



Finally...Connected

Tell me your story #6...the Heartland Redemption Outreach.

I stood behind a table and spoke with hundreds of LGBTQ people—old and young, tall and short, beautiful and unique, some with vibrant hair colors. At our booth, we were not handing out candy or fun collectibles. Instead, we asked one simple question: “***Tell me your story.*** Tell me something interesting about you.” Their answers were varied and striking. As I listened, something stood out: not one person mentioned their LGBTQ identity, gender, or why they identified as queer. Not one. Each person gave a genuine answer to the question, “Tell me something interesting about you.” I was surprised that no one brought up LGBTQ identity or lifestyle, even though the weekend’s purpose was to celebrate Pride.

There were tears and laughter as people shared vulnerable parts of their stories—victories, grief, and tender moments of anguish over loved ones who had passed. At the booth, we told each person they were created for a purpose, that their story matters, and that they are seen every day. One young woman shared that she had flown a Cessna by herself. A young man talked about tearing a diesel engine apart and rebuilding the engine before graduating high school. Another young man had saved his neighbor’s life during a diabetic reaction. A young woman told us about breaking her left hand, left wrist, and a toe on her left foot. One mom cried as we told her daughter that her life mattered and that God sees her. Another young boy simply needed a hug. Our team also prayed with people we had met the year before. One young woman, known for her great dad jokes, connected with one of the dads at our booth, and their playful exchange filled the room with laughter.

At the booth, we handed out journals that said your written story and encouraged each person to begin writing their own story. We also gave them sparkling glam pens, bracelets made by my daughter and neighborhood friends, and cross bracelets. These interactions felt like God moments—tender encounters I will not forget the faces of those I locked eyes with people created in the image of the One who formed them. No matter how they looked, dressed, or presented themselves, I sensed something within them that I longed to see touched by Jesus. As I made eye contact with each person across from me, I focused on those deeper places. When I met their eyes and invited them to share, I saw rough exteriors soften. It was a remarkable reminder that our words carry weight, and Truth spoken in love can reach tender places, it reaches the broken places.

On Friday, July 17th, during family event night, a Jesus Rally was taking place in the park across from the weekend’s venue. The churches that organized the rally did not know it coincided with Pride weekend, but God did. It was a divine appointment. The rally included worship and a clear gospel message, drawing hundreds of people and shifting the

atmosphere downtown and around the venue where the Pride events were being held. Many people leaving the venue had to walk through the park on their way home. Some mocked as they passed by, while others stopped to listen for a while before continuing on. The Holy Spirit can use any moment to get someone's attention, and the Jesus Rally created an atmosphere where ministry could happen with great effectiveness.

This year, we had a prayer team walk through the venue on Friday night, another team praying continuously from Friday through Saturday at The Table, and a dedicated night of prayer on Thursday before Pride weekend. Each prayer set was powerful. One intercessor shared that it felt difficult to pray during the parade, as though something was blocking her prayers. Another noticed that many people attending Friday's family night seemed weighed down—dark, depressed, lost, confused, and searching. As I stood at the booth, it was comforting to know others in the room were praying for us and caring deeply about the people attending. From a ministry perspective, the venue was an easier place to minister than the Pride parade.

I have attended many Pride parades in Omaha and Minneapolis, and I often leave feeling defeated. People are there to celebrate, which can make it difficult to engage in meaningful conversation. I usually observe and pray, and occasionally I have a powerful interaction. This year, I spoke with a woman running for Congress. She noticed me standing alone and saw that I had recently had my knees replaced (she just had hers replaced the year before), which led to a warm conversation and a shared laugh about surgery and recovery. As I looked at this woman—close to my age and bearing similar scars—I saw someone determined to tell as many people as possible who she was and what she hoped to change in Nebraska legislation. I admired her ability to connect with those around her, and I wondered what might happen if the church carried that same sense of mission: to be truth, light, and salt especially in dark places. One of the church's callings is to lead culture toward holiness, not bondage. Are we doing that as the church? Are we doing that as Christians?

I know that question carries weight, and honestly, there are times when the work feels too hard. At times, I have felt like throwing in the towel and serving in a different ministry. But one thing makes the burden lighter: having others come alongside me. This year, our church, Gather at The Table, did that in many ways—through prayer, encouragement, helping at the booth, and walking through the venue to pray. FHM was not alone. I served with people who cared well for the LGBTQ community. This was also the first year that churches and a local ministry sponsored the event, providing much-needed funds to help us carry out the outreach effectively.

This year, I had two knee replacements—one on May 14th and the other on June 25th. I quickly realized I was not twenty years old anymore, as I had been when both of my ACLs were reconstructed. Before and during Pride weekend, I did not feel like myself, and I was not as prayed up as I usually am for events like this. But where I was lacking, God was not. He faithfully brought the right people to the right place at the right time to make a difference for His kingdom. He also brought the right individuals to our booth—people we had the opportunity to speak Truth over.

The outreach was successful in so many ways, and I am already looking forward to next year and attending other Pride parades. Our next event is one you can partner with us in: the Loved 2 Life Conference, held November 6th and 7th in Columbus. We need to raise \$7,000 quickly to help make it possible. Speakers will be joining us from Florida, Minnesota, and Oklahoma. Friday night will be a testimony night, and Saturday will include workshops. If you know someone who could benefit from attending, please share the conference with them. Details are below—we hope to see you there!

Blessings,

Pastor Angie Klein



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Loved 2 Life

November 6th and 7th
Word of Life Community Church, Columbus
Friday 6th, 6:30pm to 9pm testimony night
Saturday 7th, 9am-5pm workshop day Lunch provided
Additional Information FerventHeartMinistries.com

Engaging a sexually broken culture
with the truth of Jesus Christ!