

Transcript of Interview with Cherilyn Holloway by Kit Heintzman

Interviewee: Cherilyn Holloway

Interviewer: Kit Heintzman

Date: 07/12/2022

Location (Interviewee): Elyria, Ohio

(Interviewer):

Transcribed by: Angelica S Ramos

Some of the things we discussed include:

Learning about the pandemic through social media. Avoiding the news. Being very social pre-pandemic and settling into isolation well. Working as a substitute teacher and noticing children getting sick in November 2019; son getting sick in December 2019. Founding a nonprofit, Pro-Black Pro-Life, in 2020 after the murder of George Floyd. Black friends and white friends wanting support on issues of racial justice. Becoming a Born-Again Christian at 15, getting saved, path to discipleship, testing of faith. Hearing calls to action from God and following them; the sound of God's voice. The difference between talking to God through prayer and listening to God. Owning responsibility when someone lets you know that you've said something harmful. Feeling out of place in the pro-life movement for its lack of interest in racial justice; white pro-life rhetoric using racism as a justification for the pro-life stance without talking to Black people or supporting anti-racism. Bipartisan work on childcare after Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization. Black voting power. Having 8 children and 2 grandchildren during the pandemic, online education, and their different ways children make sense of the pandemic; (2 grandkids?) Shifting parenting priorities; less privacy in the home. Going to marriage counseling. No longer attending church in person. Political inconsistencies on issues like abortion and gun control. Relationships with women; ideas about femininity. In person and online conflicts. Covid safety and making others feel safer: masking, social distancing, isolating; respecting different safety boundaries. Churches stepping up to serve their communities.

Kit Heintzman 00:02

Hello, would you please tell me your full name, the date, the time and your location?

Cherilyn Holloway 00:08

Cherilyn Holloway July 12 2022 1:34pm. Eastern Time, and I am in Elyria, Ohio.

Kit Heintzman 00:19

And do you consent to having this interview recorded, digitally uploaded and publicly released under Creative Commons License attribution noncommercial sharealike?

Cherilyn Holloway 00:28

Yes.

Kit Heintzman 00:30

Thank you so much, I'd like to just start by asking you to introduce yourself to anyone who might find themselves listening to this.

Cherilyn Holloway 00:36

Sure. So again, I'm Cheryl Holloway, I am the founder and current president of pro black pro life. We were created in 2020, after the George Floyd murder, where I just felt like kind of an outsider in the pro life movement, because I had just this deep appreciation for racial justice work, and also a deep appreciation for life in general, no matter where it was located. And the two just never seem to match, or. And so I created out of just hoping that this I could have a space where other people that may be out there that felt the same way could join in. So we've been around for now two years. And we focus on education, as well as messaging and understanding the history of racial inequality, the history of systemic racism, and how that equates to every aspect of the black community's lives.

Kit Heintzman 01:41

Would you tell me a story about your life during the pandemic?

Cherilyn Holloway 01:46

I just told it. Um, so yeah, during this pandemic, I had just taking a job at a pro life marketing company. Not too long ago, before that, I had left my job as executive director at our local pregnancy center, and just was ready just to have a job that I could show up and clock in, clock out, get a check, be happy about it. Um, and my husband had just bought a Cricut. So he was like, making all types of things. And I always said, you know, I'm pro black, and I'm pro life. And you got to kind of like, take me as I am I and so he decided he thought that was like a really cool saying he was going to one of the things he was going to do is like, put it on a shirt for me. Like that was his practice. And so I had this on my shirt, and we were remote. So it wasn't like we went remote when the pandemic happened. My job was already remote. And so I didn't have this, like, huge transition of working from, you know, outside and coming home. It was a transition of like, working from home and peace and quiet to working from home with like, a million people here all the time. Um, but anyway, I was wearing a shirt one day, and the president of the company says, hey, when you want to do something with that, you know, let me know. So again, this is March, you know, well, this is like, early May. I mean, I was like, I don't want to do anything with this. Like, it's a t shirt. Like, I don't want to lead anything. I don't want starting things. Like my brain just is like, No, I'm tired. And she's like, Okay. May 28. And here we are. So, my pandemic story is that pro black pro life was built out of a pandemic, that I really didn't feel like I was too affected by at the time.

Kit Heintzman 03:34

Do you remember when you first heard about COVID-19?

Cherilyn Holloway 03:42

Um, do I remember when I first heard about it? No. Because I'm not a news watcher. You know, what's funny is that I was a long term sub before. So the winter, like going into the holiday, so October to December, in 2019, I was long term sub for a teacher in my home district. And let me tell you something from November to that we got out. We were at like, 27% Because these kids were getting sick. And with these respiratory issues, and no one had any clue what it was. And they were out for two

to three weeks. So my classes which were normally 17/18 students would have six students, seven students, literally for two months.

Kit Heintzman 04:29

And that was that November 2019.

04:32

Yep. 2019 And so we I was like, what was it the flu? They're like, No, they don't know what it was. I just they could have seen it was respiratory. I just remember asking them and my son then over Christmas break got really really sick. It's terrible cough. I mean, he's a like strong kid who like will push them he was like, out of the game. Really like the hash that was weird. So when it came up, I was that's when I thought about was like, oh, that's what was going on. But between that between the shutdown, like when they shut it down. And before that. I had never even heard of it because I don't watch the news. I don't really listen to the radio.

Kit Heintzman 05:11

What was that like starting up an organization while so many structures were being put on hold and other things were happening?

05:20

Yeah, I, you know, I didn't know what it was gonna be. So luckily, the company I worked for really allowed me to like put it under their wing as we developed it. You know, they were a marketing company. So they built the website, but the social media presence and now, at this point in time, there is a strong social media presence. And I started a YouTube channel, I felt like I was supposed to start a YouTube channel. And again, everybody's at home what I didn't start watching YouTube till the pandemic, like I would look at my kids like, they were crazy. Like, you just watched YouTube, like, like you just watching the short videos all day like, yeah, like, that's weird. But then when we're stuck at home now, and there's nothing to watch, I'm like, let's see what this YouTube thing is about. Now, I was watching YouTube all the time. So I started that as a way to communicate like, what we were doing what we were about. So for me, we weren't like seeking donations or like any, you know, anything like that. We were just trying to get our name out there. And for people to know who we were.

Kit Heintzman 06:20

Can you share a bit about how you learned about a murder of George Boyd, and then what happened for you after?

Cherilyn Holloway 06:28

Facebook. And I'm not a personal like, I can't watch fighting videos, I can't watch any of the videos like that. I can't watch them. I am the girl can't watch a scary movie. Because in my brain, even if it's totally fake, my brain will twist it into something like Well, that might be ever had not ever happened. But what about this, so I can't. Like it just can't come into my brain. But I knew just based off of like talking, my husband watched it, like what had happened. And people were calling me, people who would have said the day before, that racism was just something that the media portrayed, were calling me and saying, like, I don't know what to do with this. I can't unsee this, and I don't know what to do with this

information, like, what do I do with this. And so I became more involved in from that as aspect of like helping people, you know, work through, and these are like, this is like the black community. This is not just like, you know, my white friends, or this is like the people who are in the black community that just had kind of detach themselves from, you know, racial justice. Just calling and saying I don't, I don't know what to do with this. And then, you know, later on some of my white friends, you know, work swinging around and saying, I really want to be able to make a difference in my workplace, how do I how do I make the most tangible difference?

