These are just a few quotes from families who have benefitted from the Barnabas Family Mediation process. Struggling parent & teen relationships are led through a healing process that identifies the hidden emotional and spiritual core of surface conflict. The power of the Holy Spirit provides matchless wisdom, insight, and practical answers for the hard questions facing parents and youth. This past year more than 100 families have received help, at no charge to them, through the Barnabas Team.

"Thanks for talking with us, and helping us understand our daughter. You connected with her in a way her previous counselors didn’t."

"Thanks for helping me and my mom figure stuff out...."

"You helped our family stay together. We could not have navigated the system & consequences without you by our side."

BARNABAS MINISTRIES, INC
10500 Chicago Dr., #40
Zeeland, MI 49464
PH: 616.748.8435
Fax: 616.748.8451
barnabas@barnabasmin.org
www.barnabasmin.org
The Harvest is Plentiful...

Got the most amazing text message at 7:23 this morning, from one of my Barnabas kids:

“Okay good morning! Thanks for everything idk if I ever told u that u and the people from Barnabas are really something thanks for helpin my family out.”

Their family has been served in many ways through Barnabas. They’ve received care through two mentors, two sports teams, diapers & wipes through the Pamperazzi project, girls’ group, collaboration of services with others in the community. Without assistance, the family dynamics create a despair-filled situation. With the help Barnabas brought to them, they are finding hope for successful individual lives as well as receiving many opportunities to place their hearts into God’s hands for eternity.

You are part of making that happen! Your prayers, volunteer service, and sacrificial giving have been used by God to bring a Barnabas Ministry Team member into thousands of young lives this past year.

Throughout our nearly 18 year history, God has continued to provide us with an ever increasing number of opportunities to reach the homeless and hurting youth and their families. As I look ahead to 2013 and beyond, I see the tragic reality of hearts lost without Christ, and still more ways to develop relationships with them that will lead them to the One who cares about them more than we ever could.

As you read the information in this newsletter, recognize the incredible harvest field our Father is sending us into. See the ways & places He uses Barnabas - and many of you - to be laborers in His work. Recognize that for every broken heart, our Father has the ultimate healing solution.

Yes, more than ever, the harvest is plentiful.

Might the next laborer be you?

Serving them, for Him

-LoriJo Schepers

Our Mission:

Barnabas Ministries is passionately committed to reaching high risk youth and families with the message of freedom, hope and healing in Jesus Christ.

Our Vision:

To create an environment where hurting youth and families can discover their value in Christ, grow in that knowledge, and pass that knowledge on to others.

---

Barnabas House
Mentoring
Family Mediation
Horseplay Equestrian
Lakeshore honors league
The Holland Dream
CAA softball
Pen Pal Outreach
Ministry Team training &equipping
Barnabas Publishing
Girls’ Group
Juvenile Justice Outreach
Teen Recovery Groups
Ministry Consulting & Advising

Barnabas Ministries has the privilege of running drug and alcohol teen recovery support groups in Grand Haven and Holland. Most of the youth were introduced to drugs/alcohol for the first time around age 11 by family. The reason most of the youth cite for using is because they don’t like “how they feel sober”. Our volunteers invest time, heart and truth into the lives of the 10 to 15 youth that attend the groups every week. We provide a place for them to meet people who have overcome addictions. Our weekly discussion topics range from home, work and school to all the other usual things teens like to talk about. While at surface level, they may all appear to have similar life experiences and backgrounds, it is easy to recognize the hand of God in each one of them individually and uniquely. I would ask for your prayers that mentors are found for each of them soon and that they feel the presence of God in their lives on a daily basis.

One of the greatest feelings is going out into the local community and seeing former youth from the recovery group and getting a firsthand look at how their lives have been turned around through the grace of God. We give all the glory to God for the way He is able to accomplish so much with the spark the He puts into their lives through this ministry.

-Dennis Nietering

---

Future Events:

Gifts of Hope: A $25 donation provides a bible, reading and study material, and a personal note from the Barnabas ministries team to youth who are incarcerated or in facilities away from their families for the holiday season. Visit the Barnabas website to participate!

Pamperazzi project: Providing diapers to families in need for the Christmas season.

February Chili and Auction event: Sample some really great chili and participate in our auction featuring items for the whole family, dining gift certificates, food, services, and more! If you are interested in donating items before the end of the year, we can get you a gift in kind/tax contribution receipt.

