



Reflections

MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 15 — SEPTEMBER 2021

An Embassy of Hope

First Image serves as an embassy of hope. As ambassadors for Christ, you and I can offer true compassion and proclaim the gift of life to men and women facing an unplanned or unsupported pregnancy when the dominant voices of our culture and its institutions promote the false hope that the best solution for them is abortion.

At First Image, we are thankful we can offer hope and provide for the real physical and spiritual needs of the women we serve in our centers. They need to connect with people who will care enough to educate them about the full personhood of the baby they carry. They need to access the medical and practical resources that will lead them into a healthy pregnancy and prepare them for parenting or an adoption plan. They need to hear about the God who loved them enough to send his Son, and now stands ready to shepherd them through this challenge, and the rest of their lives.

You and I are the God-given ambassadors of hope whom they need to encounter.

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left: Emily and Baby Avarlella



below: Marleigh and Baby Rosemary

bottom: volunteers and their gift of quilts



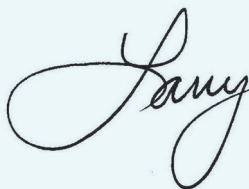
During this last year, our First Image staff has continued to help women and men without interruption. Thanks to partners like you, we have adjusted to all the protocols, and bore the added stress, in order for women to have access to help in their pregnancy and in their relationships. I am unhesitatingly proud of the First Image staff and volunteers! And I am unreservedly thankful for the individual and church partners who have made this possible through your prayers and giving.

We have not only held steady, we have prepared for this next season to reach more clients, and to serve them more substantially.

- 1. Currently expanding and remodeling two of our centers.**
- 2. Increased center staffing for more ultrasound nurses, nurse consults, and our new nursing service Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing and counsel.**
- 3. Expanding our Heart abortion recovery ministry to include pregnancy loss via miscarriage and adoption.**
- 4. Working to offer life coaching services to equip clients for better life progress.**
- 5. Continuously improving our digital marketing so potential clients will find us when they search for help.**

Without hope, people give up. Without real hope in God's grace and truth, people pursue paths that they will regret. Together with you, we have the joy of serving as Christ's ambassadors of hope to these neighbors.

In His Image,



LARRY GADBAUGH, FIRST IMAGE CEO

FIRST
IMAGE



*top: volunteers helping
with our Southeast
center expansion*

*left: Kari, one of our
STI testing nurses*



The Impact You're Making



Clients seen in 2021 so far: 1,708

Abortion-minded* clients seen: 88

Clients who found us online: 271

**either planning on having an abortion or undecided*

How God is Transforming Souls

the expanding ministry of Heart

One of the more beautiful results of lockdowns and the pandemic life has been fresh creativity and the birth of something new. You may have seen these kinds of changes in your workplaces, schools, and churches, and we're experiencing that here at Heart too!

The ministry of Heart has existed for over 30 years by serving post-abortive women in Portland and beyond through transformative healing communities. When the pandemic hit, Heart was forced to go online, but so did the rest of the country. As a result, Heart groups began to naturally expand to include women from surrounding states. Now that our community is opening up again, Heart has resumed meeting in-person, but online groups will continue as they provide us a platform to reach even more women, both here in Portland and around the country.

While Heart has changed and adapted to this cultural moment, we also are very aware that hundreds of women in our churches are grieving the loss of life through other forms of pregnancy loss. We want to continue to adapt to needs around us, acknowledging pregnancy loss in all of its forms. To lean into this space, the Heart ministry is dreaming about what it would look like to provide soul care for women who grieve the loss of a child through abortion, miscarriage, and those who place their child for

adoption. Each situation carries a specific and unique grief, a grief that Jesus sees and hears, and we as a ministry team desire to minister to women in these sacred spaces of grief and loss.

This is a space that First Image and Heart have longed to step into, and while the careful implementation of this kind of growth will take time, we're excited to see how God will lead, provide, and expand this ministry.

If you are interested in stepping into this space with us, either as a participant or a volunteer, I invite you to join a special mailing list, just for those interested in the miscarriage ministry.

Request updates at first-image.org/miscarriage.

Jesus was no stranger to grief, foretold even as a man of sorrows. We are learning how to grieve well, and we're excited to share the journey with you.

Crystal McGowen

Heart Director



Email me to get involved:
crystal@first-image.org

About Crystal

Before I was Director of Heart, I was a counselor at a local Christian counseling office, but I also have several years of experience working in international missions and faith-based non-profits. I have a MA in Human Services Counseling, and I'm currently working towards a MA in Spiritual Formation and Spiritual Direction at Portland Seminary.

I'm passionate about helping women navigate the path to forgiveness, seeking to provide a holistic approach to spiritual and emotional growth. Working at First Image provides ample opportunities for both, and it's a joy to see lives transformed through the ministry of healing and reconciliation that the Lord brings through the Heart program.

Crystal and her husband, Clint, have been married for 17 years and have two children, Callie and Tara. They attend West Hills Covenant Church in SW Portland.

FIRST IMAGE GALA 2021

Compassionate Community Stories of Transformation and Hope



Saturday, October 16th

Red Lion Hotel Ballroom
909 N Hayden Island Dr, Portland, OR 97217

Drinks and Hors D'oeuvres, 5:30 PM
Dinner, 7:00 PM

The Gala is a night focused on building community and raising funds to support First Image with its mission to provide compassionate care for those impacted by unsupported pregnancy and abortion in our city.

Enjoy time together hearing testimonies from First Image clients, advocates, and staff. The stories will honestly illustrate the real struggles and victories of the work God is doing through His people.



Register for Gala 2021 today at
first-image.org/gala



Interested in Volunteering?

There is a place for you and your unique gifts. Our volunteers and staff are a community of people that come together around meaningful work and relationships with each other, our clients and communities. Visit our volunteer page and fill out the form to get started:

first-image.org/volunteer