



## Girls Restored and Christ Exalted

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## Thanks for giving...

Thanksgiving is always a great time to reflect on the blessings from the previous year. Well of GRACE Ministries has many reasons to be thankful. As of November 2009 Well of GRACE Ministries has provided residential services to 12 young women since opening our doors two years ago. We thank God for every young woman who has participated in our program, and we thank God for our amazing staff who have invested themselves in mentoring and counseling these young women whose lives have truly been transformed.

Because we believed that we have something valuable to offer young women in our community, we pursued ways to expand our ministry. Our pursuit resulted in the creation of Club H2O, a small group for adolescent girls ages 13-18 who meet once a week for twelve weeks. We have partnerships with Overflow Church at Orchard Mall in Benton Harbor and First Church of God in St. Joseph to allow us to use their facilities to run these groups. Our next sessions will begin in January.

Every girl that we have served and every life that has been transformed by our ministry is because you, our generous donors, gave faithfully to our ministry. So, on behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and residents, Well of GRACE Ministries would like to say to all of you, "Thanks for giving!!!"

## Join us in January

Southwest Michigan's newest 12-week meeting place specially designed for girls ages 13-18. It's a safe place to connect, increase self-esteem, find potential and explore possibilities. . . defining who you are on the inside and out. . . and celebrating what makes you unique.



Engaging activities, projects and prizes! Each of the twelve splashes will provide varying exercises to help you recognize your strengths, personal interests, values and character, each enabling you to develop more confidence in the areas of: constructive thoughts, positive relationships, peer pressure, beauty, healthy eating habits and overall wellness.

Sessions will explore "beauty" in many facets: in popular songs, watching movie clips, make-up and skin care, jewelry making, collage projects and more! There will be opportunities to receive free beauty supplies and give-aways for movies, CDs and even a pass to the YMCA!

Registration is easy! You have two options: Call Well of GRACE at 269.428.9355 or visit [www.wellofgraceministries.com](http://www.wellofgraceministries.com) to download the registration form, fill it out and mail.



### ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO OVERFLOW THE WELL!

Well of GRACE has been the recipient of a matching gift from an anonymous donor for the past few years. This year we have two donors who have offered to match the end of year gifts up to \$18,000!! Considering the current economy, this is a great way to "double" the value of your tax deductible donation. Please indicate your intention to participate in this offer by writing "overflow" in the memo line of your check.



## Well of GRACE Values our Volunteers

Dr. Lisa Mc Shane, DDS, and her staff, have been instrumental in creating a beautiful smile for one of our residents. This young lady walked into the dental office to receive the gift of having her teeth cleaned, and several months later, has had cavities filled, and broken teeth fixed! She gave us permission to share some excerpts of the thank-you letter she recently wrote:

*"I have struggled with an eating disorder since I was 8 years old... I learned that I had 23 cavities, but didn't have the money to get them fixed. Eating with them was painful.... I have been working to recover from my anorexia but always thought that I'd have that ugly smile to remind me of where I had been. I was scared and embarrassed to go (to the dentist). I did not want people to see how bad my teeth were. But your office was so kind and caring to me. I didn't feel the judgment I had expected... I don't have that smile anymore as a reminder. And I am not in pain when I eat. I'm not afraid to smile and as I am getting better my desire to smile is coming back. It's awesome to me to have a pretty smile to show now..."*

Thank you to Dr. McShane and her assistants Lori and Lindsay, for their most generous gift...giving this young woman a reason to smile by giving her a beautiful one!

# A REASON TO CELEBRATE!

Well of GRACE Ministries recently celebrated another graduation of one of our residents. Bethany came to us from Indiana and spent 10 months in our program. Staff, volunteers, family and friends gathered together to celebrate her accomplishments in the program and give her words of encouragement as she transitions back to life at home and returns to college in January. During her party Bethany broke her scale from home with a hammer. She wanted to send a message to everyone that her self-worth was no longer dictated by the numbers on "the metal box." Bethany is an avid photographer and journaled her stay in our program through a series of photographs she entitled "a year lost, a life gained." Bethany took a year off from school to participate in our program so in fact she lost a year of school, but our hope is that we equipped her with effective tools that she will use for a lifetime!



