

Speaker 1 ([00:09](#)):

Hello everyone. Welcome to this edition of CareNet tv. It's a blessing to be with you again. And today I have Carolyn Roy from Life Network. No, I'm saying it wrong. Life Choices Network.

Speaker 2 ([00:25](#)):

You got it.

Speaker 1 ([00:26](#)):

Life Choices Health Network. I get that right. We do this live, so there's no editing here. It's like being on Oprah, you just go with it. So thanks for the correction on that. That's awesome. And you're in Joplin, Missouri,

Speaker 2 ([00:39](#)):

Correct? That's right.

Speaker 1 ([00:40](#)):

Great. Well, it's fantastic. You reminded me that you and I had had a conversation before during covid, I guess because I remembered seeing you in the same format. You were wearing something different, I'm sure. But listen, it's a blessing to have an opportunity to talk to you and just learn more about the amazing work that you're doing and to share with the network of other pregnancy centers out there. So why don't you just start off, Carolyn by just talking a little bit about yourself and how you got involved in the ministry, how long you've been doing it, and just anything else you want to share in that regard.

Speaker 2 ([01:10](#)):

Well, I have an interesting journey in that I served as a missionary in Africa for 20 years, and then when we returned to the states, when our kids were ready for college, there was actually someone who had supported us in Africa that said, oh my goodness, there is an opening for a part-time nurse down at our pregnancy center. Would you be interested? And I was like, oh, but I've been out of American nursing for a while. But I checked them out. I started, that was 22 years ago. So I've often said I think it took God 20 years to prepare me in Africa to be returned to be a sex missionary right here in my country.

Speaker 1 ([01:50](#)):

Right, right. Amazing. And as you say that, I remember that story. Now it's coming back to me. When we talked before and you were talking about how you kind of moved from that environment to the ministry environment. So you've been at the center for that long. How long has this center been in place? Our

Speaker 2 ([02:07](#)):

Center has been in existence all the way back 35 years. So this is our 36th year and built on such a good solid foundation of having that core of that abundant life and really wanting to serve the families in our community. And God's just exponentially blessed and allowed that to grow in ways that I think we never expected.

Speaker 1 ([02:34](#)):

Wow, that's amazing. So tell me a little bit about the community. What's Joplin? I mean, who are the clients that you serve? What's the demographic that you face in where you're ministering?

Speaker 2 ([02:44](#)):

Well, it's definitely the Midwest, southwest Missouri. We have a demographic that would, by many peoples, seem to be an economic more suppressed rural area. However, we do have a very progressive element to our clientele. So we'll have in our parking lot everywhere from someone that's had to walk in or someone that's ridden the trolley to someone who may drive in and is a doctor's wife and come in a Hummer but doesn't want anybody in her community to know that this is maybe her untimed, mistimed pregnancy. So the demographic of whom we serve. And we do serve both males and females with sexual health services. So we have a component of men who are on our team that serve as men's advocates for our unplanned dads, but we offer H-I-V-S-T-D testing the whole gambit, but very much with trained nurses who do the ultrasounds. And we have about 1600 positive pregnancy tests a year that are through our doors. So everywhere from about 120 a month and we're able to serve them. We also have area physicians that will come and do a clinic on site so that we can get people into early prenatal care when that's the decision that they've made to carry life.

Speaker 1 ([04:14](#)):

Gotcha, gotcha. So what's the environment, I guess maybe I say it better, the political environment in Missouri around the life issue, supportive, not supportive. What are some of the challenges you face there?

Speaker 2 ([04:28](#)):

We have a lot of good support. We do have a more conservative community. And so for those that are serving on the coasts, man, we pray for you guys because we know we've got it easy compared to a lot of demographics of individuals. But the interesting thing is, because we are so accepted as a medical clinic in our community, we rarely get the riffraff of tossing back and forth because you can't argue, you can't diminish when people are serving well, when they are doing it with medical excellence, when we pull in those best practices and when we've got so much of our medical team on board with what we're doing. And so you can't call a fake clinic what isn't a fake clinic because we're doing the work of God as Christians, but through a medical platform.

