

# Grace Notes

Saving Grace Ministries, Inc. Newsletter



*"If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed" John 8:36*

*Holiday edition 2011*

**Inside this issue:** *SGM, Inc. Co-Sponsors Legislative Breakfast*

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On Friday, October 28th, SGM, Inc., together with the St. John Fruit Belt Community Development Corporation, Councilman Darius Pridgen, and Councilman Richard Fontana, sponsored a legislative breakfast on rising trends among young offenders.

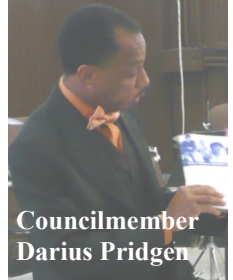
The breakfast served a two-fold purpose: to share current trends, needs, and statistical information about the young offender population in Western New York; and to present a new young offender reentry project, "1490 Jefferson," developed by the St. John CDC and SGM, Inc.

The event began with opening remarks and a brief presentation by Dale Zuchlewski, Executive Director of the Homeless Alliance of Western New York. Dale provided some startling statistics about the increase in homelessness among the young adult population, and urged area elected officials to support programs and initiatives geared at preventing homelessness among young adults, reminding those present that young adults who experience an episode of homelessness are more likely to lapse back into homelessness later in life, becoming heavy users of public services and (in the case of young offenders) re-offending at a higher rate than individuals who received early intervention and case management.

Vanda Seward, from the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, emphasized the need for services that meet the needs of the entire family unit, identifying a young offender's family as the key arena for intervention and long-term change. Ms. Seward encouraged multi-disciplinary participation in any young offender initiative, pointing out that no single agency or service provider acting alone can address the needs of the young offender population.

Rev. Darius Pridgen spoke about his personal experience in working with young adults, and emphasized the importance of reaching out, especially to those young people who do not have the family structure or support to make positive decisions. Rev. Pridgen stressed the responsibility of all community members in seeing that young people are successful.

Continued on page 3.



Councilmember Darius Pridgen



Dale Zuchlewski



Vanda Seward



"Grace House" Transitional Residence Program

**Micah 6:8**  
*"What does He require of you, oh man, but to act justly, love, mercy and walk humbly with your God."*

**You are Needed**



**See insert for our Holiday Needs List!**



Dedicated staff

**Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ a Success**

SGM, Inc. on Friday, October 28th, held its first-ever Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ fundraiser. The event raised funds to support renovations and updates to the two classrooms at the SGM, Inc. corporate offices, which are used for client life skills classes and the GED program.

Agency staff and board members sold nearly 300 pre-sale tickets, which were purchased by friends, family, area businesses, churches, and other service providers.

SGM would like to extend a thank you to Airport Plaza Jewelers for use of their chicken "suit"; Chudy Paper Company for the "to go" containers; Arrow Portable Signs for donating a light-up sign to promote the event for a week before the BBQ; and all who purchased or sold tickets on behalf of SGM. We're looking forward to doing another BBQ in the spring!

*The Holy Spirit will be the most powerful in your life, when you are the most humble—when you get your own interests and desires out of the way. Then, He can produce in you the fruit He promised: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control (Galatians 5:22-23).*





Rev. Terry King

## A Word from the Director    The Ministry of “Grace House” : Why We Exist

Recently, I was reminded why we have been called to do this work... Immediately after I returned from a hectic few weeks of travel, a resident came to see me, despondent and depressed. Having been to “Grace House” three prior times, this hardened, distrusting individual came and admitted that he was at a low point, struggling to simply make it another day, confused, angry, with no family and perhaps no reason to continue living. He said that he felt lost, like no one cared, and feared that he could not live in society, and admitted that he felt that going back to prison was a way to cope and escape the harshness of society. He said in prison, he felt safe and secure.

As I listened, I was reminded that this man was one of the least and the lost, and that Jesus loved him. At that moment I placed aside my wants and needs and knew this man’s needs were more important. As we talked, I challenged him to look at life through the eyes of our Maker, encouraging him that he could find peace, acceptance and be loved. His eyes lifted, he smiled, tears welled up in his eyes and he simply thanked me for listening. We talked about why he has failed three times to live on his own and he agreed to allow us to assist him with finding suitable, appropriate assisted living as the best means for success in transitioning to long term community living.

I often hear clients say “No one really cares about me, or about whether I go back to prison or not.” At SGM, Inc., we have recognized the need to teach clients to move beyond the submission to authority and learn how to cope, use wisdom, discern and make healthy life choices as a free member of community.

