

# First Choice QUARTERLY



SUMMER 2020

ISSUE 24

  
First Choice  
FOR WOMEN



## BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

Cindy Costerison

I wanted this to be an inspirational article that would give you hope and encouragement, but I admit that, today, it's hard. I am discouraged and frustrated with the state of our country and our world. Everywhere I look, I see the devaluation of human life. And none of it is compatible with a Godly worldview.

But I am also heartened and grateful that what the world is experiencing isn't what I experience each time I walk through the door of FCW. I see kind, loving, dedicated people who are generously giving of themselves for a Godly purpose. The commitment to LIFE is sacred.

These two opposites are exactly what Paul was talking about in his letter to the Ephesians. There are two sides in the life we lead. Those who are Christians and have decided to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior are automatically enemies of Satan. And Satan's goal is to steal, kill, and destroy. These forces are real, and we should not underestimate them. The battle is intended to make us feel ineffective.

I want to honor and encourage all who give of their time, their finances, and their prayers to this ministry. We are on God's side. The enemy will use his power to cause doubt, discord, and dissension among us, and we need to be prepared.

When facing discouragement and frustration, our strength for the battle that rages is with God. We have to "armor up" every day so that we can be ready for the attacks that are sure to come our way. Wearing God's armor protects us and puts us on His winning side.

God bless each of you as we journey through these turbulent times.

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

—EPHESIANS 6:10



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What do you do when you don't know how to move forward, when everything around you is dark? When I planned out my year to come, I didn't know our world would be in its current climate. I also had no idea I would be in my current position as the new Executive Director. At First Choice, we have chosen to persevere and put our trust in the One who was not, and never is, taken by surprise.

I see so much light in the midst of this season. We are growing, expanding our knowledge, and looking forward to the future ahead! I am reminded of a perfect scripture in Luke 9:62, "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Trusting the promises that God knows all, He sees all, He cares, and He is working all things together for our good gives us the confidence to keep moving forward.

Perhaps the most difficult parts of the challenges we face are those that are outside of our control. However, there is always at least one thing we can change in response to such challenges; our mindset. That may not sound like much, but trust me, mindset is everything.

In the midst of changes in leadership and changes in the world, we choose to think well about our future at First Choice, even when our present circumstances aren't what we planned them to be. Where we are today is not where we will remain forever. As a team, now more than ever, we are 'pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus' for our lives and the ministry we serve.

I want to especially thank each and every one of you for your prayers, your commitment, and the parts you play to keep First Choice moving ahead. With an overwhelming response to our first-ever Virtual Walk for Life, we managed to raise over \$27,000! You can feel good about the service we provided on your behalf during these past months and will continue to provide in the days to come. I believe the Lord is moving in big ways and proving each day that life matters. Your life matters. And I believe you can use your life to leave a legacy...

A little update on how we have been functioning over these past few months: Our pregnancy medical centers have remained open as an essential service provider. We screen all clients coming to our centers for COVID-19 exposure. Depending on clients' situations, we have continued to serve people on a drive-through basis for practical needs, and, beginning on June 1, we started in-person services, by appointment only. To protect our volunteers, we had asked them to stay home and operated with only staff members for several weeks. Our volunteers have started to return to serving at the centers as they are comfortable doing so. We are so blessed by our dedicated team of staff and volunteers!

We will continue to evaluate and update our practices with the guidance of our Medical Director, Board of Directors, and government guidelines. If you know of anyone who may benefit from our services during this time, please let them know we are here to serve them.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Kailee McKnight



## News from First Choice

During the pandemic, we have had time to reflect on our “why,” look at our work loads, and assess how we can improve our efficiency both in time and money. That being said, we have been blessed to have three new employees begin their adventure with us this month!



**Melissa Smith** | Madison County Center Director

Melissa Smith, about whom you will be reading in this newsletter, has had a true passion for this ministry and all God is doing within it. From working with the clients to reaching out into the community, she is eager to take on the new role as our Anderson Center director. We know that the Lord has placed her here ‘for such a time as this,’ and we are excited to watch how He leads in the years to come.



**Allison Wrin** | Office Manager

Allison Wrin is joining us as the new office manager of First Choice for Women. She is a graduate of Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science in Health Education and Promotion. During the last year, Allison was an intern at the center, and staff and volunteers can attest to the immense blessing she was on a daily basis. She so enjoyed that experience, along with learning the goals and mission of this ministry, that she felt led to join us in a full-time capacity! It is a joy to see God working everything out according to His timing.



