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# WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Welcome to this, our first newsletter for the Rise Again Aftercare Ministry, a division of the Rise Again Outreach. Our goal is to inform our partners, associates and directors regarding the programs provided by the Aftercare Ministry and to provide testimonials from those who have been served by us.

One feature of the newsletter is to provide feedback from others who have partnered with us to assist incarcerated individuals in their reentry efforts, as well as space for the director of the ministry to make comments. Each issue will also list sponsors and those who have

supported us financially and in their prayers.

This newsletter is for everyone and all comments, letters and criticisms are welcome as we seek to improve our services with each issue, which will arrive around the first week of each month.

Many people work behind the scenes to keep this ministry afloat and there may be some involved who don't understand what the Aftercare Ministry is all about. The accompanying article will explain the mission of the Rise Again Aftercare Ministry and explain some of the services provided. We invite you to sit back, read this

newsletter and the testimonials within and see what we are all about. If this is your first exposure to the ministry, welcome to the Rise Again Aftercare Ministry. If you are a supporting member but aren't yet aware of all we do, then welcome and we hope you will be encouraged by the good that is being done and we know you will keep us in your prayers daily as we serve Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in everything we do.

Finally, this newsletter is edited by an ex-offender who has been released from prison.

### Inside this issue:

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### Special points of interest:

- Many programs are offered by the Aftercare Ministry.
- Some people have found Christ through the efforts of the Aftercare Ministry.
- Clothing and necessities is only a small part of the ministry.

# RISE AGAIN AFTERCARE MINISTRY

### MISSION:

The mission of Rise Again Aftercare Ministries is to transform the lives of ex-offenders as they transition from incarceration to community. Services are available to those who have been incarcerated in New Hampshire facilities and who will be living in Merri-

mack County upon release.

### METHOD

Rise Again Aftercare Ministry exists to reconcile ex-offenders back into their family and society through a transformation by understanding and accepting the saving grace of Jesus Christ and the impact of His love. A new knowledge of Jesus will

generate a desire for a lifestyle change resulting in a more productive and purposeful life in the community.

### PROCESS:

Rise Again Aftercare Ministry seeks to provide ex-offenders with:

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- Referral to sources for clothing, housing and medical assistance
- Life skills counseling
- Pre-employment assistance
- Career planning and aptitude measurement
- Job search assistance and referral
- Bible study and personal evangelism
- Spiritual counseling.

Rise Again Aftercare Ministry also seeks to assist the ex-offender's family when needed.

Rise Again Aftercare Ministry's goal is to encourage and assist ex-offenders and their families in finding a spiritual home in a welcoming and supportive church in the community.

#### **LONG-TERM GOALS:**

Rise Again Aftercare Ministries seeks to provide these services by:

- Pre-release through post-release mentoring and counseling
- Providing a referral to accepting and welcoming community churches
- Referrals to specialized community support services for addictions and other specific problems
- Organizing and supporting accountability groups based on need
- Organizing and supporting a referral network to various government agencies.

#### **CONCEPT:**

Rise Again Aftercare Ministry is a volunteer-staffed and faith-based organization which is dedicated to providing a cost-effective, compassionate Christian response to the problem of ex-offenders returning to society with little or no support.

Rise Again Aftercare Ministry believes that with a personal transformation based on individual acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, each person can take his or her rightful place as a productive member of the local society. With this inclusion into society, neighborhoods and cities will become better places to live, work and worship.



#### **Reentry support group:**

**Every Wednesday 7PM to 8:30 PM**

**12 weeks topics:**

#### **Life Plan Series**

##### **Going for Gold**

- Getting on Target
- Accepting Responsibility
- Overcoming Obstacles
- Setting the Goals
- Making the Commitment

##### **Winning the Victory**

- Spiritual Battles
- Victory is Ours
- The Full Armor of God
- Doubt, Temptation, and Sin
- Planning for Victory

##### **Staying on Track**

- You're Living - Are you Ready?
- Support From Small Group
- Money and Relationships
- Free Time and Support
- Taking the Trip Together

#### **Group Facilitator**

**Keith Lowe**

**Worship leader and co-facilitator**

**Marc Perron**

**Raul Dominguez**

*A new knowledge of Jesus will generate a desire for a lifestyle change resulting in a more productive and purposeful life in the community.*

## **GOD'S POWER AND INFINITE GRACE TRANSFORMS LIVES**

Ron:

I cannot thank you enough for all that you have done for me. I believe that God sent me to you in a great time of need and desperation, Your ministry is so very important and in great demand. It is hard enough to try to transition from prison to mainstream society in and of itself, but add illness to the mix and it's near impossible, I know that I would never have been able to survive if it wasn't for God, family, friends and your ministry.

