

The Milwaukee Outreach Center



JANUARY 2006

The Quiet Work of Counseling

At every turn in life we can look back and see how someone's advice or counsel affected our decisions. Those who are closest to us initially influence our decisions but eventually we discover the imperfections and limitations of our most trusted family members and friends. We naturally begin to look for outside help.

For nearly twenty years now, The Milwaukee Outreach Center has carried out the quiet work of counseling. We call it "quiet" because it is deeply personal, thoroughly Christian and often complex and challenging. Only those staff members who are academically and professionally qualified are allowed to counsel. We do receive donations for our services based upon a client's ability to contribute.

Because we live in a sinful and fallen world, it is easy for individuals and families to lose their way. God knows this and throughout history He has sent special people to speak on His behalf. He told Isaiah "to speak to the heart of Jerusalem" in order that they may walk with God (Isaiah 40:2). Just prior to this Isaiah was told, "Comfort, O comfort My people, says your God."

Everyone goes through times of distress and even suffering. This doesn't mean that God is not with us. Just the contrary. He is drawing us to seek Him intimately and sometimes understanding comes to us through the counsel of others.

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you" (Psalm 32:8).

Not everyone needs a professional counselor. Healthy relationships provide a wealth of good counsel. Jesus promised His followers that the Holy Spirit would guide them into "all the truth" (John 16:13). Good counsel also comes to us through good preaching, faithful Bible study and prayer, and consistent worship and fellowship in a local church.

Counseling is a great fit in all that we do at The Milwaukee Outreach Center. It is a privilege to be God's assistant in carrying out His healing work. At every event or from every class that we teach, there are often one or two people who are dealing with challenging problems and they seek our counsel. Many other people come to us through referrals. We are in awe of this as we quietly experience God's saving and healing work in these lives.



Counseling Ministry Reaches West Bend

Luke Emrich, pastor of New Life Christian Fellowship, has been instrumental in the success of TMOC's counseling services in West Bend.

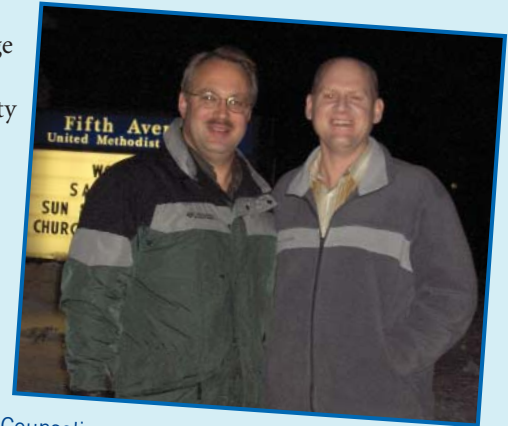
Nearly five years ago a group of community leaders in West Bend recognized the need for Christian counseling in their city. Even though West Bend is 40 miles north of Milwaukee, a strong bond developed between the counseling services of The Milwaukee Outreach Center (TMOC) and several churches in West Bend.

Every week TMOC sends one or two counselors to West Bend. The Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church provides meeting space and, in the beginning, New Life Christian Fellowship managed appointments and scheduled referrals from area churches.

Gary Shoults, a staff counselor at TMOC, believes a large part of the center's effectiveness is because of a group of faithful intercessors who pray for the counselors and clients. Shoults observed, "The greatest need is for God to counsel people during their times of personal distress." The counseling sessions involve listening, understanding, and sharing God's love and truth and applying it to hurting and wounded people.

"The opening of the center was a real blessing at a critical time," states Luke Emrich, pastor of New Life Christian Fellowship. Emrich continued, "As our counseling schedule and service became consistent, many individuals within the community began to come for counseling. Instead of a variety of voices working at large, we have been able to cultivate one central, consistent counseling voice in West Bend."

Pastor Emrich noticed that the greatest challenge for individuals and families in his community relate to discouragement and depression. "Our challenge is to help people find a sense of purpose as well as understand the grace and love of God through Jesus Christ."



Counseling services in West Bend began through a series of simple conversations between Mike Rintelman (left) and Luke Emrich (right) concerning the needs of the community.

Gary Shoults – Faithful Counselor and Friend

This month we say farewell to Gary Shoults who has been a faithful counselor and friend of The Milwaukee Outreach Center (TMOC). He and his wife Carol are retiring and moving to Las Vegas. (Yes, there are many Christians in this great city and now there will be two more.)

Before coming to TMOC in March of 1999, Shoults worked in information systems in several parts of the Midwest. Sensing a call to Christian counseling, he enrolled and completed a Master of Arts and Religion at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

As a staff counselor, Shoults has faithfully served many wonderful people in Milwaukee and West Bend. He has been a diligent teacher in the Phoenix Life Skills and the Wings programs.



Part of Gary Shoults' responsibilities included working with counseling intern, Angie Miller (left).



The Four Amigos of TMOC (left to right): Gary Shoults, Christian Counseling; Will Hope, Director of Development; Mike Rintelman, Executive Director and Bill Lange, Director of Phoenix Life Skills.



