



Ashley

Every fall, Ashley pulls out her recipe for Chai Frosted Cupcakes. She and her young daughter Ellie mix the ingredients as they pray for the people who will receive them.

The house smells amazing as they bake. Ashley writes the cards that will be delivered with them.

Once they're frosted and packaged, out the door they go.

They have joy to deliver in the form of cupcakes. The beautiful thing is that it is as much fun for Ashley and Ellie as it is for those who are gifted this little treat.

Ashley loves to share ideas like this with her Stonecroft circle. They connect and plan ways to encourage those around them. They want to express God's love in real ways that help people feel seen and cared for.

Stonecroft women are all about loving those around them toward Jesus, and sometimes, it's through a cupcake.

When you give to Stonecroft, you help women...

- Experience the joy of discovering their extraordinary purpose and calling.
- Belong to a community of women committed to making a difference together.
- Receive the training and resources needed to become life-changers and influencers in their families and communities.

Give easily to Stonecroft at [Stonecroft.org/friendsdonate](https://stonecroft.org/friendsdonate). This is the fastest and easiest way to give. You'll get an automatic receipt for your records. After the event today, you will be directed to a page on Stonecroft's website with a donation form.

At your tables, you will find envelopes. The easiest option is to use a credit card. Once you have filled out the information and inserted your gift, give it to your hostess or put it in the large envelope in the middle of the table.

THANK YOU for continuing the life-changing work of Stonecroft through your gift.



Karen

Karen was given an extraordinary offer by an ordinary woman. She and her husband were looking for a farm and were on a budget. They had heard about a farm for sale and took a drive out to see it. They were not expecting to see anyone that day so imagine their surprise when a smiling, young widow greeted them. As the widow gave them a tour, she asked questions and listened. The truth is that farm was still way beyond their budget and their offer was very low. The widow thought for a moment and said, "I will accept your offer if you agree to come with me to lunch."

Karen went to that lunch, not sure of what to expect. What she found was a room full of welcoming women, encouraging her and sharing the hope that they had. She went back month after month, found the same encouragement, developed deep friendships, leadership skills and a community of support. She never knew that decades later this group of women would save her. As Karen lay in the hospital for 22 days, almost dying, it was the constant prayer, love and care of these women that got her through.

When you give to Stonecroft, you teach women like the young widow to make extraordinary invitations, provide resources to grow them and support to build communities of impact.

If this is your first time with us, your presence here today is your gift to Stonecroft.



Julie and Cindy

Sometimes change is hard! How many times have you had plans laid out that you were certain were iron-clad, only to have something (or many things!) change those plans?

Today's story of impact is about two faithful women, Julie and Cindy, who were not afraid to have their plans changed. Their story of obedience helped create a needed space for young women to connect, be part of a loving community, and to grow into leaders. Julie and Cindy had already planned their outreach for the year, but health issues, travel and other obstacles made it impossible for the usual volunteers to serve. So, they put the event on hold and started asking God how He wanted them to reach women in the community.

During this time, they traveled to a Stonecroft event and were inspired by the book *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Influence*. They bought a few copies, not knowing exactly how they would use them. Back home, they were moved to start small groups in their homes. They invited women of all ages and gifted them with a study. This simple obedience created a powerful space for women to learn how they were loved and could be extraordinary influencers. The older and younger women supported each other through life's challenges, whether it be caring for young children, divorce, or struggles with depression, growing together towards a community of influence. Many of the women experienced transformation and started new groups.

When you give to Stonecroft you mobilize women just like this. You equip leaders like Julie and Cindy to create welcoming spaces in their communities for women, produce resources for them to use, make it possible for staff to come alongside leaders in prayer, support, and training, and launch generations of leaders to reach women where they are as they are.



Susan

There was a knock at the door. Having recently moved to Pennsylvania from Georgia, Susan was busy adjusting to life as a busy young mom, so she was surprised to see it was her neighbor, offering a meal and a smile. That neighbor would visit Susan many more times, sharing food and laughter and building a friendship that was so endearing to her. One day, Susan's neighbor invited her to a Stonecroft lunch. Susan arrived at the luncheon to find a joyful, loving space of fellowship that also shared a life-changing message of hope. She had never experienced so much love and kindness from a group of women before. They were so accepting of her!

