

T.E.A.M. Mentoring November Newsletter 2014

The Lord's Leading. . . .



T.E.A.M. just completed the 39th MT ReEntry class at Montana State Men's Prison, Deer Lodge! When you add the 20 sessions TEAM has provided MT ReEntry at the Women's Prison and additional sessions in jails, over 60 MT ReEntry classes have been provided to men and women about to leave prison.

It was 17 years ago that I felt led to provide an in-prison seminar to help men and women prepare for the challenging step of coming out of prison and equipping them to stay out. God has been good to us over these years and now today not only is Montana's Department of Corrections addressing reducing recidivism, but across the US there is a rising concern to address the need. . . in 1997 it was not even seriously considered.

I recently passed my 62nd birthday and with a couple of health issues over the last couple years, I am becoming keenly aware of the fact I will not always be around to see this continue. So what direction do I point this thing we call T.E.A.M. Mentoring so that in the future the church will be more and more involved and equipped to meet the unique needs of the person(s) coming out of incarceration? I will share two things I am sensing the Lord leading me towards as I wrestle with this and ask for His leading:

First, from I Corinthians 1:18 – 31 and looking at who Jesus chose for disciples. I think the future of T.E.A.M. Mentoring will be led by those who God has equipped by their having done prison time. There is a growing acceptance of ex-felons mentoring felons and it is usually referred to as "peer mentoring". We have witnessed the tremendous impact of men and women who have previously been incarcerated participating in ReEntry by instructing one of the MT ReEntry segments or volunteering to facilitate at a table. As I have shared this idea, I see the idea enthusiastically accepted by those still incarcerated with their beginning to find meaning and purpose in their prison experience.

The **second** involves the re-launching of an employment initiative once called TEAM Works, but now renamed **TEAM Enterprises**. This initiative should be able to provide employment and income not only for myself, but also providing employment to approved mentees when released from incarceration. Here they would have an encouraging and supportive context to adjust to life and work on the outside while identifying longer range career goals. Tim Hieronymus (see his article on this page) and I are currently working together in construction and remodeling work to initiate TEAM Enterprises. We have been doing painting (interior and exterior), sheet rock, decks, roofing, as well as fencing so far. If you have home projects, or know someone who does, please get in touch with the TEAM Mentoring office, we would appreciate a chance to bid on it.

I take this opportunity to thank TEAM Volunteers for the time they give of their lives to make the MT ReEntry seminars possible and then also make the most critical sacrifice of time to be a friend and disciple one of these men or women when they get out of prison. But that is not all our volunteers contribute, as some also understand that ReEntry and mentoring could not happen if they did not also contribute financially to T.E.A.M. Mentoring! For all of our volunteers who donate and to all our program graduates who support T.E.A.M. financially **THANK YOU!** Please keep T.E.A.M. in your prayers and if you can help financially we need both to continue to fulfill our calling.

Larry Gaalswyk, Executive Director

Join Us!

*Sunday, December 7th
At The Community Center
129 Monarch, Billings
1:30 PM*

*Bring your favorite main dish
salad, or dessert to share*

**Need a
Construction Contractor?**

Call TEAM

@ 656-8326.

Hope Restored



I am pleased to be able to share how blessed I am for what TEAM Mentoring has given me. . . Christ centered relationships. TEAM has rekindled my hope that there are forgiving, loving and Godly people in this fallen world.

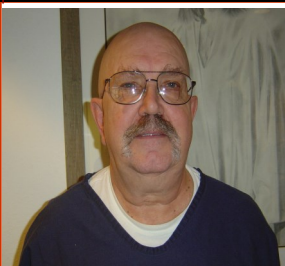
Too many people sit in prison, as I did, and feel lost. They have no or very little hope for their futures because they believe that no one will welcome them with a forgiving attitude. I thank TEAM for doing just that and am blessed to now be a part of those who return to prison to share the hope of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

I also feel very honored by being asked to help start up **TEAM Enterprises**. This Christ centered company is just another way to shine God's light into the darkened hearts of the hopeless, by providing job opportunities for those reentering society, and by maintaining a Christ centered work environment that will help grow responsible and Godly brothers and sisters. If you have projects to be done, give us a call at the TEAM Office. We'd appreciate your business.

