



Life Matters

Village Bible Church

Quarterly Newsletter Vol 1. Issue 2
April 2023

Visit the Life Matters Page at
<https://villagebible.church/lifematters/>

We've had a busy first quarter of 2023. Two of our team's highlights this quarter have been the showing of the Matter of Life Documentary and hearing Diane Zimmerman's testimony. Both are incredibly powerful. God directs us to

walk in the light, turning from darkness and Diane truly embraced that. She says, "I realized that God invited me to fix my eyes upon him and trust him completely. I grabbed hold of the redemption offered, acknowledging my weakness and His

complete sufficiency." As we look forward to celebrating our Savior's resurrection, we proclaim Christ's victory over sin and death. That is where we put our hope.

Deana Goodwin



Supplication

Please contact our team if you would like a more detailed 21 Day Prayer Guide.

Prayer Points:

Pray for abortion minded women and men-That the church would have compassion on those who are pregnant and confused about what to do. That they would be led to a pregnancy resource center. They would begin to see their babies as a gift from God. They would be surrounded by a support team.

Pray for post abortive women and men-who need to trust in the saving work of Christ as their only hope. Pray that they find Him. Pray for those who have courageously confessed their past sin of

abortion, that they will know God's peace. Pray for those who have not yet confessed their past sin of abortion, that God's grace will draw them to repentance.

Pray for courage-That we would be willing to engage in conversation with friends and family that are not pro-life. That we would have opportunities to speak truth in a thoughtful and loving way.

Pray for resources and staffing at pregnancy resource centers. That they would be abundantly provided for. That

they will reach abortion minded woman before she makes a decision to abort.

That our community, elected officials, leaders and neighbors would understand the truth about abortion. Pray God opens eyes to moral truth about abortion.

Life Matters Team at VBC-That we would increase awareness and action by the church to rally in unity to defend the weakest and most vulnerable among us. And that we would create opportunities to share Christ and to meet the practical needs of help.



Education

Showing of the Matter of Life documentary.



If you would like to watch the film again, or want to share it with others you can stream it for free using this LINK.
<https://www.thematteroflife.org/> Simply click on Revelation media, enter your email address, watch on your device or

cast to a TV. DVDs are also available to purchase following that link or at amazon.

Join us for a second opportunity to see the film. We will be partnering with our young adult ministry to show the film on Sunday, April 16 from 7:15-9:15 pm. Recommended viewing is for ages 14 and up.

We hosted two sessions of Discussing and Defending your Pro-Life beliefs.

We looked at the typical issues others bring into the discussion. We learned that our goals are engagement through dialogue and seeking to understand someone's beliefs by asking questions. We want to ask questions that invite

more dialogue and conversation on the claims being made. Some of the claims we considered are: embryos aren't people, women have a right to abortion, abortion is healthcare, and legal abortion saves women's lives. Want to know more? Contact our team: <https://villagebible.church/lifematters/>

We attended the Choose Life Church Summit hosted by the Caring Network.

New Resources:

Rainy Abbott has generously donated the movie Lifemark to the VBC library. We encourage you to check this DVD out and watch it with your small group or family. It is also available at <https://lifemarkmovie.com/watch/>



Legislative Update

Thousands of pro-lifers united to pray, rally, march, and lobby for life March 21st in Illinois's capital! The march went on for blocks — filled with joyful pro-lifers of all ages, united in standing for preborn children, mothers, and families.

The pro-life message was heard and seen — we marched right in front of the Capitol to make sure our state lawmakers heard our message!



Pro-life Illinois State Representatives and State Senators joined Representative William Hauter, a pro-life lawmaker and

physician, saying, “We must persevere. We are right on every level of this argument and that makes us mighty indeed.”

After the march around the Capitol, pro-lifers met with state senators and representatives to teach them about the good work of pregnancy resource centers.

Concerning legislation SB 1909/HB 2463: “Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers Act.”

The deceptive title hides what this bill aims to accomplish: **targeting the 95+ pregnancy care centers** in Illinois that provide tens of thousands of women and families with diapers, cribs, car seats, clothing, parenting classes, pregnancy tests, and more.