Kit Heintzman 07:51

What are some of the things you said to support people when they called you?

Cherilyn Holloway 07:56

Number one, that you don't have to do anything. You know, like, you recognize that it's happening. Like, I think that that's the biggest, you know, specifically for friends who felt like racial justice was like this, this, this, something people just use to get their way, you know, that this is a good time to recognize that it actually happens, and that it's, you know, what we're hearing about are, it's true that racism is we're not so detached from it, that, you know, in our lifetime, that we don't see horrible things come from it. And it really, to me, you know, my white friends, I just told him, you know, the biggest thing you can do is check people's language and things that they say, because I feel like you can be in white spaces, and people say things that, you know, are off colored or like, inappropriate. And because you don't want to, like be uncomfortable, or be that person who like ruins the mood, good mood, that you don't say anything. Like, you got to put that aside, like you got to correct things when they happen, you know, that people know, like, it's not okay for you to talk like that around me. And if it kills the vibe, oh, well, you know, but you may not be the only person who felt like that you may have other people like, yeah, you know what, I feel the same way, who also were afraid. And also as moms, you know, I have a lot of friends who are stay at home moms, I say, you know, if you hear other people's kids say things to your kids, that you guys don't agree with, you are allowed to say, hey, we don't talk like that in our house. And I said, and then you know, you go over and have a conversation with the mom and saying like, you know, Billy said this, you know, and this is what I told Billy. And so if this is the way you guys talk here, you know, Billy can't talk like that in my house. So there may be a reevaluation of whether or not they can play together. You know what I mean? And so, and I said, I was like, I know that's scary, because we're all mama bears. Right? But if my child said something inappropriate, I would want to know about it. Even if it's not I hear something I hear and I'm not offended by it. Right. Like, they may have heard it from me and, and I didn't know it was offensive. And so I want to be willing to be like, Oh, I'm so sorry. Like, I didn't even know that. But that would be offensive to somebody like she heard it from me. She's also got seven siblings all ordered, you know? And so I would want that because I don't want to raise a child that's insensitive, or feels like, you know, and people like, oh, well, they've always got to like walk on eggshells. I don't feel like being kind and being intentional with other people is walking on eggshells. You know, I was in college before I learned that you you're supposed to, like not say everything that comes to your mind. Because in my household, we just said, whatever came to our mind. And I grew up where I grew up, we're very sarcastic, like a little small town, Oberlin, Ohio is extremely sarcastic. And we all get each other's you know, sarcasm from a very, very early age. But that's not universal. And so like going to college and realizing like, oh, like, you didn't get the joke, like you thought it was serious. Are they like that? Yeah, it's not funny. And I'm like, it was kind of funny.

But I get it now, like you don't like so you don't appreciate sarcasm, I gotta not say what I'm thinking all the time.

Kit Heintzman 11:01

I know that you had said that you would already have been working. So there may not have been much change. But what if anything, did change in your life, and I [inaudible] sort of immediately post pandemic world.

Cherilyn Holloway 11:18

I'm definitely, like have my kids. So we are parents of eight kids, two grandkids, and have tried to help them navigate, you know, online school, something that they've never done, you know, and I, you know, we've always been so very hands on parents, but trying to navigate, you know, this tool that they've never had to use for education, trying to get my, you know, my older kids, especially my son who's very social, to understand, like, why you just can't go out to the mall? Or why you can't go, you know, like trying to figure out how do we get them to be responsible in a way that, you know, make sense to them, without making them feel like, they can't do anything. And so I think for us, that was the biggest thing. I feel like now. And we have a strong relationship. Because we've had to kind of like go through those things together. Where, you know, before the pandemic, I didn't out of total, we had a strong relationship. But I think that really, like helped us figure it out. Because there were times where I would never, if my kids were like, I don't want to go to school, like I got a headache. I'm like, suck it up, buttercup, you're gonna take some Motrin and get out of here, like, where I'm working. And they're like, I've had it, I'm like, Okay, I don't care email, the principal time, you won't be logging on. Like, just kind of that idea of what's important and what's not, I think is forever changed for us. You know, like before, there's so many things that I was like, you know, we got to do it this way. Here's the expectation. We're now I'm like, that's not really that important. It's not as important as I thought it was.

Kit Heintzman 13:20

How much do you think some of your younger children understood about what's been happening?

Cherilyn Holloway 13:26

I kind of feel like they understood the best because they haven't, they didn't really experience anything else. My daughter was in preschool, four when actually the end of preschool three, when she, they shut down. So from that to I'm sorry, [having side conversation] I don't have any cash. Who? I can Zelle them 20 I can Zell Tracy \$25 I was gonna give them \$25. This is a perfect example of me saying I'm going to be on a call and an interview literally means nothing. Because what else have you been doing for the last two years? Um, so yeah, she you know, wearing a mask, you know, being separated hearing the word, you know, COVID. And like, all those things are so normal to her, you know, to her and to my eight year old, where they're like, my hers is the youngest. So I talked about her the most because I think that like, all my other kids are grown. There's a huge age difference between her and my son, my youngest son, but even for him, you know, he's going into fourth grade. So there was a time period for him where you know, these things weren't in place. But I honestly felt like he had like a more he was the one who would talk about it the most. Because he's at that age of like anxiety and question where it's like, Should I be worried about this? What Ken is or something I can do about this, you know, where she was just like, I'm like, well, if you want to go, you gotta wear masks. She's like, Okay. Whatever. My

I feel like my older kids were more way more affected by it. The younger ones, I think that she could probably if we could shut down again and she could you know, she would hate not going to school because she likes to play. She probably wouldn't care about the schoolwork, or

Kit Heintzman 15:33

What were some of the reactions now older children?

Cherilyn Holloway 15:38

I mean, they gotta get most of the information from their own, like social circles. So you know, it depends on it's not that big of a deal. Like, you don't get that sick. To like, what's the worst that can happen? Like my I have a son who has sinus issues, and can sometimes have asthma attacks, like literally all the blue. So if the pollen level rises quickly, and unknowingly, he could like what have you, we have an asthma attack. So we were most concerned about him, because we didn't we didn't know like how this would affect him. And so that was kind of like, hey, there are two things we're concerned about concern about Ruby, who's, you know, at the time, she was four, you know, because we don't know how this will affect her little body. And we're worried about [redacted], because he is, you know, has these sinus issues and this weird asthma thing. You know, so we are actually asking you all to help us protect them. You know, the rest of us, honestly, we're super healthy. I'm whole food plant based. My husband's 90% whole food plant base, you know, so we feel really healthy. Like we I was taking, like, all the stuff that they were like, oh, take vitamin, like, we were already doing all that. So we were like, we're as healthy as we can possibly be at this point. And, but these are the these are our concerns. Like, even when it came to my mother, my mom is a widow, she's retired, she helps take care of our kids. So we have this period of time where she's can't see, we don't want her to be exposed. Again, my mom's the exact same way. She's probably 80% whole food plant based, she is in excellent shape. But she's still 67 At the time, she was 67. And I was like, you know, we're just not going to be around Moma right now, too. We figure out what this looks like. But it got to a place where I could hear that she was getting depressed. And I was like, yeah, no, we're gonna go hang out, we you know, and we came for a couple hours, you know, during the week, and then we started just having Ruby go for a couple hours, you know, a couple times a week, and then we went back and we're just like, here. There you go. Everybody's fine. Because we weren't really going anywhere. We were the weirdos who are we're extremely social people. But we also really liked ourselves. So we didn't mind like it was almost a little bit more freedom somebody telling me I can't go anywhere. Like oh darn guys can't come like you know Instacart made it like we could order and bring our food or house like you know ordering food like it just for us just having an excuse not to go anywhere. Especially after having so many kids where you're always on the go you're always always on the go to having you like you're sitting down. You're not going anywhere was more refreshing test where I joked because my husband would always want like hope that they would lock us down again. Like man think they're gonna lock us down again. I'm like they're not because like they're the way they're talking. They're not like your I know you hope you can like you can always lock yourself down honey.

