



Pathways to Freedom Ministries



FREE THOUGHTS - Newsletter

V.3 Edition 1

Spring 2014

Mark your Calendars:

April 25, 26,	Booth @ Promise Keepers "Stronger Men's conference, Faith Tabernacle Church,
April 26,	Night of Hope, @ Rock Church 7:30 - 9:30
May 4,	Bob @ Faith Community Church - morning Service
May 5,	Monthly Board meeting, 6 - 9
May 7, 8	Pastors Prayer Summit - Bob to attend
May 8,	Crime Prevention Outreach @City Church - Booth



From the E.D. Pen

Well here we are the first quarter of 2014 is drawing to a close. Things have been very busy thus far. New clients have applied for the program, and new mentors are coming on board. To compliment all of this, we have gained some new faces on our executive board as well. I look forward to working with each one of the people joining the Pathways team. Fresh insight and ideas are always invigorating. March has seen a change in the role of Treasurer for instance. Nancy had been filling in that position on an interim basis. I am excited that we can hand that off and have Nancy focus time and efforts on other priorities. I thank her for looking after the financial duties for a season. Our new Treasurer has experience with other ministry organizations and will be a welcome asset.

Our first board meeting of 2014 was on Jan 6th, and planning for our AGM went into full force. This important meeting was held on Feb 22nd at Stevens Road Baptist Church in Dartmouth. March brought us into the second board meeting of the year. There are many exciting things in the works for this spring. The Halifax Promise Keepers event will grant us good exposure amongst a group of

Christian men. Our annual promotional event, "A Night of Hope" will be a concert style evening. Similar to last year's concert, the lineup is amazing, and our host will be Rev Kirby Spivey III of New Beginnings Ministries. We will have performances by artists such as ONE8TEA, Al Bryant, Spencer Conway, Noreen Corkum, Rickcola Brinton, Ayo Aladejebi, and Mark Colley. Later in the spring, we will bring our focus to the ever present need for volunteers and mentors.

Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter, as it is a looking-glass into the goings on within our ministry. If at any time you have any questions or queries, never hesitate to contact me by email, Bob@PathwaystoFreedom.ca or phone 441-5019. May you always be in His grace and under His abundant blessings. Keep an eye out periodically on our website www.pathwaystofreedom.ca for our blog - Free Thoughts.

In Christ, Bob George, Executive Director

MINISTRY AT A GLANCE:

Springhill	3 clients waiting
Westmorland	3 clients waiting
Dorchester	1 client Waiting

Fast Mentor Facts:

- **5 Mentors are actively matched**
- **5 New Mentors are waiting institution clearance**



Here is an excerpt of TONY'S STORY: (some names are changed to protect the innocent)

I am 46 years old. I grew up in a loving home, my father was in the Navy, and mom was a housewife. I am the youngest of five children; I have 3 brothers and 2 sisters. Mom's hands were full with me, because I was so active. Then (my parents) separated at the age of six and I immediately began to rebel. I smoked my first joint when I was 11 that was just the beginning. Sent to the Shelburne School for Boys in Shelburne NS for the first time at age 12 for a B&E into a community centre, I was released within 6 months, but I was still rebelling, and got into trouble again for B&E's. Just before I turned 15, I broke into a skating rink, and a Radio Shack store.

I was sent back to Shelburne; this time I experienced physical abuse from the staff. I was released one week after I turned 16. The damage was done. I left Shelburne an angry young man; it didn't take long to get in trouble with the law for B&E's once again. Five in all landed me 4 years in the federal prison at Springhill, NS. It was in Springhill Institution where I met the Lord Jesus. He forgave me of all my sins. And, I started a new life in Christ or at least "what I thought" was a new life. I was released on day parole in September 1984, where the system (CSC) enrolled me into a Business & Management Course in Moncton NB. As a graduate student, I accepted a position as an assistant manager in Saint John, NB. This is where I met my wife, "Natalie". I was granted full parole in April 1985. My job transferred me to Fredericton NB, where I finished my full parole in 1987. The Lord Jesus had blessed me with a wonderful wife, a 7lb 9oz baby boy, and work.

As time went on my feelings toward my wife changed. She tried everything to keep us together, but to no avail. She left in June 1989. I quit my job and moved to Toronto in August 1989, I moved in with one of our friends, and I gained employment with Michelin Tire.

