

# The Love of Christ Ministries

TLC-USA 177 West Marigold Street, Munhall, PA 15120 [www.tlc-usa.org](http://www.tlc-usa.org)

## Adoptive US Family moves to TLC!

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In the summer of 2001, my husband Mark and I decided to adopt a toddler boy from South Africa. In November of that year, Azarius came home to join his four siblings in our New Hampshire home. A piece of our hearts was still in South Africa though because Amara had stolen it. Amara was the first child to greet us when we entered the TLC home. He could not yet walk at the age of three but he did not let that stop him from keeping up with all the other toddlers and preschoolers. He did not talk, but his large expressive eyes and his lovely smile communicated volumes. We left South Africa feeling that God was laying it on our hearts to find a family for this little boy. As the weeks passed God made it clear to us that that family was us. We returned to TLC in August of 2002 and Amara became our son.

We were not new to the world of adoption or the brutal reality of homeless children. We adopted our daughter Abby from Romania in 1999. My husband had spent time volunteering in Romania. The contrast between the orphanages in Romania and TLC's home in South Africa made us realize what an amazing ministry and blessing TLC is. We are in awe of what God has



**The Meister Family in their home in New Hampshire.**

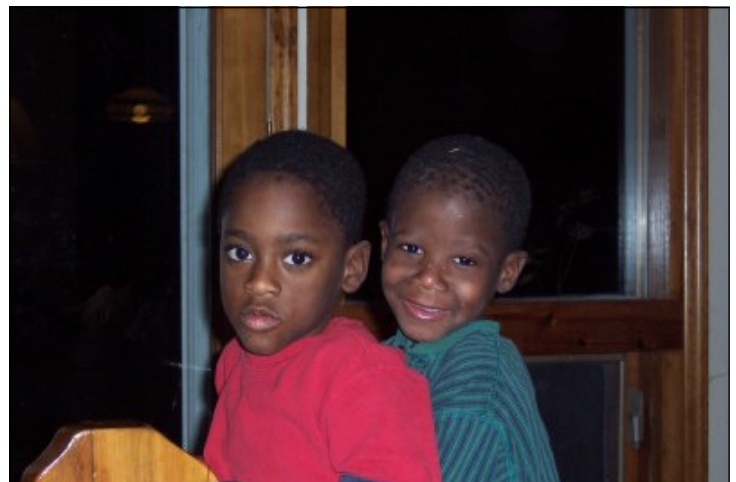
done through Thea and her family. Only Divine intervention could have created such a ministry and allowed it to grow and develop in the way that it has.

Mark and I have always felt compelled to be involved in helping homeless children, by adoption, by sponsorship, and by vocation. Now we are ready to throw ourselves completely into the work of TLC. God has surely been grooming us, and equipping us over the years for just such an opportunity. We have owned our own pet boarding, grooming, and training business for the last 13 years. God has taught us much through the running of that business. You learn about patience and cleaning up messes when you

work with animals, and eventually no messes really bother you anymore – good training for taking care of babies and toddlers! Another way God has prepared us is through Mark home schooling our

children for the last three years. In addition to helping us prepare for working with the school at TLC, this has also allowed us to be comfortable with alternative schooling for our own children. In all of these ways God has been preparing us for His work.

Last spring we decided God was calling us to work with children. We put the question to Thea, "Would TLC like our family to come and volunteer?" God used Thea to confirm our plans. So after dismantling our US life, we are headed to South Africa to see what God has planned for us there. All our children are enthusiastic and excited about it. Our son is as



**Azarius and Amara, TLC Meister brothers**

## Adoptive US Family Moves to TLC...continued

excited as 13 year old boys get about anything! Our daughter Abby, who is now seven, talks everyday about going to Africa, wearing shorts and jumping on the trampoline. That is her idea of heaven! Amara and Azarius enjoy telling everyone they meet that they are "moving to Africa". Rueben, who is eight is looking forward to having so many built in playmates, and Emily our eleven year old daughter is looking forward to Sam, the pony. I am glad that God has placed this excitement and enthusiasm in the hearts of our children because I know that this journey will not always be easy. Our family has never experienced the death of a baby and our children have never experienced moving away from their friends and family. These things will be

hard. We cling to the excitement and enthusiasm that God has put in our hearts to do this and it is our joy. We are blessed to have a great extended family in Christ that are praying for us and helping us along the way. We know whatever comes along God will see us through.

The Meisters can be contacted in their new home at The Love of Christ Ministries in South Africa. Their email address is [meister@tlc.org.za](mailto:meister@tlc.org.za).