Beginning in 2010, we will be altering the operations of our day to day ministry model. First of all, we would like to substantially increase the number of young women that can benefit from Well of GRACE Ministries. Second, we would like to have a more sustainable financial model as a non-profit organization. We are prayerfully considering these changes and will announce them in our next newsletter. We covet your prayers as we move forward to expand our services and seek to be good stewards of the resources we have been given.

## Mud Volleyball returning Summer 2010!



## Fall into the Arts

On Sunday, November 1, local artists created a fundraiser combining fine art, music and food called “Fall into the Arts.” Artists Anna Russo-Sieber and Susan Schirmer crafted an enjoyable afternoon at Krasl Art Center downtown St. Joseph. Many local artists donated their own pieces for a silent auction. Artists Elaine Harju, Heidi Heald, Jan Sonnoman and Susan Schirmer

offered guests an opportunity to create their own art. Projects included mixed media, ceramic leaves, watercolor techniques and illumination. For many of the guests, the highlight of the afternoon was hearing from our residents themselves. One of our residents shared her testimony and then she and another resident sang “The Climb.” The events of the afternoon raised over \$4000!

**Well of GRACE Ministries would like to thank the following sponsors and individuals who helped make “Fall into the Arts” a remarkable event!**

**Sponsors:**

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Southwestern Medical Clinic

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Grand Mere Inn

*Friends of the Well*

Anna Russo Sieber  
Becky Rotter/Cherry Hill Pottery  
Bethany Mills  
Bit of Swiss Pastry Shoppe  
B.J. Goetz  
Grand Mere Inn  
Hamadanchi Chiropractic Clinic  
Heidi Heald  
Joshua Andres Sculpture & Design  
Kilwin’s Chocolate Fudge & Ice Cream Shoppe  
Lynne Tan

Meredith Schmidt  
Rebecca Hungerford  
Susan Schirmer

**Committee Members:**

Anna Russo-Sieber  
Flori Mejeur  
Jenny Fry  
Michelle Seymour  
Susan Schirmer

**Artists:**

Elaine Harju  
Heidi Heald  
Jan Sonnoman  
Susan Schirmer

**Musicians:**

Allison Romano & Bethany Mills  
Bette Thompson  
Chris Spitters

**Serenata String Quartet:**

Jenna Solomon, Grace Cravens  
Samantha Parker, Amanda Leichlither

## A Special Thank You!

Well of GRACE Ministries extends a heartfelt thank you to Deb Quist for her faithful service to our ministry. Deb was one of our founding board members who recently resigned from our Board of Directors. She served as the Vice-President of the board and used her expertise to navigate all of our human resource needs including hiring employees and creating employee policies specific to our organization.

Despite leaving the board, Deb has graciously agreed to continue her role as Executive Director of Human Resources. Deb has been an integral part of our staff and our ministry. Thank you, Deb, for your past and continued faithfulness to Well of GRACE Ministries!

Before hearing about Well of Grace, I was very depressed, suicidal, cutting daily, over-dosing on prescription and over-the-counter medication, and starving myself. I had figured that I wouldn't be on this earth much longer because of all the damage that I was putting my body through. To be honest, I didn't even think that there was a place that could really help me. That was until I found out that a home for young women like myself was going to be opened.

Well of GRACE opened on November 4, 2007, and I was privileged enough to be their very first resident. While living at Well of GRACE, I was able to meet six other young women that were just like sisters in the end. I had a different and unique relationship with each of them and love them all dearly.

While I was at Well of GRACE for a year and two months, I was able to have counseling every week, a safe place to call home with many staff who loved and cared about me and all for free. I could finally get the help I desperately needed and begin to truly work on recovery and healing.

My time at Well of GRACE was a number of things. It was chal-

lenging, fun, encouraging, hopeful, loving, prayer-filled, Christ-centered, uplifting, awarding, and a new start to a new life.