**Meghan Huffman** | Administrative Assistant

Meghan Huffman is the new administrative assistant of First Choice for Women. She is also a graduate of Ball State University and has a heart for this ministry. During her interview, she mentioned that “First Choice gives me hope and jump starts my spirit.” She has been an exceptional volunteer over the past year, and we look forward to watching her in this new role. We value her help in the amazing plans God has ahead for us here at First Choice for Women.

# Welcome New Madison County Center Director Melissa Smith!



I am a life-long resident of Muncie, Indiana, and now reside in Gaston, Indiana. I'm a purpose-driven, God-fearing single woman and mom. I have three boys (Cody, 21, Connor, 15 and Caiden, 15). I spend my time chasing them from ballpark to ballpark or basketball court to basketball court. We belong to CommUNITY church, and I serve as a CommUNITY kids, as well, as CommUNITY youth leader. I also help lead a mission project called IndianaCommunity. It is a period project for underprivileged women in ECI. I'm a Parent Care Mentor, as well as an Options Counselor for First Choice for Women. This has led me to become a Certified Leader in Surrendering the Secret. My co-partner and I are starting to reach and teach women the biblical study about healing from abortion by the word of God.

I am currently pursuing my bachelor's degree in human services with a minor in Christian studies. I have spent time working with DCS and addictions in my past. I have spent the majority of my career working as a CCMA in medical offices. I love to serve others and be a beacon of light, whatever my job capacity may be.

I look forward to being able to lead Anderson and Madison County in a positive direction. I want to be able to dig in, reach, teach and embrace the families that come into the center. If I am able to use my story to help one woman, then my pain won't be in vain. I stand firmly on these verses from Isaiah 61: "The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn and provide for those who grieve in Zion-to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor."

I look forward to expanding into all areas of Madison County and spreading the good word of our Lord and Savior. I am committed to honoring and protecting innocent human lives, to presenting the Bible to those we serve, and to providing excellent client care. I can only do that with the help of the amazing volunteers we have at First Choice who are also willing to reach, teach, embrace, show compassion and shower our clients with grace every day. I look forward to working with individuals, churches, and all community organizations in this area to achieve a community in which every child is wanted, cared for, and nurtured.

# Pause

BY LESLIE HATCHER

A popular Muncie restaurant, which was closed throughout the recent Covid-19 event, had only one word on their sign - "Pause." Many of us were forced recently to take a pause in our lives for the safety of our families and our communities. And although this has been difficult and heartbreaking for some, a time of pause is a very biblical concept. The word "Selah," occurring 71 times in the Psalms, is usually defined as "pause." A pause can allow us to meditate on God's Word, pray and seek His will for our lives.



At First Choice, we were forced to take a pause as well. We had to limit some of our services, but the staff was at the center every day serving hurting people in our community. We prayed with clients over the phone, shared the truth about LIFE, distributed baby supplies, and encouraged one another. Sally,\* a great-grandmother who, in the midst of the shutdown, was given emergency custody of her three great-grandchildren, called us, desperate for help. The children had no clothes, no toys, and no place to sleep. Because of your generous support, we were able to help Sally meet those needs. She stood in our entryway...as we were separated by locked glass doors...and cried with appreciation. Oh, how I wanted to reach out and hug her! Now that we are open for full services again, Sally has returned to First Choice where we can continue to offer material and spiritual support.

I also spoke with Tiffany,\* an abortion vulnerable client from August, 2019. She called to update me on the birth of her son and tell me that she had chosen to make an open adoption plan. Tiffany even shared a picture with me! We continue to minister to Tiffany and connect her with post-adoption resources.

We are all praying that our community will not have to experience another "pause," but we are trusting that God will work through the ministry of First Choice for Women every day to impact the lives of those we serve.

*\*Names have been changed to protect privacy.*

# Abstinence Update

BY SHARYLL MARTIN

Hello, summer! In years past, the beginning of summer meant school was out. For most students in Delaware and Madison counties, school has been out for more than a month. Our abstinence instructors have been "out of school" since March 13.

Even with this huge change in our lives, we know that the Creating Positive Relationships curriculum was delivered in whole and in part to over 600 youth.

