



# T H E *Beacon*

## *Our Little Man Caleb*

*...my husband and I decided to name our son Caleb... since it means to be faithful to God, and to be bold and courageous.*

During the sonogram about six weeks before my due date, my doctor discovered that my baby had severe hydrocephalus. I was in total shock and disbelief because I had had the perfect pregnancy. My husband and I had never heard of hydrocephalus, so I wondered, "What is it? Did I do something to cause this to happen?" My doctor could only tell us that it was severe and that there is no explanation for hydrocephalus.

A specialist explained that hydrocephalus is an abnormal accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid within the ventricles of the brain, causing them to enlarge and increase the pressure on the brain. He said there was a

small chance that my baby could be stillborn. Even though the chances were slim, I was mortified.

During the next few weeks I prayed a lot. The best thing I could do was to stay positive and have faith that the Lord would take care of my child. My family and I went to my church to pray, and the priest performed the sacrament of anointing the sick for my unborn child.

At my next doctor's visit they scheduled a c-section for the next day, two weeks early. Even though I knew in advance, I still wasn't prepared. We had not even picked out his name. Then while waiting for the c-section, my husband and I

decided to name our son Caleb. I thought this name was perfect since it means to be faithful to God, and to be bold and courageous. During the procedure I just kept praying that he wouldn't be stillborn. I was so

relieved when I heard his first cry. From that moment I knew everything would be alright.

Caleb had shunt placement surgery the day after he was born. They said it was too soon to determine if Caleb



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had any brain damage, but due to the severity of the hydrocephalus, they would be surprised if he did not have some type of disability. In fact, they were not sure if he would ever be able to care for himself, or to even use his arms.

When he was a year old, Caleb had a shunt malfunction and was in and out of the hospital for two to three months. Since then he has not had any complications. In fact, he has exceeded the doctor's expectations. One neurosurgeon said that Caleb's development has

been "beyond amazing". I honestly believe that God has answered our prayers and that through the sacrament of the anointing God has healed my son. At first, I was scared that I would never see him smile, but now I see this miracle at work every time I see him smiling and hear his beautiful laugh. I also believe that God brought us to the Little Light House. Since Caleb has been there I have seen many positive changes. He loves his teachers, and he loves being around the other children. Not only can he hold his own

cup to drink, he loves to throw it! He has even started taking swimming lessons.

Caleb has a long road ahead of him, but with the help of his family, his therapist, and the Little Light House, I know he will be able to achieve all of his goals. I believe that Caleb has been truly blessed by God. Like the meaning of his name, if we remain faithful to the Lord and have the courage to do his will, then Caleb will continue to grow and develop and exceed everyone's expectations.



*Caleb, on a recent field trip*



## *Hello, Goodbye!*

*Maureen Harbinson,  
Executive Director*

new school year, we had to say goodbye to Kinsey, a student who needed be at home and more isolated from any potential infection. Next we said goodbye to Taylor and her family who found a school nearer home. So goodbye to Kinsey and Taylor, but Hello to Andrew, Allison, Amiraca and Abbygail—four new students who joined the Little Light House family in the last few weeks.

Hello to (name) our new associate teacher who will work alongside (name) in the (color) classroom, to Jamie our new occupational therapist, and to (name) our new speech therapist. We are so grateful to have these dedicated professionals join our team.

And we want to thank all of you for your faithful and generous support of our children. We could not do it without you. I hope this issue of the Beacon will encourage you.

Goodbye for now!

Hello!

I'm tempted sometimes to believe that the only thing that doesn't change is change itself! The Beatles recognized the transitions of life when they sang, "I say hello and you say goodbye!" People come in and out of our life. They enrich us for a season and sometimes have to move on for different reasons. It is hard to say goodbye but exciting to welcome the new people who come to us, especially when we need them the most!

In the midst of change these last few months, of saying goodbye to wonderful students and caring staff, it is reassuring that God doesn't change—He is same yesterday, today and forever. His faithfulness and steadfast nature is a great source of comfort to me.

As we all look back on yesterday, we can learn from our mistakes and count our blessings. We are able to look forward to tomorrow, to the realization of our hopes and dreams. However,

we must also see the present reality as a gift to be cherished and celebrated. This is the day that the Lord has made, and we will be glad and rejoice in it.

You will remember in the last issue of the Beacon, we said goodbye to Linda, one of our teachers, and to Allyson who graduated and is doing well at her new school. We also said goodbye to our therapists from Beyond Play, who went on to open their own clinic.