If we don't have a strong spiritual faith base than we will not be able to cope with the stress of trying to re-enter our chosen communities. You have given me that base.

I hope that your ministry grows and that you will be able to help many people like me. If there is anything that I can do for the cause, please don't hesitate to call upon me. Not only do you give us help, you give us hope. I am extremely grateful for all your support. God bless,

Scott Nash Testimony

## **OUR MINISTRY STAFF**

- Ronald Menard, Director
- Steven Berry, Assistant
- Mike Tunks, Chaplain
- Lee Elliott, Certified Trainer for Prison Fellowship
- Guy Priel, Newsletter Editor
- Support Group Leaders: Keith Lowe, Marc Perron, Raul & Manon Dominguez

#### **Board of Advisors:**

- Bill Pelletier, President
- Lee Elliott, Merrimack County Chaplain
- Jim Blanchard, Host, Prison Chapel on the Air
- Pastor, Dave Pickney, River of Grace Church
- Paul Roussel, founder of Christian Aftercare Ministry
- Pastor Ruth Foss

# THE THEOLOGY OF MISSION TO THOSE INCARCERATED

## Lee Elliot Board of Advisory Member

Matthew 25:36, so often quoted and yet so seldom understood. Surely, Jesus meant more than just showing up in physical presence, which is important, since visitors are so few and visits are often limited due to issues of security. But without purpose, intent of supporting and encouraging, the time spent is of limited value.

FACT: inmates are not "normal society people" in a "normal social setting".

Visiting an inmate places the volunteer in a circumstance that requires special gifting by God and training by experienced people to be adequately prepared. Not everyone is called to this ministry and yet it has every reward to offer, like any missionary field. Os Guinness wrote a book, "The Call" (Word Books, Nashville, 1998, page 4) and shares some important truths about the calling. "What do I mean by 'calling'? For the moment, let me say simply that "calling" is the truth that God calls us to Himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do and everything we have invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to His summons and service. There is a distinction between a later, special calling and our original ordinary calling. A special calling refers to those tasks and missions which individuals receive through a direct, specific, supernatural communication from God. Ordinary calling, on the other hand, is the believer's sense of life-task in response to God's primary call, 'follow me,' even when there is no direct, specific, supernatural communication from God about a secondary calling."

Those who are called can be, and should consider themselves missionaries as much as those people who travel to distant lands to share the message of God in Jesus Christ. The Life Application Study Bible (New Living Translation, Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, IL, 2004, page 1894) gives us four definite reasons why God sends us as missionaries to inmates:

1. "Although people can know God through His creation, their wickedness blinds them to the truth. Missionaries can sensitively make them aware of their sin and point them

to Jesus.

2. Although people may believe there is a God, they refuse to commit themselves to Him. Missionaries help persuade them by sharing God's word and by pointing out the dangerous consequences of their actions.
3. Missionaries help the Church obey the great commission of our Lord.
4. Most importantly, although nature reveals God, people need to be told about Jesus and how, through Him, they can have a personal relationship with God."

While our primary goal must be to present the inmate with an opportunity to enter into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, we must understand that we have to build a relationship with each individual before we can share the truth of the Gospel with them. Relationship building with the incarcerated takes time and patience. Most of the inmates have never had a relationship they could count on. Consistency and continuity are the keys to forming a relationship that will avail us of the opportunity to share what Jesus means to us. And it has to be a person-to-person exchange, not just a teaching. It has been said that a person is never so ready to listen, as they are after they have talked. Most often good relationship building can start by asking a person about themselves and their background. We don't have to dwell on the situation that they are in now or what brought them there.

