



Life Link Children's Homes

Rescuing Lives Today – Making a Difference in Tomorrow

The Birth of a Calling How Life Link got its start.

In March of 2002, my husband and I traveled to Ivory Coast, West Africa to teach at a Bible School for African Pastors. It was a wonderful two weeks of making friends, preaching, teaching, and seeing the African Continent for the first time.

On the day my husband and I were to return to the States, we asked our missionary hosts to take us to get some souvenirs. They took us to the largest market in Abidjan, the capital of Ivory Coast. It was crowded, dirty, stinky and fascinating! There were tables everywhere covered with everything an African could need! One table had fruits, another vegetable, jewelry or animals carved out of wood or bone, etc ... In one area there were tables of fish and meats! (No refrigeration! Did I mention stinky?)

We were having a great time just walking around looking at the sights and picking up a few things to bring home to family and friends. I had stopped at a table with some jewelry when an African lady came up to me with an adorable little girl about a year old.

As I turned to talk to her, she offered the little girl to me and I gladly took her in my arms to cuddle. This had happened often during our visit as mother's everywhere love to have their children admired! I thought nothing of taking the child this time. ***However as I took the child in my arms, the mother took off running away from me thru the crowd!*** As I yelled for help, my husband, David and the missionary Fred, ran after her and when they caught up with her, forced her back to where I stood with the child.

After questioning, the mother confessed that she was dying of AIDS and had no family or friends who were willing to take care of the little girl upon her death. Wherever the mother was when she died, the little girl would be left on her own. No one to feed her or care for her. ***Without a miracle, this baby would die also. Sitting beside her dead mother. A truly tragic situation.*** This mother thought that I looked like a nice lady and hoped that I would take her daughter to the states and raise her as my own.

I asked why she didn't take her to an orphanage. There are none was the answer. I couldn't believe it! Abidjan was a huge city! ***How could there be so many missionaries and no orphanage?*** The baby was returned to the mother after giving her contact information about a local church that would try to help her. We left the market in tears.

I cried all the way back home. I took that little girl into my heart. I prayed for God to protect her and provide a Christian family for her.

Once I returned to the states my tears turned to a firm resolve. There had to be a way to help these children. **After months of prayers and tears I finally said YES to the call to be the one to “do something”!** I was a 48 year old pastor’s wife who had some experience with accounting and raising kids! I knew nothing about fund raising and getting tax exempt papers or even what all was needed to begin this project! My brilliant husband suggested we go talk to the missions’ director of the organization we were ordained thru. Truly a God designed appointment!

Not only was he the missions director of an ordaining organization, but he had an established missions organization of his own and was an international lawyer! He was so touched by my story and my vision to open orphanages in Africa that **he did all my legal work for free! Life Link was born!** After that things began to happen quickly and by October of 2002 I had the money to open my first home!

I called our missionary friend, Fred Davis, for help and advice. He recommended a young lady who had been our interpreter while we were in Africa teaching at the Bible School! She had a ministry with children who had been abandoned on the streets that she was feeding and preaching to, but she had no place to offer them to live. **She didn’t even have her own home!** She was house-sitting for a friend and when that friend returned, she would be homeless also!



Esther and me with the first group of street girls. 2003

The interpreter was a young woman named Esther. We felt a kindred spirit with her from the very beginning. She had a spirit of enthusiasm and zeal for the things of God combined with a keen intelligence and sense of compassion that caused her to stand out among the many Africans we met. I knew immediately that this sense of family I had felt with her was a gift and sign from God that she was the one to start this mission of opening orphanages in Africa and around the world.



Esther with the staff and children of Refuge House 2015

After many phone calls and emails, Esther and I opened “Refuge House” a home for the street children she had been ministering to. Almost immediately other children were added to the home. **Thirteen years later Refuge House is still going strong.** Also, more homes were opened in Ivory Coast as well as the African countries of Benin and Guinea Bissau. We are helping a home in the Philippines and are open to any country anywhere the Lord may call.

We invite you to be a part of this great calling! All you have to do is pick up a pen and write a check. ***Your donations help to rescue a child; what greater calling is there than that?***

Connie Alessi - President

Life Link is a Christian non-profit international human service corporation committed to improving the quality of life for children everywhere. All donations are tax deductible.

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