



Winter 2017

TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of Evangelical Child & Family Agency

ECFA'S 67TH LOVE IN ACTION DINNER

Listeners have come to expect inspiring and remarkable stories in songs from Mark Schultz. A 14-time Dove Award nominee and platinum-selling artist, Mark touches hearts whether he sings about parents praying for a sick child (*He's My Son*), or writes in honor of those who fought for this country's freedom (*Letters From War*).

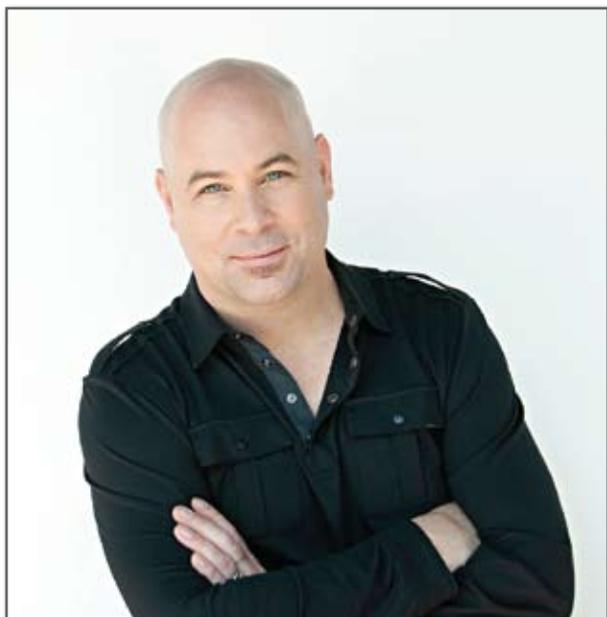
In his latest album, *All Things Possible*, Schultz continues to tackle matters of the heart and spirit. It has a joyous feeling that shows Schultz' soulful tenor voice and tuneful melodies. He sums up the album's theme in one song, *One Day*. The refrain spotlights bigger possibilities and hope beyond human limitations.

"One day we will touch the healer's hand/ One day we will be whole again." Schultz says, "No matter what you're going through – cancer, a disease, or being in a wheelchair – it's powerful to think there's an end-game to that."

Mark, who is an adoptee himself, was inspired along with his wife Kate, to start the Remember Me Mission which focuses on supporting organizations that provide health care and education for orphans and abandoned children in the U.S. and around the world.

In 2012, Mark and Kate became parents to their child Ryan. "I just get tears in my eyes thinking about him," Schultz says. "I've never met my bloodline in this world; it's not like I've got my biological mom or dad. I remember my wife saying, 'He looks just like you,' and I looked into his eyes, and he smiled. My knees just buckled. He's the first part of me that I've ever seen in someone else."

In addition to Mark's inspiring music, our evening would not be complete without compelling stories from some of our ECFA clients. Dinner is complimentary, but reservations are required. An offering will be received to help underwrite ECFA ministries. Tables will accommodate groups of up to ten individuals. Many sponsorships are available.



HILTON LISLE/NAPERVILLE HOTEL
FRIDAY, MAY 5TH, 7:00 PM
3003 CORPORATE WEST DRIVE
LISLE

For more information or promotional material, please contact Jennie at 630-653-6400 or email liadinner@evanfca.org.

“Have a Heart for Life” Bowl Classic

ECFA’s bowling fundraiser is a favorite of many. Held again this year at Fox Bowl in Wheaton on February 11th, you are able to participate in America’s most popular indoor sport and partner with us for a great cause.

Your \$20 registration enables you to enjoy “Stella’s Pizza” and soft drink lunch, three games, shoe rental, homemade heart cookies, door prizes and great exercise in a fun-filled atmosphere. All bowlers will receive a t-shirt courtesy of Personal Touch Realty. We are asking everyone to raise \$40 or more in receiptable pledges to support our Pregnancy Support Services. This program provides free confidential professional counseling, education, and support to parents experiencing a crisis pregnancy.

