

AGAPE *in* ACTION

Strengthening children and families with the healing love of Christ through counseling and social services

WHERE ARE THEY NOW: DR. HOUSTON DAVIS

Dear AGAPE Family:

On October 26th, I had the honor of being installed officially as the 11th president in the 110-year history of the University of Central Arkansas. It was one of those significant days in life when you are offered a moment to meaningfully reflect upon all those people and groups that helped shape your experiences and opportunities. As



someone who firmly believes that no person ever finds success based on their sole efforts, my list of acknowledgments extended to family, friends, mentors, and colleagues that form a constellation of positive influences in my life. It is safe to say that AGAPE was also central to those reflections.

In April of 1973, through the blessing of adoption, Linda and James Davis brought me into their lives and provided the love and assurance that set into motion every blessing in my life. Four years later in March of 1977, AGAPE made it possible for my brother, Matt, to complete the puzzle and define “family” in my life. Mom and Dad gave us a foundation of values that added up to a road map to human decency. They taught us to respect others. They gave us a steady, calming perspective on life to know how to conquer both failure and its imposter sidekick, success. They taught us forgiveness both for others and personally. And they taught us humility in our dealings with people but also to know humility in our faith and to know it against a complex human condition.

My wife, Jenny, and I have three of our own children, Polly, Whitney, and Joshua, that are approaching adulthood at 21, 18, and 15 years respectively. The love and support that our children show for each other is rooted in the family nurturing and support that Jenny and I experienced in our youth, and AGAPE formed a huge part of that foundation by modeling

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HOLIDAY 2017

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THE AGAPE MISSION

To strengthen children and families with the healing love of Christ through counseling and social services.

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We're on Facebook, Twitter,
Instagram and YouTube.



FROM THE DESK OF
CHANDLER MEANS

THIS IS US!

If you haven't already read the cover story from Dr. Houston Davis, I hope you will take a moment to read his inspiring tribute to his family, friends and AGAPE.

Like the Davis family, most stories you hear from us are upbeat -a precious child adopted who had been left at the hospital, a struggling marriage saved through counseling, a birth mom reconnects with the adoptive family or four brothers are placed in a foster home where they are loved and surrounded by the family's church community. However, the reality is they don't all turn out like we hoped or even prayed.

I recently spoke with a gifted therapist who was taking a moment to, "process the day." She faced difficult cases that afternoon including news of a young client's death from cancer and an emotional session where a client's childhood sexual abuse was finally acknowledged. In another office, we learned of an unexpected court decision that went against our recommendations for a child in foster care. It was a hard day.

Yes, most stories are of renewed hope, resolved conflicts, spiritual and emotional healing, joyful adoptions and reunifications. But, at the end of those days when the burden is heavy, and we just have to "process the day" and let go and let God, we remember that you support the work we do, and it encourages us to press on.

The world is broken!

No question about it! Has been since Genesis 3! That's not the question; the question is what are we going to do about it? Well, let's start with prayer! In the name of Jesus, God said he would answer, and He does, so **PRAY! Be a foster or adoptive parent** or get your church involved in a foster/adoption ministry in 2018!

Give to AGAPE! This is the work and ministry we do. We do it in the name of Christ and with the healing love of Christ. It's Kingdom work and it takes professional, licensed people to provide it and AGAPE has some of the best!

From our family to yours, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and may the New Year bring us all a deeper faith, richer relationships and joy and peace as we live our lives in service to Him!

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. 6:2



No person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, age, religion, or sex shall be excluded from participation in, or be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination of services, programs, employment provided by AGAPE and its contracted agencies except as is allowed by federal law.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW: DR. HOUSTON DAVIS (CONTINUED)

love and support through action. AGAPE's goal of demonstrating Christ's love through counseling and social services for children and families is one of the greatest examples to me of living out a mission as opposed to merely espousing one.

Now as a university president, I am blessed to have a significant role in shaping opportunities for almost 12,000 students annually through our university's commitment to academic vitality, integrity, and diversity. Many personal mentors - including outstanding past AGAPE leaders such as Tom Burton and Jesse Clayton - have shaped my leadership style and inform the work that I do daily through their powerful influences. As I look to create conditions for our UCA students to thrive and grow educationally and as young men and women, I hope to live up to the outstanding example set for me by AGAPE and lead an entity that is as important and impactful in changing lives. Thank you to all in the AGAPE family for the difference that you have made in the lives of me and many other children past and future.

God bless!

Houston Davis

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF THE AGAPE (NO) ANNUAL DINNER!

Thank
You!

Your generous response was amazing! We are pleased to share that the (No) Annual Dinner has raised over \$86,700, considerably more than our anticipated goal of \$80,000. To meet our Annual Fund Goal of \$1,250,000 our (No) Annual Dinner stretch goal was to raise \$100,000... There is still time to reach that number with a year-end gift!

Love works, because of you. Thank you for continuing to support AGAPE as we strive to help our brothers and sisters through the healing love of Christ.

We missed seeing everyone this year so keep your eyes and ears open for an announcement coming soon about an all new annual tradition!

