

Grace Notes

Saving Grace Ministries, Inc. Newsletter



FALL/ WINTER 2008

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



SGM, Inc. announces HIP/SHIP Aftercare Housing Award. SGM awarded 5 year contract with NYS-OTDA, under the Homelessness/Supplemental Homelessness Intervention Program, to provide transitional and aftercare services to program graduates who are living independently in the community.

SGM, Inc. Syracuse, NY Launches in Central New York. SGM Buffalo supports plan to begin "Grace House" Syracuse. Rev. Michael & Jamie Santy called to build Syracuse "GH" Ministry. Target opening late 2009 early 2010.

SGM, Inc. Incentive Program design rewards compliant behavior. Provides phone cards, gift cards & rewards acknowledging client successes.

SGM, Inc. Parole Reentry Initiative SGM awarded contract extension through the Erie County Office of Mental Health in Coordination with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to provide congregate care housing and scattered site housing services .



Syracuse, New York, Board of Directors:

Iris Godfrey, Psalm 19 Ministries, Jamie Santy, Ex Sec. NYS Dis. A/G, Rev. Michael Santy, Prison Ministry, Syracuse, Rev. Chris Cooper, Senior Pastor Destiny Christian Fellowship, Rev. Terry King, SGM, Inc., Missing in photo, Dr. Rev. Duane Durst, NYS District Superintendent , Assemblies of



The Chapel at Crosspoint Community Ministry Outreach Thanksgiving Dinner served to the men of "Grace House".

Inside this issue:

From Whence I came	2
Eddies Story	
A Word from the Ex. Director	3
A New Focus & Did You Know?	4
Staff news	4
How you can help	5
Corporate Compliance	7
Rochester Update	8
Announcing Grace Community Gospel Church	8





THE WAY FROM WHENCE I CAME.

Eddie Howard

I was born in 1951 and raised in Chicago, Illinois. I grew up in a single parent home with seven siblings. Mom was not there a lot, she worked three jobs to put food on the table. My grandparents owned the home that we lived in, Pete and Hattie Morrison. My grandmother "Hattie" was a godly woman. I remember her taking my sisters to church every Sunday. She died when I was eight and so did my hope of learning about the things of God. I am thankful for those eight years of being around a godly person. I believe with all my heart that I am where I am today because of grandmother's prayers.

Turning seventeen, I join the Army, and there I began to experiment with drugs and alcohol. Heroin became my drug of choice, and for the next thirty years I gave over control to drugs and alcohol. I was in and out of jail and treatment centers. I lived a life of shame and ignominy. Most of the times that I was in treatment or jail, I was compelled to get involved in Bible study. I need to mention that I had accepted the Lord in my life at the age of eighteen, but never had any nurturing. My only hope of learning about the things of God left me when I was eight years old, so God was using what was available. I do not have a problem with jailhouse religion, oftentimes we only respond to God when we are in a crisis...i.e. divorce religion, financial crisis religion...ect.

I realize why it was so difficult for me, whenever we operate contrary to the word of God, there are always consequences. Children should be taught the thing of God early on in life. "Bring up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (prov. 22:6, Deut 6:7, Eph 6:4) God wants believers to indoctrinate their children with his word. When we do not, we have prisons full of children who were let down, and left to fade into a state of do nothingness and become men and women with no purpose or direction in life.

Back to my story: In 1984 I was ambushed at my home, six people were shot and my good friend was killed. I was hospitalized for two months and because of that ambush, I lost my right leg below the knee. My kidney shut down and I was on dialysis for two months, my kidney function did return. I laid there in the hospital planning my revenge that is all that mattered to me.

I was released from the hospital and went to live with my sister for my convalescence. When I was well enough I moved in with my old girlfriend and continued to plot my revenge. One year almost to the date of the ambush, I had a fight and because of that, I found myself in a VA hospital living with the threat of losing my left hand. I had contacted gangrene. At that point, I knew that this was God getting my attention. I cried for days seeking God for his direction. I met a man, who I had met while I was incarcerated in the Cook County jail, he was a minister who had been involved with Teen Challenge a Christian Ministry. I eventually came to Buffalo and went through the Buffalo Teen Challenge Program. This was the beginning of my nurturing.

