



ILLINI CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES, Inc.
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There are many of amazing things happening at ICM, and we want you to be the first to know! Sign up for our once monthly e-newsletter by emailing us at **admin@icmfamily.org**.

Greetings from the Staff at ICM!

Lisa Sullivan, Sharnell Knapp, Jessie Heckenmueller, Amanda Cooper, Dayna McConkey, Bonny VanDalsen, Nadia Berger & Judy Zylstra



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ILLINI CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES, INC.
Serving families for over 45 years

f **icm.family.org**

2017 Annual Report

Dear ICM Friends,

Illini Christian Ministries is incredibly blessed to complete another year of ministry. In October we celebrated 50 years of service and know that it is only by the Lord's continued faithfulness that the work of ICM has been sustained.

When I joined ICM in September, I was drawn to a ministry that seeks to stand in the gap for vulnerable children and families. Throughout scripture, Jesus reveals His heart for those that society often considers a waste of time and resources. In Matthew 25:40, we are told that whatever we do for the "least of these", we are actually doing for Jesus. In James 1:27, Jesus refers to looking after orphans and widows as "pure and faultless religion". It is truly an honor to serve the Lord through ministry to marginalized populations.

When we join the Lord in His work of redemption in our world, we are choosing to enter into both the beauty and the brokenness of this process. We are truly blessed by all who partner with us. Families who volunteer to host a child in need of a temporary home, parents who choose to grow their family through adoption, individuals and churches who offer resources to a single mom seeking to furnish her empty apartment, and faithful donors who generously fund the ministry of ICM all play a vital role in Gods redemptive work in the lives of others. I cannot thank you enough for being a part of this work!

In the coming year, we hope to grow the ministry in a manner that allows us to serve more families in need. We ask that you prayerfully consider ways in which you can continue to partner with us!

In Christ,

Nadia Berger



Nadia Berger, LCSW
Executive Director

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Adoption

It has been an exciting year in the adoption ministry for Amanda and Dayna. We started out 2017 by beginning a year-long process of preparing our adoption services’ for re-accreditation for our Hague Certification. This enables ICM to provide adoption services such as home studies and post adoption reports for families pursuing international adoption. We also had the opportunity walk alongside four birth mothers seeking domestic adoptions for their babies, one of which delivered an adorable set of fraternal twins this summer.

Many families who choose the path of international adoption from countries such as China, Colombia, Ethiopia, and Latvia were also able to bring their children home in 2017! One of these precious families, who had been waiting over three years, was finally united with their children. We celebrate with each of the almost eighty families we had the privilege of partnering with throughout their adoption journey. We feel incredibly blessed to be able to continue our work alongside birth mothers and adoptive families desiring to change the lives of a child by welcoming them into Christian homes.

Amanda Cooper, LCSW
Director of Adoption Ministry

Dayna McConkey
Adoption Specialist



Parenting Partners

Our wonderful Parenting Partners continue to build relationships and provide support for families in need by hosting children in their homes! Here is a story from the Luther family regarding their decision to becoming Parenting Partners and their time spent with Milo, who they hosted for over a year!

“Our thought process was simple: we have an empty bedroom, extra food in the pantry, and the ability to love and provide for. So we decided to help other moms who maybe didn’t have all those advantages. What happened next was life changing for us. We learned that it takes a village for all of us to raise our kids. We learned that mommas love their babies despite the demons they are battling. We learned that God will provide, always, with comfort, with resourses, with direction.”

Safe Families for Children®

“I want to start off by saying Safe Families has helped so much with my 6 children. Without this program, I don’t know where my children would be. This program has helped me become a better mother, it also has helped me to know that there are actually good people in the world. I was homeless for over a year, I never thought that I would ever be able to provide for my children again until I met Safe Families. As soon as my girls were with the host moms I started to get a lot of help. I’m in my own apartment now, I’m working, and also going to school online. I am truly blessed to say Safe Families has done a complete turn on my life. I want to thank everybody in the program once again. Me and the girls love you all so much.”

- A story from Ashley who was served by our Decatur Chapter

Jessie Heckenmueller
Director of Family Care
Sharnell Knapp & Lisa Sullivan
Family Care



Illini Christian Ministries would love to present during your church’s weekend worship services or special event!

Contact us at (217) 355-4446 or director@icmfamily.org

Make a Lasting Impact

A wonderful way to create a living tribute to your life’s work is through a bequest to Illini Christian Ministries. Remembering ICM in your will is a way to continue serving the ministry through a lasting contribution that will ensure many children and families will benefit from your gift.

A bequest appeals to many people for a number of good reasons:

- It is irrevocable
- No change in lifestyle results from making a bequest commitment
- Heirs can be provided first, then a gift to ICM
- Estate taxes are avoided
- Future financial circumstances are not threatened
- Larger gifts can be made via your will than can be made during your lifetime

The board and staff of ICM would like to extend a special measure of gratitude to the following families for making ICM the recipient of their estate bequest:

Harold and Ardith Orr
Nellie Massey

Fred Gilmore

Thank you!

Honor a loved one by making a gift to Illini Christian Ministries on their behalf!

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
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| Willow Eve Newman | Wendell & Sandy Salm |
| Willow Newman | Kenneth & Opal Tatro |