AGAPE AGAIN AWARDED THREE-YEAR CARF ACCREDITATION

CARF International announced that AGAPE has again been accredited for a period of three years for its Adoption, Foster Family and Kinship Care, Governance, and Leadership Standards. This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization and shows the organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards.

An organization receiving a Three-Year Accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process and has demonstrated to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit that its programs and services are of the highest quality, measurable, and accountable.



MT. JULIET CHURCH OF CHRIST TO HOST AGAPE FOSTER PARENT TRAINING COURSE

P.A.T.H. (Parents As Tender Healers)

January 17, 2018 through February 28, 2018

(Wed. evenings) Time: 6:00 – 9:00 pm | Childcare provided



Serving hurting and traumatized foster children and their parents who need to experience God's love is the ministry of AGAPE, but we cannot fulfill that mission without congregations who are willing to partner with us. These children need to be with Christian families. More than ever, we need Christian singles and families who can take sibling groups of two or more and teens. They need homes! They are spending nights in DCS offices or chaotic and unsafe environments.

Partner with us! Arrange to host an information meeting about fostering or adopting at your congregation. We will be there to talk to any members curious and considering this ministry. If your church is in the Wilson County, Mt. Juliet or Lebanon areas, we want to visit your congregation this year to meet and inform those who are ready to begin the training process in January 2018 right in your neighborhood.

Contact Jeff Fox, Director of Social Services at 615-620-3487 or jfox@agapenashville.org if you can arrange for an information meeting at your congregation.

DO A GOOD TURN DAILY!

Girl Scout Troop #449 from Christ the King School in Nashville recently stopped by our main office to present the bounty of their fundraising efforts. These devoted 5th & 6th graders chose AGAPE to be the recipient of their Girl Scout Bronze Award project. The Bronze Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout Junior can earn. These suitcases will be available for children coming into AGAPE foster care. Thank you, Troop #449!



AGAPE 2017 BY THE #S

Foster Children Cared For: **32**

4,274 *Days of Care Provided*

Adoptions **7**

6 *Maternity Care Clients Served*

Counseling Sessions

9,396

Counseling Clients

864

AGAPE CONTINUES PARTNERSHIP WITH MUSICARES



Recently, some of our Nashville-based counseling staff had the privilege of leading a workshop for those in the music industry on the effects of stress, benefits of self-care, and skills for building better relationships. We are honored to continue our partnership with MusiCares and their commitment to provide access to health care for musicians and music business professionals. *MusiCares was established by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (The GRAMMYS) for musicians to have a place to turn in times of financial, personal, or medical crisis.*



AGAPE therapists, Dr. Tracy Hall, Dr. Jason Cooper, Carissa Tripp and Kaitlin Logan conduct a workshop for MusiCares

A MAN AND HIS THERAPY DOG: MEET ALAN PENNINGTON AND CHAUCY

AGAPE counselor, Alan Pennington, MMFT, and his constant-companion and therapy partner, Chaucy, have become a very familiar pair here at our main office in Nashville.

“After going through Obedience I and II and completing Canine Good Citizenship, we then took Therapy Dog I and II and met the requirements for her to be registered as a therapy dog.

In therapy, Chaucy is great at reading clients and may snuggle up next to them, just sit and look at them (as if to say, hey, you can pet me if you want but if you don't that's cool too) or sometimes she just curls up on her bed and lets me take the lead.

Chaucy is always a joy. I love when others love on her, whether it is other clients here, other therapists or employees here or just random folks at the park or hardware store.

She has and continues to help all those she comes in contact with, whether in or out of therapy. I am just thankful that God put her in my life when He did. She is a real blessing.” – Alan Pennington, MMFT.

Alan Pennington began working with AGAPE in January of 2016 after earning his master's degree in marriage and family therapy from Trevecca Nazarene University. He is currently pursuing his license in Tennessee as a marital and family therapist. Alan works with individuals, couples and families. Alan uses EMDR, Internal Family Systems, Experiential Therapy and Solution-Focused Therapy to assist clients dealing with conflict, trauma, anxiety, self-esteem and a number of other issues.



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9/14/2017 THROUGH 11/30/2017

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For Those Age 70 ½ and Older: If you have an IRA, you can transfer up to \$100,000 per year to qualified charities. These charitable IRA transfers avoid taxes and count toward the minimum required annual distribution. *

Giving a gift of publicly traded stock that has increased in value and that you have owned for more than one year may provide greater tax benefits than giving cash.*



You can donate your car to AGAPE and receive a tax deduction.*
Contact Ken Neil at 615-376-8020 for more information.



** This information is accurate as of November 30, 2017 and is subject to change. By law, AGAPE is not able to provide tax advice. For the most up to date information please contact your financial advisor or tax professional.*

You can make an online gift at any time and view your tax statements and giving history at

www.givetoagape.org

With deepest gratitude we humbly present the

inaugural members of

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visit www.agapenashville.org/TomBurtonSociety or contact

AGAPE's Executive Director Chandler Means at 615-781-3000 or cmeans@agapenashville.org.

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AGAPE

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