After being straight for several years I backslid and went back to my old ways and because of that, I went to prison for killing a man in self-defense. I was devastated, for the first time in my life I no longer wanted to live. By the grace of God, I was sentenced to five to fifteen years. I served a total of twelve years. Determined to change, I stayed positive and involved with the Church. I educated myself as much as I could. My constant prayer was "God please order my steps, give me guidance, direction and make it plain to me". Upon my release, I was sent to the Saving Grace Ministry, because I did not have a place to live. There I met Pastor Terry King for the first time in my life. He called me into his office and offered me a job as caretaker. I wanted to be sure that this was from God, so I ask him to allow me a couple days to pray about it, I did and the rest is history.

I believe that God in his wisdom has called me to this ministry to be a living example to other men, that the cycle of going in and out of jail and prison can be broken. I believe that God wants every man who comes through the doors of Saving Grace Ministry to know that he love them and that He is calling them and offering them an opportunity to change. I am here because of His Grace, it is nothing I deserve, I could not be good enough. I pray that God would Glorify Himself through me. We are saved by Grace!



A Word from the Ex. Director

Rev. Terry King

Ten years - Where do we go from here?

“Grace House”: serving the needs of the lost, impacting lives, living the Gospel.

For Sheryl and I, it is hard to imagine that Saving Grace Ministries, Inc. (SGM) will celebrate our 10 year anniversary on April 19, 2009. So much has changed, yet through it all SGM remains steadfast to the core mission, to *provide a smooth transition to community life for men recently released from a state correctional facility, who have demonstrated a consistent commitment to change, by providing a highly structured program based on Christian principles.* Through prayerful guidance and the wisdom of an active Board of Directors, SGM remained true to the call and never wavered from our core mission.

I believe that SGM’s success is attributable to this commitment to remain true to vision and calling. As I travel, engaging other servicing agencies, I realize that many are “chasing money,” struggling to “stay afloat” and spend inordinate amounts of time assessing how to remain open. Please know that as SGM started we had our struggling years but knew and trusted God would and did provide every need every step of the way. Through it all we experienced the power of God to meet needs and see us through, bringing us to a better place.

Saving Grace Ministries Inc. serves over 350 parolees in program service per year in Buffalo, New York. We have grown into 7 facilities, accommodating 61 program beds, manage 20 scattered site apartments supported by 20 employees, with a operating budget that doubled each of the last three years. To say that the growth in ten years is amazing simply understates the impact of the sheer growth, reach and impact SGM has upon the community of Western New York.

We are supported by 8 city, county, state and federal contracts and are recognized as a leader in reentry housing and case management services. Our staff serves on state task forces, local housing panels and remains a signature member of the Erie County Reentry Task Force. SGM has championed an “incentive rewards program” for returning parolees to acknowledge compliant behavior while instituting case management “best practices” and initiating a discharge information packet for all program graduates. The discharge packet provides resource guides containing vital personal information, a comprehensive discharge plan and a community resource guide for men having left and later finding themselves facing life challenges, barriers and not knowing where to access help and assistance.

Saving Grace Ministries Rochester, Inc. is opened and establishing a solid operation base that too will soon face expansion decisions and growing pains. Saving Grace Ministries Syracuse, Inc. is forming under the leadership of Michael & Jamie Santy. The Syracuse SGM Board is taking solid steps to establish “Grace House” Syracuse. SGM, Buffalo provides support, technical assistance as the building process unfolds. We anticipate Syracuse “Grace House” opening in late 2009 or early 2010. SGM Buffalo is exploring, praying and discussing with First Bible Baptist church of Dansville, New York the practicality of establishing a “Grace House” Dansville. The New York State Division of Parole Program Services is encouraging the establishment of a facility in Dansville due to the area need for reentry housing services.

Much time is spent managing, administrating and “lifting up” staff to remain steadfast to our calling. It is time-consuming, at times overwhelming and certainly not a “glamorous” part of ministry. But it is necessary for integrity of purpose, ministry character and adherence to the call God placed upon this work. I found myself wondering this fall – Should we stop growing? Maintain the work we have? Fertilize the new work that has been planted? Through prayer and a Godly answer, I personally realize that simply maintaining a ministry may preclude confrontation and violent opposition, but more often than not becomes a teaching ministry, comfortable, perhaps elitist, self-serving...in short, a “feel good” ministry that accomplishes little. This type of limitation on ministry produces fruit in small circle of lives, but limits the advancement of the gospel message. The fruit of SGM remains the lives touched, challenged and introduced to Christ.

I am reminded of James Chapter 2, the unfruitful ministry (James 2: 14-16), “**14.** What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? **15.** Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. **16.** If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?” (James 2: 17) “**17.** In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” I pray that we do not become accustomed to performing the acts of religion rather than heeding the call upon our lives. It is easy to become humanly comfortable and emotionally justify that maintenance of ministry is all that is required.

