

Starting an Orphan/Adoption Ministry

Steps – A place to start. You do not have to use these steps, they are just some ideas.

1. Meet with the pastor to express the desire and passion that surrounds an adoption ministry.
2. Gather those who are interested in participating to pray together about who the leadership team should include and how to move forward.
3. Define the leadership roles of each person.
4. Decide what ideas to move forward with and what the goals of this ministry are. Some goals can include:
 - a. Awareness, Support, Funding, Outreach
 - b. International adoption, domestic adoption, foster care, or all of the above
5. Decide together what the mission statement will be.

Ideas – Below we've compiled a brainstorming list. The point of this list is to choose a few and start there, not try to do them all.

Awareness

- Church Media:
 1. Orphan care and adoption awareness articles in the church newsletter, church-wide e-mail announcements, bulletin announcements, inserts, and media presentations
 2. Announce upcoming events, encourage people to stop at your informational table when it is available, and promote foster care and adoption (i.e. announcing foster care month, statistics, etc.)
 3. Special times for these announcements/inserts may include National Adoption Awareness Month and Missions Month (November), Foster Care Month (May) and Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (third weekend in January)
- Bulletin Board:
 1. A bulletin board in a visible area to display statistics, adoption information, interesting articles, map with flags for each country from which a member of the church has adopted, pictures, and adoptive/foster families from your church



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- Sermon on Adoption:
 1. Ask your pastor or a guest speaker to speak about adoption and its Biblical foundation
- VBS:
 1. Focus on adoption as a theme of VBS
 2. Include a time to get to know more about adoption during VBS

Support

- Support Families:
 1. Start a newsletter for adoptive families
 2. Start a mentor program that matches experienced adoptive families with those just starting or interested in adopting
 3. Provide meals for families who have recently adopted
 4. Provide respite care when families are struggling
 5. Host a shower for the adoptive family (like a baby shower).
- Small Groups & Support Groups:
 1. Adoptive families can come together for emotional support, adoption tips, parenting tips, etc.
 2. Adoption-themed book club or Bible studies
- Classes:
 1. Plight of an orphan
 2. Positive/appropriate adoption language
 3. Financial Resources
 4. Parenting classes
- Information Table:
 1. Informational table with adoption, foster care and ministry information, and ministry members on hand to answer questions
 2. Create resource sheets with agency references, mentors of experienced families from your ministry, how to afford adoption, statistics, and Bible Verses
- Resource Library:
 1. Create a library of resources for adopting, grant funding, etc.



Funding

- Adoption Fund/Grants:
 1. Start a fund or grant system.
 2. Partner with Abba Fund
- Fundraising for church ministry OR organize fundraising for individual families:
 1. T-shirts
 2. Church Garage Sale
 3. Spaghetti Dinner
 4. Concert
 5. Silent Auction
 6. Dinner Theater

Outreach

- Social Events:
 1. Host social events for those in the church and in the community to get to know more about adoption
- Panel Discussion:
 1. Plan an evening with a panel of adoptive families, adoption agencies and pastors. They can open with a talk about the Biblical foundation for adoption and answer Q & A's.
- Adoption Workshop:
 1. Host a seminar to give families opportunities to have initial adoption information or adoption education.
- Local & International Missions:
 1. Mentor programs for local foster children
 2. "adopt" an orphanage as a church
 3. Short term mission trips, etc.
- Branch Out:
 1. Connect with people in other churches that share your vision for orphan and adoption ministry.
 2. Form a network that can share resources, plan joint activities, and support one another.
- Community Focus:
 1. Set up an informational booth at community events.



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How MLJ Adoptions, Inc. can help

- Support Services: (for any adoptive family)
 1. Support sessions via teleconference or face to face
 2. Family counseling
 3. Various support groups
- Provide information to the church
 1. MLJ representatives can bring in informational table
 2. Written initial informational materials
 3. Provide initial adoption information seminars at your location
- Appoint an outreach coordinator to work directly with the ministry, providing support, information, and direction
- Partner with the church and offer information seminars at the church
- Classes: (open to the public)
 1. Transracial Parenting
 2. Afro-Caribbean Hair & Skincare
 3. Marital Enrichment
 4. Personal, Effective Communication
 5. And Many More (<http://mljadoptions.com/AdoptionEducation.aspx>)
- Additional classes/groups if requested
- Bring in speakers
- Organize an adoption benefit concerts at your church



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