

# First Choice QUARTERLY



SPRING 2023

ISSUE 31



First Choice  
FOR WOMEN

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

## Kailee McKnight



*Therefore my beloved, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, as you know your labour isn't in vain.*  
– 1 CORINTHIANS. 15:58

Welcoming in the new year of 2023 reminded me of a time I was trying to walk to my mailbox on ice. I could not seem to keep my footing and felt the cold ice more than I felt like I was set and steady. One may ask “why didn’t you just give up and turn around?” But I persevered and kept pressing toward the goal. Do you ever feel like turning around and giving up?

To be utterly transparent, I had moments that I would question the plans for our Fatherhood Initiative. We had two solid volunteers and one fatherhood champion when we first began this path. One of our volunteers continued to spread the news that we were mentoring dads and that we needed fathers who would come alongside these men and empower and equip them to be what God had called them to be as dads. Men of all parenting ages, including grandparents, were coming through our doors and yet no fathers

were signing up to mentor them. The news was spreading but the fire was not kindled in the way we desired.

Last year we received our first Fatherhood Grant through our affiliate, Carenet. It was an amazing opportunity that led to father focused material for our clients, a few more interested men to volunteer and our Fatherhood Administrator. We leaped from well under 80 male client visits in 2021 to well over 600 male client visits in 2022. God moved in amazing ways throughout last year. We were down to two volunteers and a few in training at the end of 2022. Applying for the Fatherhood grant another time, we were elated to hear over Christmas break that we were one of the 20 recipients for the 2023 Fatherhood Grant.

The first few weeks back to work were the ice trip to the mailbox design. Then on January 21, I was met with an unexpected God wink. Walking into the training room for the beginning of our training for 2023, I walked in to greet 6 men! Never before have we had a group of all men sitting in a training! Glory to God!!! Hello?!!

So here we are, entering 2023, with 14 men! A mixture of men fully trained and in training. We also are sending four Pastors and 2 laymen, for the first time, to the Carenet Men’s Summit, where they will be empowered to turn their passion into action, be inspired by great speakers and become a part of First Choice’s story in a historical fashion! You may be asking, “What does that have to do with the verse above and your story about ice and a mailbox?” If I am to take any nugget from this current season and apply it to my memory box for repeated use, it is:

1. Be steadfast: Paul wants them to be faithful to the Lord and to his teaching about the Lord, to keep going.
2. Be immovable: Paul is very concerned about the Corinthians’ tendency to compromise their behavior and even their beliefs for the sake of the culture in which they live
3. Be always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that your work is not in vain: Paul has been clear that God gives each believer ways in which to serve Him, by serving each other in the church. The Corinthians should be doing so with enthusiasm. This work they do for the Lord is guaranteed to continue to matter for eternity, compared to so much of life that will cease to have meaning in years, days, or even minutes.

I had the privilege to meet one of our clients and hear him say, “you guys include me too! I’m not just the mom’s assistant, I’m actually the dad and considered part of the team!”

“It can’t happen without men stepping into this role to protect the vulnerable, as Roland Warren says. That’s what Kingdom men do.” Thank you for being those men!

# Cheryl Farrell

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

This quarter's Volunteer Spotlight is on Cheryl Farrell. Cheryl has served in Madison County as a receptionist for two years. Cheryl heard about First Choice at her church, Tabor, when volunteer Joyce Gollimund shared about the ministry and how they needed help with a garage clean-up. Cheryl came that day as Joyce's guest and fell in love.

She enjoys volunteering immensely. She serves two days a week and loves meeting our clients or potential clients who visit the center. In just a few minutes, as the initial contact, she helps to make them feel welcome and at ease. Genuine care and concern for each other and our clients is very evident at First Choice. Cheryl knows she is serving God in a way that she never expected, but He knew her heart and opened the path to First Choice.

Cheryl and her husband Jeff have been married for forty years. She enjoys reading, traveling, crafting, and spending time with family. She has two children, Eric and Elysa, and three beautiful granddaughters.



# Shannon Bryan

## FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE ADMINISTRATOR



We are solidly into the second year of the Fatherhood Initiative, so we are no longer a "pilot project." We have added two more fully-trained men to our volunteer ranks, and there are ten more with strong hearts for encouraging new fathers in various stages of training. Our educational offerings for men have added two new fatherhood topic tracks from the Bright Course video series to the flagship Dr. Dad™. What a blessing it is to see God's hand growing this ministry!