Imagine how a day of fun-filled exercise and your pledges can yield investment in young lives, encourage families, and honor our Creator and Lord who loves us all. Circle that Saturday in February and “Have a Heart for Life!”

Saturday, February 11, 2017

@ Fox Bowl

1101 Butterfield Road

Wheaton at Danada

Check-in: 11:00 am

Pizza Lunch: 11:30 am

Bowling: Noon

Cost: Registration \$20 plus

\$40 receiptable pledges

(at least)

Contact: Jennie @ 630-653-6400

or email bowling@evancfa.org



FROM HEARTACHE TO REJOICING

Prior to coming to ECFA for services, “Melinda” was married and she and her husband hoped for a child; Melinda dreamed about becoming a mother. She became pregnant several times, but each time the pregnancy ended in heartache, with a miscarriage. Sadly, Melinda’s marriage dissolved.

While becoming involved with another man, Melinda found herself unexpectedly pregnant. Melinda was uncertain if the father desired to be involved. She was overwhelmed with emotion as she considered her circumstances and her options. She was also unsure if the baby would even survive the pregnancy.

Some women in this situation simply would have chosen to abort the unplanned child. But Melinda is someone who is filled with passion and focus; she has a strong desire to succeed. Melinda chose life, and made the hard decision to parent alone.

Melinda prepared herself for the possibility of another miscarriage. However, this pregnancy was different. At each pre-natal doctor’s visit, she was given hope. She heard a very strong heartbeat and her doctor assured her throughout the pregnancy that the baby was healthy and thriving. Melinda gave birth to a beautiful, healthy, and strong baby boy.

For Melinda, becoming a mother is a dream come true, although not at all what she originally envisioned. She sometimes had trouble picturing herself as a mom, but now cannot picture her life without her son. Melinda is blossoming in her new role and is working closely with her pregnancy counselor to learn all she can about infant development, baby care, self-care, and how to develop healthy relationships.

After talking things over with her family, Melinda decided to move back home so that her parents could provide greater support. She feels blessed by the amount of encouragement she has received and is hopeful about her and her son’s future.

As we recognized Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on January 15th, we rejoice with Melinda for the healthy delivery of her precious baby boy, and we are so thankful she chose life even though her circumstances were not what she dreamed about. We know that there are many women who are feeling scared, confused, and lost with the news of an unplanned pregnancy.

At Pregnancy Support Services, our desire is to meet women in their time of need. We want to give them hope and help them make wise, God-honoring decisions in their lives.

We are thankful for those who help make it possible to come alongside women like Melinda.

- Faith Allman, MSW
Prenancy Support Services Supervisor



ECFA FOUNDATION, INC.

ECFA Foundation Inc. exists to become a significant funding source for ECFA services. If you would like more information about investing in ECFA’s long-term future, please contact:

Tim Carrick or Ken Withrow at 630-653-6400.



BENEFIT AUCTION NOVEMBER 11, 2016

This year's Annual Benefit Auction had a memorable and touching opening. As the event was held on Veteran's Day (November 11th), we began with the posting of the colors by the DuPage Honor Guard comprised of veterans and active duty personnel. Following was a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and singing of the National Anthem. We also gave gift bags (colored and decorated by children served at ECFA) to every veteran in attendance. Our evening concluded with the singing of "God Bless America." Many expressed their appreciation and delight of acknowledging the day and our veterans in this manner.



The familiar and long standing format of the evening continued with the active participation of more than 215 guests. Tables filled with several hundred silent auction items were thoughtfully perused and bids were written down. Many were sipping the delicious warm cider beverage (an appreciated tradition), and listening to the variety of piano offerings by Stephanie Myers, our guest musician.