FIRST — The Forced Abortion Information Act claims to protect the ability of individuals “to make autonomous, informed and evidence-based decisions” about having an abortion. **However, it is another attempt to force pregnancy help centers to cooperate in some way with abortions or referrals for abortions.**

This bill would most likely lead to the closing of pregnancy help centers entirely.



SECOND — The Forced Abortion Information Act makes pregnancy resource centers and sidewalk advocates civilly liable for “deceptive acts or practice” for any concealment, suppression, or omission of a “material fact”.

This means pro-life pregnancy resource centers could be liable for refusing to provide a woman with instructions on how to obtain an abortion, even if it violates an individual's conscience.

THIRD — Under the Forced Abortion Information Act, the Illinois Attorney General has the authority to initiate a complaint against pregnancy resource centers according to “public interest.”

In other words, investigations by the state are not based on any specific complaint.

FOURTH — Under the Forced Abortion Information Act, the Attorney General also has the authority to “impound” pregnancy resource center records as the investigation continues.

If the Attorney General determines a center is in violation of the law, penalties up to \$50,000 can be issued.

Adapted from Illinois Right to Life



Mobilization

Ministry Highlight:

EMBRACE Grace exists to help inspire and equip the church to love and encourage single and pregnant young women and their families. Women experiencing unexpected pregnancies receive practical, spiritual, and emotional support through our global support groups.

Through our message of love, we are helping women see that they can have their baby and their dreams too! Being pro-life is a stance, a belief system, a vote. And it's important. But being pro-love is an action, the boots on the ground, the hands and feet

of Jesus, the church. Together, we can make abortion unthinkable. Interested in finding out more: Click here: <https://embracegrace.com/our-story>



Counseling Women In Crisis Rescuing Families By Empowering Women to Choose Life.

When consulting with women in crisis, Caring Network responds with love, non-judgmental counsel, and practical resources that empower women to choose life. **Healing Wounded Hearts with Post-Abortion Stress Recovery.** Ending a pregnancy can be devastating to both women and men. In a group or

individual setting, Caring Network offers the opportunity for deep healing to those who experience ongoing guilt or grief from a past abortion. Abortion touches everyone. Consulting with women in crisis, Caring Network responds with love, non-judgmental counsel, and practical resources that empower women to choose life. Click here to find out more.

<https://www.caringnetwork.com/>



Our next Life Matters Team meeting is April 17 from 7-8 pm. We invite you to join us to come learn more about Caring Network Aurora.

RESOURCES FOR HELP IN AN UNPLANNED PREGNANCY.

www.optionline.org 800-395-4357 www.abortionpillreversal.com 877-558-0333



God has been with me from the very beginning.

I was adopted as an infant. My birth mother was 17, not married. My adoptive parents couldn't have children of their own, and I was the second adopted child to round out the family. I have always known that I was adopted, and don't remember a time when I didn't know, and overall, my childhood was very good.

I was raised in church, but church was just another thing on the calendar. Girls Scouts on Tuesday, Church on Sunday. I learned all the songs and verses – even won a prize at a church camp for reciting the most memory verses. Again, just meaningless memorization at the time, that did **not** return void later on.

My innocence was compromised when I was about 5 years old by a cousin who was 12 years older through inappropriate touching. I didn't know what to do with those feelings. This was the beginning of the shame I felt and carried with me.

When it came time to start school, my mom didn't send me off with instructions to smile and make friends. I was instructed to not talk to this person or that person, to keep to myself so I wouldn't get hurt. To my 6-year-old self, that all translated to “you aren't good enough”, that there was something wrong with me.

In my mind, gaining attention from boys was a sign that I was good enough, though in reality it was playing with fire. I found myself pregnant at 16. When my mom found out, she was angry and hurt – disappointed. She called me trash and said that there was no way she was going to let me embarrass her by having a child that she would have to raise. She arranged everything, took me to the doctor and I had an abortion. Everything was finished by 10am that day and I was back in school by noon. My mom had to go back to work and there was nothing said of it again. My dad couldn't look at me, and rarely talked to me for nearly a month. Shame upon shame, trash. That was my identity and how I saw myself. A year later, I was date raped by a guy I thought was a friend. He decided to tell his girlfriend and I was left holding the blame. As others found out, the shame was further embedded. No one was going to believe or take the word of “trash”; that I had said no, or that I fought off the advances with no success.

