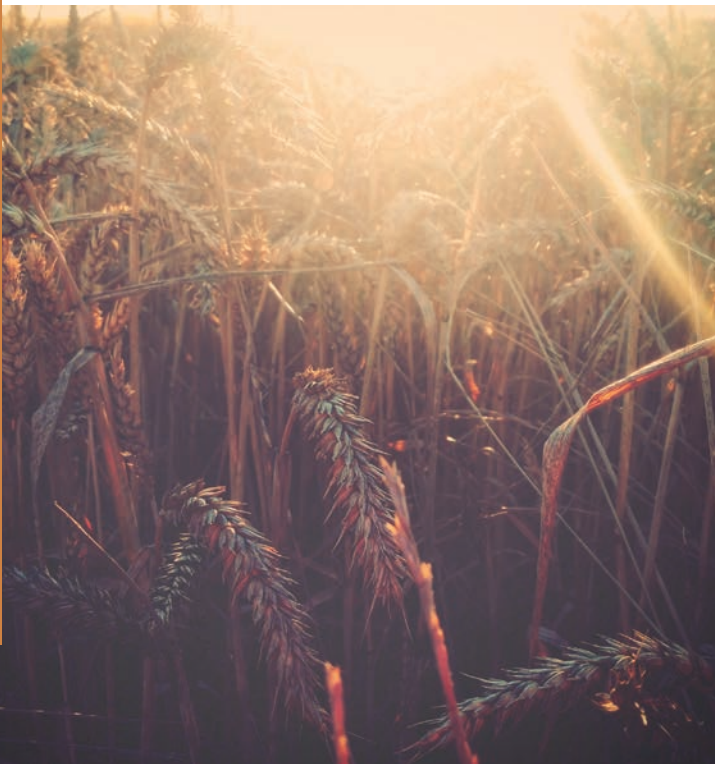


THE
COLLECTIVE
HARVEST



FALL 2020



“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

ROMANS 15:5-6, ESV

Welcome back to **The Collective**! How we have prayed for you over this tumultuous year! We know it has been hard, and we have missed you so much. BUT - we are ecstatic that we get to be ‘together’ tonight! What a fun and creative way for us to continue “not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (*Hebrews 10:25, NIV*).

Many things have changed over the past several months, but the heart, mission, and vision of The Collective has not changed. The Collective is a quarterly gathering where we unite the women of Watermark to transform the city of Dallas. We are devoted to seeing you encounter an Almighty God through biblical teaching, inspiring worship, and engaging fellowship – and come away changed.

We want to unite, inspire, equip, and unleash you to engage with our city for the cause of Christ. The way we carry out our values may move and shift, but the heart behind them stays the same. Now, sit back, relax, and let us serve you. It is our true joy.

We are so glad you are with us tonight!

The Collective Leadership Team

SERVE THE CHURCH, BLESS THE CITY.

Watermark

NOTES

- 1 In difficult times, where do you turn to cope?
- 2 What truth is your Good Shepherd reminding you of tonight?
- 3 As you consider heaven, who in your social circle comes to mind as needing to hear more about Jesus? What is one way you can initiate a meaningful conversation with them in the next week?
- 4 What next step of faithfulness is the Lord prompting you towards? Who can you share this with for accountability?

REFLECTION

CHALLENGE

Find a two-hour block of time to get away and intentionally pursue the refreshment of your faith in Christ.



REDEEMED

Kristen Belveal

I spent a lot of my time going to concerts, getting drunk, and smoking weed,” said Kristen Belveal. “It was an escape from my pain, and it gave me a feeling of significance. I was living a really unhealthy lifestyle and found myself in impure relationships with guys.

“When I was in college, my parent’s divorced and my mother was diagnosed with stage four colon, liver, and lung cancer. I ended up having to take care of my mom, go to school, and work. Trying to balance everything mentally and emotionally, I became anxiety-ridden, depressed, and overwhelmed, to the point that I eventually dropped out of school.

“Two years before my mom passed away, my grandmother died. Within two years I lost the two people I thought loved me the most. Experiencing and grieving my mother’s death in 2009 took my depression to another level. She wasn’t just my mom; she was my best friend.

“Throughout this time, I was living what I thought was the typical young adult lifestyle – going to parties, drinking too much, and finding my identity in men. After my mom passed away, these bad habits escalated. I was looking to fill a void that I didn’t know only God could fill.