The Holland Dream: come join us for our home games at the Holland Civic Center. Visit the Holland dream facebook page or go to www.ibaball.net/teams-2/hollanddream for a schedule.
Pen Pal Program

With the pen pal program we get to match up Christian adults to write letters of hope to youth that are incarcerated, in a youth home, or treatment facility. They get to be the light of Christ by reaching out to youth who are in a dark place in life. We recently began working with Bethany Christian Services and send letters to 6 different centers. We currently have 47 youth pen pals!

In the last few months we have seen a drastic increase in youth asking for a pen pal and here’s the exciting part: they want to know more about God. When asked why the youth want a pen pal they have said things like “I need someone to talk to”, “I like to receive letters” and, “I have no one to talk to and I want to find God”. Also, many pen pal youth have asked to do the Extreme Bible Study series through mail! Currently, we have a specific need for more men to commit to writing letters to the many young men who are in need of a pen pal. Please be praying for our youth to continue to be reached, their hearts opened, and how you could possibly serve as a pen pal.

From the pens of our youth:

“Ever since you started to write me my whole life has changed around… Do you know all of the stories and verses [you sent me]? I have them all taped up in my room and every day… I read all of them.”

“Thank you for your support and your words of wisdom. Thanks for actually caring.”

The Calvary house exists to provide a safe haven for young women who need a place to live. With the help of our “big sister” volunteer, they get a chance to learn independent living skills such budgeting, have responsibilities such as daily chores, and be ministered to through the love of Christ and the ministry of Barnabas.

Here’s a word from Melissa at the Calvary House:

“I am a “big sister” in the Calvary House. Basically, this just means that I have the opportunity to live with and love on some young-adult ladies. Even though I’ve only been here a few months, I’ve had some touching moments and a few good laughs. God orchestrated an unexpected moment when I had one young lady ask me to help her learn how to do devotions. I gave her a Bible and was able to walk through some suggestions with her. I’m very grateful that God gave me that opportunity.

I would appreciate prayer for these young ladies, that they will be able to find healing from the pain of the past, and that they will learn to find hope. Pray that God will draw them close and show them how much they are loved. Pray that God will give them the wisdom and the skills to make decisions that will help them grow into strong godly women. I would also appreciate prayer for wisdom and boldness for myself as I share life with these young ladies.”

-Melissa Baker

Girls Group

Barnabas Ministries Girls Group is a 10 week series of classes that give young women the opportunity to develop relationships, life skills, mentoring, and experiential learning. One of the coolest aspects of this ministry is the environment that is created by the many volunteers who attend every week.

That environment is responsible for one of our girls saying this:

“That environment is also what is responsible for our volunteers making the following observations:

“Most of our girls seemed in a funk and really didn’t have anything good they wanted to share about their day. One of the sweetest blessings I noticed was that as we began in our groups, moving from station to station, they began to soften and I believe encounter some very good things in their day! Smiles and chatting began.” And, “There is such a sense of sadness and yuck when we begin. I see every week, the scowls turned into giggles.”

When the girls encounter an environment of peace, love, hope, boundaries and grace they blossom. God is at work in their hearts and I am blessed to be a part of it.

Girls Group Transportation

One of the awesome things I have the opportunity to do is help out at girls group. I am so blessed to be a part of it. It has been amazing to see the attitudes of the girls change just by being there.

One of my roles at group is to provide transportation for a few of the girls who live in the Grand Haven area and bring them to Holland so they can be a part of the group. The car rides have been an enlightening experience and have provided me with a window into their worlds. Their stories of fighting, both in the home and at school, smoking, drug use, sexual activity and the hurt that is going on in each of their lives is both heartbreaking and shocking that it is normal in their worlds for 14 and 15 year olds to be doing these things. This experience has provided me with an incredible opportunity to be a positive influence for Christ in their lives.

The ability to make an impact in their lives through something as simple as driving a car is amazing to me!

- Nikki Schepers
It’s hard to believe it’s only been 4 months that we’ve had the privilege of sharing God’s love and grace with the kids at the Allegan Detention and Cheever Treatment Centers. We have grown to have such a love for them in such a short time! It’s awesome to get to see in their eyes those “light bulb moments” when you know the Holy Spirit just enlightened their heart to the truth you’ve been talking about and they GET IT! Or to see the tears that well up behind those same eyes because the ministering balm of the Word of God just touched their pain. We have gotten to see a young man with high walls built around his heart that wanted nothing to do with God, open up and come to a place of “what if…?”. Several of the kids are getting into the Word on their own by doing the bible study series Barnabas offers. One young man wrote on the back of his, “I wasn’t too sure about doing this at first, but it’s really helping me get things straight in my head.” Imagine that: God’s Word straightening things out in his head. I smile every time I think about it. In addition to all of that, we get to laugh with them, pray with them, and play everything from guitar to Dance, Dance Revolution with them... all to the glory of God, of course. I Pray that He continues to do what only He can in giving these precious, young lives a living Hope in Jesus Christ.

