

imagine
ADOPTION™

heart BEAT

your dreams of family coming true

IMAGINE ADOPTION

Changing Our World... One Child At a Time

“Now that I am Canadian, I have hope,” she said, “but there are millions of kids in Ethiopia just like me who can’t come to Canada... they need Canada to come to them.” This was the message presented by 6 year-old Mihret on Friday May 23rd at the Grand Opening of the new offices of Imagine Adoption and their affiliated Registered Charity, Global Reach Children’s Fund. Mihret is one of many children adopted from Ethiopia, Zambia and Ecuador through Imagine Adoption and is representative of the children whose lives are being changed through the work of Global Reach Children’s Fund.

Bringing Canada to Ethiopia is exactly

what Global Reach Children’s Fund is doing through a multi-phase project called ‘Faith Village.’

Faith Village is the flagship project being developed by Global Reach Children’s Fund in partnership with the government of Ethiopia and in harmony with the global Millennium Development Goals supported by the Canadian International Development Agency.

The day was shared with a large group of clients, associates and local dignitaries. Honored guests including: Member of Parliament for Cambridge, Dr. Gary Goodyear; Regional Chair

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A long journey

We had a long journey to our son. Having wanted children for many years, we were already a year and a half into another international adoption program when we made the decision to withdraw from that program and to instead seek to adopt a child from Ethiopia.

The adoption process can be long and difficult. Throughout, there are many moments of hope and joy, but also



moments of anxiety and frustration. It was important to us to work with an adoption agency that understands the ups and downs. We were fortunate to partner with Imagine Adoption.

Through the paperwork requirements (including the completion of a home study and dossier); the wait to be proposed a child; the wait for the Ethiopian courts to approve the adoption; and the immigration stage, Imagine Adoption’s staff – and our case worker in particular – were responsive, understanding and compassionate.

Imagine shared with us the best days of our lives: September 25th, 2007 – the day we were referred our beautiful son; December 20th, 2007 – the day we officially

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(l-r) Andrew Morrow, Director of Development, Global Reach Children’s Fund; Linda Whetham, Cambridge City Councillor Ward 3; Dr. Gary Goodyear, Cambridge Member of Parliament; Sue Hayhow, Founder and Director of Imagine Adoption and Global Reach Children’s Fund; Mihret; Ken Seiling, Chair of the Region of Waterloo; Jane Brewer, Cambridge Regional Councillor; and Dr. Jim Cianca, Director of Operations, Global Reach Children’s Fund.



a global ACCOUNTABILITY

Children are born with the need to be nurtured and loved. They flourish within the security of a safe and loving home. They learn valuable life lessons from their parents that are integral to their overall development. But when this love and security is taken from a child – through no fault of their own – their only hope is for someone to step up and provide the nurturing they need to grow into the whole person they were meant to be.

It is hard to ignore that children are affected by the harsh realities of poverty and loss, especially in the developing world. As we become more aware of this global imbalance we are moved by compassion to act on their behalf.

At Imagine Adoption we have established a set of core values which we refer to as our *Unique Total Love Approach*. These values are our guide and serve to remind us that everything we do is for, and because of, the child in need.

Global Accountability is the cornerstone of our values. We know we can bring hope to an orphaned or abandoned child by joining them with a loving, caring Canadian family through adoption. We also know that for every child adopted there are many who are ineligible, and still others who may be living within a family unit but are barely surviving in absolute poverty. This reality, coupled with the motivation of adopting parents to give back, has inspired us to find a way to further



impact the countries from which we facilitate adoptions. We have chosen to accomplish this through a partnership with Global Reach Children's Fund (GRCF).

In Ethiopia, we are developing a unique, multi-phase project named "Faith Village". Within Faith Village, we will feed, educate and medically care for 500-700 children daily. In Ecuador, we are establishing a Microloan program for indigenous communities so that they have the resources to support themselves with dignity. In Zambia we plan to create safe havens for babies with HIV/Aids where they will receive care and treatment that will increase their chances of survival. We are excited about the limitless opportunities!

It seems that if every person took responsibility for one other person in this world, we could start a revolution. Every one of us can, in some way, become that needed adult in a child's life. For some, it might be parenting an orphaned or abandoned child. For others, it can be sharing ideas, skills and resources. Our contributions today serve as investments in the future potential leaders of tomorrow.

