prayerfully considered our best options for continuing the mission of Cherish All Children. We were grateful for the strong foundation that Amy Hartman had provided the organization over the last 10 years and wanted to not only continue this work, but build upon it as best we could. We recommitted to our mission, vision and values; researched other organizations and the context in which we're operating; and identified our strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results (SOAR model). We identified 17 options for consideration and established a list of criteria in which to evaluate these options. Ultimately, our number one option was to continue our mission by joining with another partner within the ELCA.

After our retreat, we reached out to our liaison at the ELCA office in Chicago, who in turn, reached out to other social ministries. We were amazed that our very first response was from Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Their mission, vision and commitment to children, youth and families; their extensive work with a statewide initiative called Safe Harbor to help sexually-exploited youth rebuild their lives; and their long history of inspiring hope and changing lives, were just some of the positives we saw with this alliance.

We began meeting in August with LSS Chief Executive Officer Jodi Harpstead. Jodi demonstrated that LSS has successfully partnered with other organizations in a similar fashion, allowing organizations to retain their identity and mission. She emphasized, "We are changing the structure, not the mission." Discussions continued over the last three months, with final approval at our board meeting on October 26.

What are some of the benefits to this change?

At our board retreat, we spent a fair amount of time discussing the challenges we face as a smaller organization. Administration required for technology, accounting, and personnel were requiring more and more staff time and resources, resulting in less time to focus on the mission. Being part of LSS, we will not only have access to their expertise and support on administration, but also have access to their experience and knowledge in outreach, resource development, event planning, and communications.

Further, the opportunity for collaboration with LSS given their current outreach to Lutheran congregations, as well as their work with homeless youth and Safe Harbor services, is a natural fit with the Cherish All Children prevention model. Community education in coordination with the public sector and congregational settings will strengthen our work of prevention.

What about the work Cherish All Children does outside of Minnesota?

This was one of our first questions we posed to LSS. Their view is that we can continue to have a national outreach, and provide support for non-Minnesota congregations, taking our budget and resources into consideration - which is similar to how things are today. Our work

this summer with Women of the ELCA (WELCA) has also provided a platform in which we can continue this ministry on a national level.

Who will keep LSS accountable to the Cherish All Children mission?

Our board of directors will meet on a regular basis with LSS leadership and the Cherish All Children staff. However, the official role will change from a governing board to an advisory board. In its advisory capacity, the board will provide advice and support on programs and strategies and ensure that we stay aligned with the mission of Cherish All Children.

What about the roles of current staff?

Joy and Ginny Rudloff will become employees of LSS. In the short term, they will both be focused on ensuring a smooth transition, aligning the mission and goals of Cherish All Children with LSS work, and getting to know their new colleagues.

A special acknowledgement to Ginny Rudloff, who in addition to her role as Minneapolis Prevention Coordinator, did a terrific job in the day to day management of Cherish All Children over the past five months. Ginny's willingness to take on these duties, along with her continued positive commitment to Cherish All Children, made a huge difference.

What about donations?

Despite becoming a part of a larger organization, we will continue to have a great need to secure sufficient funds to continue and justify our work.

For the rest of the calendar year 2017, please continue to send your donations to us in the current manner. For those individuals who have set up automatic or recurring donations, we will be contacting you directly sometime in early 2018 with the information on how to make the necessary changes. It is important to make clear that your donations made payable to "Cherish All Children" will not be commingled with other LSS programs, but be restricted to the particular purpose of Cherish All Children.

Cherish All Children has a history of a dedicated and committed community of donors, and we thank you and hope that you will continue to support this ministry in the future. We are confident that these changes will not only allow our work to continue, but will help us have an even greater impact to ensure that all God's children will be cherished, not exploited.

Where can I get more information about LSS and ask additional questions?

We invite you to learn more about LSS by visiting their website www.lssmn.org. More information on the work of Cherish All Children within the LSS structure will also be made available soon. You can also send questions to: info@cherishchildren.org and Joy or Ginny will respond.