

WELCOME TO OUR

Quarterly Newsletter

We're so glad you're here!

What is a Post-Abortion Ministry? AND HOW FIRST CHOICE IS OFFERING THIS SERVICE

According to a survey conducted by the Guttmacher Institute, there were 1,026,700 abortions performed in 2023 in the U.S. formal healthcare system. According to their data scientist, this is the highest number of abortions in over a decade and the first time the number of abortions has exceeded one million since 2012. This statistic does not include the number of abortions performed outside of the formal healthcare system, such as women receiving abortion inducing drugs from a friend or illegally through the mail. This means that there are millions of women living in communities throughout our country who suffer from the trauma of abortion.

An article written by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) highlights some actual quotes from women recounting how they felt after having an abortion:

- "I think I went ahead because I panicked about the consequences and felt completely unable to cope with bringing up a child. Sometimes I regret my decision as I never got pregnant again but it's something I live with."
- "I have recently had a miscarriage and the feeling of guilt is back. I have thought my miscarriage is karma for my abortion. I can't change the past and have to live with my decision."
- "Looking back, I think we do regret it now. A lot of our friends are having children and I do not seem to be able to conceive."



We know that 70% of post-abortive women indicate their religious preference as Christian and 35% of them indicate they attend church once a week or more. Odds are, at some point, you have sat in a church pew with a post-abortive woman who is suffering in silence. Many of our neighbors and coworkers are among this cohort.

At First Choice Women's Center, we care about these women. We want them to know that with the help of a forgiving God, there is a path to healing. **We offer a post abortion ministry we have named *Charis*, which comes from the Greek word for grace.** Many women have found healing through this program and others like it offered at other Pregnancy Centers across the country. If you or someone you know have experienced the pain of abortion, please contact Lisa at 706-884-3833. We would be happy to provide information about our confidential and nonjudgmental post-abortion ministry we offer here at the Center.

1 <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2024/03/19/1238293143/abortion-data-how-many-us-2023>

2 BBC News. "From Relief to Regret: Readers' Experiences of Abortion." BBC News, January 30, 2017.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-38775641>

3 "Abortion and the Church Research," n.d. <https://resources.care-net.org/abortion-and-the-church-research>

Meet the First Choice Team

staff & volunteer spotlight!



Julie Dixon

STAFF NURSE

Julie has been a staff nurse at the Center for six years. Julie's role at the Center involves running pregnancy tests, prenatal teaching, counseling patients, and performing ultrasounds. She also organizes the Newsletter content. When asked what is her favorite part of her job, Julie answers, "Getting to show a new mom her baby on an ultrasound screen, and to see her smile when she sees that heartbeat is amazing. But, also, having the opportunity to speak God's truth into lives that have been devastated by the enemy's lies...it's truly satisfying and humbling all at the same time."

Julie participated with the Center's Walk for Life for the first time just two days before her first son was born in 1997. Julie's husband, Alex, served on the Center's board for 20 years and helped convert the Center to medical, which allows us to do ultrasounds. Julie goes on to say, "When I say this is the best job ever, I am not exaggerating!"

She has been married to her husband, Alex, for 30 years and together they have three children: Aaron (Sarah), Abby (Caleb) and Ben. They also have two beautiful grandchildren, Chapel and James. Julie attends Fountain Church where she is involved in the Women's and Children's ministries.

Nicole Comerford

CLIENT ADVOCATE

Nicole volunteers at the Center as a Client Advocate. Nicole works alongside the nurses in educating and counseling our clients. A major part of her role is reaching our clients with the Gospel. Nicole states, "I pray for organic and tangible ways to do that and be able to meet them where they are." Her favorite part of her job is reminding clients of their worth. She states, "Many of the women we see are never told how loved and valued they are. I want them to leave knowing that no matter the situation they are in, God adores them and desires to be in relationship with them and love them in a way no one else can."

She has been married to her husband, Ben, for 18 years. They have 3 children: Amelia, Annie and Will, and a much-loved pup named Otis. When she is not busy taking care of her children, she enjoys reading, listening to podcasts, and "dreaming of ways to get to the beach as soon as possible." Something interesting about Nicole is she loves to clean! But, as for cooking, she likes to joke that when her children are off on their own, she would like to unplug her stove never to be cooked on again.



FIRST CHOICE WOMEN'S CENTER PROVIDES COMPASSION, HOPE AND HELP TO WOMEN IN OUR COMMUNITY FACING UNPLANNED PREGNANCIES.

CLIENT ADVOCATES TYPICALLY SERVE ONCE A WEEK, WHERE THEY MEET WITH CLIENTS FOR PREGNANCY TEST APPOINTMENTS, AS WELL AS TEACH OUR EARN WHILE YOU LEARN PARENTING CLASSES.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CLIENT ADVOCATE, CONTACT LISA ELLEN AT 706-884-3833.