A new family get-together celebrating Ethio Boardwalk Fest in early June.



events

upcoming events

"Under an Ethiopian Sky"

Fundraising Gala
Friday Sept 26, 2008
Waterloo Inn,
Waterloo ON

"Under an Ethiopian Sky" - our second annual fundraising banquet promises to be a rich cross-cultural experience and a great opportunity to participate in the Faith Village vision. The event will feature special guests from Ethiopia.

Seats are limited and fill up quickly, so please contact Theresa Beach for tickets by calling: 519-653-2780 or email: Theresa@nopoverity.ca

"Safari Adventure"

Fundraising Gala
Friday Oct 17, 2008
Safari Lodge, Calgary Zoo
Calgary, AB

Hosted by Ron and Kerry Stern. "Of all the experiences Ron and I have shared in our lives, the opportunity to extend ourselves to help children on a more 'global' scale is both exciting and extremely rewarding," says Kerry, "Faith Village has enormous potential to be able to look after the overall health, nutrition, education and wellbeing of not only this generation of children in Ethiopia but also in future generations. We encourage people to see the immense possibilities that just a small amount of our 'resources' in North America can do for the children of Africa."

Read more about why former NHL star, Ron Stern has teamed up with Faith Village, Ethiopia at: www.nopoverity.ca

Just to be loved!

Hello from Zambia!!!

Well, it's been approximately one month since I arrived in Lusaka! Amidst the giant spiders, hot weather, and varied tasks, I am getting myself settled. As some of you know, a couple of weeks ago I packed up my things and flew 29 long hours to Lusaka Zambia! I am working in our newest transition home, and assisting with our Zambian adoption program. The transition home is HUGE! The children living in our home and the staff are wonderful! So far I have been working in the office, establishing relationships with the Zambian government officials, and streamlining the paperwork process.

I am thoroughly enjoying my time here. The people are amazing! The transition home Directors, Davern & Masoka Shilayi, are wonderful and very eager to learn! However, I think the best part of this journey is, and will be, the children! From the minute I walked into the home they loved me and I can't help but to love them right back! They are so full of life and want nothing more than just to be loved! Davern, Masoka and I went out and bought the toddlers new tricycles! A couple of the kids picked it up really fast, but the rest weren't quite as coordinated! Hopefully over time and a few scraped knees, they will soon get the hang of it!

Speaking of scraped knees, one of the most interesting things I have been doing is accompanying the children on their medical visits. An African hospital is very different from a Canadian one, but I am happy to report that the doctors are very well experienced and are great with the children.

Throughout my time here, I hope to experience everything I can. I want to learn about the culture and the people, but most of all, I hope that I am able to help save a child – or a house full of children for that matter. This is a brand new experience and I can't wait to experience everything that is in store for me. It is going to be a time of personal growth, emotional stretching, and full of memories that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

I look forward to seeing the Zambia program grow and flourish that we might be able to save children and help connect families forever!

Melissa Haybow

Our Dedicated Zambia team of care givers.



From snow and cold to love and sunshine

We were so thankful to miss the great Canadian Winter this year, but even more thankful for our new son Pablo. Yes, I said our new son Pablo. What amazing words to say coming from the mouths of a new mother and father. After so many years of wanting a family we now have an amazing son Pablo, age 3, from Ecuador. It's hard to believe that we have been together for four months total. Two months in Pablo's birth country, and two months in his new forever home.

Words cannot express the love and joy that he has brought to us. The first time we met Pablo was incredible. The first time that he hugged and kissed us was indescribable. The first time he called us Mama and Papa was the most amazing words that we had ever heard!!

Waiting to start our new journey felt like forever. Our plane ride seemed so long, and the last night before we met Pablo was sleepless. All the preparations for the adoption felt like they would never end.

But the waiting was over the moment we met our new son, Pablo.

It was early February when we made the trip to Ecuador. Who knew how

much our lives would change overnight? I can still remember telling myself, "Don't cry, because you don't want to scare him. Don't squeeze him too hard, because you don't want him to be afraid." Oh, how so many different emotions and silly thoughts go through your head.

Pablo was well prepared for us. We spent the first day with him and he showed us his daily routine, play time, meal time and nap time. When the day was done and it was time to say goodnight, we tucked Pablo into his bed, gave him a million hugs and kisses and sat outside his room. We listened to Pablo telling his friends "My Mama and Papa will be back tomorrow!!!!" It was so nice and reassuring that Pablo knew we were his Mama and Papa, but also that he understood that we were coming back in the morning.

