

Spring 2025



TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of the Evangelical Child and Family Agency

Come Celebrate!! 75 Years of Service



Mark Schultz is a Dove Award winning musician with over two million records sold to date with ten No. 1 singles. Mark is about to release his first album in six years, as he made fatherhood a priority. Perhaps we'll get to hear some of his new songs.

Join us on Friday, May 2 for an incredible celebration of the history of the Evangelical Child & Family Agency.

This historic gala will be filled with: ***Celebrations of Life***: We'll honor the countless lives impacted by our services and the dedicated individuals who have made it possible. ***Reflections on God's Faithfulness***: We'll give thanks for the unwavering support and guidance that has sustained us throughout our journey. ***Inspiring Client Stories***: Hear firsthand how our services have made a difference in the lives of those we served.

To register scan the QR code to the right, or visit our website at: www.evanca.org/loveinaction to register online. If you have any questions, please call Dan at 630-653-6400



ABBINGTON DISTINCTIVE BANQUETS

38002 ROUTE 53 | GLEN ELLYN, IL 60137

FRIDAY MAY 2, 2025 ~ DOORS OPEN AT 6:45

DINNER IS COMPLIMENTARY | RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

RESERVE YOUR SEAT NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, APRIL 18TH

TABLE SPONSORSHIPS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED ~ \$400 / TABLE

SINCE 1983 APRIL HAS BEEN DECLARED “CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH”

You may ask, what can I do to prevent child abuse/neglect? First, pray. Secondly, if you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call the Illinois hotline number: 1-800-25-abuse. You can remain anonymous.

BUT, there's more. Many children who have been removed from their home due to abuse or neglect have not achieved permanency after two or more years of being “in the system”. You may ask, “Why”? Often it is because the parents did not engage in services to correct the condition(s) that brought their child(ren) into foster care. Many children do get placed with relatives when they enter foster care, and the children remain with them if they cannot return home. Also if children get adopted by their non-related foster parents. BUT some children are not fortunate enough to return to rehabilitated parents, be placed with appropriate

relatives, or be adopted by their foster parents with whom they have established an attachment. UNLESS adoptive families step forward to adopt these children, they will grow up in the foster care



For Illustration Only

system; never experiencing a permanent home where they can call someone “mom and dad”.

One Church, One Child was formed in the 1980's when the Rev. George Clements, pastor of Chicago's Holy Angels Catholic Church, adopted a boy name Joey. The focus of the organization

was dedicated to recruit at least one family from every African American church in the nation to adopt a child. If every Bible believing church became dedicated to that goal, there would be no more “waiting children” in foster care. Many churches have become involved by: A) creating an orphan ministry in the church, B) families either fostering or adopting children of all ages, C) creating an adoption fund to help defray adoption expenses for a family, or D) providing a support group ministry for the adoptive and foster families in their church.

If you or your church would be interested in knowing more about foster care, adoption, or starting an orphan ministry, please feel free to contact Barb Hellmer via email at barbh@evancfa.org or phone her at 630.653.6400, ext. 7243.



Our Goal is Near! \$50,000 Matching Grant

The Christ Foundation will be matching ECFA donations up to \$50,000.00!

Every dollar you donate will be matched - up to \$50,000 - until May 31, 2025. We have an incredible opportunity to raise \$100,000 for our Life Affirming ministry.

As of this newsletter, \$28,377.33 has been donated to match this grant. Scan the QR code on the right or visit our website at www.evancfa.org/donate. Donations by check should include “Matching Grant” in the memo.





PICKLED!!!

for Pregnancy Support Services



We're so grateful for the success of our first Pickleball fundraiser! Thank you Pickled! in Wheaton for hosting, and our sponsors Diadem, First Choice Communications, and Fathom Realty for their generous support. We also appreciate pickleball pro Andrew Moment's participation. Most importantly, thank you to everyone who registered and donated to affirm life through our pregnancy support services. 33 of the 75 pickleball players were attending their first ever ECFA event!

Congratulations to the tournament winners!

NEW VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM



ECFA is launching a ground-breaking volunteer driver program in DuPage County! Transportation within DuPage County is very challenging.

Unreliable transportation creates a significant hurdle for our clients. Missing essential services and appointments, or facing the financial strain of costly ride-shares, directly impacts their ability to access the support that they need.

You can provide a lifeline by offering rides to the grocery store, food pantry, medical

appointments etc. Some needs are weekly, but some may be twice or even once a month.

It's simple to get involved: Reach out to ECFA, fill out an application, pass a background check, verify your car insurance, and present to us a valid driver's license. Once approved we will talk to you about your availability and reach out when needs arise!

