

# FIRST PERSON: The Baptist Children's Village next 125 years

*By Sean Milner  
Correspondent*

*If this dollar finds company enough to effect a movement, you will hear from me again.*

Those were the words of Mrs. Lou Moore from Tillatoba, Mississippi. This she wrote in response to Rev. L. S. Foster's inquiry as to whether Mississippi Baptists should provide a place for hurting children.

Her dollar did find "company enough to effect a movement" that has now lasted 125 years. The Baptist Children's Village (BCV) was not an easy ministry to start or continue, but God has been – and continues to be – faithful, using many like Mrs. Moore to accomplish His work.

When God called First Baptist Church of Senatobia pastor L. S. Foster to create a home for children in need, he didn't have a computer, fax machine, or any other electronic device. He didn't have social media or email. He didn't even have a phone.

However, Baptists demonstrated their faith in God by their obedient actions, and God was faithful.

In July 1905, Mrs. Dora Greenlaw of Hazlehurst wrote, *But again and again, with ever increasing force came the question: Have we filled up the measure of our opportunities? No, no, not yet. But the future is rich in promise. **Behind the movement to provide for our children lies the great Baptist heart of Mississippi, and back of that God*** (emphasis mine).

You received your first child at the Baptist Orphanage on May 12, 1897. The number of children in need of the Village grew beyond what the staff and facilities could handle, but God was faithful.

It has taken hundreds and even thousands of workers to serve children and families for the past 125 years. God has faithfully provided houseparents, case managers, campus directors, and administrative staff.

God has been faithful in uncertain and challenging times. In our 125-year history we have seen global unrest: two world wars, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, the War in Afghanistan, the Iraq War, and the War against ISIS.

We have also seen unrest in our country. We have seen presidents and civil rights leaders assassinated. We have seen periods of financial depression and economic ruin, during the Great Depression and many stock market crashes.

Most recently we have navigated COVID challenges. In all these times, God has been faithful. In fact, none of the crises in our history has ceased or even paused God's service to children and families through you at The Baptist Children's Village.

No, the work has not been easy but with each challenge came the opportunity for God to "do far more abundantly than all that we could ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20). **The Baptist Children's Village exists to take the Good News of Jesus Christ to at risk children and families.**

God has throughout the history of the ministry used circumstances and people to reveal the depth and breadth of his love, provision, and power to children and their families.

The celebrations in this 125<sup>th</sup> year are not only for the blessings of the past, but also for the work that God has yet to accomplish in the hearts and lives of hurting children and

families.

The number of children and families whose lives have been impacted by the Good News of Jesus Christ because of your ministry at the BCV is not calculable. You see, all of us "Village Kids" grew up. We have children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We have careers and circles of influence. Your testimony includes Christ's work in the lives of our children and descendants as well as our co-workers, church families, and everyone in our circles of influence.

The number of children and families impacted is truly incalculable. The success of God's plan is evidenced by His work in and through the lives of His people.

God continues to challenge your BCV ministry. As part of every Mississippi Baptist church we are asking, "Who are we missing?" and "How do we get to them?" We know you are as excited as we are about what God will do in the next 125 years.

We are exploring new ministries through which we can take the Good News of Jesus Christ to at-risk children and families. It is a joy and honor to serve with you.

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