Speaker 1 ([05:26](#)):

And that's an excellent point, and I love what you said there, and it's one of the things I've been talking about for years and years and years. I'm married to a physician, not a fake one, an actual real one. She's a doctor and she's a family practice doctor. And if you come to her for, I don't know, a heart transplant, she's going to say, no, I don't do that. And she's going to refer you to someone else because her medical practice is limited.

([05:52](#)):

So even if you say, listen, you should be doing heart transplants, I want you to do heart transplants, that kind of a thing, she's still not going to do them. Now, that doesn't make her fake. It just makes the services that she provides limited. By the way, planned Parenthood's services are also limited because if you go to a Planned Parenthood for a heart transplant, they're going to say, we don't do that. So it's really interesting for my perspective when people kind of throw that fake clinic thing around because the reality is obviously we're fake, be easy to shut us down pretty easily. You don't have to do very much if you're actually fake. And if you're not fake, then what do we actually offer? We offer limited medical services that we choose to provide any other, it's not even any, every other medical professional offers a limited range of medical services. Everybody limits their services in some way, shape or form. There's not a single physician or medical facility out there that does every single possible medical procedure that can be done. So everyone limits that. So it's just one of the things, I love your point there

Speaker 2 ([06:53](#)):

That we get to do holistic medicine. And when you really look at what medicine and its full purpose is, it does take into consideration the physical, the emotional, and the spiritual. So we don't apologize for having a holistic approach and in seeing the person as a full person, and that gives us the latitude. And we are blessed by our community in that we don't have to take federal or state funds. We're fully supported. So whenever we need to have that opportunity to share Christ, there isn't someone who limits what we can or how we can do that.

Speaker 1 ([07:34](#)):

No, absolutely. And my wife, as a Christian physician, she has patients often that want to talk to her about spiritual things or social things or familiar things that are outside the scope of a pill or procedure. One of her famous sayings for me is that she says, medicine's not always a pill. There's a lot of things that come into that. You're dealing with a family system that can be leading to a medical situation. And our approach is very much holistic. Certainly when you compare it to the kinds of support that abortion provider provides. I mean, whatever they do, it's a very limited perspective and often they're not dealing with a physical, emotional, spiritual, social aspects of what a person needs when they're looking at a pregnancy decision. And I love what you said about the gospel because that's one of the things I really wanted to drill down on a bit in the time that we have.

([08:28](#)):

I was just blown away as I was looking at the data, our last data dump before this one that we just got, that you guys had close to 4,500 gospel conversations. And that just jumped off the page to me because from our perspective, we want to make sure that she's not just say now, but also for eternity, that she's a heartbeat and you guys are really doing that. Talk a little bit about your journey there, your center's journey there. What's the framework that you put in place, the infrastructure that you put in place that yields that kind of results in terms of the gospel?

Speaker 2 ([09:04](#)):

Sure. I think a lot of it has to do with a mindset, a missional mindset. And we have an incredible board that also has that sort of DNA within their soul that wants to make sure that we're drawing people to Christ, not repelling them with an agenda. And so while we understand that activism, there is such a place for that, it's really that advocacy and Jesus was our advocate, and so we want to be seen as advocates. We're on your side, but a lot of it is the importance of we're listening to learn. We're not just throwing Bible at you, we're listening to learn. So very ally, and I love that our Jesus in the New Testament, he didn't use the same parable for every single demographic.

([09:55](#)):

He had a different story. He listened to know was he with the fishermen? Was he with the woman at the well? Was he with the multitude? He listened to know then what was good news to that person in their context. And so for us, what we say is every person who walks through our doors, every person that we interact, they're a pre follower of Christ. And so are we drawing or are we repelling? And if we're drawing, are we building maybe having that spiritual conversation? It's like we're gospel whispering into the culture. We don't come at it with a hard five point. If we don't go through all of these, then we haven't done our job. No. It's more how are we organically introducing the conversation? So in our intake form, we ask them if they have a spiritual preference, which is very much a medical stance.