I thank God every day for having brought Well of GRACE into my life. Even though there were many days that I simply wanted to give up, the staff were all along side me cheering me on.

I am grateful for being at Well of GRACE when I was because I had to face many new challenges and obstacles that I didn't see coming. My health and medical problems got much worse, my grandpa passed away, I had to have gall bladder surgery along with two other procedures, and the many doctor appointments. I wouldn't have been able to make it through all these safely without the love and support from everyone at the Well.

The best things for me while being at Well of GRACE were being in a safe home with staff that could help me keep myself safe and keep me accountable, the unconditional love that was always showed, being able to have fun and laugh, the amazing relationships with staff and residents, being heard and listened to, all the groups, the books and videos, and especially going to Shily's Promise Youth Ranch.

The hardest parts were getting to

know and trust all the staff, the change of staff and residents, being completely honest about any negative urges, being open about my story, and trying my hardest to end old bad patterns.

I can't thank Well of GRACE enough for everything that they taught me. I could write forever about my experience at the Well. It was the best thing I could have ever done for myself.

As I look back to where I was one year ago when I left, to where I am now, it's truly a miracle. I used to be on 10 or 12 medications, and now I'm only on one. I used to be scared of this entire town, but now I can go places and if I run into someone from my past, it doesn't send me into a downward spiral. My relationship with God has grown more than I thought it ever could. I have even dated a great guy, where before I was terrified to even be in the same room. The list of how far I've come goes on and on.

I never dreamed that my life would turn around like it has and it's all with the help of God first and Well of GRACE. I am determined to keep pressing forward through my walk towards complete healing both inside and out.

I thank you with ALL my heart.

- Sara

## IN HER OWN WORDS...

# THANK YOU DONORS

It is with sincere gratitude that we recognize the following individuals and businesses for their generosity. Thank you to all of you who have donated financially to Well of GRACE Ministries over the last several months. Without you and your support we would not be able to continue forward in our efforts. Donors to Well of GRACE Ministries 7-01-09 to 11-01-09

## *Individuals*

Rob and Cyndi Allen  
J.C. and Nancy Anderson  
John and Mary Banks  
Jim and Marcia Bednar  
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Susan Biggers  
James and Mary Bolton  
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Marcia Wiinamaki

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The Chapel, EFCA

## Gifts Given in Honor/Memory of 1/1/09 - 11/1/09

A gift was received in memory  
of Audrey Robinson from:  
Beth Weichhand

Gifts were received in memory  
of Darrell Struble from:  
Jeanne Goodwin, Flloyd Groner,  
and Joyce Ochas

A gift was received in honor of  
Thomas Robinson from:  
Beth Weichhand

A gift was received in honor of  
Harry and Dolores Weichhand  
from: Beth Weichhand

A gift was received in honor of  
J.C. and Nancy Anderson from:  
Jeff & Marcia Fettig

A gift was received in honor of  
Hazel Quist from:  
Deborah Quist

A gift was received in memory  
of Katie Sisson from:  
Gary and May Sisson

A gift was received in honor of  
the St. Joseph High School  
Class of 2009 from:  
David and Mitzi Tompkins

# PRAISES:

We are thankful for a chance to celebrate with another graduate from our program!

Thank God for the great team of people who helped make the Fall Fund-raiser successful!

We thank God for the vision, mission, and purpose of Well of GRACE that continues even in the midst of our changing program.

We are thankful for the blessing that our four interns have been this fall! And, we are grateful that two of them will be available to help us with the reorganization and development of our new program.

# PRAYERS:

Pray for the Board as they carry out new plans and programs for the ministry and for a smooth transition process from the residential program to a day treatment program.

Ask God to connect us with girls who need to be involved in the Club H2O program.

Pray for blessings on our efforts to build a stronger outreach ministry to our local community.

Pray that staff members who will no longer be involved in the day to day ministry would be provided with huge blessings during this time of uncertainty, and that alternative employment would be found.

To be on our monthly prayer email list,  
contact us via the web or mail a note to us at:

*Well of GRACE Ministries  
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[www.wellofgraceministries.com](http://www.wellofgraceministries.com)