Kit Heintzman 18:50

That's marriage been like for you over the course of the pandemic?

Cherilyn Holloway 18:54

I'm good. Honestly, we were I think we're probably an anomaly. We did go to counseling during during it, but not because of anything pandemic related. Because I think we got to a place where things that had happened over the course of the years, where I kind of like a fork. And I remember we went in there and we were talking about it. And one of the things is, is that I'm the planner, my husband's the visionary. I'm the strategic operator. But if you know anything about visionaries, visionaries don't like to hear about the obstacles. The visionaries, just sort of like here's the vision, go make it happen. They don't want to hear like, okay, we need a plan and we got to we were going to run into this problem. So I was like, the party pooper but because I was the planner, whenever my husband had an idea, he like would pass it off to me. So, like the example that I use is that he wanted to join like this couple's bowling league. I was like, okay, fine. Try it. Let's do it. And so then like a week later, he's like, hey, I want to join, like, do this. And I'm like, I said, okay, like, what's the problem? And by the third time, he's like, we just don't seem so excited about it. And I was like, I'm confused. Like I said, okay, like, I don't know. Well, he wanted me to reach out to the, like the people to set it up. And I'm like, I have the bandwidth for that. Like, you had an idea. And then you handed me the idea, like, expecting me to do something with it. No, no, no, I was handing it back to you. And I was like, the whole time. I'm wondering why you haven't done it yet. Because he thought he wanted me to do it. And so our pastor said, you know, did this start, you know, like, during the pandemic, and we looked, we like, Oh, no. No way before then, like, they're like, did you guys, you know, get on each other, we did it. We did it like it was, we got to spend so much time together, because any outside influence of people wanting us to come out and do things, I was very involved in the community. And so I was on several boards. And, you know, I worked late, I worked like 12 hour days. So, you know, we were often just like, passing in the wind. So it was actually exciting for us to just kind of be around each other all the time. And that's what I said, like, we haven't coming in and like, that's like, so normal for us, like him coming in and like going through my purse, me being like what are you looking for? Like, he knows, he hears me talking. But because we were so used to just being around and operating in you know, each other spaces that it was, it's always been a mentality in our house, that family comes first. And so if I'm doing like an interview or something like and they come in, they're gonna hear about it later. But I'm not going to like be mean to them. Maybe my kids that would get like a because they don't want anything but like to know where the chicken nuggets are. But for him, he's not going to come in unless he there's this he actually do something.

Kit Heintzman 22:09

I'd love to hear more about your relationship to faith and like how access to things like a pastor may have changed.

Cherilyn Holloway 22:18

I'm so you said my relationship to faith, right? Yeah. So I became a born again Christian at age 15. And I always tell the story that it was like a hell and brimstone. Sermon, and I was just like, oh, go, I don't want to go to hell. So I guess I got there. But didn't ever had any discipleship or new, you know, like how to how to even read the Bible, because, you know, the only Bible I had was a King James Version. And I was like, I don't, I don't, I don't know what this says. And so nothing really changed in my life. I went off to college. And, you know, was living a life of a college student. But we'll go to church because three of my friends that I hung out with were also had been raised, like in the church, like heavily in the church. And so even though we were like partying and doing whatever they like, it's they felt like it was

important for them to go to church on Sunday. And my roommate Godfather actually had a church in, in Columbus, I went to Ohio State in Columbus, but it was boring to me. So I didn't want to go, it was long, it was like, all day long. I'd be like, the hour and 15 minute church. So, um, you know, I brought my junior year, I end up getting saved again. We're actually kind of meant a little bit different to me. Why felt different, but still lacked the discipleship I needed. And I don't really feel like I got received that until I probably say like, 2007. And I'm 44. So I would have been, I don't know, a lot younger than this. Um, you know, early 30s, like 30, you know, 28 Something, something around there. And so I started going to a church that really focused on that focus on discipleship and had like a bunch of different classes you could take and I've really been wanting to get to like figure out, I wanted to go to a Bible study. I remember that like I wanted to go to because I had no idea how to read the Bible. Like I could read it, but I'm like, now what? And they started a women's Bible study. And up to this point, I would have told you like, I don't get along with women. And I'm so I'm like, such a tomboy. Like, I like sports. I like I don't do hardly any of the things. And at the time, I thought that's what being a woman was about, right like It was a woman and like, whatever, but being like a girly girl was about like, getting your nails done getting your hair done doing makeup, you know, going shopping, like those are girl things that all things that I don't like to do. Like, I would get my nails done, but it was my natural nails. You know, other than that I wasn't doing it. And so I'm, and I'm not sensitive. I'm not a sensitive person. So calling me whining or complaining or crying about something where I feel like this is stupid you there's a very easy solution for this. Why are we having this conversation? I just wasn't good at that. But joining that women's Bible study actually showed me a different side of myself that I actually was very, I may not be sensitive, but I'm very compassionate. So I don't always have to say something. I don't always have to give an answer. I don't always have to respond, I can see you know, meet people where they are. That allowed me those Bible studies allowed me to, to learn how to read the Bible and connect more. And so I then went through like a discipleship course where there was someone who actually discipled me over a period of time, in that during that time, is when I believe my faith has started being tested the most, where I could hear the Lord asking me to do things and they could be something so simple. I was working at a private Christian school in southeast DC. A tons of like crime and homeless people are but at the school was wonderful, still exists still there. And I had coffee, we didn't have a coffee maker at the school. And so I would bring coffee in and I worked. I lived 30 minutes away. I'd bring dunkin donuts on like a Tuesday, my coworker to bring Starbucks on Thursday. So I did two coffees and I heard the voice of the Lord say give that man your coffee. And I think he's homeless. Why would he want like a black Dunkin Donuts Coffee? And its Hazelnut that like he doesn't want this. But it was like, I know, I heard what I heard. And if he doesn't want it, then maybe then it wasn't God and its fine. I asked him if he wanted the coffee. He said yes. And I gave it to him. And immediately instead it feels like dag blasts it what am I going to drink, I felt this overwhelming sense of like, good job, where it's just like this wash over you where it almost makes you want to cry. And I was like, wow, I that's what it feels like when God tells you to actually do something, you do something immediately. Like even when you feel like it's a sacrifice, right? It's a very small sacrifice at the time, it felt huge. Because I was like, I'm gonna grab coffee now. And I gotta go talk to these first graders. But in the grand scheme of things that the Lord has told me to do since then. And so my faith began to get stronger that way, just you know, hearing from the Lord trusting that the Lord doing what He said. And knowing that in order for me to keep that to keep hearing from the Lord, that I needed to be able to read and understand what my bible was saying. And, you know, I could read something this time last year, I read the same thing this year, and it would,

it would speak differently. To me it's same words, but it will speak to a different situation or a different, you know, feeling or and it's very, very important to how I operate and how I interact with other people.

