



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE



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BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Parting words from Mark Bonham, OHM Executive Director

Over the past ten years we have laid an organizational and ministry foundation and now we are working at positioning for significant growth. At the core of all of this is our conviction that God is passionate about redeeming the harm people have experienced, using it to develop people who know His grace deeply in their own souls and offer it lavishly to others. People are catching the vision that a life-giving community with good facilitation is a powerful transformational tool that Christ uses to advance His purposes. In fact, we are on the verge of a movement that will transform our concepts of evangelism, discipleship, mission and the church as we know them. Through our own brokenness God is birthing new life and understanding. As this takes root in our own hearts, it is significantly impacting the hearts of others.

The next ten years are critical. We need to raise up leaders who can care for leaders. Shepherding, networking, training, teaming

up and leading will be high priority if we are to see the ministry advance. All of this requires people and funding to build capacity. In this issue we invite you to hear what is happening and where we are headed and meet people who are engaged in the building process. We hope it causes you to give thanks for what has been done and excites you to stay the course as OHM moves forward into this new era of growth.



I look forward to being on the frontlines of this movement. Someone else will take up the reins at OHM and I am confident that, with your strong support, we will continue

to see solid growth. It has been life changing for me to help guide us to this point. I am ready now to get away from my desk and, after a pause for

reflection and restoration, join God's people in implementing all that we have learned and experienced.

Thank you for giving me this special privilege. May God bless each of you as you carefully build in your own lives, marriages and communities.

**“By the grace God has given me,
I laid a foundation as
an expert builder, and someone
else is building on it.
But each one should be careful
how he builds.”
1 Corinthians 3:10**



SALTS REPORT

By Amy Anderson, OHM Leader Training Director

There is a mysterious and glorious beauty that emerges from a gathering of over 100 people coming together to engage their stories in new and revealing ways.

I have the privilege of having conversations with a number of the participants to determine if this is a good time in their lives to be attending SALTS. I came into the week eager to see the faces of those I had spoken with on the phone and to meet the many people who I had placed in groups.

As I asked people how they were doing throughout the week, the theme was, "Good but hard." I resonate with these words, fully aware that pain is a gift, and we grow when we struggle with it productively. I admire the integrity of these men and women who came to battle for their lives by entering scenes in their stories that are fueled by shame, contempt, powerlessness, and betrayal.



"I admire the integrity of these men and women who came to battle for their lives..."

We start the process with stories of our childhood. Our leaders set the example, being the first ones to share their stories with their group. This is a breathtaking gift of honesty and an invitation for participants to follow with their own stories of heartache and suffering.

After initial stories are told, we share our current struggle with giving and receiving love. With sorrow over losses and hope for God's redemption, we begin to dream about loving more deeply from the heart before we head home to re-engage with our communities.

SALTS -- Survivors of Abuse Leadership Training Seminar -- is not just for training men and women to lead Grace Groups. SALTS is about leadership development and personal growth. SALTS is about pastors, counselors, missionaries, and caregivers coming to be cared for. SALTS is about strengthening marriages.

SALTS is about people going deeper into their story. Please join us at SALTS! (see dates on insert.)

BUILDING UP A PEOPLE

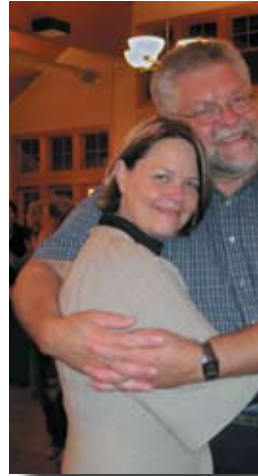
Terry and Kris Jakubaitis are OHM Area Ministry Coordinators in Brookfield, Wisconsin.

I serve a wild and surprising God and my journey towards the redemption of my story is as extravagant and unexpected as He is.

Just three years ago, before I attended my first SALTS, my friends Maria and Joanne and I were very involved in the lay counseling ministry at Elmbrook Church in Brookfield, Wisconsin. We dreamed about bringing a ministry to our church that would directly address the deep struggle with sexual identity that we would often see as counselors. While searching the Internet for training programs, I stumbled upon Open Hearts Ministry. We signed up, confident that we would soon be able to better serve others, and learn how to set up a ministry.

OHM felt different from the moment of the first large group worship and teaching. I had never heard men and women talk openly about their woundedness. I went into the first small group session defensively, without a story. By the end of the week I was fully engaged in a deep struggle with my story, leaving Michigan stunned and angry. On the way home I heard God saying to me, "Look what I had to do to get your attention." I was exactly where God wanted me to be. While shaky, we had a new passion. We started our first Grace Group the following month.

About a year into the process, my husband answered the question I had been asking, "Have you ever been abused?" His curiosity led him to the first chapter of his story. Since then he has participated in all of the OHM programs and is a co-leader in our ministry. He keeps coming back because of the change that the very first group made in his life - he connected with his heart, his story, and with others.



Why do I keep coming back? I started to experience truth and redemption in my story. Imagine - a group of like-minded people coming together, a week of work on my own story, struggling in my mess, with others accepting me even in the darkest parts of my story and loving me well. Coming back each time, it began to feel like what a family should feel like. I began to love and bless my story that was authored by God.