The visit to the luncheon was a turning point for Susan. She was so inspired by the women, and she desperately wanted the hope they had. She began to come to the monthly luncheons and started to realize that for many years she felt she could never be good enough. But this group taught her she didn't have to do anything except to be loved! The group was a guide for her, showing her where eternal joy is. And do you want to know another beautiful aspect of this story? It multiplies! Now Susan is a guide for other women – creating comfortable, loving spaces for her community to learn about a hope that never perishes!

How many of you have felt like Susan did where you are not good enough? How many of you have had a Stonecroft experience that brought you to know you are loved and there is a hope that never perishes? I am sure there is at least one Susan in this room, and in fact, I am sure there are many Susans in this room. That is the power of the Stonecroft community!

When you give to Stonecroft, you mobilize women just like Susan and her neighbor. You equip them to create welcoming spaces in their communities for women, produce resources for them to use, and make it possible for Stonecroft staff to come alongside leaders in prayer, support, and training.



Amy

Groups just like this are meeting all over the United States. Women meeting to learn new things, support each other and share the good news. We are here because of support from Stonecroft Ministry. Stonecroft makes it possible for us to meet each month. They train the leaders, support them with weekly and quarterly calls, help brainstorm new ideas, provide all the printed materials like comment cards, and coordinate our financial reporting.

Stonecroft ministry looks different across the country. It can look like a group of women meeting for lunch to learn new things, women sharing their story through their tattoos, military soldiers and spouses meeting for encouragement, or young mothers forming community while their children play at their feet.

Just recently I learned a story about a young woman who was invited to a lunch. Amy was an overwhelmed mom that had just moved across the country with several children, one that had severe medical needs. That day she found a welcoming lunch filled with women who wanted to know her. She heard of a hope and joy that did not count on the challenges that she faced every day. She felt seen and understood. Decades later she still attends Stonecroft meetings and at every meeting she intentionally greets every woman that walks through the door. She wants them to know that they are seen, heard, loved and that they too can have that unconditional joy.

When you give to Stonecroft, you care for and mobilize women like Amy. You equip them to create welcoming spaces in their communities for women, produce resources for them to use, and make it possible for Stonecroft staff to come alongside leaders in prayer, support, and training.



Barbara

Have you ever felt a profound sense of loneliness, even when surrounded by people? Imagine this feeling and how it is magnified for seniors living in residential care facilities, where the transition from their own homes to a small living area is often challenging and isolating. When people give up living in their own homes, the transition is seldom easy. They must now make a new circle of friends, not an easy thing for someone who may have lived in isolation for a while.

Loneliness can cloud their souls even though they're surrounded by people nearly all the time.

At Stonecroft, we believe no one should feel forgotten. One example of how we put that belief into action is a special group of dedicated Stonecroft women who tear down walls of loneliness to bring joy, friendship, and community to seniors who need it most.

Barbara visited her mother-in-law in one of these facilities several years ago. Recognizing the profound loneliness many residents faced, she saw an opportunity to make a difference. As the coordinator of Stonecroft study groups in her community, she knew how these small gatherings could create deep friendships among participants and bring joy to their lives.

Inspired by Barbara's vision, nine other women from our Stonecroft group joined her mission. Twice a month, they spread across the community to bring happiness, and they have even expanded their groups to four different care facilities! The residents eagerly await these visits, where they sing, laugh, and engage in meaningful activities. Musicians join in to lead music, jokes are shared, and stories from Stonecroft Studies come to life through interactive lessons and creative art projects.

The Stonecroft leaders take extra effort to welcome participants and create joyful experiences. They visit residents who can't leave their rooms, bringing smiles and conversation to those unable to mingle with others and who are in most need of human connection.

Donna, a guitarist for the studies, says, "We take the time to be friends with the residents. They need friendship and camaraderie. Our groups bring a sense of community in a time of life when they need it most."

Stonecroft helps women no matter if they're just stepping into the adult world, raising families, or are in later stages of life. By giving to Stonecroft, you can help reach women wherever they are, bringing hope, life, connection, and joy.