**Most encouraging are the words of our male clients. One man stated, "The sessions have made me more aware of different scenarios with the baby," and "learning from the videos (has helped me)... never heard of SIDS before." Another says, "I'm glad there is something like this out there for some of us that might be overwhelmed and don't know what to do or how to do it..."**

Thank you for your prayers as, together, we support men, which, in turn, supports women and creates lifesaving, life-altering communities where families can flourish.





# Seeking the Truth

MICHAEL DEUTSCH, BOARD CHAIR

One of my favorite Bible passages is John 10:10, The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

I see this reality in the world around us...the thief that seeks to take away who God has called us to be. It happens in many subtle ways, but we have this offer from God, the gift of life. It's the gift of not just a ho-hum life, but the gift of abundant life, a life filled with passion and purpose and power.

Dear friends, as the new chairman of the board, I remind us that we are in a spiritual battle. If we are willing, we will be victorious. But we must be willing! We must be willing to work hard, to work together, and to encourage one another.

AND, at all times, we must make certain that Jesus is the focal point of our mission. I am so excited about the future of First Choice for Women. Being on the board for the past three years, I have witnessed God working through so many people - the employees, the volunteers, the contributors, some of whom are simply walking alongside anonymously. It's amazing! I am so blessed to be part of First Choice. It is my hope that we will continue to seek ways to serve God and bring glory and honor to Him.

A bit about me . . . I am the pastor of First Baptist Church in Alexandria. My wife Debbie and I are originally from the Chicago suburbs but have been here for almost 16 years. We have two sons. Joshua and his wife Taylor live in Dallas, and he is a tennis professional. Zachary lives near Dayton and works for the Air Force as a jet propulsion engineer.

I love what I do, most especially, leading, teaching, and preaching. I have a first row view of God at work in His people, and that is so gratifying and fun to watch. I don't take myself too seriously, love humor, and am a bit sarcastic. I'm always around and would love to engage you in a conversation. I am honored to serve as the board chair and one of the guiding hands leading First Choice to further success as we serve the Lord together.



# Surrendering The Secret

MELISSA SMITH

Millions of women and men carry the pain and heartache of a previous abortion. They hide their secret deep in their hearts, and many are suffering severe consequences. We can NO LONGER ignore this vast mission field. With compassion, we must show these women and men how to replace the enemies' lies with God's truths and lead them to healing and freedom.

Forty-three percent of women have had at least one abortion by the time they are forty-three years old. That is approximately one in three. Seventy-nine percent of this number claim to be Christians. To put this into perspective, take the number of women in a church and divide it by three. That will give you the approximate number of women in that church congregation who daily carry the burden of least one past abortion. These are numbers from just a church population. Think how many we would add if we considered the community as a whole.

First Choice for Women can help reach this mission field with compassion, love, truth and hope. Surrendering the Secret is a biblically-based healing journey for men and women that have experienced the pain of abortion. It is an eight-week Bible study that will help participants find hope and healing through unique journaling exercises and meaningful group activities in a caring, confidential community. I have been trained by Pat Layton and her team of national trainers to lead this Bible study and break the silence of the pain of abortion. We are prayerfully waiting for a man to lead our men through this program.

Will you partner with First Choice for Women in bringing healing to the women and men in our congregations and communities? April is Abortion Recovery Month, the perfect time to build up an army that can conquer this MISSION FIELD. If you have any questions, please email [Melissa@firstchoiceforwomen.org](mailto:Melissa@firstchoiceforwomen.org).

# Creating Positive Relationships

BETHANY JONES



In 2022, our Creating Positive Relationships educational program thrived! Our instructors had the privilege of speaking to 3,450 students across Madison, Delaware, and Grant counties. Seventy-nine percent of the students who took our anonymous survey said they are going to choose abstinence.