I have learned that our choices made here on earth determine our eternal life. How we live our life here on earth is directly related to our Godly relationship and submission to that which we cannot control. When we surrender, our life truly is in the Lord’s hands. If our life continues on the sinful path we will surely die, if you submit to Christ our life will begin anew and have meaning, purpose and life hereafter. For this client, this moment was about finding “life” if only in the moment and being guided to true spiritual, emotional and physical freedom. That is the purpose, the mission and the reason “Grace House” exists: to help the lost find their rightful place in society while learning to remain free.

Daily, clients remind us of our calling and we are learning their needs as well. During 2011, staff identified that on average 30-40 % of our clients read at or below the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. In response to this need, SGM, Inc. has introduced adult education, partnering with a local adult education center to offer a Pre -GED/GED program to clients. To further support the GED program, SGM, Inc. renovated unfinished sections of our corporate offices to accommodate two classrooms.

Included in the SGM comprehensive program model, we offer life skills classes in housing, employment, decision-making, money management, and parenting; religious education; mentoring; and recreational activities. We are examining introducing a “family reunification” component, emphasizing the importance of each family member becoming whole, healthy and willing to participate in healthy living, learning new ways to live life and embracing a new-found spiritual freedom. It is tough for our clients, having been “set free,” to return to a family environment that remains focused on use, abuse and dysfunction. We realize this program is necessary, and we pray for Godly direction in the program development. And finally, we are examining broadening our relationship with local employers, developing a job bank for employment opportunities for work-ready clients.

In early November, I shared at a Coalition of Prison Evangelists International Conference, attended by Chaplains from all over the US and many nations. Meeting Chaplains and prison volunteers I was reminded just how important our work is. Upon hearing about the impact SGM, Inc. is having on our ...Continued on page 3.

Saving Grace Ministries, Inc.

**BUY A BRICK**  
change a life

[www.sgmworld.org/support\\_us.htm](http://www.sgmworld.org/support_us.htm)

**SGM, Inc. office hours are: Monday thru Friday  
9:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m. Phone: 893-1840**

## Why We Exist.....A Word from the Director Continued from page 2



community, many prison representatives said “If only you can come to our country, our city and help us build a “Grace House”.” If only it were that easy.

The Brooklyn “Grace House” project continues to move forward. I shared in late October at God’s Battalion of Prayer in Brooklyn. Senior Pastor Al Cockfield and the church overwhelmingly support the project and are joining forces with the Church of God of East Flatbush to make “Grace House” Brooklyn a reality. SGM Rochester has acquired their fourth facility, having purchased a former “Teen Challenge” site to provide additional congregate care housing. The Elmira SGM team moves forward with site selection and hopes to acquire a facility to begin the “Grace House program in late 2012. SGM of Dansville continues to raise support and recently Pastor Josh Findlay of Elim Gospel Church visited SGM Buffalo and pledged to prayerfully consider how best Elim can get involved and help support “Grace House” Dansville.

On October 28, 2011, SGM, Inc. co-sponsored a legislative breakfast, together with City of Buffalo Councilmembers Richard Fontana, Demone Smith, and Rev. Darius Pridgen, along with Rev. Mike Chapman of St. John Baptist Church. The breakfast was a success, bringing elected officials, partner stakeholders from the local, state and federal levels together discussing the rising trends with young offenders. SGM, Inc. and St. John presented the 1490 Jefferson Ave. project explained the project scope and impact a one year program of intensive mentoring, educational and job training will have upon the young offender population.

While many things continue to happen with the growth of Saving Grace Ministries, Inc., none matter more than simply reaching, touching encouraging and helping but one of the lost. Every day, the staff of SGM, Inc. faces lives seemingly lost and offers freedom through Christ, not by what we preach but how we learn to love and hold our clients responsible for their own freedom. “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature, rather, serve one another in love (Galatians 5:1, 13).”

This Holiday season our needs our many. From \$5.00 gift cards to support our incentive rewards program, to financial support for recreational activities, to basic needs like toilet paper, cleaning products, and personal hygiene items, there are countless ways to support our work. For specific ways to give, see our Holiday Needs List insert. You may also donate to SGM, Inc. by going to [http://www.sgmworld.org/support\\_us.htm](http://www.sgmworld.org/support_us.htm).

The community of faith built “Grace House” and continues supporting the ministry outreach in a way that government cannot. Please know that your donation and your prayers touch lives for good and provide countless opportunities for God to “set the captives free.”

Humbled to serve,  
Rev. Terry King  
Executive Director  
Saving Grace Ministries, Inc.

