

Palmetto Provides A Safe And Tranquil Treatment Environment



Our 70-acre campus is almost completely enclosed by the beautiful Lake Lafourche.

Palmetto Addiction Recovery Center • 86 Palmetto Road, Rayville, LA 71269
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PALMETTO
ADDICTION RECOVERY CENTER
NEWS

It's Time to Get Well – Grace
for Addicts in the Church

– Dr. Terry Ellis

Addiction. It is a heavy, loaded, and often frightening word. About 24 million people in the United States are addicted to drugs and alcohol.* That's about 10% of all Americans over the age of 12. Yet, in my 35 years of being a pastor, I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of people who came to me about a problem with drugs and/or alcohol.

I was never a fire breather as a preacher. Grace was, and is, my theme. I even write a blog about grace (gracewavestoday.com). I was approachable. But if the statistics about addiction are correct, then I was pastor to hundreds of addicts during my pastoral career. Yet almost none of them came to me about this problem.

2014, when I stood in the pulpit of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Baton Rouge and said, "I'm Terry. And I'm an alcoholic." They were not surprised, though the words probably jarred them. A little more than three months earlier, I entered Palmetto Addiction Recovery Center in Rayville, Louisiana, for treatment for alcoholism after a caring member came to me and said, "It's time to get you well."

After I entered treatment, I asked our trustees to be clear and transparent about what was happening, fully expecting my ministry to be over. The church, however, possessed a rare and beautiful grace. They welcomed me back, and that led to my odd sermon opening.

In the succeeding days and

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A New Year.
A New Start.

Alumni Dates:
April 22nd & 23rd

Look for more information
on our website:
palmettocenter.com

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Interventionist Bio

Dr. Terry Ellis

CELEBRATING OVER YEARS OF SERVICE

It's Time to Get Well – Grace for Addicts in the Church

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months, a very unexpected thing happened. People began coming to me to say that they were alcoholics or drug addicts. More common were those with someone in their family struggling with addiction.

Then calls came calls from members in present and former congregations concerning a family member who clearly had a problematic relationship with drugs and/or alcohol. I led interventions (not the kind you see on TV!), and helped people get the treatment they needed.

None of this took place before I became an alcoholic. Why? Some reasons are obvious. An addict often has an exaggerated sensitivity to judgment. We see it where it is not. Of course, sometimes censure is real. We can always find someone who condemns, and then use that as an excuse to stay away from a place (the church) that is likely to give grace if we give it the chance.

A more common obstacle is the very real sense that few people really understand what an addict is experiencing. That is true. Before I became an alcoholic, I had little conception of the agonizing mystery of addiction. The physical craving combined with the mental

obsession are maddening and miserable.

That certainly doesn't mean you have to be one to understand one. My therapist was not an addict, though many in this field are in recovery themselves. For someone who isn't, I can only say don't eat for three days, and then try not thinking about food. You'll better understand the everyday life of an addict.

Of course, the main reason addicts don't come to us is because of self-imposed exile. An addiction fights for its life. It speaks to us in a reasonable voice, and that voice is our own. It tells us that no one understands, and that we therefore should avoid every encouragement to change. The addiction isolates us. And so we slink into the oily shadows of denial and shame.

The church, God bless it, is seldom equipped to deal with this disease of the brain and spirit, and that is absolutely no indictment of the church. Bringing light to this kind of darkness requires either careful study and prayer, or walking in the darkness personally. I would not recommend the latter. It nearly killed me, and certainly dragged

me through a black depression in which I cursed every dawn.

Today I welcome the dawn. I'm in recovery, and the screeching voices of fear and doubt are still. One day at a time.

I recently left the pastorate to found **Chrysalis Interventions** (www.chrysalisinterventions.com). I help people get well by getting them into recovery. Frankly, I love alcoholics and addicts. I can say to them, "I've never met you, but I understand you." That creates a trust, and that leads to the possibility of a whole new life. I have the blessing of saying "it's time to get you well." I also go to churches and tell my story, and then present a seminar on addiction in the family of faith.

The addicts are among us, in the pews and sometimes in the pulpits. They're confused and confusing, and desperately needing grace. Chrysalis is one bucket of water in the middle of a raging inferno that we can no longer neglect.

The chorus is growing, and the church must find its voice to proclaim the good news: It's time to get well.



Let's Celebrate Our Sobriety!

Spring Alumni Dates

**Friday, April 22nd and
and Saturday, April 23rd**

**86 Palmetto Road, Rayville, LA
1-800-203-6612**

Parting Thoughts

**"I avoid looking forward or backward,
and try to keep looking *upward*."
– Charlotte Brontë**

Interventionist Bio: *Dr. Terry Ellis*



Chrysalis Interventions

Prior to becoming an interventionist, Dr. Ellis served as pastor of six churches over his 34 year career. He holds a doctorate in Greek, a Masters in Biblical studies, and a B.A. in Psychology. He's authored many commentaries, articles, and biblical studies, and his blog, GraceWaves, has a wide audience.

And he nearly lost his life to alcoholism a few years ago.

For more than three decades Dr. Ellis has stepped into the chaos of people's lives to try and bring them direction and peace. Through addiction he entered his own chaos, then began his recovery when someone said "we need to get you well." He believes in the vital importance of intervention as the beginning of recovery. His passion is to help addicts, alcoholics, and their families get well.

30+ Years Experience Counseling
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