

First Choice QUARTERLY



WINTER 2022

ISSUE 29


First Choice
FOR WOMEN



BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

Cindy Costerison

Seeking the Truth

Why is it so hard to know and understand what is true in 2022? We have so many opportunities to get information, and yet, we still struggle. We can blame the national and local news media, which are confusing at best. We can blame social media, which give mixed messages. We can blame our government because it is subjective, not objective. We can blame the church because there are all kinds of churches. How do we find and know the truth?

First, let's look at what truth is.

Truth is the objective standard by which reality is measured. It is not feelings or even beliefs. Truth stabilizes the believer when attacks come. Here are a few truths about truth!

- The Truth is absolute, and if something is true, something else must be false.
- The Truth doesn't always feel good.
- There is no "your truth" or "my truth." There is only Truth.
- Discernment and truth aren't just knowing what's right and wrong. It's knowing the difference between what is right and what is almost right. -C. Spurgeon
- To find absolute Truth, you must go to the source of Truth.
- The further you get from the origin of Truth, the further you get from Truth.
- The Truth is a Person, and His name is Jesus.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, He upholds the universe by the word of His power. -HEBREWS 1:1-3

Jesus was there, in the beginning, at creation. He is the Origin of Truth.

So what does all this have to do with First Choice for Women? As we continue to serve and love at First Choice for Women, we want to always communicate the Truth of our Savior Jesus Christ,

- the Truth that life begins at the moment of conception.
- the Truth that both mothers and fathers are valuable to a child.
- the Truth that abortion ends life in the womb and harms women
- the Truth that Jesus Christ is our Hope, that His way is The Way, and that "when you know the Truth, the Truth will set you free." -John 8:32

I praise God that you are faithful and choose to be on this journey with us. It is a holy calling. Please continue to support us through your prayers. Your gifts help us not only to protect women and children, but to give families the Truth of His word. That is the best gift we could ever give them.

Dear Holy Father, thank You for providing for the ministry of First Choice for Women through the prayers, gifts, and love of those who support us. May we always seek Your Truth in our daily lives, knowing that You are the source of everything. Thank You for the families that come through our doors, seeking truth and hope. May we always give them Your Truth and the hope that comes from knowing You. In Jesus' name, Amen

Refocused and Relaxed

A.W. Tozer said, “Whoever seeks God as a means toward desired ends will not find God. The mighty God, the maker of heaven and earth, will not be one of many treasures, not even the chief of all treasures. He will be all in all or He will be nothing.”

Many have noticed the recognition we received through the Madison County Chamber of Commerce for being open for thirty-five years. The compassion-filled services that are offered through First Choice comprise a work that must continuously focus and refocus on the One who is the Chief Cornerstone of all that we do and have accomplished as we enter our thirty-sixth year of service.

The past few years have been a unique adventure. The above title, *Refocus and Relax*, may sound simple but is very profound. God uses mistakes, victories, and Scripture to remind us that we are to refocus – focus again and again on Him, and relax – stay free from tension and be at ease. He is in control and will not fail us. As we grow together as leaders and as a team, we are intentionally growing in Him each day.

As shown in our 2021 Annual Report, we were blessed beyond measure with the abundance of time, talent and treasure from giving hearts like yours! One of our largest blessings this year is receiving a Vision Grant through ITOWN Church. This will help us take a flying leap into extending our services in a mobile fashion to all the rural areas in Delaware and Madison County. We are praying, preparing and planning to have the RV hit the road in 2022! Pray with us that all things work together the way God desires, and stay tuned for updates as we continue these efforts.

In the world today, we need encouragement to feel empowered to keep the faith and stand strong in the storm. I hope that many will find that encouragement through the articles we write. As our Board Chair shares her heart, as our team members recount real-life stories happening every day, and through photos that show the work of the hands and feet in the community, we want to remind you Who we must stay tuned towards and seek each day.

In the midst of the many mysteries of God and how He works, we can *be still and know that He is God* (Ps. 46:10), and that He is good. Here at First Choice, and also in our lives outside of work, we must consistently *refocus* on God as our all in all and relax in knowing that He has everything in His control. I pray that you will receive abundant blessings as you refocus on and relax in our Mighty God and Savior.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE
Kailee McKnight



Jill with ITOWN Church presenting \$50,000 Vision Grant for Mobile Services!

What's a Dad Got to do with It?

BY MELISSA SMITH

Since most First Choice clients are women, pregnancy care center staff and volunteers often wondered or perhaps even ask, "Will the father of the baby be coming with you to your appointment?"

Men are frequently ignored in the conversation about pregnancy, abortion, adoption, and parenting. Yet the thoughts of the baby's father or the mother's feelings about him can be the most important factor in a woman's pregnancy decision. Some women will go through an unwanted abortion in order to avoid losing a relationship with a man they love. Other women will choose abortion rather than consider the possibility that a man they distrust would ever gain custody of their child. Women who feel secure in their relationship with their partner and who know that he wants the baby are more likely to carry to term.

In 2020, the staff of First Choice for Women attended the CareNet conference. This is where we heard the words, "Joseph held the Baby too." Lightbulb moment! That was when we knew that we were missing the mark and needed to advocate for the fathers more. In 2021, First Choice applied for a Fatherhood grant through CareNet, and we won! It was an amazing experience to be announced at the CareNet conference.

