

## KEEPING THE FAITH ON MENTAL HEALTH

People in crisis often turn to a religious institution for help. But is it enough?



JERILEE BENNETT, THE GAZETTE

Velda Baker prays with a client with mental health issues at Marian House in Colorado Springs. Baker helps clients of the soup kitchen obtain doctor's appointments, medication, bus passes, food, housing and employment, and prays over the plan of care she and clients establish.

**MENTAL HEALTH**  
**A CRISIS IN COLORADO**

BY DEBBIE KELLEY AND STEVE RABEY • THE GAZETTE

**COLORADO SPRINGS**

“Pray harder,” Tracy Monteith heard from fellow churchgoers, including her husband, a fledgling pastor, when the darkness of depression kept her from getting out of bed in the morning. • When hours would pass without Monteith accomplishing anything except turning on the television, and her four young children felt like a heavy burden, Monteith questioned her Christian faith. • Other worshipers told her she had nothing to be depressed about. Yet God did not seem to be answering her prayers to get better. • “If your prayer life is strong enough, you wouldn’t struggle with mental health,” people said to Monteith of Colorado Springs, co-author of the book, “True Blue: Living with Mental Illness in the Shadow of the Steeple.”

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### LYNN BARTELS

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