There was no counsel, there was no one to turn to that wouldn't further embarrass my mom. The church couldn't know. There was no help. In my mind, I was trash. There was no fixing that. I climbed into myself, worked hard at school so I could go to college. This would not only get me out of that town, but also maybe one day make my mom proud of me.

I excelled at school, and at using people to get what I wanted. I lived up to the “trash” that I believed I was. But God never gave up on me. Looking back, He was with me, keeping me out of real harm's way. Providing bumpers that would keep me out of the gutter, figuratively and literally.

My first marriage was unhealthy and emotionally abusive. I did my best to live what I thought was a “Christian life”, but without God. I left that up on the shelf to sort out at another time, believing I wasn't good enough to deserve it. I ultimately reached the end of my rope. I remember looking in the mirror one morning and not even recognizing the person looking back at me. There was a false strength that came from building walls to compartmentalize the hurt and shame. The way I learned to survive was not the way I wanted to live.

But God saw me. He drew me to himself. It was easy to slip back into the rhythm and familiarity of church. I learned to change the tape playing over and over in my

head, to no longer be words of shame, but to reflect the words of scripture that would affirm that I was fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God, that God had a plan to prosper me and give me his peace and that there was nothing that could separate me from the love of God through Christ Jesus.

The Lord brought Craig into my life and while I was scared that I would fail and not be good enough again, God drew us together according to His will and for His glory.

The Lord moved us to Illinois 7 years into our marriage. We were both confident that the Lord was directing us here – for my job which ultimately brought us here, but also for our spiritual growth. This was necessary for us to grow in our knowledge and understanding of Christ. I now know that I had become complacent, more focused on my social structure and friends that attended the church than on my relationship with Christ.

It hurt to leave that church which had become my sanctuary. It hurt to leave true friends, the likes of which I had never had before. I was angry with God for asking us to move to a place where we knew no one. Yet, we had built a foundation of faith and trust in His plan that enabled us to move forward with confidence that God would provide and work everything out.

God again, took great care of us, leading us to Village Bible Church. This church has been a healing balm. I was just starting to come to terms with the damage carrying the baggage of all of this created. I had not yet dealt with forgiveness – my mom, others, nor myself. I realized that God invited me to fix my eyes upon him and trust him completely. I grabbed hold of the redemption offered, acknowledging my weakness and His complete sufficiency.

I've always kept my past hidden. I believe I was about 29 years old the first time I spoke to another person about

the things of my past. It got buried deep from day one. There were a couple times I confided in people I thought I could trust, only to receive the scorn, judgement and renewed shame I had carried all my life.

God has used the struggle to give me a story to tell. I have always felt like a hypocrite, being adopted myself and given a real chance at life and then having no choice but to have an abortion. I never felt that I had a right to speak for either side, along with fear of the shame that kept creeping back into my life, kept me silent and feeling not worthy to have a voice at all. But I've learned that my worthiness cannot advance me, and my unworthiness cannot hinder me from what the Lord has for me when I trust in him completely.

God has been working on me, especially with the recent developments in our world today. Serving with the Life Matters team has opened my eyes to a fresh perspective again. I have been challenged in my spirit that I needed to find my voice: that I should be speaking from both of my experiences to help others gain perspective, to find hope. Even in the most challenging circumstances, God will direct our steps and lead us in righteousness. The mountain tops prepare us for the valley experiences.

I am the woman at the well. I am Mary Magdalene. I am the prodigal son. I am Paul, in that I was once one way but now I am another. It is my hope that the church will stand with those who find themselves in these situations, that in sharing my story others would have the courage to trust the Lord in all circumstances so that the light of his love would shine brightly for the hurting world around us to see.

Click the link to watch Diane's testimonial video:
<https://villagebible.church/lifematters/>