Following the delicious dinner provided and served by the Abbington staff, auctioneer Greg Parker led the live auction which offered electronics, toys, event tickets, Donna's cinnamon rolls, and even Cubs memorabilia. The spot auction, held at a halfway break, gave opportunity for all attendees to support our Pregnancy Support Services program. A matching pre-event gift along with the generosity of our attendees and a significant anonymous donation presented that evening, made the 2016 Benefit Auction the most productive one ever. More than \$117,000 was raised to support the mission of ECFA and its work with children and those clients who are touched by our services. We'd love for you to join us at this wonderful event on Friday, November 10th this year.



Is It Time to Make Your Will?

You need no longer delay this critical matter. Call Rita at 630-653-6400 to request our workbook *Preparing a Christian Will*. It will guide you through the process of gathering the information that is needed by your attorney to draft your personal document. There is no charge or obligation. For information on Planned Giving and Estate Planning, see our website: http://www.evanca.org/opportunities/planned_giving.html

Kids Korner

Connecting Children to Families

The Adoption Program is working to recruit “forever families” for children in child welfare facilities, whether domestic or overseas. How do we do this? By connecting with churches who either have an active Orphan Ministry in their church or who are interested in “starting” an Orphan Ministry. I believe that as Christians we will give an account some day for how we took care of His children. Not only should we ask ourselves what we can do to stop abortions at any stage of a pregnancy, but also, what can we do to care for the children in foster care and orphanages who need a permanent home, a forever mother and father.

In addition to connecting with *Wendy’s Wonderful Kids* to recruit families for children, ECFA has developed a partnership with *In His Hands*, an orphan ministry that finds “host families” for overseas orphans. Hosting families can either be interested in adopting a child or be willing to host a child in their home for four weeks and assist with identifying a potential adoptive family for the child. If you, or someone you know, is interested in adoption (domestic or overseas) or hosting a child from overseas, please contact Barb Hellmer at 630-653-6400. Please consider whether you can adopt or be a host family for one of the children identified below.



Daisy - 12 years old
Daisy is a true princess!
She enjoys crafts and playing games.



Paul - 8 years old
Paul loves playing outside and blowing bubbles.

*Host an Orphan from China
Bring Hope to Children Who Wait*

*China Summer Hosting
Mid-June through Mid-July 2017*

For more information:
Call Barb Hellmer at 630-653-6400 or
email mail@evanfca.org

*Please pray that God
will provide godly,
Christian families for each
of these children.*

Not Pictured

Mary - 12 years old
Mary loves to laugh!

Bode - 8 years old
Bode enjoys putting together puzzles.

Logan - 7 years old
Logan is full of energy and enjoys playing with mechanical toys.

WELCOME BACK FAITH!

From 1994 until 2007, Faith Allman had been ECFA's Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) Supervisor. Faith loved the PSS program and has a heart for women experiencing unplanned pregnancies and crises in their pregnancies. However, God called Faith to leave ECFA and to focus on being a mom to her two young children.

Knowing that changes were coming to the PSS program, ECFA reached out to Faith a few months back to see how she was doing and to find out what her thoughts would be about potentially coming back to ECFA. At that time, Faith expressed an interest in getting back into social work, but what that would look like was unclear.

Over the next couple of months, God was at work putting into place His perfect plan. ECFA once again reached out to Faith to see if she might be interested in rejoining the ECFA staff as our PSS Supervisor again. Faith felt called by God to get back into social work and was excited that the doors were opening for a return to ECFA.

After meeting with Ken Withrow, Executive Director, Faith accepted the position and started back at ECFA on December 7th. She is transitioning



smoothly into her position and is learning about the many changes that have occurred since she last worked at ECFA. Staff members who have been around for years are excited to see Faith back and we all know that this was God's plan all along – we just needed to wait for the pieces to come together in His perfect timing.

Wendy Payne, MSW, LSW
Director of Professional Services

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

"I could do that." This is what Linda Smith thought to herself when she heard an appeal at ECFA's "Love in Action" Dinner last May. The request was for volunteers to serve an evening or two a month as a receptionist at the office. As a recipient and participant in ECFA's ministry in past years, Linda was willing to find a way to give back to the agency that had blessed her, to "pay it forward," as she said.