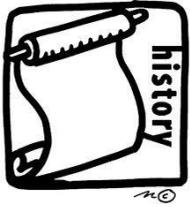
My friend introduced me to cocaine in November 1989. For a short period of time it worked for me, I thought. As my addiction progressed, I became isolated and lost my job. I had other jobs but they were all short lived. This was due to my ever-increasing addiction. I resorted to crime (stealing, B&E's, and manipulation) as my employment was not paying enough to support my drug habit. This resulted in a robbery, which resulted in two people losing their lives because of me. In October 1993, I was once again sentenced to Springhill Institution for B&E's, assault, uttering death threats. In 1996, I was convicted for these murders. I surrendered my life once again to the Lord Jesus. I asked him to forgive me, a prodigal son, on Feb 11 1996.

I can't truly say that I'm thankful for all that has happened in my life. Sure, I would change a lot of things if I could, but the reality is that I can't. Yet, in spite of the pain, my life has come full circle. God through the Lord Jesus has given me the opportunity to share my testimony, victories, and hope with others. I am grateful to Jesus because He loves & believes in me, and gave me another chance. HIS grace and truth are truly my refuge.

Thanks from Tony

OUR MISSION:

"Pathways to Freedom Ministries" (PTFM) founded to act as a bridge between Christian volunteers, the church and inmates incarcerated in local corrections facilities and prisons. This ministry has been modeled after other mentoring ministries in Canada and the US. In some cases, these ministries have been in existence for 40+ years. We pray that we will be around that long and make the difference we know they have. We exist to provide guidance, training and support to the mentors, the inmates, chaplains and their families.



*REMEMBERING WHERE WE CAME FROM: Meanderings from
The Founder.....*

Wow a new year, a new leader, as I realize several months have gone by with Bob at the helm and it causes me to reflect on why I founded Pathways to Freedom. If we remember our “roots”, it is easier to remember why we are doing what we do as a ministry. Prison ministry is not an easy sell even to those of us who call ourselves followers of Jesus; we must constantly remind ourselves of this, to prevent the enemy from causing us to be discouraged. “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. Psalm 42:5

In September 2001, as I was serving my three weeks of house arrest, it was never more apparent that this new walk with Christ was going to be challenging. I was only home from the correctional centre a week when 9/11 happened. As a new believer I had so many questions, how can a loving God allow such horrendous things happen. I questioned but I never wavered in my belief that the God I now believed in was real and was still on the throne. Through the trauma of the 9/11 events, my mentor was there, she helped me to pray effectively, ask, and receive from Jesus in that trying time. Pat my mentor inside, was there for me outside. God had her in my life for a reason and a season; she is still there today, now she is friend, spiritual mother, and still mentor.

That is the foundation of Pathways, in 2007 when I was seeking God to lead me in His service, I had no idea what he would place on my heart, but he knew. He had it all laid out from the beginning of my life. The things I have done, the life I had lead, the experiences I went through, it could have been so much worse but he protected me for a time such as that. When I look back, I know that he had prepared me for many years for what I had to do to plant a ministry that would work with inmates and ex-offenders. He never said it would be easy; our walk with Him is not easy, anything-worthwhile doing is a challenge. I do not regret giving of my life, skills, time and talents to found this ministry. I am so pleased that it will continue for many years whether it is under Bob or another leader. As head of this ministry, God will bring whom he needs but we must continue to seek his face and his will.

Pathways was my baby from birthing the vision in May 2007 until this past summer when it became apparent that my season was coming to an end. It was not an easy decision. It was the end of my season to lead. My heart for the men and women who serve time in our provincial and federal corrections facilities has not diminished. What I do know is that in this season of change in leadership for the ministry I am seeing once again that Gods plans are perfect. Already Bob is putting his vision to work, God has raised him up for this time and place. I think people are too quick to think it has to be forever. I think it is more important for us to hear from God and follow his leading. I was willing and available; sometimes I wonder how many people he spoke to before he got to me, asking them would they be willing to help those who are lost and in prison. I was just the one who answered, yes Lord I will. Bob has answered that call, along with Sherri his wonderful wife. They are placed in a position to lead and grow this ministry to where God will have it to be. I am encouraged already at the open doors God has placed before Bob. Speaking engagements are coming, which translates to new awareness for HIS ministry inside and for new mentors to come alongside. God’s love and grace continue to amaze me.

So now, I challenge those who read our newsletter, who come to our events, who support us in prayer and finance. Will you say, yes Lord I will, we desperately need volunteer mentors. The investment of time and giving from your heart will not go unrewarded; remember we store up treasures in heaven. God is calling are we listening? I heard Him when I founded the ministry, I heard Him again, when he said move on, is it easy, no; he never said His burden would be light, but he says it is His yoke and he will help us carry it. No work for God could ask more than when we believe with our clients for supernatural changes to their lives, but his burden is light when we carry his yoke. It is not in our strength but in his. I say again,

WILL YOU HELP TO SET A MAN FREE?

I remain, in his service,
Nancy

