

Spring/Summer 2019



friends
of recovery
Northeast Ohio Next Step Living
Ministries

*Arukah Home
for Women*

New Birth - New Life - Renewed Hope



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*Our Mission is to provide
Christ centered recovery homes
offering hope, healing and
restoration for individuals
recovering from addictive
substances.*



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Views from Northeast Ohio

Dear Friends,

All of us at Friends of Recovery NEO hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the much anticipated warmth and new growth we all call spring. Unlike many creatures that hibernate during the winter months, the FORNEO team has been incredibly busy.

We all know the saying about spring showers and May flowers. Well, we are extremely excited to announce not only has God blessed us with showers and flowers this May but He has also blessed FORNEO with two homes in Willoughby. Yes, not one but two homes next door to one another. One of these homes will be Arukah Home for Women. Please check out the cover picture as well as the story found inside this newsletter.

Spring has sprung and things are definitely growing in and around Friends of Recovery NEO Ministry. Two areas of growth to mention are the women's and men's ministries. These ministries are known as the SisterHood and the JourneyMen. Both are life-support groups offering free childcare and a wonderful meal every week. The SisterHood has grown from five to twenty ladies each week and the JourneyMen has blossomed into thirty men weekly. Are you or someone you know struggling with life? Please come to one of these groups and experience hope, healing and restoration.

As I close this letter, I invite you to please reach out to us and get involved in the life-changing work God is doing right here in Willoughby, Ohio. No matter where you live or your skill level you can get involved and make a difference. We have seen time and time again how God changes lives when we lock arms, trust Him and work together.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it informative and hope-filled. Thank you for your continued prayers and support. We pray you experience New Birth, New Life and Renewed Hope.

Have Hope and Share Hope,

Dennis Anthony

Friends of Recovery NEO Director

**“Behold! I stand at the door and knock.
If anyone hears my voice and opens the
door, I will come in.”** (Revelation 3:20)

Arukah Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser



Thank you Kirtland Community of Christ Church! Each month they select a local charity and host a pancake breakfast fundraiser. For almost ten years this generous congregation has been supplying not only their building but also all of the food and volunteers/helpers. In April, they selected Arukah Home for Women/Friends of Recovery NEO.

The church contacted us prior to our event and shared the month prior was the biggest to date. The charity had raised \$1,400 and the church scrambled to purchase additional food during the event. We are a competitive bunch at FORNEO and we announced we would beat that total. The church stated they did not want to run out of food so they went ahead and purchased extra supplies "just in case".

The morning of the event God blessed us with a beautifully warm and sunny day. The volunteers poured in and everything was set up and ready to go in record time. And then the floodgates opened and we had some issues. First, there was the "parking issue". There were too many cars for the number of spots available. We were advised to have people park on the side streets and various parking lots around the church. Next, we had the "too much fun issue". As it turned out, the noise level got quit loud due to the interaction of our volunteers, the many participants and their families. And finally, the "basket issue". Just like the two fish and five loaves story in the Bible, God multiplied and overflowed the offering. We experienced the overflowing donation basket issue. The generosity of everyone involved required the emptying of the baskets multiple times during the morning.

Once the last call for pancakes was announced, the volunteers jumped into clean-up mode. The church fellowship hall was whipped back into its original beautiful condition in record time. The church treasurer was busy tallying the donations while the brooms and vacuums were being put away. The treasurer emerged from the counting room with a huge smile on his face. He announced with a somewhat astonished tone "today's total is \$4,400 dollars"! He followed up with "and by the way, you guys have this slot next year as well."

As our team hugged and said our final thankyou's & goodbyes to the beautiful people from Kirtland Community of Christ Church, the event coordinator thanked us for blessing all of them today. We all came together as the hands and feet of Jesus and loved on the community.

JORDAN DR

COMING SOON!



Arukah Home for Women



We are putting the finishing touches on the purchase of two homes in Willoughby, Ohio. The home on the right will be become Arukah Home for Women. Arukah is a Hebrew word for "Healing and Restoration." The home on the left will be a future women's home possibly with dependent children. Do you see in the cover photo the early spring Daffodils reaching for the sky? In a similar way, everyone in and around these homes will experience New Birth, New Life and Renewed Hope as we all journey and grow together with God, the creator of life itself and even little Daffodils.



As most of you know, we have been steadfast in our search for just the right home(s) for ladies that have chosen recovery. With God's leading, that search has produced two properties. During this search, God has revealed many things to us.