“One day when I was working, a customer handed me a pamphlet that explained the gospel. I called myself a Christian, but I didn’t know the gospel. Although I was rolling my eyes at the gesture, I read the message. It included Proverbs 3:5-6, ‘Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.’

“This was the exact verse my mom blessed every meal with when we were growing up. It was on a plaque that was passed down from my grandma to my mom, and then to me. I had seen this verse almost every day of my life, but when I read it, I realized, ‘I’m not happy. I don’t have direction, because I’m not following God.’ I felt a conviction that I needed to find a church.

“I was invited to The Porch by a friend I met at a concert one night after explaining how I was having a hard time finding a church. The first time I went, and each time I would return, it felt like the speaker spoke about exactly what I needed to hear. The messages were so relatable and made me want to change my lifestyle.

"I started to regularly attend re:generation, Watermark's recovery ministry, and joined the church. During the Membership Process, someone asked me, 'On a scale from one to ten, how certain are you that if you died today you would go to Heaven?' I told her I was a seven. I was carrying a lot of guilt because I felt like I didn't do enough to keep my mom from dying. I didn't feel like I could be 'a ten.'"

"She told me that my mom's death was in God's hands, not mine. Even if I had done something wrong, Jesus's blood covers all of my sins – every single every single one. She explained to me that I could be a ten by accepting the free gift of salvation that Christ offers me. The words she spoke really resonated with me.

"After accepting Christ as my Lord and Savior, it has been amazing to see how God has redeemed areas of my life. I've dealt with abuse, depression, anxiety, inappropriate relationships, and a porn addiction, but Christ is redeeming every part of it. God brought so many of these things from my past full circle.

"Now I serve with ReClaimed, one of Watermark's ministry partners, serving women locally who are victims of sex trafficking. It means so much to me to be able to serve and care for these women. As someone who has experienced how damaging abuse and a lack of true friendship can be throughout my life, I now have the chance to serve women who have similar wounds. It's an amazing chance to live out 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 by extending the comfort God has given me to others. I can tell them from personal experience, 'God can heal you. You are still loved by God, even if you don't have a pure past.'"

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Proverbs 3:5-6, NASB

Painting by Amy Smith

THEN HE SAID
TO HIS DISCIPLES,
THE HARVEST IS
PLENTIFUL, BUT
THE LABORERS ARE
FEW; THEREFORE
PRAY EARNESTLY TO
THE LORD OF THE
HARVEST TO SEND
OUT LABORERS
INTO HIS HARVEST.

Matthew 9:37-38 ESV

Compassion and MERCY



JULIE NICHOLSON

“COMPASSION
AND MERCY ARE
TWO WORDS
THAT WOULD
HAVE NEVER
DEFINED ME
EARLIER IN
MY LIFE, EVEN
THOUGH I WAS A
BELIEVER,”
said Julie Nicholson.
“I KNEW THE
BIBLE AND HAD
A RELATIONSHIP
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BUT THOSE
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TO ME.

I was pregnant with triplets in 2006, and halfway through the pregnancy, I miscarried. It was heartbreaking for my husband and me to experience this loss. Because I already had a relationship with Jesus, I was disciplined in reading Scripture and praying daily when this happened. But during the grieving process, it felt like God was silent. I was unsure and doubtful with thoughts like, ‘Is this grief too hard for Him?’

“Knowing the Lord’s character and Word before losing the triplets is what pulled me through the grief and pain. While I didn’t appreciate Romans 8:28 (ESV), ‘And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose,’ I knew the truth of it. He was working for my good and His glory. I believed what I read in the Bible, and I was reminded that God didn’t do this to me because of my sin or because He is mean. The Lord was growing me.

“With our loss came the ability to have compassion and mercy in the way I knew was honoring to the Lord. My husband and I discovered GriefShare, Watermark’s ministry for those who’ve lost loved ones. I felt like there was no other move for me to make other than to serve in grief recovery in order to show the hope I’ve found and to encourage people to trust God even when they don’t want to.

“The Lord blessed us with two boys later in 2008. Our first son was born for us by his birthmother, and then in November of the same year, we had our biological son, even though we’d never been able to naturally get pregnant before.

"When I was sleep training our first boy, the Lord really showed me a parallel in parenting to our relationship with Him. Being Zach's mom, I could've easily pulled him from his crib immediately when he didn't want to nap. But with sleep training, you are helping to grow and care for your child's health. God, being my father, could have easily rescued me from my grief – just like that nap. But the Lord knew that my season of grief was helping me grow closer to Him. I realized, 'Wow! God, You never left me. You were just allowing me to grow.'"

