

@Boulevard



*A joint publication from the Boulevard church of Christ
and Eagle Recovery Center*



A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 20 — July 2014

Jots from Jeff



Exciting times are happening at *Boulevard*! Last month I mentioned we had acquired some new equipment allowing us to translate into Spanish simultaneously. Well the key component to making that even work is a young

man named **Ivan Gonzalez**. **Ivan** is a gifted young man with the heart of a servant who has committed to working full time with the *Boulevard church* as an Associate Minister. He is our translator, without whom we would not have been able to combine our English- and Spanish-speaking members into one worship assembly. He will also be taking over many manual labor tasks which we have had to pay others to do. **Ivan** will be in regular training to sharpen his ministry skills, preparing our weekly Sunday handouts, teaching Bible classes, maintaining a member directory, developing outreach efforts, and assisting in worship leading, just to name a few of his duties. Though finances are a constant struggle, we believe we need **Ivan** and his skills to build a stronger core of disciples at the *Boulevard church*, so we are stepping out on faith believing God will make a way. Perhaps He will do that through you. We solicit your prayers for **Ivan** as he begins his new role. Also, **Ivan** will be marrying **Diana Esparza** on August 15, 2014 (picture on reverse side). We are excited to have her in the *Boulevard* family as well. Please pray for God's blessing on their new marriage and ministry.

Eagle continues to assist women in their recovery journey. Thank you to those who assist us financially and in other ways. Recently, **Gary Roach** and some of his

employees (**Blake McDaniel**, **Garrett Roach** and **Ryan Gibson**) gave of themselves by mowing and trimming the *Eagle* campus. It looks fantastic! Thank you for your service.

— *Jeff Gardner, evangelist*



The woman sat in my office with tears streaming down her face. She sat straight backed, on the edge of her chair, tearing the tissue in her hand systematically into smaller and smaller pieces. Her actions were a window to her innermost feelings – sadness, anger, frustration, helplessness, love, and most of all, fear. Fear for the addict she loved, fear for herself, fear for her family, and fear for what other people would say or do. She poured out her story, one that I had heard a hundred times before. Details were different but the story was all too familiar. The faces had been different. It had been a father, brother, husband, mother, sister, wife, friend, and even a teenage child. But, just like those that had sat in the chair before her, the addiction of someone she loved was tearing a path of destruction through life.

Suddenly, I focused in on her last sentence. "I just don't know what to do, I love him to death." I said what was usually my silent prayer, "God, I hope not." Her startled look reminded me that I had spoken the words aloud and I now faced one of the most difficult sessions that I have with an addict's

loved one. We were going to have "the enabling" session. I say one of the most difficult sessions because the most difficult sessions are after the addict has died as a result of an overdose, car wreck, or health issues caused by their addiction such as liver damage, Hepatitis C, or HIV. I know that the best chance I have of avoiding that session is to educate the loved ones and get the addict into a recovery situation.

Listen to me carefully: *even if the family does everything right, addiction can still lead to an addict's death*. If you have lost a family member to an addiction-related death, it is not your fault. Addiction is a horrendous monster that destroys lives and families. Addiction is the perpetrator and you are one of the thousands that have suffered in its wake. I feel the emptiness of your pain and understand all too clearly that if circumstances had been different I would be walking in your shoes instead of by your side.

For those that are dealing with active addiction, understanding enabling helps to stack the cards in favor of recovery. The truth is, an addiction has to have at least one enabler in order to survive. Often the addict has a series of enablers, exploiting relationships one by one and then leaving that relationship wounded or dead and moving on to the next, like a serial killer. *Webster's Dictionary* defines an enabler as "one that enables another to achieve an end; especially: one who enables another to persist in self-destructive behavior (such as substance abuse) by providing excuses or by helping that individual avoid the consequences of such behavior."

(continued on reverse)

About Us

Boulevard church of Christ is a family of believers in Jesus Christ who want to be the hands and feet of Jesus in reaching people with messed up lives. We believe Jesus is the great Healer physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially. And we all need to be healed of something.

Eagle Recovery Center is a Christ-centered, structured, sober-living group home for the purpose of empowering women to successfully re-enter society and live victoriously over drugs and alcohol or any other destructive habit. All residents are valued members of the Boulevard church family.

For those who do not see themselves as an enabler I ask one question: "Have you ever interceded to prevent the addict from dealing with the consequences of their addiction?" If the answer is "yes" then you are an enabler. This includes covering for them financially, giving excuses for them, rationalizing their behavior or "helping them out, just this once". It can be in any situation: "I gave them a place to stay when they got kicked out but otherwise they wouldn't have anywhere to sleep"; "I gave them money to cover their bills but they wouldn't have been able to pay their bills and the kids would have been on the street"; "I covered for them with the boss but if I hadn't they would have been fired"; and the list goes on and on. If you hear yourself using the word "but" then

you need to look at yourself seriously because "but" is the red flag of enabling. It is not easy to change your enabling habits but remember – you are asking the person dealing with addiction to change their lifestyle and give up their drug(s) of choice. Most likely they are going to struggle even more to be successful unless you change, too.

In our next month's article we will consider doing an intervention in the spirit of Matthew 18. If you are currently dealing with this situation in your life and would like more information I recommend the book *Love First* by Jeff and Debra Jay or you may contact me at lisajmcwhirter@gmail.com.



Yes, I would like to partner with the *Boulevard church* and *Eagle Recovery Center* to help bring Christ to and heal those who are struggling to overcome addiction by making a donation of...

\$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$75 ___ \$100 ___ or Other \$ _____ (donation enclosed)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Make checks payable to **Boulevard church of Christ** and send to:

1301 N. Drexel Boulevard • Oklahoma City, OK 73107

Other Ways to Help:

- Female or Husband/Wife teams to help with transportation for a day
- Donate good clothing suitable for work
- Godly women to develop mentoring relationships with an Eagle resident
- Grounds keeping assistance (mowing, limb cutting and removal, painting and repair)

Please contact Lora or Jeff at one the numbers listed below to volunteer.

www.eaglerecoverycenter.org

www.boulevardchurch.org

Eagle Contact Information



Director — Lora Williams

Phone — (405) 737-5383

Email — lora@eaglerecoverycenter.org

Address — 3701 East Reno

Oklahoma City, OK 73117

Facility Minister — Donna Stevens-Leonard

Phone — (405) 760-9086

Email — donna@eaglerecoverycenter.org



Boulevard Contact Information

1301 N. Drexel Boulevard • Oklahoma City, OK 73107

(405) 943-3578

Shepherds

**Jim McWhirter
Charles Custer**

Evangelist

**Jeff Gardner
heal@blvdchurch.com
(405) 550-7658**

Assembly Times

**Sunday — 9:30 am
Wednesday — 7:00 pm**

Associate Minister

**Ivan Gonzalez
ivan@blvdchurch.com
(405) 923-4964**

***Boulevard church of Christ and Eagle Recovery Center*®, a DBA of Eagle Christian Ministries, are both 501(c)(3) charitable organizations.**