She has now served for several months in that role. Finding the training effective, the tasks easy to grasp, and the assistance given in support of ECFA very meaningful, Linda is an example of how relevant and valuable volunteering can be. With a need for more volunteer receptionists and other needs, won't you consider "paying it forward" with ECFA?



A JOYFUL TIME OF THE YEAR

The kindness of friends, family, and strangers (who are now friends), overflowed once again this year. The focus of Christmas is the birth of our Lord and Savior. Some families we serve share our beliefs, but many do not. Our desire is to show the families we serve the love of Christ throughout the year, in many different ways. We strive to show kindness, empathy, grace and respect. We want our parents and kids to know that they are loved, that they are special, and that they matter.

At Christmastime, we are able to love on the children and families we serve by providing them with gifts. We seek out donations, knowing that most of our families do not have the means to buy presents for their children. For many, the gifts they receive through ECFA will be the only gifts they receive. This year, we changed it up a little, and sent the gifts home with the families, with wrapping paper and tape. The parents enjoyed wrapping these gifts for their children.

This year, we have collected more than 700 toys, over \$1200 in cash and gift cards, diapers, baby wipes, numerous stocking stuffers, books, pajamas, and over 70 rolls of wrapping paper plus tape!

Our hearts are thankful to the many who gave so generously this year: friends and family of ECFA staff, moms from the Wheaton Mom's Facebook page, H4 Training in Wheaton, the Bloomingdale Bears football team, Electronic Transaction Consultants, DuPage Public Safety Communications, the DuPage

County State's Attorney's Office, the DuPage Honor Guard, Wheaton Bowl and graduates of Wheaton North High School, Immaculate Conception School (Villa Park), Craig Johnson and family, the Pajama Project for donating books and pj's, Wheaton Town Square for having 2 Christmas trees full of wish lists, and LifeWay Christian Store for donating hundreds of adorable stuffed animals.

More than 150 children and their families were greatly blessed this year and our hearts are full.

With love on behalf of all of us at ECFA,
Wendy Payne, MSW, LSW
Director of Professional Services



Memorials and Tributes

In Loving Memory

Corey Anderson

From: Sharon Watson

George Barville

From: Mr. and Mrs. Roberto Taruc

Julie Elizabeth Berls

From: Jeff and Teri Schuman

Edna Brandt

From: Suzy McLaughlin

Kathi Burkman

From: Mr. and Mrs. Devon Hollingsworth

Ed and Jean Griffiths

From: Mary Moravec

Rev. Dr. Michael Halcomb

From: Mrs. Bonnie Halcomb

Eleanor Hill

*From: Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Covarrubias
Suzanne Evans*

Robert Honig

From: Mrs. Pat Honig

Glenn Jorian

From: George and Gloria Dearing

William and Mark King

From: Lucille King

Donald Lloyd McFadden

(Served in the US Navy during the Korean War)
From: Mrs. Barbara McFadden

Clayton and Elsie Moore

From: Mrs. Tamara McParland

Emma Rose Pinedo

From: Jeff and Teri Schuman

Nicholas Poland

From: Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Poland

Veronica Rettke

From: Kurt Rettke

Lloyd "Pete" Romin

From: Mrs. Miriam Romin

Doris Wheeler

From: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wren

Robert Wiltjer

From: Cornelius and Beverly Stob

Don and Sylva Worsham

From: Don and Suzanne Wratney

In Honor of

Wilbur and Muriel Anderson

*From: Rev. and Mrs. Michael Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Berg*

Mrs. Bonnie Fisher

From: Dan and Sarah Collins

Thomas and Mary Idichandy

From: Alex and Jenny Idichandy

Jennie Tietjen

From: Mr. and Mrs. David McDonald

Michael Vande Berg

From: Mrs. Mary Vande Berg

Theresa Wiltjer

From: Cornelius and Beverly Stob