"The Lord gave me a passion through this hardship. I never would have dreamed that racing toward grief would become a passion of mine. Because of what the Lord took me through, I am not fearful to face situations of grief with those around me. Grief and loss are uncomfortable and it's hard to know what to say, but the Lord taught me that you don't need the perfect Bible verse or words to say, you just need to be present. The Lord has built in me a strength that I would not naturally have to show compassion and mercy to others."

The way I can laugh, have joy, and live life to the fullest like it describes in John 10:10 is because of Jesus. The reality of today is not the prize in our life. We are here on earth and I am able to glorify God through my pain. I can't get over my losses, but I can learn to live with the reality while I am here. It is hard, but the only way I've been able to do that is because God has shown me that He is sovereign, He has purpose in all of our pain, and I can trust Him."

THE THIEF
COMES ONLY
TO STEAL
AND KILL
AND
DESTROY;
I HAVE COME
THAT THEY
MAY HAVE
LIFE, AND
HAVE IT TO
THE FULL.

John 10:10. NIV



APPLE Doughnuts

3 cups flour
1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp nutmeg
4 tsp baking powder
1 cup sugar
2/3 cup vegetable oil
2 eggs
1/2 cup milk
1 cup peeled and grated apples
(about 2 medium apples)

Ingredients for coating

1 cup melted butter
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a muffin tin. *Note: Do not bake in muffin liners.*

Whisk together flour, salt, nutmeg, and baking powder in a large bowl.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar, vegetable oil, eggs, and milk.

Fold the dry ingredients and apples into the wet ingredients, being careful to incorporate all the flour, but not over-mix the batter.

Fill each cup in the muffin tin 2/3 full.

Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

While muffins are cooking, melt butter. Mix sugar and cinnamon together in a small bowl. As soon as muffins are out of the oven (while they're still hot), first roll them in melted butter and then roll in cinnamon/sugar mixture.

Women of Watermark, it's time to be unleashed!

Look below for ways to Serve the Church and Bless the City

DECLUTTERING? CLEANING OUT YOUR CLOSET?

If you have clothes to donate, our partner, OurCalling, would be happy to take those items off your hands and serve those in need. Schedule a time for drop-off:

tinyurl.com/ourcalling

PARTNER WITH RECLAIMED AS WE FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

IN 2020 ReClaimed exists to empower and mobilize God's Church to REDEFINE a hyper-sexualized culture, RESTORE men and women victimized by the sex industry, and to REACH a world hurt by the abuse of sex all through the power of Jesus Christ. We serve the city through motel/hotel, strip club, and safe house outreaches. To take your first step, visit: reclaimed431.org

DO YOU LOVE TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS AND HAVE A KNACK FOR WORDS?

Join us as we write senior adults living in Buckner Retirement Communities who are feeling a significant sense of loneliness during a season where visitors are not allowed. Write encouraging letters to remind them they are not alone, they are known, and they are loved. Learn more here:

tinyurl.com/BucknerRetirement

FAMILY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Grocery Restock:** Restock groceries and serve with Brother Bill's Helping Hand to help get the grocery store ready. Brother Bill's Helping Hand serves the residents of West Dallas. You can partner with them to restock the grocery store shelves, bag produce and help break down pallets. Sign up here: tinyurl.com/groceryrestock
- **The Hands and Feet Projects Guide** has fourteen great service projects for families with children from ages 2 to 12. Download the guide here: tinyurl.com/TheHandsAndFeet
- **162 Ideas for Serving with Your Kids:** tinyurl.com/serve-with-kids

LOOKING FOR OTHER WAYS TO SERVE?

Visit watermark.org/servethecity



WHAT'S NEXT?

Mark your calendars for ALL of our gatherings in 2021.

JANUARY 23 • JUNE 5 • OCTOBER 9

We have a podcast! Follow along with us:



THE COLLECTIVE PODCAST

available on all platforms

How can we serve you?

We'd love to put a face to a name, get to know you better, and answer any questions you may have. Reach out to us at COLLECTIVE@WATERMARK.ORG and someone from our team will follow up with you.

Want to grow in God's Word?

Join us in person or virtually for Women's Bible Study to be encouraged by God's Word and His people. Multiple days and times are available! Details at WATERMARK.ORG/WOMEN