



Resourcing pastors to build lives that thrive

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We couldn't have done it without you!

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spring 2013

UPdate

Pastors Day 2013

Fifty pastors and church leaders came together for Thrive Ministries Pastors Day held for church leaders in January 2013. What did leaders gain? We believe God used our conference day that addressed the 'hot topic' of bullying in the church in significant ways. Here are a few phrases that 'capture the results' of our day together.

Practical instruction

I heard from people about the benefit of education. Nothing fancy or flashy, just solid, substantial insights, facts, and observations to be mulled over.

Replenishing 'table time'

If you were there, you know how delightful and enjoyable the evening meal was... this was not a 'rubber chicken' event. Not only were bodies nourished, but hearts and minds were fed as laughter and conversations flowed easily around the beautifully decorated tables.



Down-to-earth hope

We heard from people that hope was ignited in weary and fearful hearts... 'I can stand up to bullies, I can survive awful ordeals.' And, 'I can grow stronger and wiser along the way'.

Biblical foundations

We were reminded of the criticalness of cultivating our relationship with God, being enlightened and energized by the word of God and the Spirit of God. We were also reminded to remain open to his transforming work in our own lives.

'The fellowship was good ... Excellent topic presented well... worship was great ... food was awesome ... 'gifts' outstanding!'

'I could feel the compassion for pastors when I walked through the doors.'

People were given 'tools' to experience a deeper degree of thriving. That's really what our ministry is about... helping leaders thrive in the midst of real challenges, opportunities & uncertainties.

Leaders just like you.



Cathy Gates (Thrive Director), Doug Loucks (winner of Niagara Helicopters gift certificate), John Garner (Thrive Pastoral Advisor).

UPcoming EVENTS

Early May

Small Group for Pastors beginning

May 14, May 28 and June 18

Bullying/Mobbing Roundtable Discussions

Visit www.thriveministries.ca for more information.

God is Faithful

*"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."
(Matthew 5:7)*

The Birth of Thrive Ministries

I read these words 10 years ago at Alongside retreat centre in Michigan. I was doing my best to begin the recovery process after going through a very stressful and painful ministry conflict situation that resulted in the ending of my leadership role in a church. My mind and heart were filled with the painful reality of ministry leadership. In my journal I wrote:

"There are so many grieving servants of God, mourning church leaders, pastors and pastor's families, elders and elders' wives.

They have all been wounded in some way by the body of Christ.

God began placing thoughts in my head and a desire in my heart to minister to wounded, and in many cases isolated and lonely leaders.

Over the next few days my mind was flooded with details of a ministry that would seek to do something about the sad reality of "ministry messes". God was taking my painful experience of the past three years and turning it into a vision for a new ministry - one that is desperately needed.

It has taken 10 years, and many twists and turns along the way. However, God is faithful.

The vision has finally become a reality called Thrive Ministries. Thrive's purpose is to resource pastors to build lives that thrive.

Thanks to those who have supported the development of Thrive over the years. Your encouragement and support has been a blessing.

Cathy Gates

Director, Thrive Ministries

MOBBING... in the church?

A few weeks ago I had a fascinating conversation with Dr. Steve Vensel, a Christian counselor who has counseled many pastoral couples. We spoke about 'mobbing' in the church and the devastating effects it has on the victims and the communities in which it occurs.

Mobbing occurs in organizations of all kinds including churches. It involves targeting individuals or a group in an organization who are subjected to a series of abusive and humiliating behaviours designed to cast them in a negative light, destabilize them, create suspicion about their worth as member of the organization and ultimately either force them out or render them as suspect and unworthy while remaining in the organization.

There are four critical components: the perpetrators (leaders and followers); targets; a community of participants who witness the events; and organizational members with the power to stop the mobbing but instead participate or turn a blind eye.

Pastors victimized by mobbing, have been emotionally abused. Their families are affected as well. Pastors who have been forced out of their churches by mobbing need ongoing support to heal from the experience and learn to thrive again.

Thrive Ministry can help you.

Your Gift & Prayer = Thriving Pastors and Churches in Niagara

Your donations help:

- Provide burnout prevention coaching & education
- Resource small groups for pastors
- Equip church leaders to deal with bullying
- Support Pastors Day 2014

Donate by credit card or cheque through:

Great Commission Foundation

Thrive Ministries Project

TEL: 1-855-488-7020 (credit card donations)

#3 Fourteenth St., Grimsby, ON L3M 2W1



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STATISTICS:

45 percent of pastors say that they've experienced depression or burnout to the extent that they desired a leave of absence from ministry.

40 percent report a serious conflict with a parishioner at least once a month.

80 percent of seminary graduates will leave full-time ministry within the first five years.

Source: Focus on the Family

www.thriveministries.ca
info@thriveministries.ca