



December 2006 Christmas Greetings

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"For unto us a child is

born, unto us a son is

given...and His Name

shall be called

Wonderful,

Counselor,

The mighty God,

The everlasting Father,

The Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6



It brings great joy to my heart as I consider the great things that the Lord is doing through the ministry of ICBC of Indiana. This past year, I have been a partaker of God's wisdom and grace in serving the many hurting people that call on ICBC of Indiana for help. As we approach the celebration of the birth of the Lord Jesus, let us be reminded that He truly is the Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6). His love, power, and wisdom bring freedom and healing to those that we serve.

We praise the Lord for and extend our gratitude to the many friends that support this ministry. Your continued prayers and financial support help bring freedom in many peoples' lives. To give you a glimpse of what the Wonderful Counselor is doing in the hearts of clients who have come to ICBC of Indiana in their time of need, we have included a couple testimonies in this issue. We trust these testimonies will encourage you in the faith.

Thank you for your financial help and prayers that make these testimonies a reality. It is a blessing to be able to offer this counseling ministry for no charge to our clients. However, at the end of this year we are in need of your financial support.

As we enter the last month of 2006, ICBC of Indiana is facing a deficit of \$30,000 dollars for this current year. We would like to finish the year in the black and be able to have cash available to expand our ministry in 2007. This shortfall is a concern. However, it gives us the opportunity to look to the Lord to meet our needs and share with you an opportunity to be involved.

I would like you to prayerfully consider these possible ways of supporting ICBC of Indiana.

- Send a financial gift at the end of this year.
- Make a monthly or yearly financial pledge for 2007.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration. Your financial gifts and prayers bring freedom to others!

I join with my family, staff, and Board of Directors in thanking God for giving us the opportunity to serve Christ and to faithfully assist in God's counseling ministry. Your prayers and gifts are greatly appreciated. Thank you for caring about hurting people. May God bless you and your family this Christmas season and in 2007!

Merry Christmas,

Handwritten signature of Jeff Pokone in black ink.

Rev. Jeff Pokone



Testimonies From Changed Lives

How Full Forgiveness of my Father Brought Complete Freedom!

I was raised in an ungodly home filled with emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. Sometime after my husband and I were married, we joined the Jehovah's Witnesses for fifteen years, but then left after seeing the hypocrisy. Sadly, we spent fifteen more years without God in our lives. Working sixty hours a week, helping aging and ill parents, losing control of my children, facing a past that was catching up with me quickly, and fearing that I had committed the unpardonable sin, put me in a psychiatric ward for thirty day stints twice. There, I was heavily drugged for severe depression and given ECT treatments. I had even tried to commit suicide.

Four years ago, at this low time in my life, my husband and I began attending a local Baptist church where I was welcomed and loved. It was there that I received Christ into my life through the ministry of a compassionate pastor. I was soon introduced to Rev. Jeff Pokone who assisted with the counseling needs in the church.

Rev. Pokone helped me resolve my feelings about the unforgivable sin, negativity, control, shame from past abuse, anger, fear, and the humiliation of attempted suicide. He also helped me identify through Scripture the lies that Satan had used to control my past life and feelings. He helped me understand the difference between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-22). By personalizing Ephesians 1:3-13, Rev. Pokone also helped me to find my identity in the Lord. I was able to forgive myself and build some self-esteem little by little.

Then, this past summer, the Lord revealed an unfinished work yet to do in my soul, a work of complete forgiveness. I had worked through areas of unforgiveness four years earlier with Rev. Pokone, but not completely. This time, I wrote every painful memory of my father's actions to me on index cards and prayed for help and courage. When I went to see Rev. Pokone, I asked to read my favorite psalm—Psalm 103—and then began the "*I forgive my father for's...*" with crying, choking, and outright sobbing. I grieved the pain of my childhood. After fully forgiving my father, the tears immediately ceased and peace filled my heart for the first time. I tore the cards in small pieces and discarded them. I have surrendered to Christ's Lordship. I am free in Christ!

At present, I have reduced my intake of OCD medication by half and my depression medication by three quarters! Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I pray the Lord continues to bless ICBC of Indiana and Rev. Jeff Pokone.

A grateful woman from Ohio

How Healing Has Brought Purpose for Ministry

The holidays can be a season of great joy, but that was not the case for me two years ago. Although I had struggled with depression and other emotional issues for as long as I could remember, I reached a point of complete and total despair shortly after Thanksgiving 2004. I was prepared to end my life, but fortunately my husband intervened and found me the help I needed through Rev. Pokone and the ministry of ICBCI.

I entered Rev. Pokone's office with no hope for freedom from the internal torment I felt. The counseling process began slowly as we peeled away the layers of my past and built trust so that I could honestly deal with the issues that had plagued me for so long. Finally and for the first time in my life, I faced the horror of having been molested as a young girl. I came to understand that this experience had shattered me. It left me emotionally unequipped to live my life and continued to reap destruction in all of my relationships.

Through God's amazing grace, a lot of journaling, prayer, Bible study, my husband's constant support, and acceptance of Rev. Pokone's counsel, God completely transformed my life! He restored my brokenness internally and within my relationships. He healed my emotions such that I can live and love boldly, and He has given me a hope for the future that includes serving Him through ministering to others. I am so grateful to God for choosing to heal me, and I look forward to celebrating this holiday season as I am filled with joy!

A joyful woman from Illinois