So it is that we must remain open to the “things of God” and the Godly direction of SGM. I pray that our growth – whatever shape, direction or future that might be – remains firmly rooted in “all must be saved” by faith put into action.

James 2: 21-26 tells us that we must be cooperating with and perfecting faith at all times in our ministry life. “**21.** Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? **22.** You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. **23.** And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. **24.** You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. **25.** In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? **26.** As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” So growth it is, but let us let God define what that growth for SGM means.

May the grace of God be upon each of you as we move forward. Let us rest knowing that men, families and those once lost are being introduced to the life of Christ through the ministry of “Grace House.”

In His service,

Rev. Terry King

Executive Director SGM, Inc.



Rewarding A new ministry focus Rev. Melvin Taylor

In my last article I spoke about the expansion of our borders and of the strengthening of our stakes as we pursue our purpose in ministry for men at the "Grace House" Transitional Residence. Not only have we experienced growth through the expansion of real estate properties and added staff to our ministry team but we have fine tuned our focus in the services we provide for the residents of "Grace House" moving from a sanction ministry to giving men positive re-enforcement which rewards residents for appropriate behavior. In the past if a resident was in non-compliance with what's required of him we would take something from them or restrict their movements in some way or another with the intentions to help that resident realize what he has done with the hope that he would not do it again. However we were sending the wrong message. Their behavior didn't change, we were a reminder of the institutions they came from, and this was a problem that needed to be fixed if we were going to maintain our commitment to assist men in a smooth transition into the community.

Eight months ago we developed an incentive rewards program that acknowledged the little things the men would do such as submitting important papers needed for their files, attending required appointments, hand in their appointment receipts and weekly calendars, and so forth. Rewards were distributed in 30 day increments of date of arrival with gifts ranging from a \$5 phone card to gift cards to Wal-Mart, sneaker stores, restaurants and even one week off from work details. This made a significant difference in the way men responded to what was required of them. We made a decision to meet them where they are, at their point of need, taking their private struggles into consideration by giving them some positive re-enforcement as we acknowledged their efforts for doing the little good things right, after all it is the little foxes that spoil the vines.

One of our goals is from the date of a man's arrival to "Grace House" through the day of program completion, our ministry team has worked together with a single focus specifically targeted to meet the immediate needs of our residents. This assures a measure of success, encourages self sufficiency, provides basic life skills and introduces our residents to resources that are available to them upon release from program. Our goal is to assist residents of Grace House to be prepared for independent living.

To maximize the likelihood for successful re-integration into the community our Case Management and staff work closely with NYS Parole, Erie County Re-entry Task Force and other community partners to increase the quality and availability of services preparing our residents for successful re-integration into the community by providing services and mainstream resources, education and employment which gives them the resources to lead to productiveness and responsibility.

Thank you SGM staff and our community partners for your prayers and support and your hard work with helping us maintain focus and stability as we purpose in our hearts to impact the lives of the residents we serve to maintain ongoing services tailored to meet the individual needs of our residents that would facilitate for a successful community re-entry and for successful independent living. You are a valued partner on our team and we appreciate you very much. Continue with what you do best and we'll do the same.

The Board of Directors Wishes to Welcome Mrs. Lynette Galloway

Staff Corner Welcome to our newest Ministry Team Members



Pictured left to right:
Rickey Lanier,
Caretaker,
Lisette Gutierrez
Office Administrator,
Javier Jeminez ,
Caretaker

Did you Know?

"Grace House" Buffalo will serve over 350 parolees in residential housing program services in 2008. Nearly 80 % of clients graduate program moving to independent living "GH" feeds 81 men daily.

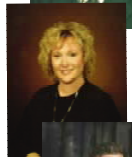
We need annually: 3000 rolls of toilet paper, 4000 bars of soap, 400 pairs of shoes annually, 3,000 razors, 1,400 pairs of underwear, 700 pairs of pants, 700 bath towels. **Please consider how you can assist.**

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

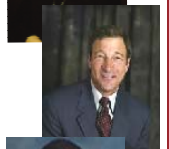
Rev. Terry J. King
President,
Executive Director



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



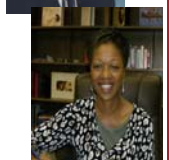
Carl Calabrese
Government Action
Professionals Inc.,
Director, Officer



