

In the wake of the Civil War, a Lutheran pastor promised to care for a dying soldier's surviving son. This is our story...

IT ALL STARTED WITH A *promise*

1868-----

Lutheran Family and Children's Services begins as the Lutheran Orphans' Home, built on 40 acres of ground near St. Paul Lutheran Church in Des Peres. The founding leader is The Rev. Johann Friederick Buenger, pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, St. Louis. Approximately 40 children live in the log home known as Lutheran Orphan's Home.

1873-----

The need for additional space leads to the construction of the second building made of brick and stone. On dedication day, 64 orphans call it home.

1893-----

A third building (with capacity for 150 children) is dedicated, replacing earlier buildings. Additional amenities include a three-acre vegetable garden, dairy farm, hogs, chickens, smoke house, bake house, and a school.

1903-----

The Lutheran Society for Homeless Children and Aged Persons is founded under the leadership of The Rev. F. W. Herzberger to provide family foster care and adoption services.

1924-----

A service building is added to the north side of the building. The basement is used for food storage. The main floor houses the latest mechanical equipment and the top floor contains the dentist office, doctors office and several patient rooms.

1934-----

The Lutheran Society for Homeless Children and Aged Persons becomes a member of the Social Planning Council of St. Louis and focuses its services on children, renaming itself as the Lutheran Children's Friend Society of Missouri. Operations include service to deserted mothers, infants/children in foster care or available for adoption, and family counseling.

1935-----

Fire completely destroys the Lutheran Orphans' Home, but no one is hurt. Children and staff are housed in the German Protestant Orphans' Home on St. Charles Rock Road while the facility is rebuilt with generous contributions from the Lutheran community in St. Louis.

Since its founding, the Home has given refuge to 1,664 homeless or abandoned children.

1936-----

Construction is completed on the fourth Orphans' Home for a total cost of \$155,000.

1940-----

Lutheran Children's Friend Society of Missouri adopts casework standards of Child Welfare League of America as best practice and becomes a Licensed Child Placing Agency.

1941-----

Lutheran Children's Friend Society of Missouri is admitted to membership of United Charities, and begins receiving financial subsidies. It also begins work towards meeting the casework standards set by the Child Welfare League of America.

1943-----

Lutheran Orphans' Home celebrates its 75th anniversary.

1946-----

Advocacy becomes a Lutheran Children's Friend Society of Missouri program to help educate and inform decision makers about the needs of our community and the impact their decisions make on the people of Missouri.

1947-----

A four-room school building is dedicated on the grounds of Lutheran Orphans' Home, a gift from Miss Bertha and Mr. Oscar Cremer in memory of their late brother Mr. Andrew Cremer.

1952-----

After 20 years of studies and encouragement, the Lutheran Orphans' Home and the Lutheran Children's Friend Society of Missouri are merged. The new name is Lutheran Children's Services. Rev. Alvin Welp is named Executive Director.

1964-----

Arnold Bringewatt is named Executive Director of Lutheran Children's Services.

1966-----

The Board of Directors votes to close the Children's Home and the Corporate delegate body approves the decision. A new office opens to house the combined staff at 634 North Grand.

1968-----

The agency is renamed Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri, with three service departments: Community and Parish Services, Child Welfare, and Counseling.

LFCS celebrates its 100th anniversary.

1970-----

LFCS takes over Hilltop Day Care Center in Wellston.

1971-----

LFCS is accepted into membership with Family Service Association of America (now Family Service America).

1973-----

LFCS sells The Children's Home property to the City of Des Peres for \$1,200,000. A portion of the property is sold to St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

In a special meeting of the Delegate Assembly, LFCS broadens its corporate base to include all three major Lutheran church bodies in its legal structure.

The Board of Directors approves an initial grant of \$30,000 from the endowment to begin work in Southeast Missouri, in response to an invitation from Lutheran churches in the area.

1974-----

LFCS begins its joint ministry with Lutheran congregations by establishing an outreach office with St. Paul's Lutheran Church. (This eventually becomes Lutheran Outreach Ministry.)

