



# Alpha Prison Ministries Newsletter

## July 2015 Edition

*"I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25:36*

# They Just Want to Study the Bible

In our May newsletter, we highlighted the importance of the Alpha House transitional housing as a key aspect of this ministry's success in helping parolees successfully reintegrate into society and beat the 2 to 1 odds against them that put most men back in prison after parole.

Our cover story commemorated Donna, an in-prison Bible study volunteer who spent the last 17+ years of her life ministering to inmates before making her journey to heaven earlier this year. We need to emphasize the importance of what Donna did for this ministry for two primary reasons:

- ◆ First, Donna and others have completed their work here on earth to receive their reward in heaven. Others have stepped down or scaled back for various reasons. The need for more volunteers never seems to subside.
- ◆ Second, one on one Bible study with inmates is just as crucial to the purpose of APM as the Alpha House we highlighted in May. Our mission is: "To evangelize and disciple men who happen to be prisoners and former inmates." Studying the Bible with them is central to accomplishing this purpose.

When we get men into the Bible, the Bible gets into them. We don't need to preach to them, we don't need other books even though there are great books out there, we just need the simplicity of studying God's word.

These inmates in turn will study the Bible with other inmates both in and out of our formal in-prison Bible studies. They become Bible study leaders and mentors themselves. In fact, our in-prison one on one Bible studies have both APM volunteers and trusted inmates for leaders.

This keeps things simple for our volunteers. You don't have to be a gifted speaker. Short messages and group sharing are fine as long as the primary purpose of Bible study isn't lost, but we're not looking for volunteers to do "church services" in prison. The inmates don't want that either, they just want to study the Bible.

We have far more opportunities for in-prison Bible studies than we have volunteers to help lead them. Maybe *leading* sounds scary but if you can join us, leading is just you helping one other person study the Bible. That is addicting much more than scary. It's only scary when you haven't experienced it yet.

Visit us online at:

[www.alphapm.org](http://www.alphapm.org)

- ◆ Remember our Alpha House residents in your prayers. Current residents are: Brandon, Colin, Kevin, Tim, and Charles. All residents are doing well but still face the challenges of reentry into society after prison. We also have new residents Chris, Ron, Kris, and Leslie. Elmer suffered a minor setback and has had health issues, but is expected to return to residency.
- ◆ Please continue praying for our annual banquet on September 21, 2015. A "Save the Date" card is included this month and more details will be published in upcoming newsletters.
- ◆ Ask God to send us more volunteers for in-prison Bible studies. We've also been asked if we can arrange for Spanish speaking church services at Carson City Correctional Facility for about 40-50 inmates. Please pray for them too.

Prayer Requests

JULY 2015

Please cut around these prayer requests and use this as a bookmark in your Bible.

Alpha  
Prison Ministries

ADVOCCATE

When Alpha volunteers study the Bible with inmates, the result is that it ignites hope, it reveals God and the fact that they have purpose. We hear it again and again. We also see it in letters like these that we're excerpting for you to see. Words like *purpose*, *vision*, and *dream* have been so integrated into recent inmate letters you would think they were all writing from the same cell, but it's just a result of your support and volunteering.

## Two Inmates With a Shared Dream

Well, I said that I would be sending you a couple more letters to explain the dream and goal that Kurt and I have been given from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Our dream or vision is a simple one. We don't want to forget where we came from and want to help out the next believer in Christ coming out of prison with the "sign on his back," Criminal Sexual Conduct (CSC).

Originally I had put together a 26 page proposal for a hotel that I wanted to purchase in Detroit and wanted to call it the "Village." This was to expand in 3 years to another hotel in Flint, then again in 3 years time to Florida.

No, I am not a millionaire. I have a plan to write many grant proposals for funding, along with charging the residents weekly/monthly rent.

Soon after this idea came to me and I was putting this massive proposal together, I was sharing it with Kurt after our morning Bible study, about my ideas, and that was when **he hit me** with this whole dream/vision that God had given him about starting a place in Grand Rapids. That was when I told him about you and Alpha House and he told me that he was already on the list to go there.

I would like to finish this letter with a testimony from Kurt:

I would like to thank you for all your support during this time at my incarceration, and also for providing and preparing a place for me to come to upon my release. I am writing this letter for two reasons. The first one is to inform you that I have received my parole, and my release date is October 27, 2015. PRAISE GOD!!

The second reason is to share with you a vision that the Lord has shown me in a dream a little while back This dream was shown to me after I had spent 40 days on a program called *A Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren, with about 20 of us guys looking at what our purpose and work for the Lord would be upon our release.

Well after this time I had spent learning, I asked God in my prayers before I went to sleep to show me what He wanted me to do for Him, and that night He did. I would just like to share this dream with you because it does revolve around the ministry that He has set before you that you have been very faithful serving for many years.

## THE DREAM

The Lord showed me a place (motel) south of Grand Rapids. I know this place because I stayed there for a short time before my incarceration. The Lord revealed to me that this would be another transition place for ex-felons, mainly CSC cases.

This place has a main house with an office and little cabins which are all one bedroom. Adjacent to this property is a church that is no longer being used as one. This could be our place of worship and also a place for a lot of programs, not only for helping ex-felons but also the community.

The Lord then later showed me that there is a small trailer park that could be joined into the program once the men involved become stable, and would be able to live there if they choose to. I realize that this is a very big step and could be very costly, but I also know that our Lord has very deep pockets and He will see that this will happen if we are willing to take that step out into the deep waters.

The amazing thing after I had this dream was that the Lord then put into my life a partner, Eric. He also has a similar dream but it was more on the east side of the state. Eric is very zealous about this program and also has a lot of knowledge about grant writing and other means to get this off the ground.

I hope you can pray on this and see what the Lord tells you. I am looking forward to joining up with you upon my release and will continue to keep you in my prayers, and all the guys in Alpha House. See you soon.

Eric (and Kurt)

## God Has Big Plans for Me

God is Working great miracles on this compound. Knowing Christ is the best thing I have ever done in my life. He has changed my life forever. We have been blessed here with so many Christian programs/services. I really look forward to coming to them and meeting everyone.

I want to thank you for all the wonderful things you are doing for us in here. I am still attending all my Christian services and Bible studies. Coming to prison has been a very rewarding experience for me. I have met some wonderful people who love Jesus Christ.

I love helping people when they need it and to bring them to Christ. When I get out, I want to be in a program and help people in the community. God has big plans for me; I can't wait to see what he has in store for me.

God bless you,  
Justin

**Easily print this newsletter from our web site**

We also offer easy access to an identical version of this newsletter so you can print extra copies. Please feel free to make as many copies as you need. Get it at [alphapm.org](http://alphapm.org).

Newsletter written/edited by APM Board member Steve Chittenden

### APM Financial Summary January-May 2015

Total \$ Income:  
39,095.81 (budget)  
**36,904.00 (actual)**

Net \$ Expense:  
34,611.00 (budget)  
**35,660.82 (actual)**



PO Box 9216  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
49509  
(616) 538-4090  
[alphapm.org](http://alphapm.org)  
[info@alphapm.org](mailto:info@alphapm.org)

APM is an **undenominational Christ-centered ministry** to prisoners and ex-offenders