Today, we ask for your support to continue this vital work. Your generous, tax-deductible gifts enable us to reach thousands of women, making them feel valued, connected, and loved. You'll find an envelope for your donation on your table, with options for a one-time gift or monthly support. Your table host will also circulate a larger envelope to collect your contributions.

Thank you for your kindness and generosity. Together, we can make a profound difference in the lives of women at every stage of life. Will you join us in bringing joy and connection to a woman in need today?



The Courage to Embrace Others

Stonecroft mobilizes a movement of women to care for other women in many different places, in many different ways. Today you'll hear Donna's story, a woman who was reached while she was in prison and is now helping others.

"Guilty."

As they read the verdict, I laid my head down on the table in front of me. Feelings and thoughts swirled inside of me. It was overwhelming, and I did the only thing I knew to do in that moment. I silently prayed. "I thought you said you not to worry, that you'd take care of me."

And almost immediately, I heard His response.

"I will."

After that day, I would spend 30 years behind bars- and I would discover that God is true to His word. He was with me, every single day of my sentence.

Not very long after I arrived, I heard about a group that came inside the prison and offered an experience where women went through an intense 3-day faith journey. It was during this that I really experienced the love of God in a way that was personal and deep. It was different than the way I had viewed God before. It was so much more real and I began to know that He really was with me, taking care of me.

I began to lead Bible Studies and hold prayer times with the other women. Even when I changed units or was transferred, I would start more. I discovered God could use me, no matter where I was.

One time I was going to be transferred to another prison. A mentor came to me to pray with me about it. As she prayed, she said she knew God was sending me to the desert. I didn't understand what she meant by that, but I would understand once I arrived in the new location. The new prison didn't have a prayer or Bible Study presence, so I began to host them. The desert was the dry desperation apart from the presence of God. My mentor had inspired me to believe God sent me there to take the Living Water to those in need of it.

When I was released from prison, I went to live at a halfway house. It was there I began to notice invitations from a local group of women. They had monthly luncheons and a summer get together. I wanted to go but hesitated, feeling nervous and unsure. Then, one of the women from the local group came to the house and extended a personal invitation and I agreed to attend with her.

That luncheon was hosted by Stonecroft women in Gainesville, Florida.

I had no idea I would meet women who loved me so unconditionally. They warmly welcomed me, paid for my meals, and invited me to help.



Friends of Stonecroft

October 2024

They heard my story and did not run away. In fact, they came closer. They were there for me and for my growth as a Christian.

Eventually I became the prayer coordinator for the group, and later led the Stonecroft Bible Study, Prayers Worth Repeating. But the biggest impact came when they extended their trust to me to run their database. It felt amazing to be given a role that required strong character - these women believed in me!

I still speak for the Florida Probation and Parole Commission. Each time, I tell them that the women of the Gainesville Stonecroft group helped me feel seen, known and loved by the way they live their faith.

My journey may seem pretty unique among other believing women, but one thing is true for all of us: Jesus is the One who makes the difference. We all need Him. I am grateful to be part of Stonecroft, helping more women to know the love of God through Jesus Christ.”

There are so many more women like Donna. They are waiting to be seen and loved, hurting and hungry for the hope of the Gospel.

And, Stonecroft is sending women to reach them, just as the Gainesville group reached Donna.

When you give to Stonecroft, you care for and mobilize a movement of Christian women praying and proclaiming the Gospel. You equip them with the training and resources they need to create welcoming spaces in their communities for women like Donna and make it possible for Stonecroft staff to come alongside leaders in prayer, support, and training.

It is easy to make a gift today to fund a movement of women. Your table host will pass around an envelope. Your cash or check gift can be placed in the envelope and returned to your table host. Please do not write your credit card information on the envelope. We encourage you to give by credit card if that is most convenient for you. The safest way to give by credit card is by using the QR code or the text to give link on the envelope. Make sure to put your group number and today's date in the comment section online. If you have any questions, your table host will be happy to assist you.

Please know that if you are a first-time guest today, your gift is your presence.

Thank you for mobilizing a movement of women to pray and proclaim the Gospel.