Cherilyn Holloway 28:21

You know, with just love and compassion and understanding even when we don't agree, even when even when I feel like my values are being attacked. How to how to be able to respond to that in a way where it's just like if you want to sever this relationship because you don't like my value, that's a choice that you are allowed to make. But do not misinterpret it as in like I chose this value over you. You chose your value over me and I'm okay with that. And I think I can be okay with that because of my relationship with the Lord and because I know that's where my values come from that like I'm they're not like arbitrary like values, but that they're mostly related and centered around the love for people that were created in His image.

Kit Heintzman 29:43

I have so many follow up questions. Would you? Are you willing to share an example of a circumstance where you found your values being attacked and sort of how how you met that moment with grace?

Cherilyn Holloway 30:08

I'm trying to think of one in person. Create people are nutso on line you know, I think for people, when people know me, like people in person or people know me, they're a lot different. Right? So they're not as like, aggressive. But I cant think of a time recently. And maybe just because my brain won't let me go too far back, my brain is like, why are you trying to do that? So I was on ABC National News, ABC did a special called soul of the nation in 2021, where they wanted to focus on the black experience in America. And they aired six episodes over the course of six weeks. And I was asked to be on the faith episode that also included the your biblical standpoint on abortion. And so I flew to St. Louis, and did you know, these interviews that were phenomenal. And I think that they were phenomenal. I'm doing this interview with, like, Debra Roberts. And they're phenomenal. Because after the interview, there's all these associate producers that are talking to me, and they're like, wow, like, I never thought about it like that, like I you know, you don't really hear that. When they aired it. They also do they always do like a written piece. Anytime they air something they do like a written piece with like a video clip. And I didn't tell people, I was gonna be on it. Like, I just was like, you know what, Lord, this came out of the blue and You tell people what you want to tell people. But this isn't I never wanted it to be an extra, you know, to attribute it to something I had done, right, like, Look at, look what I did, like, that's not how it happened. Like it was the most it was so strange how it happened, that there's no way that I could even take any credit. And I wanted to leave it at that. But a year later, because of everything that happened since you know, I really felt that I needed to thank the people that, you know, encouraged me, you know, ran alongside me and said, don't quit, like, please don't go to Starbucks and you know, be a barista, like, please keep doing this is my dream job, by the way. And, you know, I just said, you know, thank you. And so I'm tagging people in this, you know, post. And someone I'm not even friends with, who is heavily involved in the pro life movement. And hes a white male, like, literally came on to my post attacking me. Because when they asked that when she asked, do I think abortion should be illegal? My response was, I think abortion should be unnecessary. Now that it was like the phrase heard around the world, that was the the thing that got people who normally wouldn't even like because my, you know, I run an opposition, it's called pro black pro life would have dismissed me because the pro

life part because of that phrase, they didn't. And so I was able to reach, you know, women in my community, because of the way, you know, I phrased that answer, which was, how I truly felt, you know, I don't think anything of it at the time, I said what I felt, but I basically wasn't pro life enough. And then I had missed an opportunity to say, on national TV that, you know, abortion should be illegal. Well, that wasn't what God doesn't call me to take opportunities to say, you know, what I want to say, God calls me into rooms to say what He tells me to say. And so, I mean, it was people, my friends were coming on and defending me. And he I seen the first posts, and I he'd written on this rant, I said, are you done? And he said, No, I'll never be done, you know, fighting this, this whole life narrative. And I said, okay, well take it up with Jesus. And that's all I said. Because at that point, like you want to fight. I'm not one I'm not going to argue with you on social media. I'm not going to spend my time typing in words to some to what you clearly don't want to hear. But I remember people calling me and saying, you the way you handled that. I couldn't and again, unless it was taken up with Jesus like I you know, I'm not going to say there's nothing like no matter what I said he's just going to come back saying like things that didn't even address what I said. And they were like, you were just I don't know how you just didn't rip into him. I don't like because there were people now that had board members coming on in responding very kindly very gracefully, but with 100% truth. But what I noticed, which was really, really strange was that he would respond to the white females and the black males. But when the other black females would come on and say something, he wouldn't respond to them at all. He would just essentially just pretend like they didn't say anything. I had friends on my on that post, who were staunchly pro choice that came on, and we're just like, I really appreciate what you're doing. Like, I'm so proud of you. So what is the point of a movement? Right? Like if you cannot reach people on the other side and not from for conversion, right? For a moment of Hmm. I never thought about that. That way. That's interesting, or even so much to say, I love you so much, even though we disagree on this issue, that I can see the passion that you have for it, that it has to you have to be called by God to do this. I appreciate everything you're doing. I appreciate you saying yes, every single day. Because if you got to do with things like this, you know, like, and you keep going, like, I don't know if I could do that.

Kit Heintzman 36:19

You talk to so many people with very different relationships to spirituality, many of them feel they have this like very deep, intimate relationship with God that I hear you describing. Could you explain in whatever way is available to you what it's like to hear from the Lord to someone who just might not have that experience? What that means to you what it feels like?

Cherilyn Holloway 36:42

Yeah, it's like hearing it's like hearing. Well, it's like seeing the sun coming when it's the one is thunderstorm. Like, it's like this moment, where you're usually not even thinking about the thing. He said, He's speaking to you. And that's why it's interesting, because is this gonna be something you've been praying about? And now, you know, you're at the grocery store. And He says, Okay, do you know do that thing now? Like, what? Wait, wait, what now? Like, it's never convenient. So you know, when we think about hearing from the Lord, we think like, and people have I've heard people say, like, they heard this, like, booming voice where they're like, it's like, no, I've heard Lord say, no. But it's never been like this booming voice. And it's also not my voice, which you know, another thing I hear people say, like, yeah, it's the Lord, but it's like, my voice is never my voice. And I immediately know that it's him because it's uncomfortable. And it's either uncomfortable, because He's telling me to do something

He knows I don't want to do, or it's uncomfortable, because He's affirming something. And I'm just so overwhelmed with like, you took the time out to say, yes, Cheryl, and you're doing what you're supposed to be doing, keep moving forward. And sometimes it sounds like other people. And so I think the Lord talks to us all the time. You know, I think the problem is we spend a lot of time praying and talking to God that we don't actually be silent enough to hear what He says back. And a lot of times, we already have our mind made up. We're, we're just looking for that affirmation, or we're like, come on God, this is what I want to do. Come on, get on board and help me do this. Where, you know, learning what it's like to take direction from God who has bigger and better plans for you than you can imagine. And trusting that and saying, Wait, like, this is the biggest I could imagine. And He's like, you're so small minded. Like, I was shocked, like, I'm so small minded. Like, I just thought I was supposed to be this. And then it's this. I think that you can get the excitement in it. But then, on the flip side of that, there are times when you're told no, right when you wanted to say very excited about something you're told no. And that's disappointing, because you're like, Oh, I really thought this was the thing now what am I now I really don't know what to do. And I gotta wait for the Lord to tell me what to do next. Right. And sometimes, that's where I struggle. Is that when I'm trying when I'm getting ready to do something, or when I'm waiting for an answer to do something? I struggle in that in between kind of like yes, I know you have my best interests at heart. Yes, I know what you have played for me is better than what I could put them up for myself. Yes, I know you're no is better than my Yes. Like I get it. I don't want to feel disappointed. Like I don't want to have that feeling of disappointment like that's what I'm trying to avoid. You know, being those moments of sadness. We're like dang. So it really the biggest thing I can say is that like it's never convenient. You if you immediately feel uncomfortable.