This is a wonderful opportunity to show God's love through action! If interested, please give us a call at 630-653-6400 or email us at mail@evanca.org

The Early Days of ECFA

In the 1940's Chicago area believers became increasingly aware of and concerned for the many neglected and dependent children in the city. A group of people began to meet to discuss the establishment of an agency to address these needs. Reverend and Mrs. Sholund, of Winnetka Bible Church, Mr. Penner of the National Association of Evangelicals, and Dr. Harold Lundquist, met and decided to take action. Around the same time, two significant events spurred them on to open an evangelical agency in the Chicago area. The first event was a foster child being removed from the home they were placed in because the case worker felt the child "would have too many strikes against them" due to the evangelical home environment. The second event occurred April of 1945 when an abandoned baby was found at the door of a Moody Bible Institute dormitory.

The Evangelical Welfare Agency (EWA) was established in 1950. Rev. Milford Sholund was the first Executive Director and Della Cain was the first case worker. The first office was located at 542 S. Dearborn St. in Chicago.

In 1959 EWA became Evangelical Child Welfare Agency (ECWA), and in 1974, was renamed Evangelical Child and Family Agency (ECFA), as it is still known today. In 1981, after 31 years of rented facilities, ECFA moved from their downtown location, though an office building was maintained at 188 W. Randolph, to their own building at 1530 N. Main Street, Wheaton, IL, where the office still exists.

A women's Auxiliary was formed under the sponsorship of Mrs. Dorothy Kelley who also began working at EWA in 1951. This women's Auxiliary played an integral part in the growth of EWA. The almost 2000



Auction 1996

Rummaging through old pictures brought up many memories from the past. Not all can be identified, but all bring a smile from days gone by.

Christmas in July Tree



*Ardmore Attic
Our resale shop!*



*Resale Shop
Volunteers*



— How it All Began

women who were part of the Auxiliary supplied clothing and other supplies to the agency and raised funds to support the agency.

In October of 1962 the Auxiliary saved enough S & H green stamps (987 books) to purchase a brand-new Chevy II. If you never heard of S & H Green Stamps, I encourage you to check it out on Google.

There is more history to share with you, but I will end this for now with these encouraging words: ECFA began as a ministry to honor and serve our Lord Jesus Christ. It remains that to this day. We covet your prayers as we continue to serve clients as the “Hands and Feet of Jesus”.

A recent Stride for Life!



Wheaton Parade!



ECFA's Wisconsin Office

Tag Days!



Live Auction!!



2018 Fire!



TOP GOLF FUNDRAISER & FRIENDRAISER

We had so much fun last year, we're doing it again this year! Our goal is to fill an entire floor at Top Golf in Naperville. ECFA supporters not only came out in large numbers last year for this fun activity, they also brought along family and friends to help spread the message of our LIFE AFFIRMING ministry. Mark your calendar and gather family and friends to help raise funds and awareness for ECFA.

When: *Thursday, May 22, 2025*

from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Where: *Top Golf*

3211 Odessey Drive | Naperville, IL 60563

Fee: *\$60 per person | \$360 per bay for 6 people*
Dinner is included

To register for this event please use the QR code or call Dan at 630-653-6400



We are looking for sponsors! If you would like more information please contact Dan at danv@evancfa.org or (630) 653-6400 x 7210 for more information.

There are several sponsorship levels available!



ECFA Foundation

The ECFA Foundation was established to provide long-term support to ECFA. This year the Foundation is providing support to our counseling program in order to provide affordable counseling to those facing economic challenges.

The Foundation is also providing support to our PSS and Adoption programs, our fundraising events, and

our marketing efforts. A true "Foundation" for ECFA as we serve our communities.

For information about how to direct a gift to the ECFA Foundation, please contact Dan Vallaro at 630/653-6400.

Honoring Social Work

March is Social Work Month and this year, the theme designated by the National Association of Social Workers is: SOCIAL WORK: COMPASSION + ACTION. Why was this theme picked?

Social Workers care about people! Every year, numerous people enter the field of social work, making it one of the fastest growing professions in the United States. Social workers go through years of educational training and obtain a license, in order to help those they serve, their communities, and society as a whole to reach their full potential! Compassion + Action!

Though all of the ECFA staff are not social workers by education and licensure, they are in the field

of social services and they all possess a great amount of compassion and believe in those they serve. They desire to see change in our communities and in society. They also desire for those we serve to find hope and healing through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

In looking for quotes about social work, this one stood out: Social work is love made visible. Our desire is to make God's love visible to those we serve. Colossians 3:23 says, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" and I Corinthians 3:9 says, "For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building."

It is a blessing to be the hands and feet of Jesus and fellow workers with God. As social workers/social service workers at a Christian organization we have the privilege of combining our faith with practice!

Would you like to celebrate our staff and the work they are doing? You could bake cookies or other desserts, send cards of encouragement, and most importantly, you can pray for our staff. Being in the trenches is hard and social workers often go unrecognized but they keep pressing on. If you are interested in celebrating our staff, please reach out to Wendy Payne at 630-653-6400 or via email at wendyp@evancfa.org.



Our staff works hard, but has fun together as well.

Memorials and Tributes

In Loving Memory

Hank Huizenga

From: Mr. and Mrs. David Kramer

David E. Salstrom

From: David W. Salstrom

In Honor Of

Bev Ozinga

From: Doug and Linda Haney

Geri Sorenson

From: David Sorenson

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