Gary and Carol Shoults are looking forward in their retirement to spending more time with their grandchildren. Left to right: Samuel (2), Noah (4) and Benjamin (1). Not pictured is Aaron (12).

A common theme in Shoults' counseling is that God is the counselor who chooses to work through us. He also believes in the necessity of prayer in helping people. He noted, "Prayer invites God into every situation so we can find out what pleases Him." We pray God's richest blessings upon Gary and Carol as they start a new season of service.

Count On Me!



Thanksgiving volunteers and guests used every inch of the dining hall at the Berean Family Worship Center.

Today I'm enclosing:

- ___ My monthly commitment of \$ _____
- ___ A special offering for counseling \$ _____

I would like...

- to attend the Phoenix Life Skills program
- to schedule TMOC at our missions fair/conference in 2006
- to visit with a Christian counselor

Name _____
(first) (last)

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Thanksgiving Praise Report

Joy and gratitude filled Our Thanksgiving Celebration of Love. Ronnie was our first arrival. The night before he had slept in the streets and when he came in the door, his hands were clumps of cold and ice. As he warmed them before the heater in the foyer of the church, they changed from purple to blue to white and then a dingy pink.

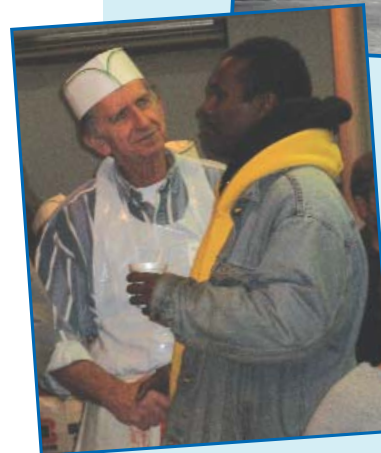
On this 15 degree day over 200 volunteers welcomed some 800 guests to a full sit-down Thanksgiving dinner. Table hosts made sure that each person was greeted by name and time was made for visiting. Christmas cards were available for guests to send to loved ones, neighbors and friends. Afterwards we put stamps on the 200 cards and mailed them the following week.

Our meals-on-wheels volunteers delivered 90 dinners to shut-ins. Each driver set aside time to visit and introduce the ministry of The Milwaukee Outreach Center. Before leaving, they prayed and then gave the shut-in a copy of *The Message of Hope*.

At the end of the day there was a sense of awe in what had just happened. We remembered the Scripture in Hebrews 13:2,3: "Never forget to welcome strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves are in the world."



Berean Family Worship Center at Capital and 51st Street hosted this year's Thanksgiving Celebration of Love.



Rod Denetz (left) paused from serving tables to visit with one of our Thanksgiving guests.

Looking for Direction in 2006?

- Are you searching for answers?
- Wondering what God's plan for you might be?
- The Phoenix Life Skills program teaches people who they really are and how to find meaning in life and work.
- This is an intensive one-week 40 hour course designed to motivate and empower individuals to achieve personal and financial goals.



Dates:

January 23 – 27 March 6 – 10
 April 24 – 28 June 5 – 9

Time:

8:45 AM – 4:00 PM (lunch provided)
 Register: Call The Milwaukee Outreach Center at 414-760-0334.



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Lasting Change.*

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Michael Rintelman
Executive Director

Executive Director's Update

Several years ago it was evident to me that very few people in our corner of Wisconsin had access to affordable professional Christian counseling. Moved by this observation, I started a five-year journey that led to a graduate degree in professional counseling. From the early days of ministry when The Milwaukee Outreach Center hosted the

call-in center for The 700 Club to today where we counsel from two locations, counseling has always been a significant part of our ministry.

Our fervent prayer is for God to use each of our counselors to bring exhortation, admonition, reproof and correction to each person we counsel. I'm so happy for those who desire to face their problems head on through counseling. It takes courage to overcome problems that we can't solve alone.

Most people do not suffer from a lack of knowledge about their problems. What they lack is the application of biblical truth in their lives. Some of the people we have worked with in the past years have come to us with problems that they haven't yet told their pastor. We have been able to develop a relationship with the individual or couple and with their pastor in order to maximize the impact of accountability and application of truth in their lives.

We see counseling as part of God's saving work. The Psalmist reminds us, "The Lord is near to the broken hearted, and saves

those who are crushed in spirit" (34:18). Your faithful prayers and gifts enable us to fulfill God's saving work for the many people who come to our doors seeking help. Thank You!

This month many of us will make resolutions – most of which will not make it past Valentine's Day. As you start the New Year, ask yourself: Is my marriage all God wants it to be? Can I be a better parent? Is it time to finally resolve a lingering problem? Is my relationship with Christ all that it should be? We are praying that the Holy Spirit will counsel and guide you throughout the New Year.



Ready to enjoy some Christmas candies, Mike Rintelman (center) is joined by (left to right) Marilyn Rintelman (receptionist), Melissa Whiting (undergraduate intern from Concordia University), Angie Miller (graduate intern from Concordia University) and Gary Shoults (TMOC staff counselor).