We spent the entire next day together laughing, playing and just getting to know each other. Things ran smoothly, so off we went to spend our first night together as a family. We were expecting a sleepless night but he just simply snuggled in to us and off to sleep he went. It was incredible. It was like Pablo

just knew that we were now a family!

Our bond and love for each other grew and grew over the next two month's stay in Ecuador. We travelled and learned about Pablo's birth country and enjoyed spending time with two other Canadian families who were also adopting. It was amazing how the time flew by and how much we all enjoyed Ecuador, but it was nice to hear the words "Pablo's Visa had arrived!!!" We said our goodbyes and thank you's to Dr. P and Lily who were so amazing during our stay. I can't express how much they mean to us for all that they did during our adoption process. We travelled back home with the other two Canadian families and promised to reunite the children for a play. We have spoken with the other families since and they are all doing well. Pablo continues to amaze us every day with his sunshine personality. He brings happiness to everyone wherever he goes with his smiling face. His English is improving each day but no words spoken from his mouth will ever replace the first time he said, Mama and Papa.

A huge thank you to all the staff at Imagine Adoption for all their help. We couldn't have imagined a smoother adoption process, but more importantly, the amazing outcome, our son Pablo.

Greg, Lesley, and Pablo Swift



Life after adoption...

Deciding, signing, waiting, referral, booking and finally MEETING! No one can describe these six simple words and anticipate them more than one who has experienced them; and is now blessed beyond these six words.

I am writing this little note, not only to tell you how wonderful Val, Sue and the rest of the Imagine Adoption (Kids Link) staff are but to speak to you on how much our life has changed.

When my husband and I brought our two little angels home from Ethiopia we were overjoyed and overwhelmed at the same time! (We were only first time parents with two 18 month olds) We cannot believe how well the transi-

tion has gone. From the aspects of the Ethiopian trip, to feeding, sleeping, and the attachment we are forever amazed at how well our girls have adjusted!

We are forever thankful for the care and love the staff at Imagine Adoption and the staff over in Ethiopia have been to be able to provide for our two little girls! We believe that it was those individuals who cared for them that shaped them into the fine happy girls they are today!

We have been home for five months now and I cannot remember how life used to be when they were not with us. Now mind you, some nights are long, some mornings are early and the costs of diapers are crazy!! But



when you get to hold that little child in your arms, you don't think of any of that.

I can honestly say that I start off each day with a simple prayer thanking God for our little girls, and for all the other little angels that are still waiting to find their homes. I truly believe that there is no greater blessing in life, then the day that we became a mom and dad.

Thank you, Imagine Adoption (Kids Link) for making our dreams come true.
Matt and Jenn Lauzon

One Child At a Time

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of Waterloo, Ken Seiling; Cambridge Regional Councilor, Jane Brewer; and Cambridge City Councilor for Ward 3, Linda Whetham were on hand for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony.

“This is a wonderful group of people, they do a lot of good work actually sav-

We can't save every child, but we can certainly do our part in attempting to make our world a better place, and by fulfilling every adoptive parent's dream of becoming a family.

Both Imagine Adoption and Global Reach Children's Fund envision a



ing lives,” said MP Gary Goodyear. “I am very honored to be here, this is a special privilege for me. I want to congratulate Sue and her team on the most excellent work and incredible progress.”

Providing hope and opportunity to impoverished kids within developing countries is the reason why Imagine Adoption exists. The children themselves are at the core of every decision we make, and at the heart of all we do.

world where poverty no longer exists and social justice is upheld – a world where individuals are treated equally and provided the resources and freedom to help them reach their full potential. We work alongside children and families by providing opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them.

*Sue Haybow
Executive Director*

Imagine sweatshirts now available!


Now you can purchase your own imagine 'hoody' and support Faith Village, Ethiopia at the same time!

Price: \$50 (includes taxes and shipping)
Sizes: S, M, L, XL
Delivery: Allow 2-4 weeks
Crew-neck sweatshirts are also available.

Place your order today by emailing:
theresa@imagineadoption.ca



NOTE: 50% of each sale will be donated to Faith Village, Ethiopia.