Here are some comments that students made after having one of our guest speakers in class:

**“ I learned a ton of new stuff this week. Even though I was choosing to be abstinent and not have sex before marriage, I feel even more strongly about that decision. I also learned what certain STI’s were and how they can affect me. I feel like my instructor did a very good job at teaching this to me and my class. I learned quite a lot, and I honestly think that she is one of my favorite guest speakers. She was very informative about this topic.**

*- 10th grade student at Yorktown High School*

**“ I learned a lot this week about relationships, and I started to talk to my mom more. Now we have a bond because of this week. The instructor was great. I have learned a lot from her!”**

*- 8th grade student at Madison-Grant*

**“ I learned this week to set boundaries with anyone I start dating, and that you HAVE to talk with your parents. I think [the instructor] did good because I wouldn’t find out these things that help keep me from danger. She was really nice and caring. I think your program is going to help children and teenagers and maybe even adults.**

*- 9TH grade student at Madison-Grant*

**“ I learned a lot more than I thought I would. I’ve learned you can get a lot of diseases, and I think a lot of people would’ve changed their minds if they knew about those diseases. The instructor did really good! I think the program is a good thing for high school students. People should learn about these topics because it’s sure changed my thinking about a lot!**

*- 9TH grade student at Madison-Grant*

**“ Most of my relationships didn’t go as planned. Most of them used me. I couldn’t do anything about it because I’ve never really seen any red flags. As we learned about all of this in class, I’ve noticed that there were many red flags. This could really help me in the future.**

*- High School student at Alexandria-Monroe Jr/Sr High School*

Our program is truly making a difference in the hearts and lives of the students in our community! Keep praying for us as we go into the schools in 2023. We would love to add more schools, youth groups, and organizations to our schedule. [Bethany@firstchoiceforwomen.org](mailto:Bethany@firstchoiceforwomen.org)

# Expect the Blessing

LESLIE HATCHER



We've all heard the adage, "Many hands make light work." I have found this true in life and true in the ministry of First Choice for Women. Partnering with other Delaware County agencies has allowed us to have a greater reach and to better serve the clients who need our assistance.

One example of this is our partnership with The Family Resource Center, which recently celebrated its second anniversary in Delaware County. Located on Walnut Street, this organization serves to connect agencies with those who need community resources. First Choice has a presence there as part of their "Full House Chat" parenting support group. I participate in a monthly online meeting to assess community needs and brainstorm solutions. I serve as the community connector for this group, receiving information about community happenings and then forwarding it to a large group of agency representatives through email.

We recently experienced the benefit that results from these connections. A local teacher reached out for help for a student about to deliver twins. We were able to provide newborn necessities and information about First Choice programs to this caring teacher. The teacher was so appreciative and said, "I knew who to call," because she receives community emails from me.

We also received a phone call recently from Firefly Children and Family Alliance. They were looking for a very hard-to-find formula for a baby about to be released from Riley Children's Hospital. It was nowhere to be found on the shelves of local retailers, but we had it a First Choice! God had already provided for that sweet baby. Someone had donated that formula to First Choice, and we had it when it was needed.

Agencies such as A Better Way, Muncie Mission, Healthy Families, and many more are working together to make Delaware County a safe place for families. Another familiar adage says, "Teamwork makes the dream work." First Choice is honored to be part of the team.

# Tabor Church

We adore our church partners here at First Choice, and we are celebrating Tabor Church, a long-time supporter that is near and dear to our hearts. Some of our most beloved volunteers and many material donations for our clients come from Tabor, and the church continues to support our vision to see every individual respected and every child wanted, cared for, and nurtured. We share Tabor's mission as well, which is stated as "sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and making disciples of Him in all nations for the praise of God's glorious grace." First Choice is blessed to be a small piece of the mighty Kingdom impact that Tabor is having, both locally and globally, through their avid missions work.

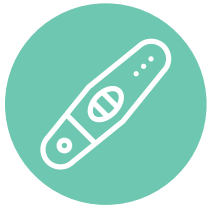
Tabor Church is led by Pastor Brad Fox as well as Zac Clements, who is over Student Ministry, and Isaac Mazingo, Interim Worship Leader. Tabor has deep roots with its elders as well—with decades of service to the ministry from Terry Ayers, Bill Wehmeier, Brad Fox, Zac Clements, and Steve Gray.