1976-----

Richard Eissfeldt is named Executive Director.

1977-----

LFCS moves its main office to 4625 Lindell Boulevard, St. Louis.

The Board of Directors approves the purchase and remodel of the Roosevelt Federal Savings and Loan building on West Florissant to meet day care standards for Hilltop Day Care Center.

1983-----

The first LFCS Helping Hands Dinner Part Auction is held, netting \$76,000.

1987-----

The Good Samaritan Service Center for the Homeless, a cooperative venture of Lutheran Mission Association, Trinity Lutheran in Soulard, and LFCS, is initially funded by the Lutheran Charities Foundation.

1990-----

LFCS hosts the First annual Arnold H. Bringewatt Advocacy Education Conference.

LFCS commits to an intensive international adoption focus and becomes a member of Lutheran World Child.

1992-----

Rev. Alan Erdman is installed as President of LFCS.

LFCS receives Peter F. Drucker Foundation Award for non-profit innovations for its Parish Partnership Transitional Housing Program.

1993-----

LFCS celebrates its 125th Anniversary.

First Annual Faith in Action Award presentation is held.

LFCS coordinates the Inter-Lutheran Disaster Response effort in Missouri, assisting 45 Lutheran congregations during the great flood of 1993.

1995-----

LFCS office relocates to American Cancer Society Building on Lindell Blvd.

New LFCS office opens in Columbia, MO.

\$1.1 million grant for flood relief work received from federal government.

Developed CALL & CHOICES, two youth mentoring programs in community-based settings to focus on self-esteem, healthy choices and goal achievement.

1996-----

First annual Walk held at Laclede Groves.

Accepted as member of United Way of Mid-Missouri.

1997-----

New office opens in Springfield, MO.

1998-----

Statewide Governing Board is proposed, consisting of representatives from LFCS Board, Day Care Board, the LFCS Foundation, and Regional Advisory Boards.

LFCS establishes LFCS Foundation.

2001-----

This Defining Moment Capital Campaign reaches goal of \$12.4 million.

2002-----

LFCS office moves to 8631 Delmar Blvd, University City.

2003-----

LFCS receives 2003 Award for Excellence from Lutheran Social Ministry.

2005-----

LFCS participates in Hurricane Katrina disaster response with mental health counseling to evacuees in St. Louis and Columbia, MO.

LFCS participate in Hurricane Katrina disaster response in Alabama.

2006-----

LFCS assists with response efforts to tornado damage in Perry County.

2008-----

Growing Hope Capital Campaign concludes with \$7.1 million received in gifts and pledges.

LFCS contributes to the successful effort to place "Putting Kids First" on the ballot in St. Louis County.

Cape Girardeau office moves into new 6,500 square foot facility.

LFCS celebrates its 140th anniversary.

2009-----

First "Light the Way" event take place in Carondelet Park to support foster care and adoption programs of LFCS.

LFCS receives Hague Accreditation for inter-country adoptions.

2010-----

LFCS receives \$2.5 million in funding for eight new programs from the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund (Putting Kids First).

2011-----

United Way recognizes LFCS as 95% agency.

LFCS serves as the coordinating agency for Lutheran Disaster Response efforts following Joplin, MO tornado.

LFCS assumes responsibility for Footprints Counseling Program in St. Charles.

2012-----

“Putting Kids First” passes in Boone County.

2014-----

LFCS headquarters relocates to new offices at 9666 Olive Boulevard.

2015-----

Program expansion in Franklin County leads to the opening of a satellite office in Union, MO.

2016-----

Hilltop expands care to infants through Early Head Start.

Mid-Missouri office relocates to accommodate their maternal mental health services expansion.

Missouri State Emergency Management Agency selects LFCS as the management agency for the FEMA-DR-4250-MO Disaster Case Management Program, a federally funded program that provides long-term recovery to the victims of the December 2015 floods.

2017-----

Mike Duggar joins LFCS to serve as President and CEO.