It has been a very busy few months since I began my role as Resource Representative. After spending eight years working in public education, I am thoroughly enjoying working with parents and families as they walk through the adoption process. I have been so impressed with the compassion, professionalism, and attention to detail that the staff at Imagine Adoption have demonstrated. My focus has been to develop the Family Registry section of the website to connect adoptive families in local areas, and to build an extensive list of resources to support our families at all stages of adoption. Our Ethiopian Culture and Awareness Workshops have been extremely successful and well-attended, as have our Hair and Skin Care Workshops. A goal for the future is to provide these workshops in video form for our families across the country. Here is what our clients are saying about the workshops:

“Mibrak is an excellent speaker and we have learned so much. We appreciate her taking the time to teach us about the culture and language of her country. It's great to learn about Ethiopia from someone who was actu-



ally born and raised in the country. Thank you IA for putting these workshops on...”

“I enjoyed learning about Ethiopian culture and I also thought learning the lullaby was really neat. I hope this is something we can sing to our baby someday.” Cristina Mattison

“Another excellent workshop. It was very informative. I especially appreciated the focus on using organic and natural products. This is something that I value greatly and feel it's very important. It was nice to see that Imagine feels that way as well.”

“I felt that I learned enough to take us confidently into our new experiences with Ethiopian hair and skin. All the information was important and useful.” Tracey Crewson

Many thanks to Bare Organics (www.bareorganics.ca) and CURLS (www.curls.biz) for providing beautiful samples of their organic products for families attending Hair and Skin Care workshops.

Sally McCord

Your Imagine Adoption™ team in profile:

Program Coordinator – Africa

Val Goodyear has the distinction of being one of the first employees of Imagine Adoption. Val knows from being a Case Worker the anxieties a family experiences when adopting and does all she can to provide a smooth journey in the adoption process.

Val has had the opportunity of traveling to Ethiopia three times. One exciting benefit of having been to our transition home in Addis Ababa, is that when the older children come to Canada and visit our office, they remember Val! For the children, it brings a familiar bit of their former home to Canada.

Val's most defining characteristic is her inevitable need for a tissue when a discussion about these precious children arises. She knows each one by name and their name is etched on her heart. You will not have more evidence

of a caring heart than Val's as she studies photos and medical information on all the children in our transition home.

As the Program Coordinator for the Africa programs, Val's job is to ensure a family's dossier moves through the necessary steps from proposal to bringing a child home to Canada. Val has the privilege of informing the case workers that a proposal has arrived and that the court decision has been granted.

When the visa documents arrive she again has the joy of informing the case workers that they can notify the family that they can travel. There is nowhere Val enjoys being more (besides Ethiopia) than with the Case Worker when they call a family with the exciting news – as always, with Kleenex handy.

We are fortunate to have someone so caring and meticulous working for our children, our families and our agency.



(l-r) Ms. Mutheu Kivuvani from the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi, Solomon Dibaba our Director of Operations, Ms. Jacinthe Roberge-Binovec from the Canadian High Commission and Melissa Burke, Imagine Adoption staff and recent adopting parent.

High Commission Visits our home in Ethiopia!



imagine
ADOPTION™
780 King Street, East
Cambridge, ON N3H 3N9

Tel: (519) 623-KIDS (5437)
toll-free: 877-323-5437
Fax: 519-623-1845
Email: admin@imagineadoption.ca
Web: www.imagineadoption.ca



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Journey

▶ continued from cover



became Eric's parents; and March 31st, 2008 – the day we took Eric into our arms forever.

We had a wonderful trip to Ethiopia

to meet Eric and bring him home. The people of Ethiopia are the friendliest we've ever met. And Imagine's staff in Ethiopia (from the administrative staff, to the agency's drivers, to the care givers at Imagine's transition home) took very good care of us. We were so impressed with Imagine's transition home in Addis Ababa and with the loving care the children are receiving there.

We are blessed to be Eric's parents – he is a beautiful, happy, healthy (and sometimes exhausting!) one year old boy. We are so grateful to Imagine Adoption for bringing Eric into our lives, for giving him the best possible care in Addis Ababa, and for being with us every step of the way.

Peter and Karen Christiansen

Ask us about 'Faith Village' Ethiopia – the building of a modern Community Care Centre on 100 acres of breath-taking land



We envision a world where poverty no longer exists and social justice is upheld – a world where individuals are treated equally and provided the resources and freedom to help them reach their full potential. We will work alongside children and families who are impoverished and exploited to create a future filled with hope, dignity and opportunity.

www.nopoverty.ca