-Carol & John McCracken

They’ve talked to me when I was down and gave Hope

“I would like if you could pray for my family and me. I am locked up and would love for you to pray for me to come home soon.

“Can you please pray that when I get home my mom and my family would just be understanding of the bad things I have done and also that I can change and pray for the effort I put into it.

“They take their time and effort to help improve our lives. Barnabas has a lot of positive role models that we all can look up to.”

The Lakeshore Honors League is a part of the Barnabas Family of Ministries. The LHL is entering into its 5th season. The LHL was developed after many seasons of Barnabas having one team in the community. The need for a place for the guys to play was greater than one team could provide. The formation of the LHL gives a structure to a league with 7 teams, 5 alternative schools, real referees, and a real tournament. We desire to give the young men a high quality league where they can belong, learn character that sports can teach and learn basketball skills.

Barnabas Ministries’ has a team in the league in partnership with the Juvenile Justice Institute. The Jaguars’ head coach this year is Teddy Davis:

“I have to say, I am so excited to coach the Jags. I have a lot of passion when it comes to coaching, teaching, and building relationships. Just from a few practices, I’ve already had the opportunity to begin building some relationships with the guys on my team. It’s exciting to see the team growing and I know that we will have a solid team this year. The main focus for the season is to keep the guys motivated to learn and grow as a team and of course, to make sure that we have a ton of fun while playing. This could be the year that the jags can bring the championship home!”

Barnabas would like to welcome the Holland Dream to our family of Ministries. The Dream is a local, semi-pro basketball team that is a part of the Independent Basketball Association.

“Dream” stands for ‘Driven, Respectable, Encouraging, Athletic Men’.

We are excited to have a professional team in our community that can inspire and impact our youth. We are looking forward to exploring how we can reach out to more students and families as well as develop these professional athletes as they pursue their goals of making it to overseas and the NBA. And we are excited of the potential for our players to be able to mentor younger guys. I look forward to partnering with Barnabas as I continue to learn how to run a basketball organization.

-Teddy Davis
Horseplay Equestrian

When we look back at this year and all of the cool things God is doing, one word comes to mind... GROWING. Horseplay has had the most incredible privilege of working with many kids over the course of this year. We have had over 30 mentee/mentor kids, over 175 kids out as groups, and 5 young people give their lives to Christ. God has moved and provided in so many amazing ways, creating the most beautiful moments both in the youth that we serve, and in us as volunteers.

One afternoon a young lady came out for their weekly session. Besides giving her riding lessons, we also talked about Christ. We talked about how Christ sacrificed himself on the cross so that we can have forgiveness, and that He is our peace and comfort. As we finished out our last lap around the arena she became really quiet. When I asked her about it, she responded, “I think I need to pray”. We walked together to the prayer garden and sitting on the bench beneath the cross, she gave her life to Christ! These are the most precious moments that we get to see here. We get to see an awe inspiring God use anything (even a horse) to show His unending love here.

- Tami Klinger

**Mentored Youth Events**

This past summer we have had several events for the Girls and Guys. The favorites seemed to be the outdoor events. The Girls were invited to a lake house in Conklin. We enjoyed the perfect weather as we ate dinner out on the deck overlooking the lake. When we finished our hosts loaded us up on the boat, sea-doo, and the kayaks, then sent us off to have some fun. The Girls were able to see the love of God through the hospitality of our hosts. The Guys had an entire week’s worth of Big Lake Fishing! Several of them held up their prizes for the camera as they smiled from ear to ear. We partnered with Free Water Experience so the guys could have one of their weekly session.

Also, the Horseplay Outing was a big hit! The kids were able to walk horses through an obstacle course and learn about themselves and how God sees them. The Horses would mimic the kids’ actions. If they were uninterested then the Horse was uninterested, if they were nervous then the Horse was nervous, but if they showed confidence, then the Horse would follow them where ever they went. One boy was very timid and had difficulty with the horse. A staff member taught him about being a leader and standing up to bullies, and used the horse to show him how to do that. The next thing you know the boy leading the horse with ease and had a big grin on his face. The Lord really did an awesome work in his life that day.

