



# When You Say Goodbye

An Adoption Ceremony to Enhance Transition and Placement



## Adoption Ceremony Instructions

### Preparation of the Birthmother

Prior to the ceremony, ideally during pregnancy by the social worker, clergy, counselor, or adoption lawyer, the option of participating in the Forever Fingerprints Adoption Ceremony should be explained and offered.

### Preparation of the Adoptive Parents

Prior to the ceremony, they should be given a copy of the book, Forever Fingerprints.

### Preparation for Actual Ceremony

In order to provide a compassionate and meaningful transition and placement for everyone involved in the ceremony, including the baby, it is advisable that the presiding person is a social worker, adoption lawyer, counselor, or trusted clergy that has worked with the parties involved. The residing person should bring the Forever Fingerprints Box containing:

- Two copies of the book: Forever Fingerprints...An Amazing Discovery for Adopted Children, by Sherrie Eldridge (EMK Press)
- Two ink pads
- Six Forever Fingerprint Craft Sheets
- Colored Pens

The birth mother should be given as much control prior to the ceremony as possible, deciding where, when, and whom she would like to attend. Because it is a crisis time for everyone, certain preparations are suggested prior to the ceremony, such as soft music and a bouquet for the birth mother from the adoptive parents. If the birth mother doesn't desire to participate in the timing, then the presiding person should do that ahead of time for her, always mindful of her needs and vulnerable condition. This is her cherished time with her child.

As the ceremony begins, the birth mother should be holding the baby and the adoptive parents should be mindful of staying a fair distance away, respectful of the mother's need for time with her child.

## The Adoption Ceremony

...a time to learn that an unexpected life was growing within your womb, a place made sacred by God Himself, as He fearfully and wonderfully weaved together your baby's body.

...a time to make the grueling decision to carry your baby full term, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that mysteriously communicated love to your unborn baby's heart.

...a time of indescribable trauma when telling others that you're expecting, a pain that will deeply unite you and your child when he is old enough to understand.

...a time to contemplate the heavy load of guilt adoption would produce, a guilt your adult child might likely explain was false guilt, for it was right and God's plan for making her into the person she has become.

...a time to choose adoptive parents for your child, a time your child wants you to stand strong for your rights as a birthmother in determining how the two of you will stay connected in the future.

...a time to participate in the absolute miracle of birth, a time your child wants and needs to share with you before adoption, by laying on your tummy and nursing at your breasts.

...a time to cuddle, hold, feed, cherish and whisper words of love, a message your child will internalize on an unconscious level.

...a time to meet your baby's deep need for future connection to you by giving her a tangible, personal gift, a special picture with your very own fingerprints, which your Creator patterned hers after, in that sacred place, her first home.

...a time to help your baby give you a gift to hold in your empty, aching arms, a special picture with her tiny fingerprints, a tangible reminder of the connection you will always share because of the God who created her and who is able to keep those fingerprints alive forever.

...a time to say goodbye to your baby and the mom and dad you have chosen to nurture the nature you have lovingly put into this child.