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



Mrs. Lynette Galloway
Residential program manager
IV
Buffalo Psychiatric Center



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



Saving Grace Ministries

2008 Capital Campaign.

“Growth” a Daunting Perspective

Rev. Terry King Executive Director

It's one thing to look at the brick, mortar and incredible expansion SGM has experienced during the last 9 plus years. Often we focus on clients, beds, contracts and supporting program infrastructure to carry out our mission. Meeting with staff and reviewing supply needs I was “awe struck” at the significant number of items the ministry must solicit, purchase, acquire and have on hand to meet basic needs of arriving residents and housing clients. Though we have been blessed with significant contract support, the ministry is responsible to provide certain basic needs and items for house maintenance and client hygiene. Historically we have relied upon the community of Faith to meet these needs and the church family has been and continues to be most generous.

“Grace House” Buffalo, NY, is seven facilities, 61 beds serving over 350 State parolees per year in residential program services. With 350 parolees arriving per year we need over 1400 pairs of underwear simply providing 4 pairs to each arriving client, 1400 pairs of socks, 4000 bars of soap, 3000 rolls of toilet paper. 400 Pairs of shoes, 3,000 razors, 700 bath towels, 350 twin sheet sets and 300 blankets. The list seems endless but necessary for our work and outreach. Underwear and socks are important, so goes with soap and deodorant. The quantity of need is daunting. But we owe it to the men to have their basic needs met. No we can't expect guys to leave underwear behind for the next man etc. Included in this newsletter is a complete “needs list.”

Meeting basic needs is what “Grace House” is called to do. The Gospel's teach us to reach out satisfying the needs of others. **2 Cor. 8:14 “at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality”**. The majority of men enter “Grace House” with nothing, having lost all. Leaving prison with little or no money, possessions, clothing or personal effects is humbling and stressful. Arriving at “Grace House” men are welcomed, basic needs met, a restoration process commences. SGM staff is trained and understanding of the shame, guilt, humiliation that men “feel” when arriving with nothing. Through experience, we know that when needs are met, new underwear, new socks, a clean shirt, pants and shoes are provided along with basic toiletries men begin to reestablish dignity and experience a sense of hope. As Christians we know that Christ will provide all of our needs. This “first step” is a true encounter with Christ. That in spite of who we are, what we have done, we are welcomed encouraged and our basic needs provided.

Recently I sent letters to area church leaders requesting them to prayerfully consider how their churches could assist us in reaching this need and provide the much needed items. Perhaps having read this article you are encouraged and moved you too will consider how you can help advocating within your circle of influence. This need is ongoing and becoming even larger as SGM grows. We must be creative. Perhaps you can solicit items at your work place in a drop off bin, schedule a collection point at local businesses or within your community. Whatever it takes, we need your help to get the message out and share the impact SGM has upon our community. **You can make a difference even by providing underwear.**

Your Help is needed! You can help in many ways. Financial support is needed.....so are many support items. Please consider soliciting items from within your church community, workplace, neighborhood, family, friends and community. Call 893-1840.

ONGOING:

prayer support
funds for special projects
special event meals
help with hot dog sales
resident special events

CLOTHING:

new socks
shoes
shirts (casual/dress)
pants
outerwear

FURNITURE:

dressers
twin beds
dining room tables
chairs
couches
twin size sheet sets
pillows
pillow cases
rugs
window treatments

APPLIANCES:

refrigerators
microwaves
toaster/toaster ovens
coffee machines
tools

OTHER:

pots and pans
dishes
silverware
cleaning products
laundry detergent

Considering the large increase in clients served SGM Inc. has **immediate needs for household items and appliances in good working order.** SGM Inc. does not accept items in need of repair and accepts newer model appliances with energy star labels. SGM Inc. has started a household items inventory sufficient to add program graduates with basic household items in order to equip their first apartment and begin independent living. There is an ongoing need for furniture, beds and kitchen supplies. Clothing is needed, remember this is 2008, not 1975....the men are grateful for newer clothing and contemporary fashions.

Perhaps you are unable to volunteer directly at "Grace House", you can still help...organize a clothing drive, food drive or bedding drive..... Men's toiletry drive..... Or recreation special event....such as a UB Basketball game...help us in some tangible way continue to help them....the men in need.

We cannot do this alone... We need our community supporters.

Please let us know if you decide to allocate your "gift" to a specific capital project, event or to use for general agency purposes. Below, please find a donation card. Cash, checks and all major credit cards are accepted.

