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The World's First Posthumous Adoption of an Aborted Child?

ANS NEWS STORY

By Dan Wooding
Founder of ASSIST Ministries

COSTA MESA, CA (ANS) -- A California couple signed adoption papers Monday, April 20, 2009, so the husband could adopt his wife's two previously aborted children and give them his last name. It may be the first such posthumous adoption of an aborted child.

The documents were executed live on Rich Buhler's radio program Talk From the Heart on KBRT AM-740, which broadcasts to all of Southern California.

Stan Musil said he wanted to adopt his wife Lisa's children as a part of his love and support for her, as a part of her healing from the pain of the abortions, and to give them his last name for a memorial that is being constructed in Riverside, California to honor children whose lives have been lost to abortion.

Joining them for the signing was attorney Ron Stoddart of Nightlight Christian Adoptions who drew up the adoption papers. He is also a pioneer in the field of embryo adoptions.



1) Rich Buhler, Lisa Musil, Stan Musil, and Ron Stoddart (from left to right)

Lisa, who is now 45 years old, said that at the age of 19 she was a hairdresser and living with her boyfriend in Southern California when she discovered she was pregnant. She said she was terrified. She felt she had no one to talk with about her pregnancy and was too frightened to admit it to anyone.

"I had my whole life ahead of me," she said. "I felt there was nothing else I could do."

When she was almost three months into her pregnancy she went to an abortion clinic in Inglewood, California and arranged for her baby's life to be ended. But instead of bringing the crisis to a close, it only opened the door to years of further and deeper difficulty. "I felt such agonizing pain in my heart that I tried to cover it by becoming involved in drugs, alcohol, partying, and a promiscuous lifestyle," Lisa told the radio audience.

"My life spiraled out of control and although I didn't realize it at the time, I was on a path toward destruction that would last for years."

Lisa later discovered that she was pregnant for a second time which was complicated by the fact

that she also on her way to jail because of a drunk driving conviction.

"I had another, this time at the third month of my pregnancy. Lisa recounted. "This time it was a different man, a different father and I could not even say the word 'abortion.' I preferred to describe the pregnancies as 'terminated.'"

There were times when Lisa felt she could sense God calling her name. Her brother told her once that if she didn't quit the way she was living, she was going to die. "I just shrugged off those words and carried on," she said. "But deep inside---I knew."

Then came an evening in 1988 when Lisa's brother took her to Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa. The teacher that night was Greg Laurie who is the pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside. Lisa went forward during the service and dedicated her life to Jesus Christ. That night her destructive path came to an end.

In the years that followed, Lisa grew in her faith in Christ and also sought to deal with the pain of her destructive lifestyle, especially her two abortions.

"It wasn't instant and it wasn't easy, but I came to realize how much God loved me and that he also offered me forgiveness for what I had done. I can say that today I feel completely healed and God has allowed me to help many other women who are carrying the searing pain and loss of abortion."

After committing her life to Christ, Lisa was determined to do things right this time and to find a healthy relationship with the right man---a Christian man. He turned out to be Stan, an Elder at Harvest Christian Fellowship who was also the overseer of the singles ministry there. They met at a singles retreat and after a 13 month courtship Stan and Lisa married nearly 7 years ago.

Lisa is a part of a ministry in Riverside called White As Snow that helps women in crisis pregnancies as well as women and men who are dealing with the pain of abortion.

"There is such a huge void after an abortion," explains Lisa. "Once a mother realizes what has happened and that there was a living child in her womb and who would be alive today had it not been for the abortion, the pain is almost too much to bear."

It has become common for women who have experienced abortion or miscarriage to imagine whether their child was a boy or a girl and to give the baby a name. "Some of us have asked God to reveal that information to us so we can further acknowledge the personhood of the child and grieve the loss more concretely," added Lisa.

A cemetery plot at Pierce Brothers Crestlawn Memorial Park in Riverside is to be the site of a memorial to aborted children, a granite monument on which the names of the children will be engraved. "I was trying to decide what last name I should give to my two children," Lisa said, "When Stan told me that he wished he could adopt them so they would have his last name."

"I love Lisa," Stan said, "And what better way to show it? It's easy to say I love you. What better way to show you love someone than to prove it by actions. It never came to my mind that this had not been done before. These babies are a part of Lisa, so they are a part of me as well."

Lisa mentioned Stan's desire to adopt during an interview on Rich Buhler's radio program on April 2 and that gave Buhler the idea of exploring whether it would be possible.

"I immediately called my friend Ron Stoddart," Buhler explained. "Ron is an expert on adoption and has also been a leader in arranging for the adoption of frozen embryos. Hundred of thousands of embryos have been created as a part of fertility treatments and Ron helps infertile couples to legally adopt them, implant them into the wife's womb, and bring them to birth."

Stoddart said that it wasn't possible to do an adoption in the eyes of the law because there was no birth certificate for the aborted children, no legal acknowledgement that they ever existed. But it would be possible for Stan and Lisa to a ceremonial adoption, to sign paperwork with each other that reflected their desire for the adoption to take place and their desire to honor the personhood of the two children Lisa had briefly parented. Before each other, before God, and before witnesses, they would be embracing the children as a part of their marriage.

So when the intended memorial is erected in Riverside, among the names will be Alicia Anne Musil and Vincent Matthew Musil.

Lisa said that abortion is such a lonely place to be that she feels blessed that her children are acknowledged and love by others, especially by Stan. "He's the man I never prayed for," said Lisa. "I could never have prayed for anyone as wonderful as him."

"We've had other couples express an interest in this ceremonial adoption," Lisa said. "Ron Stoddart has given permission for the adoption form to be freely distributed to anyone at his web site at www.nightlight.org."

Further information about the memorial being erected in Riverside, California, can be found at www.coronalife.org.

Dan Wooding, 68, is an award winning British journalist now living in Southern California with his wife Norma of 45 years. He is the founder and international director of ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times) and the ASSIST News Service (ANS); and US Bureau Chief for the Missionaries News Service (www.missionariesnews.tv) and Safe Worlds IPTV's Faith, Hope and Charity channel. He was, for ten years, a commentator, on the UPI Radio Network in Washington, DC., and now hosts the weekly "Front Page Radio" show on KWVE in Southern California and which is also carried on the Calvary Radio Network throughout the United States. The program is also aired in Great Britain on UCB UK and Calvary Chapel Radio UK. Wooding is the author of some 42 books, the latest of which is his autobiography, "From Tabloid to Truth", which is published by Theatron Books. To order a copy, go to www.fromtabloidtotruth.com. E-mail: danjuma1@aol.com.



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