**Prodigal Ministries Board Treasurer and Volunteer: Richard Overy**

My name is Richard Overy. God has blessed me thousands of times more than I could have ever imagined. My most recent blessing occurred when the Good Lord led me to involvement with Prodigal Ministries, Inc.

Prodigal Ministries has transitional homes that provide homes for individuals just released from prison.

In our community there are 4 Houses... 2 in Louisville and 2 in Oldham County...3 are for men and 1 is for women. I am confident that the Good Lord desires us to have 40 of these homes.

In the absence of transitional homes, newly released prisoners tend to return to environments they were in when they made their original bad decisions. The cycle repeats and they end up back in prison. Prodigal disrupts this cycle.

Research shows that many of these individuals have come from dysfunctional homes. For that reason, they are in need of emotional and spiritual support, job counseling, and life skills education.

Emotional support is expressed by:

I love you

I care for you

What can I do for you

God loves you.

Spiritual Support includes:

Bible study and meals every Tuesday Night

Church attendance

Financial counseling and life skills are critical:

Personal items are often lost after arrest including birth certificates, drivers licenses, and social security cards

We obtain medical and dental assessments and support.

Each resident needs to become employed and they are counseled to understand the difference between needs and wants.

We help each person open a checking and Savings accounts. Saving accounts create a financial security blanket.

Residents pay rent monthly and help take care of the property.

They are held accountable for their decisions

Our residents must also remain drug free. Because addiction is a tough disease, they are randomly drug tested. They typically hold each other accountable and provide support to one another.

Prodigal Ministries’ mission takes time and money. Publicly funded programs generally require a residents exit in 90 days. This is totally inadequate. It is not unusual for a resident to remain in the Prodigal House for a year or more before they are fully prepared to live on their own. When they are ready to leave, Prodigal helps them find a place to live and provides a means to secure food, transportation, furniture and needed supplies.

My involvement fills my heart with joy and breaks my heart.

There are successes and relapses. Fortunately, there are mostly successes. Sharing the love of Jesus Christ is so rewarding. I certainly receive more joy from these young men's accomplishments than I could have ever imagined. I receive much more than I give.

In the absence of any long-term housing such as at Prodigal Ministries, the recidivism rate is 76% within two years. With Prodigal House involvement more than 90% of our residents do not return to prison.

Currently there are about 20,000 people behind bars in the state of Ky. This costs taxpayers an average of $24,389 per inmate per year. Approximately $488 million dollars annually. I think you can see the financial advantage to the state if we had more Prodigal Houses in Kentucky.

I am fortunate that God has led me to Prodigal Ministries. Bobby Schiavone and I are volunteers and we serve on their board. Christ Church has graciously supported this organization.

I encourage each of you to personally or to financially support Christ Churches dedication to Prodigal Ministries. This afternoon when you arrive home please go to our web site: www.Prodigalky.org and consider the ways you can assist.

Those who surrender their life to the loving power of Jesus Christ see their lives renewed and restored.

Please feel free to contact me or Bobby Schiavone should you desire more information.

Thank you and God Bless each of you.