

# Smoky Mountain Children's Home Hosts Centennial Reception

Cleveland, TN–The Smoky Mountain Children's Home (SMCH) held a reception at the Church of God International Offices, January 8, 2020 to formally kick off a year of celebration of the home's 100th anniversary.

Located in Sevierville, Tennessee since 1949, the Church of God's signature benevolent ministry was established in 1920 following action at that year's General Assembly.

“With the Church of God Orphanage having its beginning in Cleveland, Tennessee, it seemed most appropriate to host a Centennial reception here to recognize the many years of childcare within our denomination,” stated Dr. Walt Mauldin, executive director of SMCH. “The Children's Home is forever grateful for its humble beginnings 100 years ago and for the miraculous way the Church of God has consistently blessed and supported this ministry. We sincerely appreciate the church's faithfulness in prayer, financial support and love for the youth and children placed in our care.”

The reception began with an opening statement from Church of God General Overseer Dr. Tim Hill. Dr. Raymond Culpepper, liaison to the Division of Care and First Assistant General Overseer, shared his support and appreciation for the excellent leadership of Dr. Walt and Tammie Mauldin. Cleveland City Mayor, Kevin Brooks, presented the Mauldins with a proclamation declaring Wednesday, January 8, 2020 as Smoky Mountain Children's Home Day in the City of Cleveland.

The proclamation called attention to the December 17, 1920 opening of the first orphanage under its first “matron,” Lillian Kinsey. The ministry began with three children in a six-bedroom house on Montgomery Ave. in Cleveland and was initially named Orphanage Number One. In 1928, a 119-acre farm just south of Cleveland was purchased and the operation remained in Cleveland until 1949 when it relocated to Sevierville, Tennessee when what was then Bible Training School moved to Cleveland and became Lee College (now Lee University).

According to records from the children's home, the home has ministered to over 30,000 children and young people throughout its long history. Their residential, foster care and adoption programs continue to minister to children and youth. The organization has received national

recognition from the Council on Accreditation of New York, as well as through licensing with the Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

During the reception an announcement was made regarding the most significant anniversary event of the year for SMCH, the Centennial Celebration, which will be Tuesday, April 21, 6:00 pm at the Sevierville Convention Center. The occasion will include a benefit dinner and auction, as well as an opportunity to share in the historical milestone.

For more information on SMCH or the centennial year of activities, please visit the website [www.smch.org](http://www.smch.org) or call 865.453.4644 Ext. 118 for more information.

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