

HOPE Notes



Welcome to Hope Notes, a celebration of the resilience, healing, and hope that unfold each day at Pastoral Institute.

Founded in 1974, Pastoral Institute began as a small community effort rooted in the belief that emotional, relational, and spiritual well-being are deeply connected. More than 50 years later, we have grown into a trusted resource serving thousands of individuals and families throughout the Chattahoochee Valley and beyond.

Through compassionate counseling, professional education, clinical training, and community wellness programs, we help people navigate life's most difficult seasons and move toward healing and wholeness. In each issue of Hope Notes, we look forward to sharing stories of impact, updates from our programs, and the many ways our supporters, partners, and staff are bringing hope and healing to our community.

Laura Cardin
CEO/Executive Director

Finding Peace in a Difficult Season



When a life-threatening illness affected Buffy Swineheart's father, her family was prepared for the medical challenges, but not the emotional trauma that followed. His behavior became confusing, and the family feared they were losing the man they knew and loved. A friend encouraged them to seek counseling at Pastoral Institute. Within just a few sessions, Buffy's father began speaking, interacting, and behaving like himself again. "Even though my dad's prognosis was grim, we had him back," Buffy shared. "Counseling made our last days with him so very sweet." While counseling could not cure his physical illness, it gave the family peace, meaningful conversations, and cherished final memories. After his death, Pastoral Institute continued to support Buffy's mother through her grief. Buffy's message to others is simple: "Don't suffer alone. Getting help can make such a huge difference. There is light on the other side, and you are not alone." For Buffy and her family, Pastoral Institute provided more than counseling; it gave them the lasting gift of saying goodbye with love instead of fear.

Did You Know Your Story Inspires HOPE

Your story can inspire others to seek help and believe that healing is possible. If you, a loved one, or your organization have been impacted by the Pastoral Institute, we invite you to share your experience. By telling your story, you can help reduce stigma, encourage others to seek support, and remind our community that HOPE is real. Together, we can put HOPE in Action. Scan the QR code to share your story of HOPE today.



Chick-fil-A Midland

We are grateful to Chick-fil-A and everyone who purchased a cookie in May, raising \$897.50 in support of Mental Health Awareness Month and mental wellness in our community!

Clinical Training Program



The Pastoral Institute is celebrating the first year of its Clinical Training Program. Two Interns and six Residents received hands-on experience, clinical education, and more than 340 hours of supervision while helping expand access to care. With donor and grant support, the program helped provide 206 free psychoeducational groups and affordable counseling for 288 clients. As we welcome the next cohort, we remain committed to training future mental health professionals and bringing healing and HOPE to our community. To find out more about our Clinical Training Program, contact Crystal Passmore at cpassmore@pastoralinstitute.org

A special thank you to the generous supporters of our Clinical Training Program:



BRADLEY TURNER
FOUNDATION

Community Friends
& Individual Donors

Honoring a Legacy of Service to Our Community

After many years of dedicated service, we celebrate Earl Nichols and Tom Waynick and thank them for their commitment, hard work, and lasting impact on the Pastoral Institute. Their contributions have helped shape the strength and success of our organization, and we are deeply grateful for the many years they have shared with us. Please join us in wishing Earl and Tom a happy, well-deserved retirement filled with joy, rest, and new adventures. Thank you, Tom and Earl, for all you have done!



Welcome Our New Therapist: Jada Henderson



We are pleased to welcome Jada, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, to the Pastoral Institute. Jada has experience supporting children with autism and working with adolescents. She works with individuals, couples, and families facing anxiety, depression, anger, relationship concerns, behavioral challenges, minority issues, and more. Using collaborative, evidence-based approaches, Jada tailors therapy to each client's unique needs. Outside of work, she enjoys reading, traveling with friends and family, attending concerts, and roller-skating. We are excited to have Jada join our team!

Serving Churches and Congregations in our Community

For more than 50 years, Pastoral Institute has stood as a beacon of hope and healing in our community. Founded by a psychiatrist, two ministers, and a philanthropist-businessman, we have partnered with churches from the very beginning. That original calling remains unchanged: to walk alongside local congregations as individuals and families face life's most difficult moments. Through our Congregational Care Program, we now serve more than 30 churches, providing professional counseling that strengthens, rather than replaces, the pastoral care already present in each faith community.

"As a pastor, sometimes my role is like a triage nurse. Part of pastoral ministry is helping people find the right kind of support for the challenges they are facing. While the church provides so many opportunities for help... the most loving thing we can do is connect someone to trained professionals who have specialized skills. I am deeply grateful for the Pastoral Institute... We consider Pastoral Institute an extension of our ministry in the community, a trusted partner that enables us to care more completely for the people God has entrusted to us."

A Partnership in Compassionate Care



Ready or Not, 2027 Is Coming...



As your church plans its 2027 calendar and budget, consider including Pastoral Institute as a trusted pastoral care partner. Through professional counseling, wellness programs, and onsite support following traumatic events, our licensed clinicians provide compassionate, confidential care to those you serve. Let us help lighten your pastoral care load in 2027. To learn how the Pastoral Institute can support your congregation and ministry, contact Ernie Kelly at ekelly@pastoralinstitute.org or call 706.649.6507 ext. 1361

You're Not Alone

Mental health challenges affect millions of individuals and families each year, yet many do not receive the care they need. With Georgia ranking among the lowest states for access to mental health care, compassionate local support is more important than ever. If you or someone you love is struggling, reach out to the Pastoral Institute today.



**1 in 5 Adults
Struggle Annually**



**Of Those Adults,
Only 52%
Receive Treatment**



**GA Ranks 46th
For Access to Care**

HOPE *in Action*

Bringing Hope and Healing to Our Community

Too many people in our community don't get the help they need. Cost, long wait times, and a shortage of counselors can prevent individuals and families from receiving help during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

The Pastoral Institute's HOPE Fund helps remove these barriers by:

- Providing reduced-fee counseling for those facing financial hardship
- Training future therapists through supervision and hands-on experience
- Expanding free wellness programs, support groups, and community partnerships

You Can Help Create HOPE

Every gift, regardless of size, helps someone take an important step toward healing. Your support ensures that financial hardship does not stand between a person and the care they need.

To make a gift online, please scan the QR code.

Checks may be mailed to:

Pastoral Institute, Attn: Development
2022 15th Avenue, Columbus, GA 31901



Community Programs

- 9/2 - The Friendship Palette
- 9/3 - Adult Grief Group
- 9/8 - Compass Crew
- 9/10 - Coffee & Connect
- 9/15 - Move Together, Grow Together
- 9/15 - Adulting 101
- 9/17 - Adult Grief Group
- 9/21 - Navigating Change
- 9/26 - Art on the Lawn
- 10/5 - Create Your Mental Wellness Toolkit
- 10/19 - Building Your Toolkit
- 10/27 - Parenting Neurodiverse Kids
- 10/28 - Behind the Mask
- 11/2 - Solo Agers
- 11/12 - Coffee & Connect
- 11/16 - Managing Holiday Stress
- 12/1 - Surviving the Season
- 12/7 - Seasons of Grief

Sponsored by



To learn more about the Pastoral Institute:

Pastoral Institute
2022 15th Ave, Columbus, Ga 31901
706-649-6500
www.pastoralinstitute.org

Christina Clifton - Development Director
cclifton@pastoralinstitute.org
Stephanie Gobin - Marketing Coordinator
sgobin@pastoralinstitute.org

