

# pivotnow

THE PIVOT MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

## Pivot Graduation Is Always a Cause for Celebration

Pivot Ministry held its spring graduation ceremony on Friday evening, May 31, 2024, at Ardmore Baptist Church. Five participants completed the 16-week course, learning such things as how to make better choices, handle finances, work on relationships, apply for jobs, and understand scripture. They were joined by family members, friends, mentors, instructors, and Pivot staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers in the joy-filled celebration.

Two previous Pivot graduates provided beautiful music for the ceremony. Flutist Kimberly Gleason played “Pomp and Circumstance” as the graduates, mentors, Executive Director Carol Polk, and Program Director Michelle Minnich processed into the sanctuary. Later in the program, Wendy Corley sang “The Captain of My Ship,” a soulful hymn recognizing God’s guidance and grace in our lives.



*L-R: Executive Director Carol Polk, graduates Donna Toney-Gaither, Dusty Snyder-Fisher, LaTonya Gainey, Emma Arbery, Sinethia Scott, and Program Director Michelle Minnich.*

told the graduates to set their minds on their goals and believe; to find trusted mentors and share your dreams; and to know who you are: your gifts, short-comings, and areas of growth. Ms. Bailey called each graduate by name and, with the help of those gathered, challenged her to FOCUS AND FINISH!



*Bailey*

its founding. As the late evening sunlight streamed in through a beautiful stained-glass window of Jesus, Polk responded, “Everything Pivot does is for God’s glory.” Ushers gathered a love offering for the ministry while Board Member Lori Timm sang the prayer “May the Road Rise to Meet You.”



*Gleason*



*Corley*

Rev. Kenneth Pettigrew, Chairman of Pivot’s Board of Directors, welcomed all and prayed. He then recognized all the former Pivot graduates, mentors, volunteers, instructors, other board and committee members present. He acknowledged former Chairperson Jill Lackey and thanked her for her years of service to Pivot since its beginning as she remains on the board. Rev. Pettigrew then introduced R. Folic Bailey, the keynote speaker for the graduation.



*Pettigrew*

After the inspiring keynote speech, Ms. Minnich and Ms. Polk called each graduate to the front to receive her graduation certificate and have a moment of affirmation and prayer with her mentor. Each graduate then had a chance to speak about her Pivot experience and how it has changed her life. Some thanked their Pivot “sisters” for walking the journey with them, showing the close bond that has developed during classes. Many shed tears of joy and expressed how much they would miss their Thursday gatherings.

Rev. Pettigrew and Board Member/Fund-raising Committee Chair Sallye Liner both recognized Carol Polk for her leadership of Pivot and for the countless ways that Polk has given of herself in the nine years since

Rev. Pettigrew closed the ceremony with a prayer of thanks. He invited all to a reception in the nearby fellowship hall. Cheers and applause engulfed the new graduates as they left the sanctuary, each with a big smile on her face. Graduates were further applauded, hugged by family and friends, and given gift bags containing Pivot class reminders at the reception. **Thank you to all volunteers** who ushered, served, provided refreshments and decorations, and cleaned up afterwards.



*Liner*



*Timm*

Ms. Bailey, a Professional Certified Coach, spoke from personal experience about the need to “Focus and Finish” when your life circumstances take an unexpected turn. She

### Donna Toney-Gaither

Words cannot express my gratitude and appreciation. Your support and encouragement have motivated me to overcome obstacles and achieve success.



### Dusty Snyder-Fisher

I believe God brings people into our lives for a reason. You were all a big part of me discovering who I am and that I have God-given gifts that I should be using for God.



Each participant received copies of the books used in the LifeKeys class taught by Debbie Loftis.

### Emma Arbery

Pivot is an eye-opener! I realized that things I went through in life were not my fault and I am not alone. This gives me hope. I am

in the right place at the right time. Thank you, Pivot family!



### LaTonya Gainey

I would sincerely like to thank every mentor, volunteer, speaker, cook, and the donors who help make Pivot possible. All the love, prayers and support is so very much appreciated. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. May God Bless You All.



## Notes of Gratitude & Appreciation From Our Graduates

### Sinethia Scott

I would like to thank everyone who has a hand in making this program life changing for so many women such as myself. I have gained hope, clarity, regained focus, and am looking forward to my future. The tools that I needed to complete the process of pivoting in my life was gained through me attending this program.



Above: Pivot instructor Jan Overman (center right) teaches a class in dealing with change using the book Who Moved My Cheese? Left: Graduates with their mentors l-r: Cynthia Banks & Donna Toney-Gaither, JoAnn Burnette & Dusty Snyder-Fisher, Carmen Price & LaTonya Gainey, Emma Arbery & Cheri Thompson, Sinethia Scott & Valerie Wilson.



## Special Fundraiser to Honor Carol Polk's Retirement



Pivot Executive Director Carol Polk, left, and her sister Sylvia Pickett, pose at the recent graduation. Sylvia has been a supportive Pivot volunteer throughout Carol's tenure.

The Fundraising Committee of Pivot Ministry has authorized a new Appreciation Fundraiser: **Continue Carol's Cause** in honor of Executive Director Carol Polk's upcoming retirement. All donations made to this fundraiser will go to the General Fund to sustain the ministry long after Carol's retirement this fall.

To make an online contribution to this special fundraiser, click on one of these links: [www.pivotnow.org/appreciation](http://www.pivotnow.org/appreciation) or <https://pivotnow.org/appreciation>.

