



June 5th, 2008

To Our Many Friends and Supporters,

Please meet Joan Hollingsworth:

Joan came to Hope Street Ministries in March 2007 -a tired, 49year-old woman who had been using drugs and alcohol since high school. She was raised in a “good-church-going” Catholic family without any major trauma during childhood despite being born with very poor eyesight. Using alcohol and drugs began for her socially - cocaine and alcohol were her drugs of choice - but steadily progressed to serious addictions. She managed to complete high school and finish two years of college before entering the work force fulltime and began using more drugs.

Joan was a functional addict for many years, trying hard to manage her drug use while being a productive part of society. She was very active as a civil rights supporter and advocate. She also worked on political campaigns that led to a successful marketing business. She met and married her husband at 33 and continued her dual lifestyle in her marriage that lasted for 10 years while raising a son and daughter.

Joan was treated about 15 times for addictions, and eventually, as for all of us, her world came crashing in on her when her beloved son was murdered in Milwaukee in 2002. Her life took a more tragic turn for the worse as she struggled to deal with this tragedy. She seriously damaged all the meaningful relationships in her life during this time. Most friends and family had given up hope that she would ever recover.

And that is, of course, when our friend Jesus stepped in; when Joan was finally on her knees. In an effort to hide from the police, she entered treatment again on December 14, 2006. She came to Hope Street soon after and has been a special part of our community since then. “I feel part of a family here that looks out for one another.” she says.

Joan successfully graduated from our Christian Foundations Mentor Program recently in March this year. "I have been so impacted by working through the curriculum. It was awesome!" she says. And her new friend/mentor found a way to bless Joan with much-needed dental work. God was suddenly pouring his grace upon her!

Joan volunteers her many talents and time with residents and staff. She is currently assisting in a fundraising project for Hope Street that involves a Fashion Show being put together by a Women's Bible Study Group here. She's also writing a faith-based children's book. "What makes the difference for you here at Hope Street?" I asked. "They're showing me how to make living for Jesus a LIFESTYLE not just Sunday Church. Hope Street has helped me own up to my own mistakes, helped me to move forward and through faith in Jesus Christ my life is changing, improving and I can now contribute to others and make a good life from a bad."

I was so encouraged by meeting with Joan to write this story and see how God has transformed her life and to see the freedom she is enjoying in Christ. It reminded me of why Hope Street exists - so that God can restore broken lives that have been devastated by drugs and alcohol and cleanse from all the sin that goes with it. What an honor and a privilege to see the Lord at work in lives as we hold out the Word to them! To see the progress, the tears, the fears and watch as real hope starts to take root as they see Christ more and more and as they become those new creatures in Christ that we are all called to be!

And all of you get to participate as well by supporting our work. We receive no government funds and while members here do pay a fee to participate in our ministry, we still have to raise about 55% of our budget from local foundations and individual contributors. Many of those who come to Hope Street need financial help to pay their fees. This year, with the economy what it is, our budgets are very tight and fund raising is down.

We need your help now. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution and return the enclosed giving card. We will send you a receipt very soon.

Please visit us and see firsthand what the Lord is doing here. We love visitors! You may also come to our Wednesday morning prayer meeting at 9:00 am or our Sunday night worship service at 6:00 pm to be a part of those activities. I am sure that you will be blessed. I am back to work full-time and feeling much better. God has healed me up from 3 major surgeries over the winter. I am so grateful to be back to work and back serving the Lord. No matter what your situation please include our ministry in your daily prayers. That is the greatest gift you can give us. We thank the Lord for you every day.



Pastor Scott Martin
Executive Director