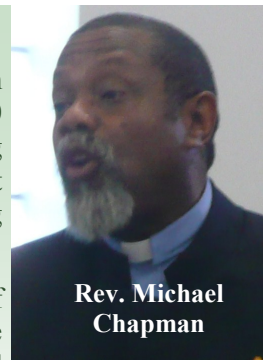


### *Legislative Breakfast continued from pg.1*

Rev. Michael Chapman, Senior Pastor at St. John Baptist Church and consultant for the St. John Fruit Belt CDC, presented the 1490 Jefferson Young Offender Reentry Initiative project, encouraging the assembled elected officials and their representatives to support the project as a tangible solution to address the needs of the rising young offender population in Buffalo.

Councilman Demone Smith closed the program with a statement of support for the 1490 Jefferson project and reiterating the importance of involvement from government, churches, service providers, and community organizations in addressing the needs of young offenders.

The legislative breakfast was a well-attended event, and SGM, Inc. and our co-sponsors extend our deepest gratitude for all who attended, participated, spoke, and continue to support our efforts to improve the quality of life in Western New York and to serve those most in need.



**Rev. Michael  
Chapman**



**Councilmember  
Demone Smith**

For most of us, the upcoming holiday season brings to mind outings with friends, special events, Christmas parties, and time with family. For many of our clients, however, the holiday season is among the most difficult of the year, and serves as a stark reminder of broken families, estranged loved ones, and a sense of loss and loneliness.

Recognizing that this is a difficult time of year for many of our clients, SGM, Inc. sponsors several holiday activities, not only to give a sense of hope and belonging to those who have no family to spend the holidays with, but also to allow clients the opportunity to begin rebuilding those fragile relationships in a safe, family-friendly environment. Please consider how you can help to support these much-anticipated annual activities for the clients we serve:

\* HOLIDAY NEEDS \*

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS**

Each year, local churches provide gifts for each of the clients, as well as gift cards in small denominations to area fast food and other restaurants or to local stores. Every year, clients who have never received a Christmas gift of their own are handed a wrapped package to open that contains a brand-new gift that was purchased just for them. In order to provide the men and women we serve with the same opportunity to experience receiving a Christmas gift, we will need donations of the following:

**64 gifts for men**

- sweatshirts in various sizes
- men's socks, underwear, t-shirts in various sizes
- new winter coats in various sizes (including 2-3 in XXL or larger)
- shaving/bathroom/hygiene kits for men

**6 gifts for women**

- sweatshirts or tops in various sizes
- women's socks, underwear in various sizes
- new winter coats in various sizes
- shaving/bathroom/hygiene kits for women



**Gift cards in various denominations for McDonald's, Tim Horton's, Dunkin Donuts, Wal-Mart**

**CHILDREN'S GIFTS**

SGM, Inc. also provides gifts for the clients to take to their children on Christmas eve; to assist in that endeavor, we are accepting toys or other children's gifts for various ages (up to 18); gifts are sorted and tagged and wrapped by our staff prior to being distributed. *Wrapped gifts need to be tagged with the age and gender (ie. boy, 3-5) for proper distribution.* Based on prior years' numbers, we anticipate needing the following:

- 25 gifts for children under 5 (books, games, stuffed animals)
- 20 gifts for children ages 6-9 (boys' and girls' gifts, or unisex games, books, or toys)
- 20 gifts for children ages 10-12 (boys' and girls' gifts, or unisex games, books, or toys)
- 15 gifts for children ages 13-18 (unisex games or gifts)

*If you are able to provide any of the above items, please call our office at 893-1840.*



**I'D LIKE TO HELP!!**

My One-Time Pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or Please check one

Monthly Supporting Partner Pledge:  \$15.00  \$25.00  \$50.00  other:\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**I authorize Saving Grace Ministries to bill my credit monthly for my supporting Partner Pledge.**

Credit card Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Expiration Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Authorized card member signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make all supporting partner checks payable to Saving Grace Ministries: P.O. Box 1013, Williamsville, New York 14231  
You may cancel your monthly support at any time by contacting us at (716) 893-1840

### **SGM, Inc. Partners with St. John Baptist Church on Young Offender Reentry Initiative**

Since 2001, SGM, Inc. has serviced the offender population in reentry housing and comprehensive services. The program provides food, clothing, shelter, case management, and linkage to treatment and support services to assist in the successful transition into independent housing. The “Grace House” program serves clients age 18 and up, but has accommodated clients age 16 or 17 who were released from the adult corrections system.

