

A Prayer for Children

We pray for children who sneak popsicles before supper, who erase holes in their workbooks, and those who can never find their shoes. And we pray for those who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire, who cannot bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers, and for those who have never counted potatoes, who were born in places we would never be caught dead in, who never saw a circus, who live in a violent and X-rated world.

We pray for children who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money. We pray for kids who never get dessert, who have no security blanket to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die; who can't find any bread to steal, who don't have any rooms to clean up, who live and die in refugee camps, whose pictures are not on anyone's refrigerator door, and whose monsters are real!

We pray for children who spend all their allowance before Tuesday, who throw tantrums in the grocery store, and pick at their food. We pray for kids who like ghost stories, who shove their dirty cloths under the bed, and for those who wear nothing but dirty cloths. We pray for those who never get a bath, who get visits from the tooth fairy, who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool, who squirm in church and scream into the phone, whose tears are real, and whose smiles and funny faces make us cry!

We pray for those whose nightmares come true in the daytime, who will eat anything, who have never seen a dentist, who have no one to spoil them, who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep. We pray for children who live and move, but have no being. We pray for children who want to be carried, and for those who must be carried. We pray for children we never give up on, and for those who will never get a second chance. We pray for children who want to sing and dance, and for those who shut them out. And we pray for children who are the victims of abuse, and for those walk alone on the streets with no place or people to call home.

-Adapted from Dear Abby
The Centre Daily Times

“Love a Child Fund”

The **“Love a Child Fund”** is a Permanent Endowment with the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation. The yield from the Fund is distributed by the Commission on Child Advocacy of the Susquehanna Conference, United Methodist Church, to provide grants for small membership congregations and others who may qualify, with funds to start new ministries with children and young people, to enhance existing children or young people’s ministries, or work collaboratively with others in projects or programs that assist children or young people’s ministries.

The Fund is designed to support tangible and measurable ministries within a local or regional context. The grants are available through an application process and must meet the following **criteria** to qualify for consideration by the Commission on Child Advocacy: [1] the program must be with and for children and young people through age 12. [2] The grant should be considered as seed money for new or expanding ministries. [3] The grant is best applied when the existing or new program is a cooperative effort with other United Methodist congregations, ecumenical congregations, or other non-profit agencies or social services.

Priority may be given to those congregations, groups, or individuals who provide matching funds, and who demonstrate the involvement and dedication of the congregation or network to reach out to children and their families, especially those on the margins of our communities.

Letters of inquiry may be sent to:

**The Commission on Child Advocacy, c/o Rev. Dr. Ed Zeiders,
67 Enola Drive, Stewartstown, PA 17363**