First Ladies

October 2026



Encouraging Women to Know Christ and Make Him Known

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A Word from Our First Lady

As the Church, we need to stand ready to walk along side them…



Hello, October! October is my very favorite month of the year. October not only marks the beginning of Fall, but it encompasses so much that defines our culture - football, good food, family events, beautiful weather and the return of boots.

For some of our ladies October is recognized for a very different reason. They know it only too well as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, more than 1 in 3 women experience physical, sexual or stalking abuse in their lifetimes. Many agencies report that the domestic violence statistics are comparable between those who identify as church members as those who do not. If that statistic holds true, our church body includes many women who have suffered some form of abuse. Many of those women suffer in silence. Afraid of the stigma that comes with reporting abuse.

As the Church, we need to stand ready for these women. They need sisters in Christ who will walk the long road of recovery beside them. Women who will show the love of Christ through caring actions, kindness, prayer and friendship.

This month, you hear from one of our very own who has suffered abuse. Yet, the abuse has not broken her. She has chosen to put her trust in Jesus as she has walked the path of recovery. My prayer for any of our ladies reading this is that you will do the same and let us walk beside you.

Many Blessings -

Lisa

My Testimony

Anonymous

I didn't sign this testimony, that's okay, abuse is no respecter of persons, age, or gender.

My testimony is rooted in Christ Jesus. He saved me out of the darkness of sin. That was the moment of a miracle. He replaced my heart of stone to a heart of flesh; I am a new creation.

As a young child, my first introduction to God was from the old bedtime prayer we are all familiar with; "Now I lay me down to sleep…". I remember nothing of going to church or learning anything about Jesus. My memory of that prayer was scary to me, and I was thankful I didn't die before I woke up.

My sister and I lived with my Grandmother, and our young teenage aunt, who was also our caregiver. My parents were not around much during those early years, and I would call my aunt Mommy, she is only nine years older than me.

We lived in a two-room apartment, with no bathroom, our sink was the kitchen sink. The apartment building had two floors with one bathroom on each, that we all had to share, no tub or shower, just a toilet. I learned years later that my parents would send my Grandmother money to help with our care. They had to go where the work was.
In 1958, I was in first grade, my parents came to get us, and we moved to another state. This would be our new life now. We moved into a small house, and my mother had to get a babysitter for us that sometimes stayed overnight. I liked her, she was very nice. The babysitter had two older brothers; they came over one night and one of them molested me. I don't remember his face because it was dark. That was the only time I remember seeing either one of them. I never told anyone about it.

My Testimony

Anonymous (cont'd)

My parents did not go to church or speak to us about Jesus. The only time I went to church with my Mom was when I was an adult with two children of my own. My father died at 45 years of age, and before that he wasn't around much, because they had a turbulent marriage. They finally divorced when I was eleven.

Not long after our initial move, my Mother took us to this huge event that took place at a football stadium. I didn't know what it was going to be about, but what I saw changed me. We were watching the live story of Jesus' life, all the way to His death, burial, and resurrection. Little did I know that the Holy Spirit of God had planted a seed that night. I think back on this and cry, thanking God that He saw me, and for His merciful grace. Romans 3:10-11—"There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God" That was God reaching out for me! And oh how I would need Him! I started praying more and more.

We moved to a different house that following year. I really liked that house, and I had made a good friend. My bedroom was a small room off the kitchen. My parents room was at the other side of the house. My uncle was staying with us one night, he was sleeping on the couch. My father was the only other person ther that night, but he was in bed. My uncle came into my room, he woke me up as he started to pull off my pants, I just froze, he sexually abused me, I was seven. It was maybe two years later, I told my sister about it, and she ran to our mother right away. I remember being scared about it, and shocked, because I thought she wouldn't believe me, it was her brother after all. My Mom ended up taking me to the doctor for a physical examination. We never saw our uncle again after that. I learned much later that he died in the street, from alcoholism. After my physical examination, we never talked about the abuse again, so

My Testimony

Anonymous (cont'd)

that was more suppression. I thought that my mother believing me was enough at least, that's what I would tell myself.