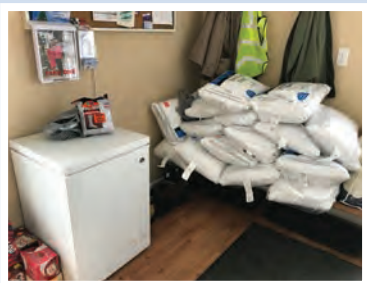
One thing He revealed to us was the significance of the Jordan? Please let me explain. Did you know the Jordan River is the second largest water source for Israel? And, that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan? And, the Israelites had to cross the Jordan in order to enter the Promised Land? They made a difficult and hazardous journey from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. Therefore, the Jordan can refer to "Freedom".

Do you know what separates the Friends of Recovery NEO office/Tikvah Home for Men and the soon-to-be Arukah Home for Women & its sister home? Not a river but a road that bears the name "Jordan" Drive. God has utilized a river in a faraway land and events that happened thousands of years ago and brought it all to life - today. Every lady that comes to Arukah will have traveled a difficult and hazardous journey from slavery (addiction) to freedom (crossing the Jordan) into the Promised Land (Arukah-filled with Hope, Healing & Restoration).

In mid-May we will receive the keys to both homes in this picture. Both have been abandoned for years and are in need of extensive rehabilitation. Our plans are to have Arukah Home for Women open and operational by the end of 2019. The sister home next door will be open by the end of 2020.

Would you or your organization like to get involved? We need your help. Our contact information can be found on the back of this newsletter. Please consider locking arms with us because together we will help others.

Your Donations Make a Difference



The operation of Tikvah Home for Men and Friends of Recovery NEO could not be possible without your continued support and generous donations. Over the past few months, we have been blessed with a tremendous amount of essential paper products and additional items.

A great big shout-out and thank goes out to: Anna – Mentor High School/Lake County High School Opiate Task Force, Community of the Holy Spirit Church, Cornerstone Christian Academy/National Honor Society, Saint Robert & Williams Catholic Parish and Willoughby Bible Church Senior Saints/Adult Sunday School Class.

With the opening of Arukah later this year, our paper product needs are going to double. We could sure use your help. If you or your organization would like to make a donation please see the back of this newsletter for our contact information.

Thank you for helping us help others



SUPPORT GROUPS

Are you or someone you know struggling?

Please invite that person and come join us.

SisterHood

- Life-recovery support group
- Any women over 18 years old looking for support with any of life's struggles. All ladies will experience love, hope, forgiveness and peace.
- "Share each other's burdens and in this way obey the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)
- We are currently meeting at Willoughby Bible Church, 37927 Euclid Avenue, Willoughby Ohio 44094. Please enter at the lower level/rear portion of the building. Once Arukah Home for Women is open, this group will then meet in the women's house.
- Contact: Sue (440) 669-9599

Journey Men

- Life-recovery support group
- Any man over 18 years old struggling with pornography, substances, food or anything else.
- We are a group of broken men who humbly seek God's leading as we journey together. We believe Hope, Healing and Restoration can be found in a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1Peter 5:8)
- We meet at 37915 Euclid Avenue Willoughby, Ohio 44049
- Contact: Dennis (440) 669-9595

6:00pm Free dinner and fellowship | 7:00 - 8:30pm Support group meeting | Free child care



www.friendsofrecoveryneo.com

Greetings from Tikvah House for Men!

by Steven Kliot

My name is Steven Kliot and I am a recovered alcoholic, addict, and a sinner saved by grace. Prior to my time at Tikvah, I was resident manager of a different sober living home for about 18 months. When I first came to Tikvah, it was as a reference interview for a friend of mine who was trying to secure a spot in the home. Since I was almost at the end of my commitment to the other house, Dennis asked me what I would think about moving in. I hadn't anticipated this question and my answer was, "let me pray about it."

This response was such a massive change for me, that I was almost surprised to hear myself say the words. As I mentioned earlier; I am a sinner saved by the grace of Jesus, but I haven't always been or felt that way. In order to get the full picture of just how impressive a restoration this has been, let me tell you a little bit about myself and my life before coming to Tikvah House for Men. First of all, I did not grow up in church. My parents never reconciled their faith differences and decided that they would not push us into one direction or the other. Therefore, pretty much my only experience with church was when I would sleep over at friends' houses who were church. Looking back, I realize that in the case of my one friend, I was never allowed to spend the night on Fridays, only on Saturdays, and only if I was willing to go to church with them on Sundays... Needless to say, I did not feel particularly close to God as a youngster. As I grew into an adolescent and young adult, I had pretty much devoted myself to the idea that God was nothing more than a fairy tale for dummies and a crutch for the weak, and a haven for hypocrites. Later, in college, I took up the study of Philosophy and was going to prove that I was right.

