



More Than Hope

Living Hope International

March 2016

You have seen... You are the *helper* of the fatherless — Psalm 10:14 (NKJV)

Dear Friends,

Spring is in the air! The newness of life around us is a reminder that our lives have been made new because Christ arose, the victor over death, giving us our greatest hope! As nature is once again beginning to flourish, so is our work here at Living Hope International. We've seen the Lord blessing in so many ways and today I'd like to share some very special highlights with you.

LIVES FOREVER CHANGED

This past Christmas was an outstanding time here at LHI and for several very special families from different parts of these United States. In early December, we launched the winter session of our Orphan Hosting program with the arrival of twelve special needs orphans from China, along with several of their caregivers who would serve as interpreters throughout their stay. There was so much anticipation prior to their coming and the host families kept social media popping non-stop it seemed with questions, suggestions and other relevant chitchat. Who knew there could be so many ways to say, "We can't wait 'til they get here!"

They say a picture is worth a thousand words...
If that be true, then this one's worth at least 10k!



The excitement leading up to the hosting session was such a delight to witness, but then the floodgates really opened when the kiddos arrived—twelve "bundles" of joy, some almost buried beneath the many layers of clothing they'd been lovingly dressed in to shield them from winter's chill. Their outermost was a down vest of bright blue and fluorescent green—all matching so the caregivers could easily keep an eye on them during their travels.

No one really knew quite what to expect when the children arrived. Would they be utterly exhausted from such a long journey? Well, yes, of course. Would they be cranky, confused and reluctant to go home with these funny-looking strangers who were greeting them at the airport? Not at all. The kids had been very well prepared for this exciting adventure by their orphanage and by our LHI staff in China. After the effects of jetlag wore off, each settled wonderfully into his or her new four-week home.

The children spent the next month doing a host of things they'd likely never been able to do before, soaking up new experiences, and for some, discovering hidden talents. One little guy took to the water like a fish—surely a future Special Olympian—and another spirited young lady showed 'em how it's done in her ballet class! One of the most significant opportunities the kids were given was to attend Sunday School—possibly for the first time ever—to learn the real meaning of Christmas.

The children blossomed and transformed right before our very eyes, some overcoming long-standing challenges both physical and otherwise. It was truly beautiful to see the transformations. There were far too many to include them all, but here's an example of the kind of impact that unconditional love can have: One boy, the oldest in the group, was deathly afraid of dogs, so much so that a reminder was sent from his orphanage after he landed. His host family was very mindful of this and kept the dogs safely away from him. But by the time the hosting session was drawing to a close, his fear had dissipated and he was allowing his new canine friends to rest on his lap and even took an afternoon siesta with them! How true it is: *Perfect love casts out fear — 1 John 4:18 (NKJV)*

When the much-dreaded time came to say goodbye, all were worried that the children would not understand and that their hearts would be broken to have to part ways. In fact, many prayers went up about this very thing. To everyone's amazement, however, the only ones crying in the airport were the host families! The kids happily boarded the plane with their caregivers, proving that God had done His perfect work in each little heart.

The icing on this story is that of the twelve orphans who got to participate in this session, eleven are now in the process of being adopted and soon will be called orphans no more. **This is an unprecedented success rate** and we surely thank the Lord for His great blessings. Eleven out of twelve! And that's not all: Two other children who did not actually get to participate in the program are nonetheless being adopted as a result of this recent session. We're not giving up on number twelve either, so please help us pray that he will meet the family he will call his own real soon.

That will definitely be the cherry on top!

It's no exaggeration to say that the lives of each participating family and all of our staff were forever altered by the beauty of this program. How can one witness such depths of love and ever remain the same?

And so we find ourselves looking ahead to the summer and preparing to do it all over again.

A MOST HAPPY RETURN

Our China Angels are back in the United States and hopefully coming to a church near you! This year's tour began in central Florida with a gracious and warm welcome from a lovely couple who own and operate a horse and cattle ranch down in that neck of the woods. Our staff and children—surrounded by wild turkeys, cows galore and an occasional friendly alligator—enjoyed themselves immensely in their rustic "home away from home." Thank you so much, Mr. and Mrs. S, for opening your hearts and your home to our little cowboys and girls!

Making up the Angels this year are veterans Mandy, Emma, Elizabeth, Ryan and Tyler. New to the tour are Silas, Logan and Keira. The last two, Logan and Keira, are both relatively new to Living Hope, so allow me to briefly introduce them to you:

Keira (Zhang Hong Juan) is currently the second youngest child in our Guangling home and is cute as can be. She can be quite bashful, but is described as very detail-oriented and hard-working. She's really good at cleaning up and organizing things, qualities that will serve her well as she gets older.

Behind that fabulous smile of his, our Logan (Liu Yu You) can be a bit mischievous. But he's also not afraid to work very hard and will see a project through to completion, asking questions anytime he's unsure of how to continue. He has exceptional pronunciation when speaking English, which will also undoubtedly serve him well in the future.

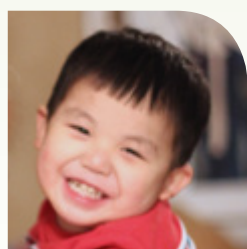
We're delighted to have both children as a part of our Living Hope family!

Be sure to visit the Angel's page on our website to see if there is a performance scheduled near you. The calendar will continually be updated throughout the season, so don't forget to check back often!



ORPHAN HOSTING Winter 2015 Session

Left to right: Brooke . Tyler . Kate . Alex .
Lily . Jason . Megan . Ryan . Sara . Patrick
Cover: Ashton Next page: Tommy





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