

PLEADING THEIR CAUSE

KERRY HASENBALG BRINGS PLIGHT OF ORPHANS TO POLICY MAKERS

story by Nicole Passar Gebhardt

Since God first called Kerry Hasenbalg to fulfill His command in James 1:27, to “visit orphans and widows in their trouble”—not only has she visited them, she has brought their plight before those who can do something to help. From high-profile Christian musicians to powerful U.S. lawmakers, many have been influenced to help orphans by the vibrant Kerry, who attends CC D.C. Metro.



Kerry Hasenbalg holds an orphan in Kitgum, Uganda. She has traveled to orphanages around the world answering God's call to care for the fatherless.

This summer, she traveled to ravaged Uganda with a team that included Christian recording artist, Steven Curtis Chapman. A year earlier, she brought a congressional delegation to the same place to acquaint powerful lawmakers and businessmen with that country's suffering and endangered children. During that trip, she was still executive director of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institution (CCAI), a nonprofit group she founded in 2001.

Kerry started working with orphans nearly a decade ago. Now she and her husband, Scott, work mainly with CC D.C. Metro and the Chapmans' Christian adoption foundation, Shaohannah's Hope, which started in 2003, and where Scott serves as executive director.

“Here is a group of people that God desperately cares about, and the world is becoming filled with them,” Kerry said of the growing

orphan crisis. There are now approximately over 50 million orphans around the world, although the exact number of children needing adoption is unknown.

“It's really neat that it is Calvary Chapel that is involved, because the legacy of this movement is that they are sheep who know the Word of God,” she said.

Pastor Chris Warner, CC D.C. Metro, has also gotten heavily involved with orphan ministry, helping to stir interest among 1000 Calvary Chapels and other churches in the U.S. He helps link them to Shaohannah's Hope, which provides resources about how each church can get involved in helping orphans.

“As the body of Christ, we're all called to reach out to orphans, but in what way? Are you supposed to be mentors, foster parents? Should the church start a program or be involved with an orphanage overseas?” said Wendy Cosby, program director for Shaohannah's Hope, citing the group's motto: “H.O.P.E.: Hear from God first, Obey, Pray, and Expect miracles.”

Kerry traces God's hand in calling her to orphan ministry back to her preliminary mission work with Calvary Chapels in Russia in the early 1990s.



Actress Jane Seymour, and Kerry at CCAI's annual congressional gala.

Having studied Russian and economic reform, Kerry's educational background led her to Eastern Europe where she met CC leaders Brian Broderson, George Bryson, and Jack Hibbs. She offered her services as an interpreter and became part of the early ministry in Russia. During these trips, orphans continually flocked to Kerry, as God drew her towards His call on her life—working with orphans. “The Lord took my heart from just the Gospel, to understanding compassion ministry—and that is the Gospel. Once you're saved, it's about going to work at whatever the Lord has fore-ordained for you to do.”

His calling became crystal clear through James 1:27: “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” Adoption, she said, is the perfect example of what God did for people by making them His children through Jesus Christ.

Kerry began working with an adoption agency in the States and went on to found the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, which allowed her to partner closely with 180 members of the United States Congress. As executive director of the organization, she directly impacted adoption policies in China, discussed family issues with the First Ladies of countries in Central America, and raised awareness of

HIV/AIDS orphans worldwide—especially in African countries. She traveled with congressmen as well as missionaries to places where many children were infected with HIV.

Wendy, who also attends CC D.C. Metro and has worked closely with Kerry through her involvement with Congress and now with the Christian organization, said, “You start out thinking the answers for orphans are with the government or people in power, but it became so evident that it's the call of the church to care for orphans.”

CC D.C. Metro now sponsors two families in Uganda – providing food, schooling, and clothing for nearly a dozen children – and works heavily with an orphanage in El Salvador. ☺

Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.
Ephesians 1:5

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Open your mouth for the speechless ... and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Proverbs 31:8,9

“God is doing something ... I see miracles every single day.”

Kerry Hasenbalg



Kerry addresses members of Congress at the annual “Congressional Angels in Adoption™” in Washington, D.C.

Uganda