

November 13, 2007

Dear friends,

I need your prayer about a *rescue*. This time the rescue is not for Barb and me and some others in the waters of the Bering Sea. No, this rescue is for the leaders of our Lutheran churches and their spouses.

After much prayer and discussion and consultation with trusted friends and colleagues, Barb and I have decided to take the biggest leap of faith we can imagine. We believe that the Lord is leading us to expand the Fellowship Ministries “tent” to include a specialized counseling center for hurting single clergy, clergy and their spouses, missionaries, and other professional church workers.

Some of you know that, for over 20 years, I have had a passion of putting together a specialized counseling center for burned out church workers in crises. The root of this concern comes from very personal experience. My father experienced such a crisis when I was in 9th grade. I had my own burn out experience when I was only 25 and that led to my resignation from being the founder/director of Lutheran Youth Encounter (which led to my going to Los Angeles to become the a church youth director and that led to the formulation of Lutheran Youth Alive which led to impacting the lives of tens of thousands of young people all across the country.

The root of this concern also comes from 32 years of concert, conference, and seminar ministry, meeting hundreds of “in need” pastors and church workers and their families.

Most all of us know of someone in the ministry who has been or is now in crisis and need to be ministered to so they can continue to minister.

As some of you know, this passion became a brief reality 20 years ago when several of us formed a counseling ministry called Cathedral Rock Centre, Inc. This ministry functioned for about 18 months and 27 individuals came to rented facilities in the Sedona, AZ area for 2 weeks of intensive counseling and therapy. The counseling was “successful”; people experienced healing and hope through the work of outstanding Christian therapists. The organization failed due to changes in insurance reimbursement for “mental health issues” and because of a leadership personnel issue.

I was greeting people who were registering at a FM-sponsored worship/music conference when a man came up to me and said, “Dave, do you think that the Cathedral Rock ministry will ever get going again?” I asked him how he even knew that that ministry existed. He said, “My wife and I were there at a very low time in our ministry and marriage. It was the best thing that ever happened to us. We would not be in ministry today were it not for those two weeks of healing”.

On another occasion, at one of our Celebration of Christmas concerts who said, “we would probably not be married today and we would not be in ministry today were it not for the help that ‘you’ gave us”.

And then, just a few weeks ago, another pastor said to me, “I am a ‘graduate’ of Cathedral Rock. I will do anything I can to help make this new ministry become a reality”.

For two decades we have prayed that God would allow us to, once again, become involved in such a healing ministry.

Is there a need? **There is a need!**

- *Surveys say that 55% of American clergy would change careers if they had a good offer*
- *Most stated this feeling was due to rejection, stress, and burnout* Between 1400 and 1500 Protestant clergy leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, emotional burnout, or contention in their churches
- *Upwards of 70 % of pastors fight depression constantly*
- *80% of pastors (and 84% of their spouses) feel unqualified and discouraged in their roles*

We have committed ourselves, with God's help, to building a care center where pastors, their spouses, and others can receive professional care to deal with their personal circumstances, strengthen their souls, refresh their bodies, and return to their calling.

There are professionals in this area who are willing to share their ministry models and lessons learned with us, to help us hit the ground running.

We believe that God has opened two doors at the same time. Two huge issues can be developed at the same time: *"the program"* and *"the place"*.

Our longtime friend, Mary Gerdes, a Masters-level marriage and family counselor, has carried this passion in her heart for as long as we have. She has agreed to serve as the "Interim Program Director" of this emerging ministry. When the ministry is ready to launch, Mary will have fully developed the center's counseling *program*, including the care-givers/therapists.

The other door involves *"the place"*. A few months ago, while looking around some beautiful countryside, at almost 5000' altitude, only one hour east of the Phoenix area, I found an incredibly beautiful 13.65 acre site that would be perfect for this counseling/retreat center.

When I first arrived at the site, I got out of my car, stood absolutely transfixed at the incredible beauty of the place, and I said, out loud **"Lord is this the place"?** I actually sensed that I was standing on "holy ground".

Some very sensible person, at this point would say, "This project is too big!" I would agree. Too big for us, that's for sure. But not too big for God if this is His plan.

Here is the vision I believe the Lord is giving us...and, of course, the vision is a "work in progress":

- *The program* plan would include two eight-day counseling sessions each month. For as many as 10-12 days each month, the center would be rented to church groups for small conferences and seminars, retreats, and prayer retreats. It also be made available to secular and educational institutions. The rental income would greatly help with the center's ongoing expenses
- *The place* - the buildings and the land - would be purchased as our program is under development
- *The buildings* for the center
 - eight 400 sq ft log cabins (four for clients, two for therapists, one for a chaplain, and one extra). For non-counseling sessions, each cabin could accommodate 3 to 4 people;
 - A 5000 sq ft log lodge for all meals, kitchen, lounge/gathering area, admin office, counseling offices, exercise room, restrooms, and reception area;
 - A 1200 sq ft home for the "host couple" who will provide meals and hospitality ministry.
 - The cost is about \$500,000 for the land and \$700,000 for buildings and infrastructure (less with a lot of donated labor).

Our greatest need from you, dear friend, as I mentioned at the beginning, is the precious gift of your fervent, heartfelt, and faithful prayer. Specifically, that...

- A family or two will buy the land
- other ministry friends will sponsor a cabin (\$28-30,000)
- donors will help us build the Lodge (about \$250,000) and the host couple's log house (about \$90,000)
- someone will sponsor the well/water system (about \$25,000). There is plentiful water under this property and, for land in Arizona, that is a miracle in itself.
- volunteer carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and laborers/helpers will join in the building
- friends from all over the country will step forward to donate everything from artwork to Furniture, linen, kitchen supplies, and exercise equipment
- in the summer of 2008, this vision will be realized and the healing will begin.

As you pray, could you contact me if....

First, you will become a prayer partner with us. We need a team of men and women who will commit themselves to prayer for this ministry.

Second, you your family, your family foundation/trust, and/or a fund within your church could help us buy the land and build the buildings.

Third, you could volunteer with physical labor.

Fourth, you could possibly be called by God to serve as the "Host Couple", providing Hospitality

Ministry by providing great meals and maintenance six months or so a year.

The word "Rescue" has become an important word to Barb and me, especially for the last 14 years since "The Rescue" in the Bering Sea. It is past time for us to provide a place and a process that will "rescue" leaders in His church who are in peril. This verse, which could serve as the counseling center's theme verse, says it all:

**"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those who are crushed in spirit"
(Ps. 34:18)**

Please share your thoughts with us. We are listening to God and to you..God's people!

May God's will be done!

Dave and Barb Anderson

Would you consider investing in this place of rescue?

_____Please put me on *The Shepherd's Canyon Retreat Newsletter* list.

_____I will pray that God's will is done with this emerging ministry.

_____I will consider sponsoring one of the following:

_____cabin _____the Lodge _____the water system _____Host Couple home _____scholarship
_____kitchen supplies _____artwork _____exercise equipment _____money for furnishings

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Email address_____

Phone number_____

Please send this completed form to:

Fellowship Ministries

6105 South Ash, A-1

Tempe, AZ 85283