As the ministry formed, we all had to step into areas that we had never been involved with before. We had to be willing to try, to allow ourselves to make mistakes, be will

ing to ask forgiveness, and to laugh. There was a tremendous amount to learn. God brought people into our ministry with varied gifting, such as administration, teaching, shepherding, finance, creative/technical, hospitality, and the most important of all - prayer. We could not even begin to imagine our ministry growing, let alone surviving, without the passion and dedica-



“We have come to embrace the spiritual battle.”



tion of our leaders. We have come to embrace the spiritual battle.

Started by three women, our ministry was never intended to be for women only. Our first group consisted of 3 co-leaders and 2 participants. One group led to two. This session we have 35 participants in six groups, two of which are co-ed. We have 14 people on our co-ed leadership team. Growth has come mostly by word of mouth. After participants experience the first 12 weeks, we so often hear “what’s next?” and “is there more?” They

love the community, authenticity, and connection - and this is what we have strived to model as a result of our OMH experiences. People are hungry for the real body of Christ and a safe place to wrestle with their stories, struggles, and relationships. Referrals also come from other local churches and professional counseling centers. We are currently training leaders for four area churches that will be starting Grace Groups. Perhaps most important, we do not view our ministry as an “abuse ministry.” We have all been wounded and Grace Groups are all about God’s grace, redemption, and restoration.

Our future plans include daring dreams and taking risks. We envision more groups starting throughout our state and in each of the churches within the Elmbrook family; more involvement with the church body; serving as a resource for the training, education, and support for area ministries; offering groups in our local Hispanic community, the college age group, and perhaps our deaf community; encouraging more men to experience healing and having more men in leadership; and beginning to offer the OHM couples’ program that we attended last year. How about a pre-marital program? What about becoming a liaison to groups in other countries? Terry and I were just invited to co-lead in Beauty for Ashes in Alaska in early November. We can never dream bigger than God does! What a wild ride! We are reminded and humbled by Nehemiah’s building story and the choices he made. It’s not about building up a wall, it’s about building up a people.



OHM STRATEGY MOVES FORWARD

By Tracy Johnson, OHM Regional Consultant



On September 8th I walked into the offices of OHM to begin my responsibilities of leading the Regional Initiative in more specific ways. My arrival was the culmination of hoping, dreaming and many prayers. My job includes connecting leaders and those wanting to start grace groups with one another. I will be working toward providing a solid structure to help grow life-giving community among those offering groups in the US and around the world.

We have a vision to bring OHM staff to all the regions of the globe to provide training retreats, men's events, women's events, and couples retreats. We dream of a connected community of leaders stretching across the oceans in tangible ways. We hope for each person leading a grace group to have a support person they can call to receive encouragement as they walk alongside those God has placed in their sphere of influence.

Mentoring relationships for grace group leaders will begin implementation during 2011. A more experienced leader will come alongside a newer leader to provide support through prayer, encouragement and practical ideas to help those beginning new ministries. We will also offer this same support for leaders experiencing growth in their church ministries as they move from offering a single group to multiple groups. We want to empower our leaders to follow their dreams and support them as they respond to God's call in their lives.

Steady movement forward with the Regional Initiative has put a platform in place allowing us to launch Regional Training Days in 2011. These training days will be designed to help current grace groups leaders grow as well as offer a venue to bring leaders from churches to experience a taste of what OHM has to offer. We believe the training we offer grace group facilitators is applicable for leading any small group. We are committed to growing life-giving community by providing training to all who are in leadership.

Finally, we are excited about opportunities to take Open Hearts to England, Ukraine, India and Cambodia. The opportunities for ministry continue to pour into our office, and we invite you to join us in prayer for how we can say "yes" and support all this growth.

WANTED: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WITH MASTER BUILDING SKILLS (JER. 29:11-13)

By Gregg Corbin, OHM Personnel Committee Chair

Taking a cursory glance at the current job market, you could make the assumption that there is a large field of candidates to choose from in selecting OHM's next Executive Director. A second assumption one might make is that if you have a fairly clear understanding of the qualities, expertise, and gift/talent mix you seek in a candidate, the road to selection success would be pretty straight forward. Let me assure you that the field of available candidates is broad, plentiful, and hungry, but finding the RIGHT person and more specifically God's person for the job is not so simple. The task requires the seekers (a.k.a. the search team) to exercise faith, prayer, perseverance, focus, communication skills, patience, more prayer, obedience, wisdom, and trust, just to mention a few. If you have never been involved in this process, it will stretch your faith to new dimensions or you will find yourself giving up in total frustration.

Fortunately, we have been blessed with a five-member search team that has no quitters, and desperately wants God's direction and person for this key leadership role. As the search team has worked hard over the last months, the stark realization that only God can deliver the "right" person has increased our need to pray earnestly and seek His face on a regular basis. While we have not yet found our next director, we continue

to evaluate our direction and goals as we dialogue within our ministry framework. We would appreciate your faithful prayers and encouragement as we continue to navigate the search process.

We have reviewed 30-40 resumes from potential candidates around the U.S. That has resulted in 4 - 6 first round finalists. Those finalists were each interviewed by our search team via an hour telephone or face-to-face process using a scripted questionnaire developed by the search team. Finalists then received a second telephone interview con-



ducted by our training director, Amy Anderson. We eliminated all of our first round finalists and have recently interviewed one new candidate. The process has included looking both inside and outside the organization via personal recom-

mendations, leads, and job postings. These have yielded resumes submitted to the OHM office, or sent to our electronic collection point at: www.christianjobs.com.

If you know of interested people who fit the job description, please have them submit their resume to our office at executivedirector@ohmin.org. We greatly appreciate your prayers and ongoing support.



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