

MIRIAM'S PROMISE

J. Dietz Osborne, M.S., President & CEO and Hailee Hunt-Hawkins, Chair, Board of Directors

Since 1985, Miriam's Promise has offered hope and healing to thousands of Middle Tennessee expectant parents, birth parents, children, and adoptive families coping with issues of grief, loss, and transition. We are excited to celebrate our 37th year of ministry. The heart of our mission is to ensure the well-being of the child by nurturing individuals and families. Miriam's Promise continues to meet this mission by offering the following programs:

- Non-directive, option-based pregnancy counseling at no charge to the expectant parent
- Holistic parenting coaching which includes attachment work
- International and domestic adoption services including home studies and adoption training and education

Miriam's Promise is a licensed child-placing agency serving Middle Tennessee, and is Hague Accredited by the Intercountry Adoption Accreditation and Maintenance Entity (IAAME) and a member of the National Council for Adoption. Miriam's Promise offers services without regard to race, creed, gender, color, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression.

According to recent studies, the birth rate in the U.S. is the lowest it has ever been. In addition, the teen pregnancy rate in the U.S. is also the lowest it has ever been. Both of these factors have led to fewer and fewer infant adoptive placements across the country, and Miriam's Promise is no exception. At the same time, couples and singles hoping to grow their families through adoption continues to rise. The staff and the board of directors continue to evaluate our programming in order to meet the expressed needs of the Middle Tennessee community. Priorities identified include parenting classes, comprehensive post birth services for clients who choose to place a child for adoption or to parent the child, Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) attachment therapy, and specific child counseling for adoptive children.

Over the past year, Miriam's Promise has worked hard to understand our place in helping to dismantle the systems of racism and white supremacy. We have been intentional about diversifying our suppliers, focusing on minority-owned businesses. We have offered educational webinars taking a deep dive into transracial and cross-cultural adoption, better preparing prospective adoptive parents to parent a child of a different race or culture.

As an affiliated agency started by The United Methodist Church, we continue to be a vital part of ministry within the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference. Miriam's Promise is an avenue for the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference to uphold the Social Principles of the UMC on adoption:

Adoption

“Children are a gift from God to be welcomed and received. We lament that some instances, birth parents are unable or unwilling to fulfill their caregiving obligations. Under these circumstances, we applaud the willingness of extended families and foster and adoptive parents to step in as primary nurturers. Even in these situations, however, we recognize the trauma that may be caused by separating children from their families of origin and urge that such actions be handled justly, sensitively, and compassionately. Where appropriate and possible, we encourage open adoption so that children may know all information relevant to them, both medically and relationally (Social Principles, 2020. Page 21, paragraph A).”

The relationships with the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference and local churches are vital elements of the agency's mission and outreach. We have seen when the conference and Miriam's Promise work together to share the story more expectant parents find hope, more children find homes, and more families are grown. We are grateful for the support and engagement of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference.