

HB0982

Support - Favorable

Name and Address

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District Height, MD 20747

Organization: Leading Ladies of Integrity

I have been a church member for over 40 years of my adult life and the church has helped me in many ways. But as the parent of 3 children, having 1 child who spent over 10 years in prison and the wife of 30 years to a husband who spent 17 years of our marriage on drugs, the church served as my place of refuge, to find peace and strength, not as the place I went relive or rehash my homelife. Over the years I have found that there are many people like myself who are in the gap, suffering in silence, between talking to the pastor/clergy or seeking clinical/professional help. In the gap, I needed a loving, compassionate trained, faith-based person to talk to as I navigated my way through the healing process.

Having been trained as a part of a faith-based network allows me to help those in the gap and others by offering prayer, comfort, moral guidance, and scripture study to those in need. It has prepared me to recognize when people need a higher level of support such as clinical/professional; how to access resources; an understanding of the reporting requirements for abuse and potential danger to themselves and others. Faith-based counseling is beneficial for helping to build a strong, healthy community.

As a part of a trained faith-based network, when people come and share their stories with us, we have an opportunity to address their basic needs (food, shelter, loneliness, etc.) offering them faith-based care, but it also gives us the opportunity to help to direct them as needed. We serve as the first line of defense for those we see on a regular basis at church, that we know are in the gap, dealing with issues, and are looking for a safe, place to share. With love and compassion, we help to get them the support they need, working seamlessly with professional and clinical partners.

We love people and want to be empowered by the state to assist in reinforcing a strong healthy community.