Growing up, I don't remember being hugged or told how much I was loved. I became quiet and withdrawn. I dealt with mental abuse until I was an adult and on my own. Fear and humiliation were the way I was raised. Beating was the form of punishment. One beating left lacerations on my legs. Those were the times when girls wore suitable dresses to school, but I wore pants for a week.

I had no direction growing up, we were taught the basics: don't lie, steal, or use bad language. The impact of all that took place, the abuse in my life, led me to bad decision making, and that was carried into adulthood.
I got married after I graduated from high school. I turned to God even more in the early years of marriage. We had two children. I had a God-fearing mother-in-law, who I cared for and loved, she prayed for me all the time. We went to church together, but my husband never went with us. My husband turned out to be an abuser. His life was very dark, and it came to the point of a life-or-death decision. I have to say, God was in control of this, and twenty-four hours later, my two children and I were leaving everything behind, our church, our home, family, and friends. We were away and safe. Who stands between us and the evil one? It is Christ Jesus; "Even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast." The children of God know that He will never leave us or forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5)

I never blamed God for what happened in my life. There were times I would think, "Why is this happening to me?" But as I grew to understand about God's Word, and what Jesus sacrificed for me, I knew we all have free will, and we are all sinners. We all deserve death. But Jesus saved

My Testimony

Anonymous (cont'd)

those who believe. We may feel distant from Jesus, but not because of anything He has done, but because we let the world distract us, or our unconfessed sin. What is so wonderful is that Christ will call us back, backto His Word, He will never leave us or forsake us.

My life is what my Father in Heaven has defined for me. He was there in my fear, and pain, my hurt. "But God", I love those passages in the Bible. This one in Romans 6:17-22; Here are vs 17-18 "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness."
I want to be a sanctifying influence to my brothers and sisters in Christ, and a light to the lost, to God be the glory. Through our pain and sorrow Christ will be glorified. He is the reason we live and have meaning. I humbly say, I am my Father's daughter!

I didn't sign this testimony, that's okay, abuse is no respecter of persons, age, or gender. And if there is anyone that is reading this, and you have been abused, know that it is not your fault, and you are not alone. Trust in Jesus, cast your cares on Him, because He cares for you! Jesus knows the agony of abuse.

"Have you ever thought about God as a God who suffers? Have you ever thought about God as One who has pain? How did those scars come into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ? Those nail prints? That scar into His side? Because He willingly suffered in our place. The question is not 'Why' is there suffering, 'Why did God take our suffering?'"
— Adrian Rogers, Why Jesus Still Bears the Scars (excerpt)

First Ladies Connection Groups

Find a place to connect, grow and study God's Word

TWO TYPES OF BIBLE STUDIES

ONGOING BIBLE STUDIES

These studies meet throughout the year and are a great way to grow deeper in God's Word and fellowship

SHORT-TERM BIBLE STUDIES

These studies run for a limited time and focus on specific books or topics Dates vary-join when you can!

ONGOING BIBLE STUDIES

Meet throughout the year

MONDAY

Ladies Stonecroft Study
9:30-11:00 a.m.
Home of Linda Mullican
The Village of Harmeswood

Women Disciples: 2 Peter
1:00-3:00 p.m.
FBC The Commons
Led by Chris Adlfinger

TUESDAY

Tuesday Ladies Connection
6:30 - 7:45pm
The home of Lisa Branch
The Village of Piedmont

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Stonecroft Study
9:30-11:00 a.m.
Home of Linda Mullican
The Village of Harmeswood

Ladies Stonecroft Study
9:30-11:00 a.m.
Home of Gail Coleman
The Village of Belle Aire

Precepts Upon Precepts
I Corinthians (BEGINS 9/2)
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
FBC The Commons
Led by Draxie Bolam

SHORT-TERM BIBLE STUDIES *Dates vary-join when you can!*

Uninvited
by Lysa TerKeurst
Sept. 28-Nov. 2 | 9:00-10:00 a.m.
Home of Pam Brown
The Village of Briar Meadow

Look for more short-term studies throughout the year in the newsletter and email!