Cherilyn Holloway 40:00

Especially if it's something that you're like, you're you're asking me to step out of my comfort zone. I've never been asked to do something that wasn't out of my comfort zone in some way, shape or form. I'm, like, I love talking like this is super easy. Like, this is easy breezy to me. I don't like talking to journalists. And in the last few months, that's all I've done. I don't enjoy writing. In the last few months, that's what I've been asked to do the most. And so I'm asking like, what are you doing God? Like why I thought we were awkward and strange remember? We're doing strength finders operate just in our strength. Like, why are you asking me to operate in my weakness, because of my weakness, I have to either lean on Him, or I have to figure out who He has put around me, that can help me with those things. And learn to ask for help, instead of because I couldn't say no. I mean, I guess I could. But I wanted people to have the opportunity to hear a nuanced perspective. And so those are those moments where you're like I said, yes to this, but I didn't mean this. Like I said, Yes, I would do this thing. But when I said that, I meant not that. And so you know, it, it's a lot of times being willing to say yes, every single day to something that, like I said, you may or may not think you may, there are things I've said yes to. Nothing has happened. Nothing has come out of it. And I'm like, Why did you tell me to do this? Like, why this is so silly. Like it's been a year and a half. And then something will happen. And someone will ask for something. Like, Hey, um, you know, have you ever done a class on bla bla bla, and I'm like, I had never actually taught a class, but I have prepared for a class to do exactly that. They're like, really like, well, two years ago, God told me and nothing ever came of it. So once you have that experience, where you hear that from the Lord, and you think, even if you think, like, wait, what was that? If it's uncomfortable, I would say if it's uncomfortable at first, where you're like, I don't know, if I'm supposed to do that. The first question I was asked, doesn't line up with His word. So that, you know, there are

things that God would never ask me to do, you know, things that do not line up with His word things that are that don't have integrity, things that are compromising, you know, to my, to my walk with Him to my relationship to others, you know, in terms of like my husband or my children, like Gods not going to ask me to do that. But when it comes to the things where I'm like, if I could check off all those boxes, like wound doesn't compromise, it actually makes sense that He would ask me to do this. Then I just do it. And then I say, okay, Lord, I'm gonna do this because I believe you're here. This is what I'm hearing he's telling me to do. If it's not shut the door, you know, shut the door. And just say, I aint you to do that. You know, but I will say 95% of the time, He 100% asked me to do it. And but we have to be able to quiet our mind enough to hear that whatever it is.

Kit Heintzman 43:18

Were you called do anything that felt pandemic specific to?

Cherilyn Holloway 43:27

I think the YouTube channel, that's the first thing He told me to do. Um, when he said, you know, the time is now so when, after I had a conversation with my boss, and I was like, I ain't doing nothing. I ain't doing this. Like we ain't doing this. We it's too many like, you can do what you want. But and He woke me up that Saturday morning and said The Time is Now I knew exactly what He was talking about. And I was like, Okay, Lord, what do you want me to do? And He said, I want you to make the I want you to make videos. And I want you to educate videos like What do you mean? And I happen to look up and out opening about does this but the cafe channels on YouTube, like if you have never gone to a cafe in France on YouTube and drink your coffee from home, you really should try this. It's always up my daughter and I love it. Or and there's they can bookstore was now two, which are even more fun. But it was on the TV. And I was like YouTube, and like I said, I had been binge watching YouTube. And so I'm like, Okay, well now, how do I do that? Like, and I was not worried at all about people watching the video. I wasn't I didn't know anything about subscribers, or like, I didn't know anything about any of that. I was just trying to figure out how to get the stupid thing up. But when I told my boss at the time like this, the Lord said The Time is Now she's like, it's music to my ears. He said he wants me to make videos. She's like, perfect. Record the video, send it to me. We'll edit it and we'll we'll create your YouTube channel and we'll put it up for you. So all the barriers are the things I was like, gosh, how am I going to do this? Like I don't know how to do this. The Lord just took out and was like, I just need you to say yes. Once you say yes, I'll take care of everything else. And that was pandemic specific because of the civil unrest that was happening due to racial justice. The issues that were happening, you know, where people were feeling the Supreme Court was being stacked. Like, there were so many things in there that were happening. And people were watching a lot of YouTube. And so I feel like that was the the, I would have said it at the time, like, Oh, this is cute. I knew that YouTube thing was because we were in a pandemic, and people were going to be watching it. Where Traditionally, when I had taught classes, it was in person, right? We weren't doing this. And so but it makes sense to me. It wasn't like that nobody's you know, I never said nobody's gonna watch it. Because again, I didn't know and I didn't care. I was hoping nobody wasn't like, the people are meeting online, right? Like, I want to do what mean comments, like, when you're first starting something, the last thing you want is to be discouraged by someone like, you're dumb. This is stupid. I was like, I don't know how I'm gonna do with the comments. I was more worried about that, like, oh, people do watch it. And they comment, like, what

am I supposed to do? But I feel like that was pandemic related. Because we were all stuck in the house watching a bunch of YouTube, you know, be trying to be entertained, or educated, one of the two.

Kit Heintzman 46:25

Curious, what does the word health mean to you?

Cherilyn Holloway 46:29

Oh, gosh, health is all encompassing. To me, health is physical, spiritual, emotional, mental. I don't feel like I feel like our body is one working organism that needs every single part to function properly. And that we are often out of alignment somewhere. And we have to understand how one thing that we're doing could be helping that out of, you know, being out of alignment, but also, how does relationships play into those things being aligned? So when I hear health, I think of, you know, how is someone overall, you know, doing, you know, someone could be in great physical shape, and their marriage be terrible, right. And so your, your overall health is not going to be good, because you're dealing with some mental and emotional stress and maybe some spiritual stress in there. So for me, when I when I, either either for myself or saying, like, I want to make sure I'm healthy, I'm always kind of doing like a system check. Like, how are your spirits? How are you? You know, how is your mental? How's your emotional? How's relationship with God? You know, how many times have you worked out, you know, at least three times this week? You know, what did you eat yesterday? You know, if I'm feeling like, a little sluggish or down, like, what did I eat yesterday? You know, like, did I go outside yesterday? Like, I tried to do some, I say something to me that, like I put in the back of my mind, but didn't really, you know, process. I try to think about all those things. And that's how I also operate when it comes to my own family. Right? And when some was someone's sick, it's not just about like, the symptom. It's about every other thing. Like what else is going on in your life? Like, are you stressed about anything? What have you been eating? You know, have you been taking care of yourself? Are you have you been on the go? It's not just about the code you caught, or, you know, maybe you have coat, you know, COVID as your allergy, it's not just about thing. And I think being whole food plant base was the thing that really helped me see that we're, everything's connected. In that, you know, we treat things singularly right, like, Oh, your arm hurts let me figure those who was wrong with your arm. You know, I got like, I feel like I got stung by a bee in my head. I was driving yesterday and I was like, What the heck was that? Like the pain shot all the way down my arm? Like, well, if I got stung here, like the pain oh, that's clearly not a bee. But just how it was all connected to it actually was like, I turned my head too fast. Again, I'm 44 these things happen. But just even in that right the class one of the exercise class I takes it focuses on strength and balance. You know, balance is so important as we age to be able to you know, if you slip or you know, you lose your balance to be able to regain it with your core. And we don't think about that into we need hip replacement surgery or you know, we broken a hip because you know, we fall and we don't think about it at the time and really kind of being conscious about those things before they happen. Is a whole reason I went home from playing bass wasn't because like I you know, I don't like meat or I love animals so much, you know, they're cute but if there's no other food, I might have to eat you But I knew that this was something that could benefit me later on. If I just took care of the discipline now, you know, dealt with the hard stuff now, and became disciplined in it now, as I age, this is something that could benefit me later. And so it's the same thing like with our spiritual walk and having some type of, you know, time with God discipline like this isn't this may not, I may not need this now, in this moment, I'm having a great day, I'm you know, but I may need to draw on this later. And so these

things are kind of like in this reserve tank. And so when I hear the word health, all those things, you know, kind of come to mind. When it when, what it means like what, what is health look like?