You may also send a check payable to *Pivot Ministry*, with *Carol's Cause* in the memo line, to: Pivot Ministry, 501 Miller Street Winston-Salem, NC 27103.

The Board of Directors will host a special celebration this fall to honor Carol as she retires. Look for further information about this event in the coming months.

We hope all of those who have volunteered, taught, donated, or supported Pivot in other ways will continue to do so as we welcome a new executive director.

# Pivot Attends the Symphony and April Alumnae Event



Many graduates, volunteers, and friends of Pivot Ministry were thrilled to attend the May 11 Winston-Salem Symphony performance featuring former Miss America Nia Imani Franklin. Ms. Franklin is a Winston-Salem native and graduate of NCSA. Pivot received 28 tickets to the event **free of charge!** Pictured at top left are some of those who were able to attend the concert at historic Reynolds Auditorium.



Thirteen graduates attended the April quarterly Pivot Plus meeting at the Central Library. Debbie Loftis did a review of LifeKeys: Discover Who You Are. Each graduate was asked to choose her style of “ruby slippers” that, like Dorothy’s from the Wizard of Oz, will bring her home to be who God made her to be. Styles ranged from stilettos to high-top sneakers, with each graduate telling why she chose that particular one. Laughter, testimony sharing, and a few tears were among the results.



# Graduates Pursue (and Meet!) New Educational Goals

By Becky Bryant, Pivot Volunteer

Pivot Ministry makes a huge impact on its participants and often inspires them to continue their education after graduation. From working hard to receive a GED, training to work in the medical field, or studying to complete a Master’s Degree program – the graduates continue to dream and achieve new goals, using the skills and confidence that Pivot provides.

“It helped me go in the right direction” says Mable Garner, who recently walked across the stage with pride to receive her GED. Pivot Ministry classes and support inspired her new goal, and later was able to provide a tutor as she studied. “If you fall down, someone is always there at Pivot to pick you up,” says Mable. Her



Mable Garner(L) and Kathryn Walden are celebrated at their recent graduation by Michelle Minnich, Carol Polk, and Debbie Loftis.

goal now is to attend Forsyth Technical Community College (FTCC) to receive training in sign language.

Kathryn Walden says “Pivot gave me the empowerment to follow my dream.” After working hard with much determination for years, she recently realized her dream and received her GED as well. Kathryn wants to be a mentor for other ladies in the Pivot program. “All of my blessings were from Pivot,” says Kathryn.

Pivot graduate Kimberly Gleason is working on a Master’s Degree focused on trauma resilience. Her goal is to teach and help others with self-care. “Pivot has really helped me with my self-confidence” says Kimberly. She says she often refers to the information from her Pivot studies and that it continues to be very valuable to her as she moves forward.

Wendy Corley is a 2022 Pivot graduate who was able to complete an Associate’s Degree in May of 2023 at FTCC and

then changed jobs. She is so grateful for all the tools that Pivot provided for working through challenges and feels that Pivot gave her a fresh sense of confidence. She says “it was so good to join other women, to learn and grow together.”



Brown



Davis



Mayo



Gleason was also recognized for her flute playing in Davidson County.



Corley celebrates her graduation with her grandchildren.

Pivot graduates Amanda Brown, Susan Davis, and Candace Mayo have all continued their educations and gotten new jobs in the medical field.

Amanda recently received her EMT certification and got her ideal job as an EMT in Stokes County.

All of these ladies were thankful for the encouragement and support they received from the staff and volunteers at Pivot. “Carol and Michelle were so supportive of each woman and allayed any fears and apprehensions I had early on,” says Wendy. What a wonderful testament to the difference that Pivot makes in so many lives!



*For a new approach to life & work*

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## ROCC Pivot 5K Was a Big Success!

*By Jennifer Szescula, Pivot/ROCC liaison*

Saturday, May 11 was a day of low humidity, moderate temperatures, and sunshine: **perfect weather** for the ROCC 5K benefiting Pivot Ministry! And this year's race had the **largest number of sponsors ever (22!)** and **517 registered runners/walkers**.

Pivot's Fundraising Committee spent the last three months calling potential sponsors and spreading the word. Additional Pivot volunteers assisted with pick-up, set-up, course support, take-down, and a Pivot information table on the day before and day of the event. **It was a team effort for both Pivot and ROCC, and we couldn't be more grateful!**

**ROCC's Run for God program and Children's Ministries donated over 2,000 Protein Bars to Pivot.** These will be given to ladies currently in the program and to graduates at Pivot Plus events.

**THE BEST NEWS? Pivot received a total of \$15,013.13!** On Tuesday, May 28, the ROCC staff presented Pivot staff and liaison with a check, as well as leftover race T-shirts.



**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, to ALL who made the ROCC Pivot 5K a great success!!**

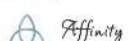
### THANK YOU SPONSORS!



PRESENTING



PLATINUM



GOLD



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*Left: ROCC's David Holcomb delivers protein bars to Pivot. Top right: David presented the race proceeds to Pivot staff, joined by (far left) race liaison Jennifer Szescula and (far right) ROCC's Brett Kanode. Not pictured: ROCC's Carina Deguire.*

Pivot Ministry Inc is a 501(c)(3) public charity. Donations directly to Pivot are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Two ways to donate: Make checks payable to *Pivot Ministry* and send to: 501 Miller Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27103 or click here to donate [pivotnow.org/appreciation](http://pivotnow.org/appreciation). Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919-814-5400. The license is not an endorsement by the State.



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