Now there are many opportunities to interact with inmates and to form relationships. Most often mentioned in Christian ministry circles is the proverbial Bible study. While there is nothing wrong with conducting a Bible study, you are significantly limiting your exposure to the whole inmate population since only those interested in the Bible will come to a Bible study. Several other areas of ministry are available and offer a significantly larger population to draw from or to impact.

Defining the whole person map as a complex of spiritual, intellectual, social, physical, environmental and emotional segments, we can see many opportunities for service and ministry. For in-

stance: in the intellectual arena, we can have computer class training, GED coaching, English as a second language training and other scholastic endeavors. In the social realm, we cannot take the inmate out of the institution to participate in seminars or other situations, but we can sure help prepare them when they are due to be released. Courses on resume writing, job interviewing and family coaching can help the inmate make the transition to life outside. In the physical arena, coaching a basketball team or a volleyball team can build team participation while providing some additional resources to the over-worked activities unit of the facility. There is not much we can do in the environmental arena until the individual is released, but we can pre-induce them to civic work or community service to be accomplished during their free time after release. In the emotional arena, we can work with the inmate with qualified volunteers to conduct emotional response classes (often called anger management) and other self-evaluative courses. One of the strongest areas with the greatest impact on recidivism is mentoring. Christian mentoring can be started at any time but ideally it should be initiated at least 6 months before release. It is even more critical for those inmates who are facing release into a probation or parole status. Mentoring is not a command and control environment but a relationship building, accountability setting and emotional involvement between at least two human beings. It is a double-ended relationship involving the mentor and the one being mentored. The best mentoring relationships are based upon a love of God, willingness to share of one's self and a sincere interest in the life of another. The model of Jesus and His disciples portrays a realistic goal. Recognize that any and all of these efforts will fail without being bathed in prayer and based on the Word of God. The importance of these ministries cannot be underestimated nor should the situation that the inmates are accomplished in be trivialized or taken for granted.



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### How You can help

- 1.– **Pray:** use this Newsletter as a prayer group
  - 2.– **Volunteer:** call at our office for info how to get involved
  - 3.– **Give:** \$25. \$75. \$150. \$500. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Donate online at <http://riseagainoutreach.org> Or Mail to: Rise Again Outreach 34 Staniels Road, Unit 5 Loudon, NH 03307

<p><b>A note from the director of</b></p> <p><b>RISE Again Aftercare Ministry</b></p>	<p><b>A NOTE FROM Paul Roussel</b> <b>DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER-</b> <b>CHRISTIAN AFTERCARE</b> <b>MINISTRY</b></p>
<p>February 2011 marks 11 months of officially operating at our location on Main Street. We started with a small beginning with what God has laid on our heart and every day God has surprised us. Partnering with Prison Fellowship Aftercare was a major accomplishment for Rise Again Aftercare’s long-term vision in mentoring ex-offenders and training volunteers to prepare them to mentor. On a monthly basis we average 23 clients for basic needs; receive 2 to 4 letters from inmates behind the walls seeking mentoring help and we share the Gospel with every new client offering the Lord Jesus Christ as their best option to transform their life; we bring hope, support and encouragement for their journey. Thank You for your support and keep us in your prayers. God Bless. Ronald N Menard, Director, Rise Again Aftercare Ministry</p>	<p>About 18 months ago, I met Bill Pelletier and Ron Menard and they shared a vision they had to start an aftercare ministry in Concord. I was excited about their vision as I realized that Rise Again Aftercare Ministry would help our ministry, Christian Aftercare Ministry,, in helping men and women released from prison/jail into the Concord area—another Christian ministry to help share Jesus and His plan of Salvation. Over the last year I have seen this ministry grow and prosper as the Lord has opened all these doors (parole office, prison counselors and staff, and local Bible preaching churches). Our daily prayer is that the Lord would use Rise Again Aftercare and Pastor Steve Provost to touch the lives of hundreds of men and women for Jesus in the Concord area. Paul Roussel, Advisory Board Member and founder of Christian Aftercare</p>