



Leaving a *Legacy*

Jerry's Kids, a Lynchburg-based adoption foundation started by Callie and Kendra Penn, seeks to financially assist Christian couples in their adoption journey and honor the legacy of their late pastor, Dr. Jerry Falwell, Sr.

The Penns, who have two adopted children themselves, are members of **Thomas Road Baptist Church** and graduates of Liberty University. The couple helped launch Jerry's Kids on Mother's Day in 2023.

Since its launch last year, Jerry's Kids has financially assisted three couples with their adoptions. Callie Penn, who serves as senior life

Jerry's Kids

adoption foundation



coordinator at Thomas Road, said being an adoptive father himself makes the ministry even more meaningful.

"I know what these couples are going through and how happy and elated they are," Penn said. "That's the joy that I get from it."

The name, Jerry's Kids, is meant to honor Falwell, the couple's late pastor and founder of Thomas Road Baptist Church and Liberty University.

Penn explained that Liberty students and young people who were part of Thomas Road and its affiliated ministries were often called "Jerry's Kids." Falwell even helped found the Liberty Godparent home, where young pregnant mothers receive care and counseling in making parenting and adoption plans.

The Penns spent much time with Falwell while he was ministering at different events during the

late 1990s. At the time, Callie worked at Thomas Road as a travel logistics coordinator, while Kendra was a staff soloist for Falwell's ministries.

After getting married, the couple realized they could not have children naturally. As a way to do ministry together, they began offering free childcare to Thomas Road members.

The couple was soon notified by the director of the Liberty Godparent home that someone had made it financially possible for them to adopt.

The Penns would go on to adopt their first son, Graham, in 2001 and their second son, Jackson, in 2007. Falwell would dedicate both babies to the Lord at Thomas Road.

Falwell dedicated Jackson on May 13, 2007, two days before passing away at the age of 73. Jackson was the last baby he dedicated to the Lord.

For many years, the Penns never knew the identity of the person who made it possible for them to adopt. Just a few years ago, Penn was told by a Thomas Road co-worker that the person was, in fact, Dr. Falwell.

At that moment, the inspiration to start Jerry's Kids was born.

"When we learned that it was Dr. Falwell who made it possible, I wanted to do something in honor of him and his kindness and generosity to us," Penn said.

"It's one of the most rewarding things I've ever done. I just said yes to God to do what I felt He was calling me to do. I think God orchestrated all this, and I'm excited to see where He takes it in the future." ■

RESOURCE:

For more information about Jerry's Kids, visit the website:

 jerryskids.us