- Leah Cole

“A mentor is a person you can talk to about personal stuff. I have a lot of stuff going on and I just want someone to talk about it with.” As I travel around and interview kids, variations of that answer are the number one response I get to the question, “Why do you want a mentor?” Here’s the translation they want us to hear: Please care about me. It’s such a tremendous opportunity. Mentors have the privilege of getting to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the life of a vulnerable young person. They get to be that voice of encouragement that says, “I believe in you.” The seed of those simple words alone has powerful potential. That’s what I love the most about working with mentors and kids. A very big God takes the smallest of offerings we give- a trip to McDonalds, a couple hours of my time, and a listening ear- and compounds eternal dividends. Kids are being changed as they experience God’s love through His ambassadors. Mentors are being changed as they are faced with new challenges that must be committed to Jesus’ trustworthy Hands. And God gets the glory for all of it. Would you pray and ask God if you aren’t His answer to one of our waiting kids saying, “Please care about me.”? Blessings to you.

- Carol McCracken

**The big 4-5**

You see signs on the side of the road when there is a celebration for someone’s 40th or 50th birthday. The signs are put up to honor the person and perhaps to embarrass them, [out of love of course]. To clear stuff up, no, no one is turning 45 at the Barnabas office, well, I don’t think so at least…. But we want to honor the 45 youth WAITING for a youth mentor in our local communities and let everyone know what is happening. So, we hold up a banner high in honor of the 45 teens patiently waiting for someone to hang out with them, share hobbies, learn with, and teach them to cook or throw a football.

Can you be that listening ear? Would you be willing to share with a willing teen how much Jesus loves them? Could you share some skills God has gifted you with? Mentoring takes a heart for the Lord, a heart for the hurting youth in our community and a teachable attitude. You in? The 45 still wait… for someone like YOU.

Pray with us for these 45 Christian adults to rise up. Be one of the 45 to make an impact for eternity. Contact Rachel at rachell@barnabasmin.org or 748.8435 ext. 107 for more details.

- Rachel Patmos

**Mentoring**
WHY HOMELESS YOUTH?

In June 2012, the Ottawa Area Intermediate School district released its numbers of homeless students throughout our community.

Students, Attending school, Homeless.
The numbers are sobering.

For the 2011-2012 school year, the ISD has 127 students registered as homeless and unaccompanied.

Totally alone.

Student self-report number from 2011, recorded in the Ottawa County Health Department YAS survey, shows 113 8th, 10th and 12th graders had no place to sleep at least once this school year.

Kids with backpacks, homework, going to class. No safe place to sleep. In our community.

We believe this is unacceptable.

We believe NOW is the time to band together and build the Barnabas House.

Holland Sentinel Editors, September 1, 2012

HIT: Teen Homeless Shelter for Holland

“Congratulations to Barnabas Ministries, which recently began site work for the first shelter for homeless teens in the Holland area. A teen shelter has been the goal of many churches and social service agencies in the area for decades, and a lot of caring people are excited to see it becoming a reality. Further, the fact that the shelter will be run by an experienced and professional agency like Barnabas gives us confidence that it will be well run and won’t create problems for its Holland Township neighbors. The need is real. The nature of homelessness in our community - you’re not likely to see anyone sleeping in a park or an alleyway in Holland - can mask the reality of the problem here. Many teens are dealing with broken families and have been forced into a transient life, shuttling from one friend’s couch to the next; even if they have a roof over their heads, they are truly homeless, and in need of the stability and positive direction that an agency like Barnabas can provide.”

“The services Barnabas provides are of tremendous value to Ottawa County. The Barnabas House will help many stay out of the legal system, while providing safe shelter at a critical time in their lives.”

Paul Lindemuth, Ottawa County Juvenile Court

“For too long we have not had a safe place for unaccompanied teenagers in our community. The Mission is not legally allowed to take them in. We need to move forward with the Barnabas House, to create a safe place for our vulnerable teens.”

Todd Krygsheld, Holland Rescue Mission

“Ask any law enforcement officer in Ottawa County if this facility is necessary, and they will tell you it is. This has been a gap in our community for far too long.”

Captain Jack Dykstra, Holland Police Department

BARNABAS MINISTRIES
616.748.8435
www.barnabasmin.org
lorijo@barnabasmin.org