Kit Heintzman 50:50

What is the word safety mean to you?

Cherilyn Holloway 50:53

Safety or safe?

Kit Heintzman 50:55

Safety.

Cherilyn Holloway 51:01

Safety means that I trust God. I truly believe that safety in real time doesn't exist, that we are never truly safe. You know. So in order for me not to worry, you're having anxiety about that, you know, or do things that try to like, create this false environment of set, you know, this false look of safety, I have to trust God, that He is doing what he said he will do, which is protect me and my family, for whatever that looks like. Right? And that he knows what's best and he has mine and my children and my husband's best interests at heart, and that He will keep us you know, safe. My son just took a COVID test, he just said

Kit Heintzman 52:02

Is he okay?

Cherilyn Holloway 52:04

It's negative looked a little bit more like wait, she's my mom sent me the picture. Speaking of COVID.

Kit Heintzman 52:16

Thinking about safety, and that really sort of tiny, narrow conference of a COVID conversation, what are some of the things that you've been doing to keep yourself feeling safer?

Cherilyn Holloway 52:27

Yeah, um, you know, I couldn't figure out once we did the six feet apart thing, like, why would we ever so close in the first place? Like, why? Why the grocery store did I need to be right on your back to get? So that's one of the things that I feel like I still practice like I still give distance. We still will mask certain times certain places, especially if there are going to be elderly. If someone else's has a mask on, I will ask like, what do you prefer? And I know that's like not popular, but I'll ask like, do you would you prefer that I was wearing a mask? Because I can wear one if you prefer it? Some people said yes, some people I don't care. Like, you know, for me. Safety also has to do with how I treat you, and what makes you feel safe. I guess that kind of goes along the idea that I feel like God's got me right. So how can I make you feel safer in your space? What else? We don't really I mean, we don't really go to super busy places, but I don't, that has probably less to do with COVID than it does. I don't like being in crowded places. Like not enough exits. You know, but we won't not do something because of that. But it's just not our thing to be intimate. Like, oh, there might be a little too many people there like let's not go there.

But we weren't really out and about social people. Like we just do our daily thing. Of grocery shopping a really weird time when most people aren't there like after I dropped my kids off. So if it goes to like 8:30 in the morning, like everybody's at work. So yeah, I one time I thought I knew I didn't have COVID I had taken a test and I knew I didn't have COVID But I had a little cough. And so I went to spin class and I said I'm wearing my mask because I have a little cough and I don't why wait you guys out and they all looked at me like I lost my mind. They're like you are not spinning with that mask on. And I was like I just want to make you guys go do it like we're fine. Take the mask. We don't we're not trying to resuscitate you so sometimes I think I can do like overdo it. You know what I mean? Because you don't want people side I knew. But I think our my biggest precaution and I would probably say our family in general is making sure that People feel safe around us, and that we're safe people, right? Like, we're not going to mock you for wanting Assad to wear masks to your birthday party or like, you know what I mean? Like, or come in waves or whatever you want. We're not going to be like, I'm not coming. That's stupid. I don't have time for that. Like, if that's what you want. Cool. That's what you want. Let's do it. Nobody do.

Kit Heintzman 55:21

How have you felt about how sort of local governments I think municipal at the state level have been handling?

Cherilyn Holloway 55:27

I mean, I'm in Ohio. So I felt like our governor did really good. He. He is a Republican governor. And he got a lot of pushback from this party. And he kind of like stood his ground, which is what you want, right? Like, you want someone who's going to be like, we're going to do what we're being asked to do by our federal government, which is this. And so we I thought he did well. And I think what I felt like when it was time, to just say, You know what, here we are, there's vaccines available. We've made them available to everyone at every corner you could possibly go to it's time, it's time to, you know, be done. And I think people, some people push back against that. But also giving, giving that responsibility back to the store owners event, you know, restaurant owners say you guys can choose like you can, there is no state mandate, but you can decide, we still want people to wear masks in our, you know, establishment, like, I feel like that is empowering people to make their own decisions. And again, like, there ain't no law saying I can't wear a mask. And I don't really feel like least where I live. I live in Lorain County is extremely rural, separate from places like when I see people mask, I'm not just like, I don't feel like people are like, pick up that mat, like nobody cares. Like people are like, just like, you know it. That's what you felt like you felt like you want you wanted to wear that mask for your safety cool. Like, like I said, if I'm somebody if I'm in their present, and I'm like, Would you be more comfortable if I would wearing a mask to, like our doctor's office still require them. And they provide it like, you know, and so I think the state of Ohio, I personally feel like they did a really good job, they did what they were asked to do.

Kit Heintzman 57:15

Were you able to keep attending church services in person during the pandemic?

Cherilyn Holloway 57:20

No our church. So our church has branch branches. And so we went to a branch of the church, and it was being held at a school. And so the school shut down. And so that service had to end. And because the main campus wasn't necessarily big enough. They did church, and they are already streaming online. So they just continue to stream online. But when they opened up, they said, This is what we can accommodate this amount of people. After that, we're going to have to turn people away. And we just never like attempted to like, I mean, I got to get somewhere in time. But um, I know that there are other churches in my area that didn't like so if we really wanted to, we could. But I also know, and one of them every single person got COVID. And, you know, I was I've never been afraid of it. But we just never knew what was going to happen, right until we saw like, what what it could do what would happen. It was just like, I don't I don't want that. I would I would say I don't want that. I don't want your cold. I don't want your flu. I don't want none of it. Like I don't want anything you got like, keep it I don't want it. Um, you know, or like in 2020 we were asking me where I get sick maybe this mass thing but yeah, so we weren't arch our particular church had to shut down solely because the school that it was house had shut down. And we just made a choice not to like try to get into the church service. When they reopened it. And they reopened, the main one shut down. They reopened when the state said churches can now reopen it. As long as they can accommodate people with a dis social distancing.

Kit Heintzman 59:15

I'd love to hear more about what the terms pro Black and pro life means.