This Is My Story

WRITTEN ANONYMOUSLY



While in my mid-twenties, after six years of a very rocky marriage and no hope of restoration, I was in the process of a difficult divorce, resulting in a very stressful custody battle over my young daughter. I was a single mother, burdened with all the financial responsibilities and struggling to make ends meet. I had just discovered that my employer, who was funding my nursing school tuition, was closing the doors on their business so I was losing my job and school funding. Now, my dream of being a nurse was gone as well. I was also seven weeks pregnant. I didn't know what to do. I had no one to turn to. No one for financial or emotional support. I had "religion" and works, but I had been out of church, and I didn't know God. I couldn't turn to my parents as my stepdad was outwardly angry. He was always demeaning and criticizing. This left me feeling like a failure, unloved, unwanted and worthless. I was in a financial mess. I was an emotional wreck and I was scared about the future. What I believed about myself was my worldview; the lens in which I perceived the world around me. It was a worldview based on lies and distorted thinking ingrained into my mind since childhood. It prevented me from being able to see things clearly, which clouded my emotions and thoughts, especially in my most desperate, fearful, and hopeless situation. Having a distorted view or a false sense of identity, mixed with the pain of other people's sins against me, and with my own sinful nature, and not knowing the sovereign God of the universe, was the perfect storm for fear, doubt, and bad decisions that led to failure.

This is my story.

Just before my eighth week of pregnancy, on the advice of a friend, I made a rushed and ill-informed decision to have an abortion. Both my friend and the clinic nurse assured me there was only a clump of tissue and they assured me it would be a simple procedure. They were wrong.

Nothing could have prepared me for the pain, grief and heartache that came that day. It was traumatic mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Out of fear, guilt, and shame, I buried this secret for 12 years. But, God, in his amazing grace, and because He loves me so much, began to draw out my secret after 12 years of suffering. This pain had produced the fruit of fear and anger in my life. The Lord led me to a women's post abortive Bible study where He took me on a journey through the healing process. It was there that I met Jesus at the cross, waiting patiently for me to surrender my secret and receive forgiveness for my sins and He didn't stop there. He has given me freedom from my past and freedom to share my story of brokenness to redemption.

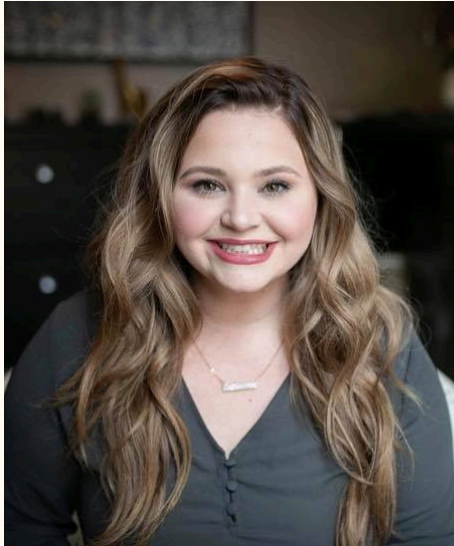
If you are reading this and you've had an abortion, please understand, you have not committed the unforgivable sin. There is forgiveness. God is not angry with you, He loves you. God hates sin but He does not hate you. He sent His perfect son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for your sins so you can spend eternity with Him. I share my story because I know God can use the ugly, broken pieces of my past to speak life to others. This is why I serve at First Choice Women's Center, a safe place for women to find help from their past abortions without judgment or condemnation.

Women are welcomed with love and compassion as they work through a Christ centered Bible study to walk them through their journey to forgiveness and restoration.



How You Can Offer Support

Thank you!



SAVE THE DATE!

Flapjacks & Flannels Fundraiser



Date: Tuesday, November 12th, 2024

NEW Location: Oakfuskee Conservation Center

Speaker: Rebekah Hagan

PURCHASE COFFEE WITH A PURPOSE

We are so excited about our new partnership with Seven Weeks Coffee! First Choice will receive 10% of coffee sales when you purchase from our link. Head to the website below to order and support us as we work together to protect life!

<https://sevenweekscoffee.com/?ref=FirstChoiceLaGrange>



CONSIDER BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG

If you are a member of a church, Sunday school class, Bible study group, etc. interested in an easy way to support First Choice, consider the Baby Bottle Boomerang. We provide the bottles, you fill them with change, and then you send them right back!

NEED: RECEIVING BLANKETS

When a client tests positive, we love gifting her with a new baby blanket. If you or someone you know can make or simply donate new receiving blankets, we would be so grateful for your contribution!



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Friends of First Choice
Women's Center



Join our Prayer Team:
Text PRAYER to 706.668.7525