Fast forward to now. We have been working diligently with CareNet's Fatherhood team to implement our own Fatherhood Initiative here at First Choice. We held our first Dr. Dad workshop in Madison County in January. It was led by our Fatherhood Champion, Todd Lail. It was great to see two fathers say, "Yes I'll come" without hesitation. These classes are for expectant fathers and will help increase their health literacy by providing them with the knowledge and skills they need to successfully care for their young children.

In our culture, it's hard for a man to say he needs help raising his children. We have a great motto that states, "No one can teach a man to be a man better than a man." We pray that we will be the father's "First Choice" when it comes to his discussions regarding parenting from here on out.

We can't wait to watch this program bloom into what God has planned for it!



We launched our first Dr. Dad series with our Fatherhood Champion, Todd Lail, leading the sessions! We will be having our next series on March 10th and 15th. Please contact fcw@firstchoiceforwomen.org if you would like to learn more about the series or about opportunities to volunteer.

Hope and a Future

BY LESLIE HATCHER

Every client who comes to First Choice has unique personalities, life circumstances, and challenges. That's why it is imperative that we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us as we speak with clients about pregnancy choices. We never know what the Lord will use to soften someone's heart.

Cheryl* and Donovan* came to us, saying that they absolutely could not parent another child. They already needed Cheryl's parents to help with two children they have, the youngest being ten months old. Cheryl was dealing with multiple life challenges, including drug addiction issues, and was seriously considering abortion. Donovan did not want the abortion but said he would support whatever decision she made. This is what we often hear from the father of the baby. He doesn't feel empowered to share his true feelings about the pregnancy. Unfortunately, disagreement about the decision can lead to lifelong emotional issues and will often result in the deterioration of the relationship. We discussed adoption in view of the hope and future for the baby, as well as the potential effect of this single baby's life on future generations. They made an ultrasound appointment and said, "You've given us a lot to think about."

When they returned for the sonogram, Cheryl said they had chosen to carry the baby to term because the thought of "the hope and future of the baby and future generations" really stuck with them. Watching the baby's movements on the ultrasound monitor sealed their decision. They are now attending ParentCare classes, and we are connecting Donovan with a fatherhood mentor.

We are so thankful for this baby's life and the opportunity to work with this family as they navigate the multiple challenges they face. It reminds us of how God meets us at the unique point of our need every day, as it says in Psalm 34:4, *I sought the Lord and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears.* Praise His Name!

**names changed to protect privacy*



Thank you to the Cardinal Catholic Ball State Students for hosting a Trivia for Life Night supporting First Choice for Women.

Dottie Hamlin

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Our volunteer spotlight is on Dottie Hamlin. Dottie loves the Lord and is just a country girl at heart! She is a married and a retired teacher in the Marion school system. She spent forty years teaching our younger generation, and now she spends her time volunteering weekly at our Anderson location. Funny fact: she worked in Marion for forty years and drove from Anderson; now she lives in Marion and drives to Anderson to volunteer. We are blessed to have her. Dottie loves to see her clients grow as mothers and fathers. "Studying and teaching God's word is my delight," Dottie says. She has also taught a Bible study for First Choice volunteers and staff.

When asked why she volunteers at First Choice, Dottie said, "When we read Proverbs 6:16-17, it is obvious God wants us to be on the side of Life. First Choice is a full spectrum ministry that affects the body, mind and spirit and is openly Christian. I know God is pleased with the many ways First Choice gives and serves. It is an honor to be a part of this ministry."

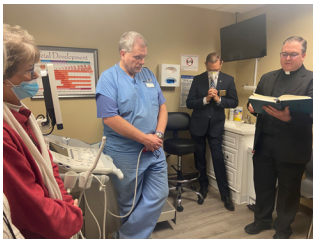


Thank you to the Campus House Students for coming to help with cleaning our center and lots of toys!



Thank you Madison County Chamber of Commerce for commemorating First Choice for 35 years of service in the community. We look forward to many more years ahead serving our communities!

Thank you to the Indiana State Knights of Columbus. We received brand new ultrasound machines at each location! Thank you to Pastor Tim Overton from Kingston Avenue Baptist and Fr. Eric Underwood who leads the Muncie Catholic Pastorate for praying a blessing at each of the ultrasound dedications.



DELAWARE COUNTY

MADISON COUNTY



We were able to bless 12 families at Christmastime thanks to the HOPE networking group in Delaware County. This was such an unforgettable moment for so many!



How Your Donation Helps First Choice



\$9

Average cost of pregnancy test



\$50

Average cost of a car seat



\$100

Average cost of a bassinet or pack and play



\$150

Average cost of a crib and mattress



\$250

Average cost of an ultrasound



\$1,200

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



\$1,400

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: _____

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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

SHOP WITH AMAZON SMILE

If you shop on amazon.com you can give to First Choice through Amazon Smile. Simply go to smile.amazon.com, log into your account and search for and select First Choice for Women as your charity of choice. For every purchase you make, 0.5% of the money spent will be given to First Choice. You get the same stuff, at the same prices, and your purchase helps First Choice protect the unborn and show compassion to women facing pregnancy decisions.



amazon smile
You shop. Amazon gives.

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.



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, 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.

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!

Volunteer Appreciation Week

April 17–23, 2022

Walk for Life

Saturday, May 21, 2022
Mounds State Park, Anderson, IN

Annual Fundraising Gala

October 2022

Thank you Pridemark Construction for keeping our drive clean to keep our clients, volunteers and staff safe!



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