Tabor explains why they gather together by saying, "Our Sunday morning gathering has the feel of a family because that is what we are. But it is all about worshipping God: praising Him with our songs, talking to Him in prayer, and hearing from Him through a message from the Bible. It is a corporate worship experience because we are the Body of Christ – Jesus Christ, by His Spirit, dwells within us as a fellowship of believers. We are conscious of one another when we gather and seek to encourage and equip one another for a life of worship, believing that God is present among us as a body."

If you are looking for a Bible-based church in Delaware County, we highly suggest a visit to Tabor Church!



# How Your Donation Helps First Choice



**\$9**

Average cost of a pregnancy test

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**\$110**

Average cost of a car seat

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**\$100**

Average cost of a bassinet or pack and play

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**\$215**

Average cost of a crib and mattress

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**\$250**

Average cost of an ultrasound

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**\$1,315**

Average cost to save a life  
*(From initial engagement to on-site counseling & education)*

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**\$1,600**

Average cost to serve one client for a year  
*(From pregnancy test to ongoing parent care)*



# Yes, I want to change the world— one life at a time!

If you would like to become a monthly giver, go to [FirstChoiceForWomen.org](https://www.FirstChoiceForWomen.org) and click the “Donate” menu OR complete this form and mail it to [3020 N Oakwood Ave, Muncie, IN 47304](https://www.FirstChoiceForWomen.org).

One-Time Gift

Recurring Monthly Donation

\$25

\$50

\$100

\$500

\$1,000

Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed

Charge my Credit Card (complete section below)

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ CVC: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

First Choice for Women is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit ministry; donations are tax deductible as permissible by law. TIN# 35-1695860



# Interested in other ways to give?

## WISH LIST

Size 4 and 5 Diapers • Baby Hygiene • Baby Bottles • Bottle Brushes • Girls clothes up to 5t

## CHOOSE LIFE LICENSE PLATE

Ordering a Choose Life license plate is as easy as 1-2-3.

Visit <http://www.in.gov/bmv/2620.htm> to find the Choose Life plate. Select “Order or renew your plates online” and enter your information. Your new specialty plate will arrive in the mail within 14 days!

You can also get a Choose Life license plate at your local BMV. Every year your plate is registered, \$25 will go toward the pregnancy resource center in your county.



## MAKING A QCD

Over age 70 1/2, have Traditional IRAs, and interested in potentially reducing your income taxes??? Please discuss with your CPA/tax preparer if using the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) would be beneficial to you. Upon reaching age 70 1/2, account holders of Traditional Retirement Accounts (IRA, 403b, 401K, etc.) must take an annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from the account. The IRS permits the account holder to send the RMD (or more up to \$100,000) directly from the Traditional IRA only, to a 501(c)(3) as a QCD and therefore not have to include the withdrawal as taxable income. With the 2018 tax law changes that increase the Standard Deduction, many people will no longer itemize and therefore get no tax benefit from making charitable contributions. Utilizing the QCD allows people to continue to make contributions and eliminate those gifts from taxable income. Please discuss this strategy with your CPA/tax preparer if you are over age 70 1/2, have Traditional IRAs, and are interested in reducing your income taxes.

## KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

To designate First Choice for Women as your charity of choice in the Kroger Community Rewards Program visit the website, set up an account and enter DW443 or UU404 when it asks you to enter a “NPO#” (non profit organization). When shopping at Kroger and using your Kroger Plus Card, you can give to First Choice. This program allows Kroger Plus members to designate First Choice to receive a percentage of what they spend at Kroger.



## ESTATE GIFT (IN YOUR WILL)

The most popular way of providing long-term support for a meaningful charitable organization is to make a gift in a will. With some foresight, you can make a gift in your will that fulfills specific planning goals as an integral part of an estate plan.

# Thank you to our sponsors!

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# Upcoming Events

## Baby Bottle Fundraiser

Choose the date that works best for your church or business!

Schedule a guest speaker, information booth, baby bottles, baby showers for your church, Bible Study group or Business today!

Contact Karissa at [karissa@firstchoiceforwomen.org](mailto:karissa@firstchoiceforwomen.org)

## Walk for Life

Saturday, May 20, 2023  
Mounds State Park, Anderson, IN

## Annual Fundraising Gala

October 12, 2023

Thank you Altrusa of Muncie for the grant received to purchase brand new books for our clients and their children!



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