

## How God Led Us to Start a PRO-LIFE MINISTRY at OUR CHURCH

Our church is truly blessed that our Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Richard Gibbons, is decidedly pro-life and is not afraid to preach on the subject of abortion. One such Sunday, the Holy Spirit used his message on abortion to convict and empower me to share my testimony with him after the service. From there God opened doors. I have now shared my abortion testimony with our church multiple times, as well as before a crowd of 1500 people at the annual fundraising banquet of Piedmont Women's Center (a local crisis pregnancy center).

After this "mountaintop" experience, I prayed, "Where are you calling me now, God?" It soon became evident that God and the Holy Spirit were at work. When Lisa Van Riper—church member, elder, and President of SC Citizens for Life—asked me to help start a pro-life ministry at our church, her call was confirmation that this is where God was calling me to serve. As we shared our idea with other church members, the Holy Spirit moved them to support us and join our efforts. In July 2017, the First Presbyterian Church Light & Life Ministry was founded. **Our mission is to speak truth, change hearts, and save lives.**

—Stephanie Johnson, wife of Rev. Stan Johnson

To learn more about  
The FPC Light & Life Ministry, visit  
[FirstPresGreenville.org/care/light-and-life](http://FirstPresGreenville.org/care/light-and-life)  
or email [fpclightandlife@gmail.com](mailto:fpclightandlife@gmail.com).

## RESOURCES

### **PRESBYTERIANS PROTECTING LIFE – PPL.org**

PPL helps Presbyterian and Reformed churches create sanctity of life ministry teams to help pastors and congregations champion life.

### **CHURCHES FOR LIFE – ChurchesForLife.org**

Learn about the basics of pro-life ministry leadership.

### **CARE NET – Care-net.org**

Provides free online courses and e-books to equip and train people interested in becoming "Pro Abundant Life."

### **LIFE TRAINING INSTITUTE – ProlifeTraining.com**

LTI equips Christians to make a persuasive case for life from a biblical perspective.

### **40 DAYS FOR LIFE – 40DaysForLife.com**

An internationally coordinated 40-day campaign that aims to end abortion locally through prayer and fasting, community outreach, and a peaceful all-day vigil in front of abortion businesses.

### **VIABLE – ChristianCreativeMedia.org**

*Viable* is a one-act play about a woman who suffered from decades of post-abortion sorrow, shame, and self-condemnation until she encountered the merciful love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ—in a most unexpected and unusual way!

## POST-ABORTION HEALING and RECOVERY

### **SUPPORT AFTER ABORTION – SupportAfterAbortion.com**

Healing, help, and recovery for abortion regret and grief

**FORGIVEN & SET FREE** a Bible study for women;  
**HEALING A FATHER'S HEART** a Bible study for men –  
both by Linda Cochrane, available at [ChristianBook.com](http://ChristianBook.com)

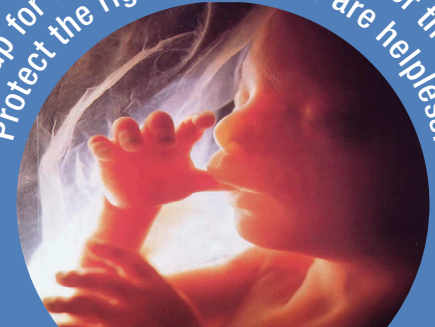
**FACILITATING BIBLICAL HEALING LEADERS GUIDE –**  
for use with *Forgiven and Set Free* books

**COASTLINE WOMEN'S CENTER –  
CoastlineWomensCenter.org**  
Jeannie Smith, Director

January 2022

# The Value of a SANCTITY of LIFE MINISTRY for Your Church

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves.  
Protect the rights of all who are helpless.



PROVERBS 31:8

## CULTURE

- **Abortion is the leading cause of death worldwide**—more than three times as many people lose their lives to abortion than to the second leading cause of death, communicable diseases.
- Worldwide every year, there are an estimated 40-50 million abortions or approximately 125,000 abortions per day. —World Health Organization (WHO)
- In the U.S., every 30 seconds an innocent preborn child loses his or her life to abortion. That is approximately 3000 per day and over 60 million killed since 1973.

## CHURCHES

- **Only 7% of protestant churches have a pro-life ministry**, according to pastors responding to a survey conducted by Barna Group.
- 48% of pastors responded that they had addressed the pro-life message at least once within the last six months; an additional 25% had done so in the past year.
- 70% of women who had an abortion indicate their religious preference is Christian, according to a Lifeway Research and Care Net survey.

## Effects of ABORTION

- Children and their future generations could have been covenant partners in our churches.
- Women and men wounded by abortion are living lives of shame, regret, guilt, and condemnation.
- The erosion of our sanctity of life ethic can lead to infanticide and euthanasia.



Does your  
Church  
Culture  
lack  
GRACE?

### Among women who have had an abortion:

- 40% were churchgoers when they ended their pregnancy.
- 76% say the church did not influence their abortion decision.
- 59% believe churches/pastors are not prepared to help with a crisis pregnancy decision.
- 93% did not discuss their abortion with anyone at church.
- 52% of regular churchgoers still haven't told anyone at their church about their abortion.
- Most women don't see the church as a safe, non-judgmental place.

“For abortion to become unthinkable in America, it's going to take the church and Christians using their voice to speak up in defense of those who cannot speak up for themselves—preborn children.”

—HumanCoalition.org

## PERSPECTIVE

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.* Genesis 1:27

This is why our ECO denomination takes such a strong stance on the sanctity of life, expressing this biblical mandate in our ECO Essential Tenets and Confessional Standards III—E-6:

**We recognize and honor the image of God in every human being from conception to natural death.**

A sanctity of life ministry is essential for helping to equip your pastors and congregation to be on the front lines of “life” issues, all along the spectrum from fertilization to natural death, offering grace, compassion, tangible help, truth, and protection.

—Presbyterians Protecting Life: *PPL.org*

Your church can be a gospel-driven champion for life by:

- **Equipping Christians** to make a persuasive case for life from a biblical perspective.
- **Raising awareness** and shedding light on the devastating effects of abortion.
- **Providing resources** for restorative care and healing for women and men who have experienced child loss due to abortion or miscarriage.
- **Educating your congregation** on sanctity of life legal issues and protections.
- **Being an outreach ministry** in and to your community.

## Starting a SANCTITY OF LIFE MINISTRY

- Assemble a group of people passionate about sanctity of life issues. PRAY about where God is leading you.
- Educate your pastor or leadership about pro-life issues.
- Find out how your church starts ministries. How is your church governed? What is your church's “culture” about life?
- Contact resources to get information and training. (See *RESOURCES* list on reverse.)