The authors of the curriculum created online lessons, and First Choice emailed our materials to all the health teachers in our service area. We all miss being in the classroom, and we are hopeful that we will be back in school in the fall.

At the time of this writing, area schools will be opening August 5 and beyond. We will be ready to deliver our 'healthy relationships' lessons whether the instruction is face-to-face or via video meetings.

Please keep our country and her people in your prayers. None of this has been a surprise to Our Heavenly Father. We follow wherever He leads us!







# 2020 Walk for Life

87 Registered Walkers • 229 Donors • \$27,985 Raised  
We exceeded our highest record year by over \$3,000!





# Annual Anderson Banquet

Held at the Paramount Theatre in downtown Anderson, Marc Eckel was the guest speaker and artist for the evening.

**\$23,534 was raised at this event!**



# How Your Donation Helps First Choice



**\$9**

Average cost of pregnancy test

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**\$50**

Average cost of a car seat

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**\$100**

Average cost of a bassinet or pack and play

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**\$150**

Average cost of a crib and mattress

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**\$250**

Average cost of an ultrasound

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**\$1,200**

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

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**\$1,400**

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

# Volunteer Spotlight

## JANET TROWBRIDGE

“People who volunteer are led by the Holy Spirit,” notes Janet Trowbridge. “I am thankful He led me to First Choice for Women.” Janet has volunteered with First Choice since 2016. She serves as a receptionist and manages volunteer scheduling. “At First Choice, I help the staff with office responsibilities, but, most importantly, I am part of wonderful group of women who help parents nurture their children in a safe and loving environment.”

Janet attends Yorktown Christian Church Disciples of Christ. She and her husband, Ralph, have been married for 46 years and have one son and one grandson. An active volunteer, Janet serves on the Board of Secret Families of Delaware County, a non-profit which provides Christmas gifts for over 400 families per year. In her free time, Janet enjoys reading, crafting, and antiquing.

“At the end of the day, I hope I have done something that impacts families in our community,” Janet concludes. “It is important to me to be part of an organization that values human life and does all it can to protect the unborn.” Thank you, Janet, for your dedication and service to First Choice for Women.



# Sponsor Spotlight

## HOOSIER TECHNOLOGY

Owned by Jason Conley since 2006, Hoosier Technology specializes in IT service and support for small businesses in and around Delaware County. Staying local allows the techs to handle service calls in person whenever possible. The company sells the equipment they use but can special order for any project they do. Hoosier Tech has a word-of-mouth home and student market, too. Jason has been supporting First Choice since August, 2015, as a part of their 50-50 program supporting local non-profits. Roberta, their friendly receptionist, said Hoosier Technology likes the smallness of their company because they like small business. “These guys work until the problem is solved,” she stated. First Choice staff would have to agree. Thank you, Hoosier Technology!



## CARTER CLEANING

Tom Jarvis (Jarvis Ventures) owns Carter Cleaning and has been sponsoring First Choice for Women since October, 2016. Every month, his crew comes to sweep, dust, mop and remove our trash. Several times a year, they also wax our hard floors and spot-clean the carpets. It is always a pleasure to enter the building after Carter Cleaning has been there. It was interesting to learn that Tom’s company is certified to clean medical facilities such as IU Health Ball Hospital surgery, Imaging Center, Voss Clinic and several other businesses. Ted reports that he has twenty-six customers that keep his company very busy. After retiring as principal of Central High School and purchasing Carter Cleaning, Tom believed it was time to give back to the community. First Choice would like to thank Carter Cleaning for sponsoring us!





# Thank you to our sponsors!



PREMIER SPONSOR



# 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](http://FirstChoiceForWomen.org), click the "Give Some Help" button, then click on the "Donate" menu OR complete this form and mail it to [3020 N Oakwood Ave, Muncie, IN 47304](mailto:3020 N Oakwood Ave, Muncie, IN 47304) or [1817 N Madison Ave, Anderson, IN 46011](mailto:1817 N Madison Ave, Anderson, IN 46011).

Designation:  Muncie  Anderson

One-Time Gift  Recurring Monthly Donation

\$15  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  \$500

\$1,000  \$2,500  \$,5000  \$10,000  Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed  Charge my Credit Card (complete section below)

MasterCard  Visa

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

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

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

Charge me \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of each month.

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

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