Then, just as we began this

## Year Ends with Graduation, Party

Little Light House celebrated its first graduation ceremony on July 17, 2007, honoring Allyson Plunkett for her milestone achievements. Allyson, now four, is the daughter of Shannon and Charles Plunkett. She began attending the Little Light House in January 2006 and was one of the first seven students enrolled. While at the Little Light House, Allyson was known for her friendliness and hugs, which she freely shared with her friends and

Little Light House visitors. "Allyson's growth in the last 18 months has been remarkable," says Maureen Harbinson. "Her biggest accomplishments have been learning to listen in class and follow directions, which have prepared her for Christ Covenant School."

The graduation ceremony included a presentation by Ms. Linda and the Blue Class and an inspirational address by Executive Director



Maureen Harbinson. Following the program, the students and families enjoyed a Wet-n-Wild year-end bash, which included hamburgers, hotdogs, and homemade ice cream. The children enjoyed a giant water slide, several small pools, a slip-n-slide, and other water games. This event marked the end of an exciting semester, which also included a trip to Horses for Handicapped and a trip to the Jackson Zoo.

*The first graduate of the Little Light House Central Mississippi: Allyson Plunkett!*

## Tunes, Tutus and Turning Wheels

On a warm evening in early September, three young ladies with Little Light House ties made their on-stage debut during Tunes, Tutus, and Turning Wheels. The program, presented by

Belhaven College, the USA International Ballet Competition, VSA Arts of Mississippi, Methodist Rehabilitation Center, and Mississippi Paralysis Association,

among others, was a collaboration of music, dance, and visual arts highlighting artistic expressions of those with and without disabilities.

One of the program's pieces was a heartfelt depiction of a mother's movement from despair into acceptance of her child's disability. This touching piece featured current Little Light House students Ella Grace Miller and Taylor Newell, in addition to recent graduate Allyson Plunkett.

Ella's and Taylor's faces beamed in the spotlight as

they wheeled with the dancers around the stage. Allyson, true to her nature, stole the show with her innocence and love for attention.

They performed for a packed audience at the Belhaven Center for the Arts. Portions of the program will be recreated at a repeat performance for Parent Night at the Little Light House for Little Light House family and friends on October 26, 2007. Space is limited, so reservations are required.



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## You're Invited: 2007 Laps for Little Ones and Struttin' Their Stuff

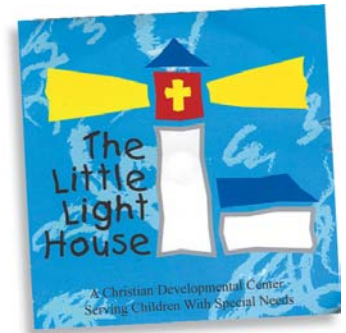


Come Rock-N-Roll with the Little Light House, our families and our students during the second annual "Struttin' Their Stuff." This year we are combining a new event, Laps for Little Ones, with this favorite fundraiser from last year. Join us at the North West Rankin High School Track and Field from 8:00-9:00am on November 10, 2007 for Laps for Little Ones, a one hour run/walk fundraiser with community participants of all ages. Then

at 9:30, cheer on our bravest little athletes as Little Light House students make their way around a mini track for their personal victory lap.

Please show your support by running, walking or "warming the bench" in Laps for Little Ones. Or show your support by sponsoring either a Laps participant or one of our "LLH mini athletes." To download forms, visit [www.llhms.org](http://www.llhms.org), or call 601-829-3446 for more information.

## A Special Thank You



The Little Light House was richly blessed this year by the 2007 Leadership Class of the Rankin County Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Mississippi State Hospital, Brian Hull, and Ian Cranfield. Their 2007 project involved preparing and funding an informative and inspirational DVD about the Little Light House-Central Mississippi. The completed DVD and 150 extra copies were presented to the Little Light House at a preview party for Little Light House families on June 21. Daniel Elliott, Linda Trewolla, Dennis White, Julie White, Michael Jordan, and Wilda Thames were the members of the Leadership Class who made this project possible.

### *Our Mission:*

*The Little Light House is called to glorify God by improving the quality of life for children with special needs, their families, & communities*



*Nicholas and Caroline laugh with glee at the "Wet and Wild" Little Light House graduation party.*

The Little Light House Central Mississippi is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit Christian Developmental Center for children with special needs, age birth through six years of age. The Little Light House Central Mississippi does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or medical diagnosis (unless it affects the child's ability to attend on a regular basis) in the administration of its educational policies, and other school administered programs. Some behavioral conditions may be evaluated on an individual basis. The Little Light House Central Mississippi assures that all children's records will be maintained as confidential. All gifts to The Little Light House Central Mississippi are tax-deductible, less goods and services received.