([10:53](#)):

But when we're going through any kind of option or any kind of intake as healthcare providers and with our advocates, we'll ask the question, do you have a support system in this decision? And that's where a lot of times then somebody will say, blank, no, that church doesn't have anything. And we'll say, well,

have you ever, but it's opening the door and letting them allow us to enter in. So we also have a framework of when we're doing that gospel whispering that we're not handing out tracks. We're very careful not to force a Bible on anyone. But in every conversation we have a small I am message New Testament, and depending on how the course of the conversation, we're leaving it in the room and saying, this is yours. If you'd like it, it's yours to take. So it's not the course. Nobody can say we forced.

(11:52):

And it's always gone. Everyone takes. We also have a small little sort of a business card that on one side it has three different app pictures and we can say, Hey, you've got your phone. This is the app that's on my phone when I'm feeling sad or I'm feeling overwhelmed, here's a great app to go to and we'll write a scripture on the back. Well, a lot of people, they don't carry a purse. They're not going to carry around a Bible. But modern technology has allowed us for everybody to have the Bible on their phone be able to take that in the deepest, darkest places that they would go. So we're helping to connect them word of God on a device that we know that they have. So again, I don't know that I could say our spiritual conversations are not a program. It's not a project. We see people as people, and we really train our folks to organically look for those open doors. Sometimes it's as organic as our ultrasound individuals. They're doing an ultrasound and they see a tattoo. Tattoos are the gateway to great spiritual conversations.

Speaker 1 (13:12):

Yeah,

Speaker 2 (13:13):

Usually a tattoo has to do with a death or a loved one or a child. And so when we have our staff team meetings, we do a round table where people stay. Hey, I had this Wiccan and this Wiccan person said that they couldn't do the Bible because of this, that and the other. And we're like, oh my goodness. Have you ever heard of the three wise men? These were people that were astronomers, that they followed the stars. Can I tell you about them? So we're looking for those key ways

Speaker 1 (13:46):

That we

Speaker 2 (13:47):

Inspire and encourage each other to whisper the gospel in different ways with our different clientele. And God just seems to allow us to be, when we're open to it, he infuses us with a spirit. So there is not an entity that we can't open a spiritual conversation. Sorry, I'm going to get really passionate because Oh no,

Speaker 1 (14:12):

That is so cool because I'm hearing from you intentionality for sure, and then looking for those opportunities to make the connection in a way that's relevant to the person that you're talking to. And I love what you said about tattoos. I had an experience with someone, some folks here at staff know this. I was in an airport and there was a guy who was sitting across from me, and I really felt the Lord tell me, you need to talk to this guy right in the airport. And I was like, how am I going to have a conversation with him? I didn't know where to start, really. And I looked at his arm and he had a tattoo that said, only God will judge me. And it's sort of kind a hip hop sort of perspective. It's sort of like, don't you judge me? Only God can judge me, kind of a thing, kind of pushing off. And I said to him, I said, I'd love your tattoo. Very interesting. He said, oh, yeah, yeah, I love this. And other, it says, only God will judge me. He said, yeah, yeah. I said, how's God going to judge you?

(15:03):

And his mouth dropped and he was like, I don't know how God's going to judge me. And then I said, well, there's actually a book that can help you understand how God's going to judge you. And he said, what book is that? I said, it's the Bible. And he started smiling and we got into a conversation. Long story short, we ended up trading numbers. I text in Bible verses every day now. But it was just that thing because to your point, those tattoos people, that's the permanent thing. That's something about them that they want everyone to know because it's very visible, particularly if it's on their arm or someplace that's visible. So I love, love, love, love, love that intentionality and looking for those opportunities to connect in there. So again, I love what you're doing there, and it's so encouraging for you in this way to communicate this to the other folks that are out there doing this work because we're going to want to make sure that we're heartbeats, that are heaven bound.

Speaker 2 ([15:57](#)):

Jesus

Speaker 1 ([15:58](#)):

Always met people at their point of need, met that physical need, but he always called them into a discipleship relationship. And that's the fullness of abundant life, heartbeats that are heaven bound is really what he was looking for.