Fresh Picks

Prison Alliance: Making Disciples Behind Prison Walls

For nearly 10 years, our church has partnered with Prison Alliance to share the Gospel with men and women behind prison walls. Judi Hecht faithfully leads this ministry at our church, coordinating our monthly collection of Christian books and Bibles on the third Sunday.

The **impact is significant**: 12,650 books and Bibles distributed, 1,152 Bible study lessons reviewed, and **4,249 professions of faith in 2026**. First Ladies is part of this effort through our donations and by helping review Bible lessons and leadership assignments.
Have Christian books or Bibles to share? Bring them on the third Sunday. Interested in becoming a Bible lesson reviewer? **Your time can help an inmate grow in faith and become a disciple-maker.**



Movement Is Medicine!

CELEBRATING ONE OF OUR AMAZING FIRST LADIES

Over the last couple of months I have been busy preparing for the Berlin Marathon on September 27. I completed the Muncie Indiana Half Ironman in July. In August, I completed in Nationals for triathlon, earning a spot in the World Games in Hungary, Germany in September 2027!

On September 12, I competed in Senior Games track and field and took five gold medals in the 50M, 100M, 200M, 400M and 1500M races! This earned me a spot at state games in December!

5 GOLD MEDALS!

SENIOR GAMES • TRACK & FIELD

50M • 100M • 200M • 400M • 1500M

Movement is medicine!

Anything that gets you moving is good. God is Good and he has blessed me.

This Month at First Ladies











Ways to Serve

Personal Testimony:
We'd love to feature your testimony in an upcoming issue. To share your story of coming to know Christ, email Susan Joslin at sljoslinppm@gmail.com.

First Ladies Ministry Outreach Program:
Our Outreach Ministry **is looking for women who would be willing to visit homebound ladies in our church family**. A phone call is wonderful, but sometimes there is nothing like a face-to-face visit and a little companionship.

- Would you enjoy visiting a homebound lady and spending a little time together?
- Do you know a homebound lady who would appreciate a visit?
- Would you be willing to make an occasional visit? You don't have to commit to a regular schedule. Sometimes the greatest gift we can give is simply showing up.

Wednesday Night Family Supper:
Wednesday Night Family Supper Team
We're looking for **one more** team leader to help with Wednesday Night Family Supper (September–May). With four leaders, each serves one week per month by planning the menu, coordinating the meal, serving, and overseeing cleanup. Interested?

Glimpses of Grace

Where Have You Seen God Working?

God is always at work! Consider sharing a brief story, answered prayer, or moment of encouragement. Your experience could be just the encouragement another woman needs.
To submit your story, contact Susan Joslin at sljoslinppm@gmail.com.

This Month's Reflections

"Yesterday I went to Walmart and started a conversation with the checkout girl. She started telling me of her stomach issues and a recent hospitalization. I had the opportunity to pray with her and asked God for healing for her."

Carey Beasley

Contact Information

Director of Women's Ministries: Lisa Branch
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PASTOR'S WIVES

- **Beth Banfill beth@bethbanfill.com**
- **Karen Bowen tkabmusic@gmail.com**

BIBLE STUDY & DISCIPLESHIP

- **Chris Adlfinger cadlfinger@yahoo.com**
- **Martha Dennis martha.m.dennis@gmail.com**
- **Linda Mullican lindakmullican@gmail.com**

OUTREACH

- **Lee Kubas kubashome@gmail.com**
- **Unfilled**

EVENT PLANNING

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- **Debbie Roberts dkroberts1976@gmail.com**

HOSTESS & FOOD

- **Marcia Battista hilltoprr3@gmail.com**

PROMOTION

- **Susan Joslin sljoslinppm@gmail.com**

WORSHIP

- **Unfilled**