Cherilyn Holloway 59:20

Yeah, so pro black to me means that anything that advances the black community, anything that pushes us to a place of abundance, as a whole, as a community as a whole. And pro life means to be for things that are living in so regardless of proximity, where it's located, where they're located, that we support, their ability to live. And so when I say like, regardless of proximity, that could mean in the womb, but that could also mean in the projects. that, you know, could also meet in prison. You know, the all those lives have value, everyone's lives have to have value. And so I think what what ended up happening either purposefully or not with the pro life movement is it became a very white Evangelical, even Catholic movement, where people were using rhetoric that wasn't pro black. That was more or less like, you know, more racist, more whites, you know, more on the lines of white supremacy, and not that they were using that term. But it was like, well, the real racism is an abortion. Well, it had to come from somewhere. So like, you know, racism didn't start, you know, when abortion started, it had to come from somewhere, like a person has to be racist. And I think that was my frustration is that, like, you keep using the black community as like this example of racism, and with when we look at the numbers, but there's so many more things that are leading women to black women to make this choice that if they ever those systems, you know, were were fixed, or at this point were burnt down and rebuilt, then we, that end result would be different. And so that's what made me put the pro black first, because I felt like in order for me to advocate for life, from womb to tomb for the black community, I had to be able to address everything that that woman or that, you know, man, the man or whoever is going through during that during their life, that would lead them to that choice. Because that's the band aid is the choice is the end result, right? It doesn't actually fix what happened up here. In so I wanted to be very specific to the black community, because that's where my passion was. And because I had been involved in racial justice, even before I was involved in the pro life movement, there was no separation to me, it was painfully obvious that these issues were connected, and not just at the end, with the issue

of abortion, that again, racism started way back here. And so how do I help the black community? Look at the history of racism and how it isn't, you know, how it keeps these systems that we typically can all agree on, right? Uh, typically, we can all agree on police brutality and healthcare systems, you know, the justice system, even, you know, economics, we can all agree on that. where it starts getting real messy, is when we get to, you know, we're adults, now we're making decisions, and how do these decisions then affect our future? And as we began to see the population numbers in general decline, but also in the black communities decline? What is the cause of that? What are all the variables that are happening? And how does that when we're looking at these issues up here? How is that going to affect our future, when we are limiting our voting power, we are limiting, you know, our activism power, right? Because we're making a choice. That's not beneficial to our legacy. Because someone is telling us that in order to succeed, to be able to succeed, as black women, we really need to be able to have the option to abort our children, or to not have children. Which is crap. Like, that's a terrible answer. So I can't have liberation, I can't have freedom, like a white woman be. And in order for me to do that, I have to sacrifice my child. So we've created this to sound as if we're being we're being given something. But in reality, something's being taken away from us. And we're still not getting that freedom. A poor woman that finds herself pregnant and feels like she needs to have an abortion so that she doesn't become more poor her problems now she's prettier prom, she's poor, and she's gonna be poor after the abortion. Like, she'll come out with \$2 million. Like she's, she's gonna come out with, you know, some heartache that she had to make this decision based on her life circumstances. Even if she feels like it's the best decision she made, right? No, no one comes out of that thinking like, oh, that decision I made. It's like, gosh, I had to make that really hard decision. Because I felt like that was the only decision I had which isn't choice. That was the only choice I had in that time so that I could be where I am now. Where it's like, that should be winning. To fix the other stuff, so that if you're looking something in the face, where I would always say this the question, the question you just asked is a question I get all the time when you're looking something in the face. And someone says like Sherrilyn house is going to affect the black community. And I give all the points I just gave, you can't, there's no rebuttal to that. Because you're basically telling me the solution to black maternal mortality rate, the solution to economics, the solution to racial inequalities in the justice system system is abortion. And that's how we're solving that problem. And you know, that's not true. You know, that's not how we solve that problem. And when I tell you that that's not true, you immediately punt to, well, woman should have the right to do what she wants. We're not talking about the same thing anymore. Because now you're just talking about independent choice, independent choice, for no reason at all. With no rationale that's completely different than having a conversation about how does racism and a systems created, put us in it putting us in a place where we have to make a decision whether or not we are going to sacrifice our children for our own liberation, because that takes actually a lot of work to solve. And if you just go ahead and slap the women's rights sticker on it, and try to cover us all, we still don't get what we need, my community doesn't get what it needs. All we get is abortion. Right, like we don't get anywhere, everything saw our women just get abortion. And I just really began to feel like someone needs to go, we were having all these conversations are outside of the black community. And we're talking about the faculty, but nobody was actually going in and having these conversations. And Alex, somebody's got to go in and have the conversation because I'm tired of being used. And both sides. Like I said before, like what the pro life movement saying that, like, the real racism is in abortion, I'm tired of being used. What say ye go into the black community? What do you think? What do you say? What do you in most a majority? I'm saying I'm tired of being used as the example. Yes, I've known. So you know, a couple

people that had abortion for this reason. And, you know, they're really struggling right now. And they don't know why they're really struggling right now. Or she had did it so that she could go to jail. And you know, she's very successful. You know, we I've had all these conversations, you know, and they've all boiled down to what could have been different. If something was different, what could have been different that you would have made a different choice? Or they would have made a different choice? Oh, well, yeah, I guess if you had childcare in a maternity house for you to still be able to attend and do well, then I guess, yeah, that made it that that choice would look differently. It may not she they may not have made a different choice, it just would have looked different. You know, and now it's no longer about I can't go now it's more about what will I be able, what will I have the freedom to do while I'm there? What will I not? Those are different questions. But you what you do is you remove the barrier that you're telling me was there. And I think that once I began to hear those stories, I was like, oh, we need to address the problem, not these solutions down here and not be sitting here arguing about what's the best solution for this humongous gunshot wound, like what's the best bandaid to put on it, we need to actually be up here, figuring out what the heck is happening, and how can we fix this, in that once we fix that, less then take a look at what's happening down here.

Kit Heintzman 01:08:38

Where do you think we're at in terms of addressing some of those structural problems? So the woman who's still, in the example you gave, the woman who still doesn't have access to child care, she's still poor?

Cherilyn Holloway 01:08:50

Yeah. I think that it's number one, that we have to take our power back as a community and start being who were, who God has called us to be. That is to be the church, we have become so individualistic, where it's all about what I want my rights, my you know, whatever the right is, we could go on forever about this, you know, that we forgot about what it meant to what servitude meant, what it meant to, you know, serve others in that way where we're putting other people before ourselves, you know, and there's definitely putting somebody up putting somebody above you. I'm talking about their needs, right? All my needs are met. All my basic needs are met. So if my neighbor comes to my door, and they're like, we don't have any food, like, Okay, well, here's some food, right? It may not be great. And maybe yeah, maybe I was planning on using that chicken on Friday. But as of today, I don't need that. So here you go. We need to get back to that. And that's a mindset that I really believe that the church has to work out and we have to we the church structure has to work on, and we have to be the ones to call them out on it, and saying we know what programs and we used to have, that we don't have now, what types of things does our community need that we could offer? Also what other churches in our community maybe meeting those needs? What are they doing? And from that place, when we know what our communities need, our counties need our state's need, we can advocate on a higher level for those, because right now, we're just throwing stuff out right like that, right. And, you know, the thing that Dobbs did do is now we're off everybody's spin and trying to help people, all of a sudden, we've got plans, you know, on the table for the child tax credit, we've got plans for you know, helping with child care, like all of a sudden, you know, we've got all these bipartisan things working, where before we were like, oh, no, we're not willing to do that. Oh, no, we don't want to cover child care. Oh, no, we don't want to do, we're not going to do a child tax credit. Unless there's money for abortion, like, now it's off the table. So now people are, you know, throwing things out there. But it's not a one size fits all. Not