Amara, who was born with cerebral palsy, didn't walk at TLC, but with the appropriate help, patience and love, he learns to walk at his home in New Hampshire.

## TLC-USA Launches WEBSITE!!!

After months of planning, work and preparation, the website dedicated to the work of TLC-USA is now ready for launch!

Through the generosity of ADHost, a Seattle based webhosting company, and Carnegie Mellon University's Technology Consulting in the Community student Jon Milikowsky, our new website is visu-

ally engaging and easy to use.

At the website, you can learn more about TLC and the mission of TLC-USA. In addition, you can now donate on line and sign up for a brand new venture called ADOPT A BED (read more below...).

To visit our website, go to [www.tlc-usa.org](http://www.tlc-usa.org). Let us know what you think! Contact us by email at [info@tlc-usa.org](mailto:info@tlc-usa.org).

Visit our website at  
[www.tlc-usa.org](http://www.tlc-usa.org)!

We want to hear from YOU!!

## ADOPT A BED...TODAY!!!

Would you like to have a closer relationship to TLC? More insight into the lives of the orphans who fill the beds, cradles and incubators at the TLC Farm of Love? Well, now you can!

Based on the innovative Dutch website, [doptiebedje.nl](http://doptiebedje.nl), our Adopt a Bed program seeks to follow the lead of the adoptive families of the Netherlands. By making a quarterly donation to TLC-USA, you will

be sponsoring a bed at the orphanage. As a bed sponsor, you will receive quarterly updates about the activity in your underwritten bed. Did the child in that bed find a forever family? Did they visit the hospital? Or perhaps learn to play the guitar? Now you will know the impact you've made on the work of TLC Ministries through the photos and stories that will come to your email box each quarter. Sign up today at [www.tlc-usa.org](http://www.tlc-usa.org)!



## Nelisewe's Story, as told by Thea Jarvis

Last night I was resting on my bed ~ it was not quite bedtime for the little ones yet and so they sometimes like to come and crawl onto my bed to have a snuggle. Nelisewe was the one who came last night.

Nelisewe has been having a really rough time. She is 6, and the eldest of the 3 little sisters who were with their Mommy when she died in their room in Johannesburg and they were left with her dead body for three days before anybody found them.

When the mother was buried, they made Nelisewe say goodbye to her mother in an open coffin and immediately after that they buried her and Nelisewe had to witness the whole thing. This is an African tradition. Immediately after all

that, the three sisters spent 5 days waiting at the Methodist Church in the centre of Johannesburg, waiting to be picked up by the Welfare and put into an orphanage. The welfare never arrived, so they called us and we fetched them and they are still here with us.

Having had all those traumatic experiences, it is not surprising that poor little Neli has been having dreadful night-

mares. I have explained to her over and over again that her mommy is in heaven with Jesus. That heaven is the most beautiful place anybody can imagine. That she is happy there and can never get sick any more. Somehow, it didn't seem to sink in and the terrible nightmares persisted. She would wake up every night screaming: "My mommy can't get out of that hole. They put sand on top of her. She will never get out of the hole. Help! Help my mommy please!" Poor little thing!

So, I was going through some cards I had received at Christmas and reading them again ... while Neli was lying next to me. She gasped at the beauty of one card by the artist, Thomas Kinkade. It is really beautiful! Then I had a very inspired idea. I said to her, "Nelisewe ... this is heaven. This is where your Mommy is living now, with Jesus!" You should have seen her face! It was like a lightbulb. And that smile! Even more beautiful than the picture she was looking at!

She clasped the card to her heart and skipped out of the room to show everybody from the small children, the family, the volunteers and the staff this picture of heaven where her Mommy is now living. I really think that all she needed was

a PICTURE. She couldn't picture it by herself ... she has only known poverty.

Last night when I went to tuck them all in ... there she was, fast asleep ... still clutching the picture to her heart! God bless the little child. And the best news is that there were NO nightmares last night. Praise God!



Kensani, Amy and Nelisewe at TLC

## Picturing a Day at TLC...



Another wonderful volunteer up to her elbows in babies!



Learning is fun at the TLC school!



The older boys in a rare quiet moment!

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Thank you for the hope and help you bring to the orphans of  
South Africa!

**The work of TLC-USA is to inform others about the orphan crisis in Southern Africa and inspire them to help in the struggle to care for these vulnerable, desperate children. By contributing money, volunteering, or becoming an adoptive parent, we want everyone to know that their efforts make a world of difference in the lives of these helpless infants.**



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