Also, I should add that as a child, I always felt like I was defective. I don't know why I thought this way; but as early as I can remember I felt less than, defective, apart from, angry, and rebellious. I was abusive verbally and physically to my parents and siblings. I was taken to so many psychologists and psychiatrists in those early years that I began to believe even more strongly that there was, in fact, something VERY wrong with me. Toward the end of my High School career, I began to drink occasionally and to smoke pot regularly with my buddies. This I started to do mainly because they did, and I wanted to fit in. As I began to indulge in these substances, though, what I found was a solution to my anxiety, awkwardness, and self-loathing. When I drank and when I got high, I felt OK. I wasn't focused on what was wrong with me or why I wasn't good enough. I didn't feel like I had to excel so that others wouldn't see my defects. I didn't feel anything, really, and I LOVED IT!

When I got to college, and had no one to answer to, I began smoking pot daily and drinking very often. My first year I was still doing fairly well in school, but when I moved into an apartment for my second-to-fourth years, my grades began to fall, my substance use began to increase dramatically, and the variety of substances to which I had an affinity grew, and grew rapidly. I eventually dropped out of school altogether and thus began the "Dark Period" of my life.

I'm not going to go into all the grimy details for you; because, honestly that's not what's important. What is important is that over the next fifteen years or so I was caught in this downward spiral of addiction, isolation, and self-hatred. I built walls high and I built them thick. I didn't want help, I didn't need help, I wasn't going to get help, and besides that there was no help for a guy like me. Suffice it to say, there wasn't much HOPE for a guy like me.

It was dark. I was miserable. I had always been miserable. At the behest of my parents (with whom I was living with again) I got back into counseling and the guy told me that he thought I might have a substance abuse issue. Can you imagine?!? Everyone else saw substance abuse as my problem—when to me—the substance use was the SOLUTION to my problem. Anyway, he suggested I go to some 12 step meetings. I begrudgingly went, and that's where I first started getting confirmation that there was never going to be a good end to this situation.



“Commit
everything you do
to the Lord. Trust
Him and He will
help you.”

(Psalm 37:5)



You see, right from that first meeting when they talked about a "Higher Power" and "God as I Understood Him" I saw this for what it was: watered-down Christian brainwashing. Thanks but no thanks. But, you see, as my misery increased, so did my desire for a solution and EVERYONE I asked or talked to assured me that the ONLY answer to the addiction problem was going to be found in those meetings. So I went. And I listened. And I made excuses, and I half-measured their program and I got no results. I even stayed sober for a while. And miserable. In meetings I was surrounded with people who were happy and sober; I was sober and miserable... Because God wasn't real, and God, apparently was the only thing that could help me. Quite a Catch 22, eh? So for years I was in this place where I wanted to be sober but I also didn't want to stop getting high. The people at the meetings kept talking about "God as I Understand Him." I didn't understand Him at all. So I began to seek out what that might mean for me.

I had begun looking, but I was still living for me and getting high daily. About this time I had an experience that in hindsight can only be described as miraculous. I didn't know it then but I do know now that this conversation with this man on that night forever altered the course of my life. The result of that interaction was me darkening the doors of a church for the first time since I was a kid. As it turned out, the Pastor was a guy with whom I had a tangential relationship with in my High School days. I remember being weirded out by the whole church experience, but at the same time, I really liked it and decided that I would go back.

I got involved in my "home church" before I even knew I had a "home church." I started helping out after services stacking chairs and moving things. I got to know people. And then like any good drunk will do I stopped doing those things. At some point I started getting high again. Even though I wasn't making fantastic choices I still had a group of fantastic people surrounding me. I was still a regular fixture at church, I just thought that what I had experienced here was good, but like everything else in life just loses its luster. I struggled mightily, and the people in my church loved me enough to let me fall but were still there to encourage me to keep going. Every time I reached out, there was a hand there to grab a hold of. They showed me through their examples what it meant to be a Christian. What it meant to love like Jesus loved.

So then what? Well, turns out it's pretty tough (though not impossible) for God to work in the lives of people who are still self-absorbed and self-centered, and I was REALLY really good at being both of those things. Ultimately, as a result of my decisions, I was convicted of a Felony, and I went to jail AGAIN in the winter of 2015. I got letters and cards and encouragement from people from my church. I was being lifted up instead of looked down upon. I heard stories of their struggles and trials, and got to know some people like never before. Ultimately, I learned that everybody struggles through life and that what we struggle with isn't nearly as important as us struggling through things together, as a community.