every community is going to need the same thing. And that's what we have to do. And I truly believe that like, as a nation, we have to go back to being involved with our communities and knowing what's going on. We're yes, we're all busy. Yes, we're all raising families, or maybe not, maybe we're out do like jet setting and traveling the world. But you have something to offer. You have a gift to offer. And it maybe it's not my the same gift as mine, it shouldn't be the same gift as mine. Or maybe a gift that's like mine, but you're talking about something different. How do we create a place in our communities where we are meeting the needs? of others? I'm on a. I can't remember when you got to raise a whole lot of money, something campaign. What do you say fundraising campaign is fundraising, but it's the big ones. Like millions, capital capital. Just not like couple 1000. I'm on a capital campaign committee for a organization that meets the food insecurity needs housing needs of, you know, of our community. And they they have grown over the last 20 years. like 725% So you need more space. Everybody should should want that to happen. Right? Everybody should want, you know, to be a part of that, because that is taken care of your neighbor, right? We have, you know, Land Trust organizations that are buying up old houses and renovating them, and they own the land. But when the person buys the house, they're gonna own the house, right? And it's low, it's affordable housing in an area that's normally not affordable, like people are easily priced out of, when you start figuring out, here's a problem we have, who has the bandwidth, the knowledge or the passion to tackle this problem. You know, someone's like, I have the passion. And I have every file on my computer, but I ain't got the time. This person may say, I have the passion for it, I ain't got no files, but I got the money. Like, you know, you once you start finding those people, that's we put them together. The problem is we don't talk to each other. Or we're afraid we talked to someone might they're gonna take our idea. Not one single person. When I told him I was thinking about doing pro black pro life was like, Oh, let me do it. Not one. Trust me. I was waiting. So this idea that if I give out this idea that I have somebody's gonna want to take it is silly. Like you are like hindering yourself and hindering your community based on independence and selfishness. And so we have to stop, we just have to stop. We want. We want to come together when it's when it makes sense to us individually, right. So like the pandemic and masking and quarantining. We want everybody to do the thing. Right? Like, wow, I don't understand where the mask what's the big deal? We don't feel like that about everything. That's the big deal. We're inconsistent. That's the big deal. It's easy for me to say yes to those things, because I'm consistent. You want me not to have a automatic rifle? No problem. I won't, I don't own one and I won't. Perfect. You know, you want me not to be able to legally get divorced. I won't. You know, but I need help in these areas. Right? If you don't want me to have a weapon in my home or whatever, without this training, or whatever, I need you to put some things in place to make sure my home is safe. What else we got? You know, because the whole idea right of the Second Amendment so that the government can't come in your house to take your stuff. Like that's really the whole idea of it. It's okay when you insure me that the governments not gonna come in my home and take my stuff. Cool, great. Like, these are the conversations we need to be having. But instead, we're fighting or fighting about when we should care about each other and how to care about each other. And it's never based on the problem. The solution is never based on the actual problem. The solution is always based on the end result of the problem. And I think that that's why we've gotten to the be the in the place that we are now as a nation, where we are bickering and fighting and picking sides. Because we don't know how to say, Stop. Everybody freeze. Let's go back to the beginning. And let's fix the problem. Right, everything we do is solution based at the end, even when we look at the pandemic, even when we say you know, okay, wait, stop, everybody stop what they're doing. Let's we got to figure this out real quick. What How did how did this happen? What's What's the worst case

scenario like? Well, what can we do now? We need a vaccine. Yes, but that's been down the west out here. Right? What about now? These are the things we need we need to do now. Right? Now we you need to stay at home. Right now you need to wear a mask. I'm saying that, but then saying on the other side, like, okay, yeah, you're wearing a mask, but I'm gonna be honest, that means it's a good chance. I'm gonna work like, like, Okay, I'm gonna wear the mask. But why am I wearing the mask? Right? Like, you're not hope you're not solving the problem? How do we solve the problem? So we these things happen. We don't, we don't want to get in the weeds because we're impatient. And we don't want to waste the time on that. We want. Give me a solution. I don't care if it's temporary, give it to me. And what happens when we do the temporary solution? We cross off our list, wipe our hands off, and we move on to the next thing. Instead of saying this is this is a temporary solution. We need to focus on something that's that's actually going to solve the problem. You know, since then, we always joke in my house, because there were so many variants. And they're like, Oh, there's another variant. And I was like, it is not going to end like I don't know why y'all wait. I think you're gonna wake up one day and they'll be like, you know, what's gone. The Coronavirus? It's not going anywhere. Like it's a virus. Like, it's going to if we're going to have herd immunity, it's going to take a long time. I might be somebody's great grandma, but it when I get to talk about the Coronavirus, like my grandparents talked about smallpox like, right? Like I, I could be very, very old when that happens. But what do we do now? We take COVID tests, and we try to process information. But we're not doing you know, the things that we used to do, right? Like my friend has COVID. I said, Well, I said, they're so concentrated, like, do you still have to tell somebody. And she's like, Oh, I didn't know the doctor, I took a home test. And it was part of it. Like, do I need to tell somebody? I don't know, I'm not going to the doctor.

Cherilyn Holloway 01:18:02

Like, I feel fine. Like, you know, so I joke I say, Well, who knows? Our kids go [inaudible], I said it could be 60 kids if they were COVID. And nobody would ever know, because they're not doing the same things they did before. And so we don't as a community have those conversations, right? Like I can have that with my my best friend. But the reality is, somewhere in our brain, when there was a vaccine, we thought it was over. And we moved on. And it's not over somewhere in our brain. We tend to think once we create a law or a mandate or a rule for something, it's over and we can move on without actually addressing the problem. Right? The problem is, there going to be all types of viruses and things that happen, right, that's going to it's going to happen, there are going to be laws that we don't like and that we need to address and that we need to change. And we need to figure out if we're talking about protecting ourselves personally, or if we're talking about the greater good of a community. Like, we struggle with this, we pick and choose and we are inconsistent. And so I respect someone if they're consistent along the selfish part, like it's just me, me, me, me, me, me, if you're consistent, like I can respect that like, Well, if she's consistent. She believes in gun rights, abortion rights. And she she wasn't wearing a mask like they're consistent, like, you know, they believe in their right to do whatever they want. With you, I have yet to see that. Yet to see that. Somebody has an opinion about something that has to do with the rights of others, and how that affects other people. That's not just them personally. But it's usually that one thing or maybe two things. And that's it.

Kit Heintzman 01:20:04

I want to thank you so much for the generosity of your time today. And I'm at this point, I just want to open up a space. If there's anything you want to say that my questions haven't made room for, please take some space and say so.

Cherilyn Holloway 01:20:17

Yeah, I guess the only thing I want to say, which is kind of far left, but I do want to say that, I think it's important. When we talk about anything that's happening. You know, today, that we go all the way back, you know, that we don't pick and choose where in history, we want to go back, right, that we go all the way back, because going all the way back on. Like I said, even if we go all the way back and look at smallpox or whatever, whatever viruses came before that, or we go all the way back and look at you know, genocide and colonization, all those things. We go all the way back and we look at, you know, the women's rights movement when it came to birth control and abortion internet, you know, if we look at that, go all the way back, you know, don't just start where people started speaking up, you know, you got to go all the way back to look at what the circumstances were when it was okay. Because that tells us a lot more about what's happening now. Then, that moment when people start speaking up, you know, and so, make sure if you're thinking about history, you're thinking about a holistically and you're not just picking and choosing where you want to start your history at in order to prove the thing that you're hoping to prove that we need or don't need.

Kit Heintzman 01:21:45

Thank you so much.

Cherilyn Holloway 01:21:48

Thank you