Thanks you for your support, your prayers and walking with us in order that SGM Inc. may continue this vital work and afford opportunities to the men and families in need.



I'D LIKE TO HELP!!



My One-Time Pledge \$ _____

or

Monthly Supporting Partner Pledge:

_____ \$15.00 _____ \$25.00 _____ \$50.00 _____ other: \$ _____
Please check one

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

Corporate Compliance

What is compliance? What are the most important day-to-day considerations? What is it that I actually DO at SGM?



The SGM staff had an opportunity in September to learn more not only about compliance in general but also about the various contracts that we operate under and what they require. It is important that our staff members understand not only how each of our individual contracts work, but also how they work together to allow us to continue providing much-needed services to ex-offenders in Western New York. A September in-house training stressed the importance of documentation and accuracy, two areas relevant to all of our contracts and important for daily business as well.



As Agency Compliance Officer, I am the i-dotter and t-crosser. It is important that SGM continue to meet each of our contractual obligations under the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the Division of Parole, the City of Buffalo, the Erie County Department of Social Services, and the Erie County Department of Mental Health in cooperation with the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services.



Beyond having an understanding of our legal obligations under our various contracts, compliance includes ongoing policy analysis, program evaluation, and procedure development. We are in the process of updating and expanding our employee policies and procedures manual, and will be doing a complete round of intensive staff evaluations in early 2009. These two projects will allow SGM to continue to build and expand its capacity, preparing our agency for the increasingly competitive process of applying for funding support.



I am excited about 2009 – SGM expects to serve 350 men during the course of the year, providing life skills classes, case management, transitional and aftercare services, special events and activities, food, clothing, and shelter to some of the hardest-to-place Parole cases. With the continued support from numerous government contracts, community groups, and churches, SGM anticipates that 2009 will be a year of continued dedication to our purpose.

SGM would like to acknowledge that Alyssa George, Agency Compliance Officer passed her New York State bar examine and will be sworn in as a Licensed NY State Attorney. She becomes the SGM agency Corporate Counsel, February 2010. Congratulations Alyssa !



Pumpkin Carving. For many this is a first time to carve a pumpkin. What a huge success.. Fun was had by all, prizes awarded....Men are growing, trusting and learning fun is okay

Staff celebrate earned incentive rewards



The SGM Incentive rewards program is designed to reward compliant behavior, acknowledge personal success while encouraging personal choice leading towards independent living. We thank you Staff member Vincent Phillips, Gene Baes, Michael Young and Warren Delling for your investment of time in the lives of men.

Earmon & Walter successfully achieved all phases of the incentive program and are moving to independent apartments as of December 1, 2008. Congratulations Earmon & Walter.....





A special thanks to Eastern Hills Wesleyan Church for your generous donations of our new dryers.



Update: "Grace House" Rochester. SGM Rochester, Inc., is growing, remains full to capacity. We receive referral of clients from the New York State Division of Parole. "GH" Rochester is assisting parole providing specialized housing service with the NYSP Alternative to Incarceration programming. The Board of Directors is prayerfully considering expansion to meet the community reentry needs. The Board is considering a second "Grace House" Rochester providing additional bed capacity. A special thanks to former Board member Mickey Mattle. We appreciated your service, willingness to walk with us and for your faith as this ministry began in Rochester several years back. Many Blessings.

Upcoming Events and announcements: SGM forms "Grace Community Gospel Church" (GCGC). (GCGC) is a church outreach sponsored in part by; Elim Fellowship, the New York State District of the Assemblies of God, SGM, Inc., and other community church sponsors. Led by Rev. Warren Delling (GCGC) will conduct the initial church service at "Grace House" Buffalo 1932 Bailey Ave, Buffalo, NY, on Sat. January 10, 2009 @ 6:30 pm. **Who we are:** The (GCGC) is a church outreach designed to unite our community, reach the lost and speak into the lives of those who do not know the love of Christ.

We encourage community members to attend worship services every Saturday night.

SGM, Inc. Celebrates Ten year anniversary: Anniversary Dinner April 25, 2009, Chef's, restaurant. Tickets available January 2009. Celebration worship services, Evangel Assembly of God, April 26, 2009, 8:30 & 11:00 am. Mark your calendars.....and come celebrate the impact SGM has upon our community.



*The Staff
of SGM, Inc.
Wish you and yours
a safe, healthy and
prosperous
New Year !*



Saving Grace Ministries Inc.
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Williamsville, N.Y. 14231