During the last 10 years SGM, Inc. has witnessed an increase in the young offender population returning to Erie County and the City of Buffalo having been remanded to state custody as a youthful offender and now return as a young adult. This population is age 16 to 24, requiring structured supportive services, educational, vocational training while safe, secure affordable housing options are made available. The young offender population presents personal, behavioral, educational, and life skills deficits; they also present with needs associated with children they have parented and numerous relationships they are responsible for supporting. Lacking the tools necessary to maintain independent living, the young offender often and quickly reverts to a life of crime and a lifestyle of violence in order to get personal needs met.

Even with services available at “Grace House,” there remains a significant need to establish post-“Grace House” program aftercare housing for the young offender population. This population is age 16 to 24, often aged out of foster care with limited family ties, and too young to live alone while on public assistance and presenting with numerous educational and behavior deficits that prohibit living in a group home servicing the younger aged population leaving foster care or involved in juvenile justice issues. The need is to establish aftercare supportive housing environment for up to twelve residents along with a live-in staff mentor/supervisor.

The 1490 Jefferson project will provide aftercare supportive housing for up to twelve residents along with a live-in staff mentor/supervisor at the proposed site. The clients will begin with participation in the “Grace House” primary program as young offenders released from a state prison. Once stabilized (after 1 to 3 months), the client transition to the aftercare congregate care facility. The clients will be afforded the opportunity to participate in educational, life skills, mentoring and employment programs as needed. Clients will then transition from this facility to independent living as approved by the New York State Division of Parole. The partnership between St. John the Baptist and SGM, Inc. is to acquire, establish and assist in the site development of this facility to service this young offender population.

Each client will be required to participate in the mentoring program; St. John’s will assign an adult mentor to provide a minimum of one year of one-on-one mentoring, weekly meetings, and to assess compliance with program and be available to father, parent and mentor each client through this life journey. The mentor will provide the mentee with a place of safety to confront issues and challenges that the client faces in transitioning into independence. Young offenders learn at an early age not to trust, to share for fear of incarceration or other community imposed sanctions. The mentor, once a level of trust is established, can begin to guide and positively influence the young offender’s decision making to result in a better quality of life. SGM, Inc. is looking forward to the continued development of this project and the impact that it will have on the young lives served.



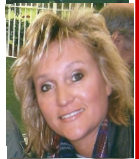
1490 Jefferson Building

#### **Saving Grace Ministries, Inc. Board of Directors**

Rev. Terry J. King  
President,  
Executive Director



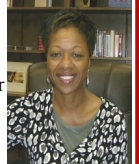
Sheryl L. King,  
LCSW-R  
Sisters Hospital  
Care Management  
Social Work



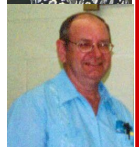
Rev. Dr. Ron  
Burgio,  
President, Elim  
Fellowship  
Love Joy Gospel Church  
Senior Pastor



Mrs. Lynette  
Galloway  
Buffalo Psychiatric Center



Chaplain Don Snyder  
Wende Correctional  
Facility  
Oak Orchard  
Assembly of God,  
Associate Pastor



### Youth Fundraiser A Success



On September 9, 2011, SGM, Inc. held a youth bowling fundraiser at Transit Bowling Lanes, sponsored and promoted by the Western Section Youth Ministries of the Assemblies of God. The bowling fundraiser event was a part of the AG Western Section Youth rally and an all night "lock-in" for the kick-off to the start of school.

The night started off with a worship service and a presentation by Dave Hertweck, District Youth Director for New York Youth Ministries, and Missionary Terry Rosch from Panama. This was followed by a pizza party, provided by Terry Rosh. At midnight everyone headed over to the bowling alley for a whole lot of fun and bowling from midnight to 3am. This was followed by more fun and games at the church until morning.



Over 100 bowlers participated and over \$600 was raised for the SGM, Inc. Resident Rewards Program, which provides positive incentive for program clients to progress through the program successfully.

A special thank you goes out to Pastor Dave Leandre, the Youth Pastor of Evangel Assembly of God and Western Section Youth Representative, and to all the leaders and young adults from the participating churches. With your support, families are being touched and lives are being changed.



**A Special Note:** Rev. Terry King was recently appointed the Buffalo area regional representative for Elim Fellowship International.

#### Coming Events :

City of Buffalo Fire Commissioner Garnell Whitfield will be the guest speaker at the Martin Luther King Luncheon January 16, 2012 at 11:30 am at 2025 Bailey Avenue.

Christmas Eve 2011  
prayer, songs, and gifts for residents at 6 pm  
1932 Bailey Avenue, Buffalo.  
All are welcome.!



**Saving Grace Ministries Inc.**  
P.O. Box 1013  
Williamsville, N.Y. 14231

Founded April 20, 1999