Timothy Hieronymus

*Happy
Thanksgiving*

ReEntry Classes Bring HOPE for Tomorrow



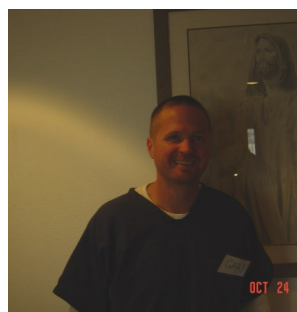
I have been involved in many various religious activities over the years that I've been in prison, but this group has had a lasting effect upon me. It has provided tools for me to help me increase my self-awareness and accountability, not just to myself, but to my Lord and Savior, as well as my fellow believers. I look forward to continuing in participating with the men I've come to know through the Montana ReEntry classes.

Jerry R.

Just a small note to thank you and to let you know that I and all the others involved in the TEAM MT ReEntry Class really enjoyed it and believe we have benefitted greatly from attending. Thank you!



Fred T.



Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the TEAM MT ReEntry program October 20—24. Your group of volunteers are wonderful and breathe new life into this place while you are here.

I know that if I am going to be successful I must change for the better today. Starting my day by not only reading God's word but also journaling on it has opened my eyes to how great a life with Christ can truly be. I look forward to getting up every day to see what the Lord will bless me with that day. I make it a point to apply my scripture reading to an event that day. I have learned that my attitude and actions can have a ripple affect on those around me, and that if I am walking with Christ, that effect is a glorious one.

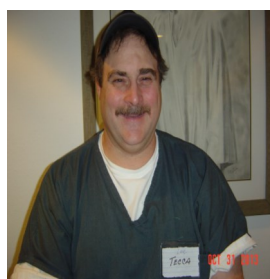
I look forward to being assigned a mentor once I am released and becoming a part of the growing family that is TEAM Mentoring. It was always my plan to turn my back on this place and never think of it again once I am released. This program has taught me how ridiculous that mindset is. The last 10 years are a chapter of my life that I cannot simply forget. By becoming a mentor to someone else someday I can be assured that the last 10 years were not simply a waste of time. I pray that my experience can someday help someone else realize that God has a plan for them as well.

Gary S.

Thank you for the wonderful week of love and knowledge. The five days you spent with us was a wonderful breath of fresh air. Where there is not much hope...you all brought a "well" full of hope. You touched me and everyone else who attended. You opened my eyes to so much: mentors, challenges, choices, stress, friends and support groups, relationships, forgiveness, goals and self-worth, and budgeting! Thanks for taking the time out of your lives to teach us love and forgiveness and so much more. You have changed my life.



David "Jake" G.



Thank you for giving us the hope that people still care about our future in the community. Without the life lines you throw us we would be lost in trying to reintegrate into society. Continued support for the ReEntry Classes and Eagles Nest programs inside, and volunteer mentors on the outside are critical to our success in the community when we leave here.

Lee T.

You Can Make A Difference

TEAM Mentoring does not receive funding from the Montana Department of Corrections, the State of Montana, or the Federal government. The ministry relies solely upon the generous donations from people like you.

As we enter the most critical fund-raising season of the year for T.E.A.M., we must reiterate that we depend heavily on your year-end financial gifts to cover essential ministry expenses throughout the year. Through your continued support, together we can make a difference in the lives of "the least of these", leading all of us to a deeper, more meaningful relationship with God and with one another.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration and rest assured that your gifts are supporting something that money cannot buy — transformed lives that are Christ-centered... And remember all your donations to T.E.A.M. are tax deductible.

**Please mail your donations to:
TEAM Mentoring,
PO Box 30642,
Billings, MT 59107**