

Place of Promise

A Multi-Service Advocacy Center

"I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people." Leviticus 26:12

March 2011

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them."

Romans 8:28

Dear Friends,

If you listen closely at Place of Promise this month, you'll hear the distinct tap of the Conductor's baton. You can always hear it, but often, I must confess, we ignore or simply become accustomed to the sound and go on as if it does not exist. The events of this month, however, have reminded us ever so clearly, that our lives are being orchestrated and conducted by the great Adonai, the Master, who knows the plans He has for us! They are plans to prosper us and not to harm us; plans with a hope and a future!

Certainly, we can see God's commanding performance in the "volunteer piece." It starts with the sighs and sounds of an exhausted director and staff, followed by a rising crescendo of people God has chosen to fill in the gaps and make life a little easier. As I've mentioned before, Jeff has been such an amazing addition to the harmony of the men's house. He teaches them a Bible Study every day, drives everyone around to appointments all morning, and much more. With 22+ people to jockey around to courts, jobs, career centers, GED school, college, doctor appointments, etc., it can be a challenge to orchestrate our day. Thanks be to God who often leads us through plan A-G, but always shows us the way to get us all there and back. Of course, God really knew what He was doing when He brought Dustin and Pete to Place of Promise two years ago. Dustin was so full of fear and anxiety; his addiction was strong and overpowering. He could barely speak. His whole life consisted of pain and fear. He was completely lost. Pete was a dead man stumbling. He believed he was of no value, no use, and was unloved. Our Conductor tapped his baton, raised His hands over their lives and today they are like a duet driving all over Lowell. Dustin and Pete take over after Jeff leaves for the day. Dustin drives; Pete navigates. Only God can make sweet music of two lives that could only moan in misery!

Another score written is the return of the former residents to help out in the evenings. Lynn, Darlene, Billy, and Kerri all come at least one or more evenings a week to run groups for those who are in the program now. We also have a couple current residents doing groups and/or house duty: Billy, Winston, Pete, Dustin, Roger, and Geoff. God individually chose each of these people to be at Place of Promise, to grow in His love and to give back a portion of what they have been given. Even with their help, I still had too many evenings without help. God brought us Courtney, originally connected through a church in Amherst, MA. She adds a note of grace and beauty to the women's house each Tuesday.

Still that's not all! We also have a pastor from New Colony Baptist Church who comes as often as he can to teach a Bible Study to the residents. We have "cooking ladies" from Grace Point Church. There are nine mentors actively working one on one, helping our new believers learn to walk more closely with God. Two of our mentors also run an Alpha class once a month for the women. We have two faithful people from Boxford Congregational Church bringing dinner every Thursday. A group from Ipswich Presbyterian cooks dinner for us every 2nd Tuesday each month. We get cleaning products and so much more from our friends at Grace Chapel. A member of our Board of Directors has been providing food for Sunday dinners for over five years. We are blessed with clothing, furniture, and lots of good food. One resident had asked Terri to buy Activia yogurt and the very next day 4 cases were delivered by the food bank!

The list goes on and on. God, our great Conductor, chooses each resident, staff person, volunteer, Board member along with each of you, and creates a symphony of faith, hope and love in Place of Promise!

Let me tell you one final story that demonstrates the awesome orchestration of God in our lives here at Place of Promise. Hopefully, you will be encouraged that God is using your lives, your support, and your prayers to help carry out His great purpose.

Many years ago, God began to compose and orchestrate a powerful symphony called Place of Promise. So many of us were completely oblivious to what God had in the works. Times were really tough, and it almost seemed impossible for anything good to come of all the human tragedy. With God, however, all things are possible. He chose Rosita Hernandez to inspire and challenge a roomful of people gathered in the little church in our home in Dorchester. We all thought we were there to have a “going home” party for her; a celebration of her move into heaven. She was one of the most broken women I had ever met. She had been in the streets using heroin for over 20 years. She carried all the labels society puts on one whose life is criminal, sinful, destructive, diseased, and trapped in pain and suffering beyond description. She referred to herself as the “walking dead”, but declared to all who would listen that God had given her life. She challenged us all with the truth that there were thousands more just like her still out there who needed to hear the message that our God is the Giver of abundant life! It was about a dozen people who were at that party that night, Terri included, who came together, under God’s direction, protection and provision, to begin Place of Promise.

God brought us all together and has conducted the show since before day one. We are all vital players in this great piece that He is still fine tuning all the time. We are here, we give, we surrender all to the great Orchestrator of our lives. Sometimes, we just stand amazed and say thank you for honoring us to be important players in His great work of art.

Three weeks ago, I received a call from a Beth Israel Hospital social worker who described a woman from Kenya who had lived in the states for about 16 years and was now a patient in that hospital. Over twenty years ago, I developed a good working relationship with this hospital while Rosita was a patient there. Now, when it seemed there was no one to help, social services remembered Place of Promise. The social worker went on to describe this woman in her fifties who had been medflighted there, almost frozen to death. She had been found, barely alive, lying in the snow in a parking lot. She had severe tissue damage due to frost bite and upon arrival at Beth Israel Hospital’s ER, had begun to have seizures. A CAT scan revealed a large tumor in her brain and surgery was performed. Later, it was discovered that after working many years as a CNA, this woman had lost her job due to health problems of unknown etiology. Subsequently, she had lost her home, was living in her car and had a seizure late one night in the parking lot of a church. Two Sisters of the church had found her early the next morning. God had orchestrated a rescue that was declared a miracle by all, but now what were they to do? The Kenyan woman was alive, but was without insurance. No rehabilitation facility would take her. The shelters refused her due to her serious medical conditions. The only alternative seemed to be teaching her how to tie a bag or two of her personal belongings to a walker and discharge her to the street. Everyone was distraught; everyone that is except the woman herself who has a very personal relationship with her life Conductor, Jesus Christ. She kept assuring everyone that God would send someone to help her. That’s when the social worker called Place of Promise.

Could we help this woman? Was there room in our home for her? Could we handle all this extra work? There were so many questions with only one answer: what would Jesus have us do?

Place of Promise couldn’t do what Jesus would do today unless every single one of us followed the lead of His baton. Listen! Do you hear the tap? Do you realize just how important each of you are to the whole composition? God has orchestrated our lives to create a beautiful Place of Promise in the midst of a very troubled world! Everyone plays a part in this symphony; those who volunteer, give financially, pray, donate what they have. Even our newest resident from Kenya, who is now warm, safe, and getting better every day, blesses us with her prayers each day. Thank you so much for the part that you can play and to God be the Glory!

In His Orchestra,



Beth Kidd, Director