So, what is my life like today? Well, first of all, I have been Clean and Sober since Nov 17, 2015. That's quickly approaching 3.5 years! I have begun to rebuild relationships with my family; and my brother and I who hadn't spoken for years have been hanging out every week or two for a couple of months, grabbing dinner or catching a tribe game. My boss constantly reminds me that I am an asset to the company and that I am an amazing testament to the restorative power of Jesus Christ. I am active in my church, I have been the stage leader for Vacation Bible School at my church 2 years running, and I'm signed up for this year as well. I lived in and managed a sober living home for 18 months, trying my best to BE an example to other Men of the remarkable transformation available to them through Christ. I currently live in this Christ-centered recovery home operated by Friends of Recovery. Although when I came into the house I had anticipated becoming the resident manager for the house; that opportunity has been given to my friend and brother, Mark (who you may have read about in the last newsletter).

It has been so rewarding to have lived here over the past (almost) year, that I can hardly express it. To be in community with other believers, to help others grow in their relationships with God, to see others wrestle with their faith in the way I did for so long and be there to continue to encourage them knowing who waits for them at the end... I am beyond blessed to be even a small part of what's happening here.

There is a LOT happening here! Constant opportunities to help, to volunteer, to participate. We are all so excited to be in the process of acquiring property for the future Arukah Home for Women! There will be countless ways for you to help us fulfill this mission; to provide hope, healing, and restoration to women who God has already chosen. Also, JourneyMen (and SisterHood for the ladies) on Tuesday nights gives me an opportunity to get involved in a community of believers, and get to work serving in the Kingdom.

This house has made me part of a family. It's shown me how to reconnect to my biological family. It's shown me that life is meant to be lived in connection with others. It's taught me that if God is first in my life, I never have to feel like I'm last ever again!



Moving on to Live on Life's Terms

by Edward T.



Spring is a time for renewal and the growing season and so is this time for me as I bid farewell to this very special home. Nearly 2 years ago I entered the Tikvah family and what a blessing that was and is for me. It was a very difficult time for me in mind body and spirit; I was coming out of the depths of brokenness. God wasn't finished with me though and he guided me, as he worked miracles through others, to the doorstep of Tikvah to begin my next journey toward a new life. That new life today is Joyous, Happy, and Free as I have moved on as house manager and resident to take my message of faith, hope, and service to others in need. I could fill many pages of the gifts I received from Friends of Recovery NEO and those involved with Tikvah. I am so very Grateful for those gifts including: re-established loving family relationships, a great new job, a bright future, new friends, and a faith-based life with a solid sober foundation living one day at a time. I had a saying for the men that left Tikvah, "when you leave here, this house goes with you in spirit"... How true, as I am living proof of that!

God Bless-
Ed



Ministry Needs

- **Paper Products:** toilet paper, napkins, paper towels, heavy paper plates, 8 or 12oz paper cups
 - Marc's/Aldi Grocery Gift Cards
 - Support Group Meals
- Ladies: www.mealtrain.com/2095ve
Men: www.mealtrain.com/k9r6m0
- Monetary Donation/Support: www.friendsofrecoverynco.com

Friends of Recovery NEO
PO Box 226
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Thank you for helping us help others!

For more information
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www.friendsofrecoverynco.com


What is Friends of Recovery NEO?

Our Mission is to provide Christ centered recovery homes offering hope, healing and restoration for individuals recovering from addictive substances. These homes provide a safe, affordable, drug and alcohol-free residential environment for both women and men that have chosen recovery. As the women and men grow in their recovery, they will learn respect, accountability/responsibility and healthy relationship building. Most importantly, they will learn they have a loving Father waiting with open arms that can/will set them free.

While staying with us, we will teach the life skills necessary to blossom into a functioning/productive member of society. Everyone will learn such things as what addiction is and how it affects you and your family. We will also offer lifesaving tools to help throughout one's recovery journey. You will meet like-minded people and develop relationships based on love and trust.

We at Friends of Recovery Northeast Ohio know what it is like to lose hope and direction in life. We are a group of people who have been there. We have made the poor choices ourselves or have watched our loved ones choose the wrong road. Either way, we have all felt alone in this struggle. Does any of this sound familiar? If so, we are here to offer hope and share that YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

What do we expect from the residents? First and most importantly, we expect everyone to remain sober. Second, living in one of our recovery homes has no set number of days. Third, we expect everyone to help others struggling with addiction within the recovery house as well as in the community. Lastly, we expect everyone to give back to the community by living a functional and productive life. Simply put, we believe the more we help others, the more we help ourselves.

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