Speaker 2 ([16:09](#)):

So much of the time, we think we have to be heard rather than listening to see what it is that message that they're needing today, and how do we contextualize the gospel to be good news. Now,

([16:24](#)):

We also, I think sometimes don't realize that if there's not the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, how can we expect their moral compass to align with ours? We've got to draw them to God enough that their heart will be open to receive and then he can deal with all the subsequent issues, issues. We've got to have a system centered and a systemic, not a symptom driven. When we're only looking at the symptoms of an SDD of sex trafficking of an abortion, we're missing that intimacy. I think it was j GK Chesterton that said, every man who's knocking on the door of a brothel is looking for God. Well, I think so many of our individuals that are engaging in sex, they're looking for intimacy. And it's that brokenness with God that often has drawn them into multiple relationships, and then one scar is left, and then you try to plug that with another.

([17:26](#)):

And really at the end of the day, we use a quote often with our folks that says, don't judge me by the chapter you walked in on, because that chapter, we can be the plot twisters with God on our side. Just whisper that good news that changes that next chapter suddenly from I'm in this chapter, suddenly it's a whole new opportunity for hope. And I think one pastor that came and did a devotion for us, he said, you guys truly are the sex missionaries that deal in hope. And nobody else feels in hope like you guys, because you engage a world that feels like there is no hope. And so I think if we can all see ourselves as hope dealers, what a better way to be categorized than we get to deal in abundant hope and we get to share the heartbeat of Christ in sometimes the heartbeat of an ultrasound. But what is death today can suddenly be transformed to life in Christ.

Speaker 1 ([18:37](#)):

Amen. Preach it. Preach it. Hope whispers. I love that. I love that. And I hope the folks that are listening there are just kind of tracking with you in terms of this intentionality, this passion around it, and reframing what it is that we're doing in a way that really is very, very relevant. I guess the last question I

would want to ask you is, as you think about the growth that you've had over the last few years, is there a particular program or initiative that you had that really has inspired you? I know this work can be incredibly draining. You're giving, you're giving, you're giving. But do you have a particular area that you're focused on right now? You said this has kind of put some additional win in the sales For me and for my team,

Speaker 2 ([19:21](#)):

I think Roland, because we have such a heart for the lost and for the sexually marginalized that are often not going to enter into our church family from a more traditional way, our ability through the sexual health services that has now opened doors for us to minister to sex trafficked survivors through our law enforcement connections,

([19:48](#)):

Man, we've had the opportunity to whisper the gospel to FBI agents, to Homeland Security, to officers, our JPD, our Joplin Police Department, they bring all of their officers for training with us on sex trafficking. So they come into our clinic setting and they get a lot more than a four hour presentation on trafficking because they learn who we are. They know if they've got someone on the streets that's pregnant or that has some kind of a sexual health. They know that we are the people they're going to refer to. And honestly, I am leaving straight from here to go and take someone to a safe house in another state because we're getting her to safety. And so those kinds of doors that are opened, because we aren't just focused on an agenda, but we're focused on the heartbeat of people lost because of that lack of intimacy with God.

([20:46](#)):

And we are positioned as people who care. The biblical justice that we get to do through our pregnancy centers is a justice for that voiceless victim that's in the womb, but also for that voiceless victim that's on the streets. And there's not an end to that. Now, I think people can say, well, what about mission drift? And what about mission creep? And Oh no, it's not either or, it's and, but it's because of that medical platform, and it's because we're drilling down with parenting classes and material resources, and we're inviting people. One of my gals said she came to church on Easter. She was there. She met me in the lobby. And I know for my husband, and I like one of the Gs from our club outreach, she came to church. And so she was excited about being with us, but it's doing life in a way that is relational. And when we establish those relationships before a pregnancy or even after, man, it's a God thing because it is a relationship, not a statistic.

Speaker 1 ([22:00](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Amen. Well, listen, Carolyn, amazing, amazing work that you and your team are doing. It's just such a blessing to talk to you today. I tell you, you just lifted my spirits for sure, because I tell you all the time that this work, it can be draining in a lot of ways and you need to be refreshed. And just talking to you today was certainly an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to do that for me through you. So I praise God for that. So again, for you folks out there, check out what she's doing, listen to what she's saying. I think it's really powerful for the perspective that she has. And this is the end of this episode, CareNet tv. Never know we might be coming to your way next. Blessings to you.