



Covered Bridge Therapeutic Communities, Inc.

"A Residential Substance Abuse Aftercare Program"

P.O. Box 569; St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
(802) 748-6948

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Dear Friends,

October has been a whirlwind of activity as we progress toward the completion of our renovations and upgrades throughout the house. As I type this, floor covering (Carpet Connection) is being laid, trim work (Rob Couture & Company) is being installed, the basement ceiling (Caledonia Community Work Camp) is being hung and electrical work (Dana Wells Electric) is progressing. Williamson Plumbing & Heating from Underhill is finishing with their work (heating system and plumbing) during the coming week. I've taken some photos that are included in this letter.

Throughout all of this we've experienced God's sustaining grace and His abiding peace. A recent morning devotional and prayer-time centered on these verses from Paul's letter,

"Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, *making the most of every opportunity*, because the days are evil. Therefore **do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is." Ephesians 5:15-17 (NIV)**

The King James Version begins this way, "See then that ye walk circumspectly..." Walking wisely according to the Spirit requires us to see our circumstances and the opportunities that are before us in order to experience God's best for us—growing and maturing in His love and perfect will.

We can often be distracted into thinking that we're "in-between" here and there and miss the opportunities that are right before us. Perhaps we're in-between jobs, or in-between sickness and health, or in-between prison and our own place to live, or in-between where we just were and where we're headed..... the list goes on. This renovation has been a good

"Reconciliation To Community By Building Bridges Of Restoration"

example for us. We've been "bombarded" with opportunities to extend His grace and to remember that He is in control.

With God, there's really no "in-between". He wants for us to see our present circumstance as His opportunity to demonstrate His character, His purposes and ways to those with whom we interact. This, I believe, is the intent of Paul's instruction here—at least that's the application for us at Covered Bridge right now!!

Transitions.....and transformations.....

Patrick Laughlin has moved to his own place in nearby Waterford after residing at Covered Bridge since October 9th of 2007. He's living about three miles from Union Baptist Church and continues to serve there, overseeing their maintenance and custodial needs for both the church and the school.

Shortly after Patrick departed Covered Bridge, we received Steven LeClair as our newest resident. Here's a brief letter of introduction from Steve:

Hello, my name is Steven LeClair. I am a new resident of Covered Bridge. I have been here for four days now. I was previously incarcerated at the Caledonia Community Work Camp for a little over a year. I was born in Burlington and am 25 years old. While at the Work Camp I came to the conclusion that my life was in shambles; it had been for many years. I was plagued by addiction, lies and a lack of faith. There was something missing from my life. That something was my relationship with God.

I started attending Celebrate Recovery and going to church. I studied God's Word and started taking the steps to mend my relationship with Him. I started noticing changes in my life. All for the better!! I was going to be released soon and the place I was going was a dead end. There was no spiritual guidance or encouragement from others. Somebody recommended Covered Bridge to me. I looked at a packet someone printed off the internet and was hesitant about it because I was still holding on to some of my old ways. Plus, I would be far away from my family and home. I had never really been on my own, away from the nest. So this is like my journey into the wilderness, my voyage to discover my true purpose in life and figure out what kind of man I really am.

It's been a blessing to be able to have this opportunity presented to me. And it would not be possible without the support of good-hearted people, people who support Covered Bridge, Pastor Steve and Lorie Clark and, of course, God. So, I would like to thank everyone who has supported this ministry from the bottom of my heart. I pray for you and I have faith that God will and is blessing you all for it.

God Bless you, Steven LeClair

Another "high-water" mark for October was the wonderful opportunity that most of the men here had to attend a weekend workshop in Richford, Vermont. Pastor Lyle Willey hosted a "Freedom In The Tree Of Life" seminar that was a real blessing. Among those attending was Bob Grenier who has been with us since the middle of June. Here's a letter from Bob about his experience that weekend:

Hi folks,, My name is Bob Grenier. I came to Covered Bridge In June after doing four years in jail. What I have got from Covered Bridge is well beyond what I expected. The people here are caring and loving and it's real. God is the center of life here. For years I have suffered from depression, anxiety, stress to the max and loneliness. I felt betrayed by family—years of the court system, to the point of feeling suicidal. And that's only half of the mountain. I seemed to be in a downward spiral and it got worse from there—half of my family turned their backs on me when I went to jail.

Pastor Steve and Lorie must have seen all this hurt and pain in me and saw what it was doing to me. I really felt defeated and a lot of this I brought on myself by the bad choices I made in the past—they were hurtful to others and especially the ones I loved the most (deep guilt). Pastor Steve and Lorie sent me and two of my brothers here at the house to a conference in Richford, Vermont—to a little white 200-year-old church up near the Canadian border. The church's pastor is Pastor Lyle Willey, a man truly blessed by God. It was called "Experiencing Freedom" and what I experienced is very difficult to put into words that someone can feel it and know just what I felt.

At the end of the two-day seminar we stood in line in the front of the church, about 12 of us. Pastor Lyle put his hand on each of us and told us each something. When he got to me he put his hand on my heart and on my head. I felt a warm and great love deep within and all around me. Water flowed out of my eyes and what he told me I knew without a doubt it was straight from God himself. He told me things only God knew. I had never talked with Pastor Lyle beforehand. He told me I had a heart full of love and I was soon going to share it, among other things he told me that were deeply personal. I went down on my knees. I felt alive and loved and all the hurt and pain and guilt were gone. God leveled the mountain I had built on top of myself. After years of suffering I was free and loved. I guess the best I can do for you is please read 1 Timothy 1:12-17.

I know I'll never be the same again. Praise God!

Your brother in Christ, Bob Grenier

Pastor Lyle sent out advance notice about this weekend and God made it possible for us to send three men. Pastor David Piers (Union Baptist Church), along with three men from his church, accompanied our guys to Richford. What a wonderful testimony to God's redeeming love!

Prayer Requests

- ❖ For wisdom in the process of considering potential residents
 - ❖ Continued hunger & thirst for God
 - ❖ Strengthening & deepening of relationships
 - ❖ Restoration of families
 - ❖ Passion for prayer among God's people
 - ❖ Please pray for Ron as he will fly to Maryland to visit his sister and her family for a week during Thanksgiving
 - ❖ Each of our current residents, Bob, David, Ron, Ted and Steven
 - ❖ For Patrick, one year resident who is now in his own place.
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Other things..... We could use, if you can.....

- ❖ Toilet tissue, paper towels
- ❖ Bath towels and hand towels
- ❖ Pillow cases

We love you and, as ALWAYS, we want YOU TO KNOW.....We Thank GOD always for you and ask Him to strengthen You in His STRONG and UNCEASING LOVE, being rooted and fruitful in the knowledge of who you ARE IN HIM---for the Praise of His glory—FOREVER! IN His Love & ours, Steve & Lorie Clark