



RU Family and Friends,

This update will be unlike anything you have seen from RU before and probably unlike anything that follows. I apologize upfront for its length, but as you will see, it is too important to summarize. For those who want to get to the highlights, I understand. Look for those topics that interest you; they are marked along the way. Those who wish to know the whole story, the hows, and whys, buckle up and grab a cup of coffee.

We will explore how finances shaped our course and brought us to where we are today. I will share God's healing, renewal, and transformation of the RU Ministry itself and those of us who call it "our job." Most of all, you will clearly see God's unending love for RU and the miracles He has sent to confirm that love and unwavering support.

I have prayed for the correct way to convey this to you for several months. You should know upfront that I consider it much more accurate and productive to speak as "we" rather than "me." I am nothing without Christ, and RU is nothing without a dedicated staff and a world of supporters like yourself. I am an addict who found Christ through the program of RU, nothing more. However, the details, discoveries, and facts herein were witnessed by me. Many of you don't know me, and several have asked about my background and qualifications. So... I am going to speak from my point of view.

It is my prayer that you walk away with a few specific things through this update.

- I pray that you understand my personal loyalty, dedication, and calling to RU Recovery.
- I pray that you understand the reason behind some difficult decisions.
- I pray you receive a clear view of the road(s) that led RU to this point.
- Most of all, I pray that you have a clear idea of our Mission, our Vision, and our Direction.

It is only with HIS guidance that I proceed. My request each moment is that HE remains the narrator.

Wishing you His Blessings,

Brad Woodbury
CEO/Executive Director for RU Recovery



Since August 2021, I have had the privilege of speaking to many of you. Some of you I knew from conferences, but most were first-time meetings. I look forward to putting a face to everyone's name soon. This post is the one we have been talking about. It is the FAQ that I promised. I plan to include all the issues we discussed and several that we didn't.

There's **a lot to unpack**; let's get started.

First Things First: What Happened between 2017 - 2018?

The first mention of significant change in RU was during the 2019 National Conference. However, let's step back a bit further to fall 2017. One Wednesday afternoon, RU Recovery found itself in need of ten thousand dollars to cover that period's payroll. All previous resources and options for funds had been exhausted. Pastor Kingsbury called a meeting and asked Tim Farley and me to step into two leadership roles. We were given the task of reviewing the Ministry as a whole. Unofficially Tim was named the Executive Director, and I was named the CFO. Tim set his sights and talents on operations and housing while I dove headfirst into business and finances.

Enter Brad Woodbury... Is He Qualified?

For any of you who don't know me or my story, I feel it's important to tell you a little bit about myself before we go any further.

I first heard about RU Recovery in 2013. The previous thirteen years had been a fog of eleven rehabs and countless hospitals. I could recite the twelve steps in my sleep. I was homeless and crippled by alcohol and drugs. After several failed attempts to end my life with pills and other substances, I found myself at the edge of a busy highway. I scarcely recall anything other than revulsion and a resolution to end this life.

I took a step forward...

This attempt landed me in a hospital for eighteen days. The first few days were filled with more drugs from the hospital. During my stay, the Lord sent an RU director to my hospital room. I didn't know he was a director or what an RU director was, nor did I care. I only remember saying: "I don't need another program. I don't have the money even if I wanted to go to this place." He looked at me and stated: "I think God might work that out." That gentleman was brother Corbett Stone from Florence, South Carolina, and he was right.

God had worked out the money, and He had started a work in me. I began feeling convictions that I had never felt before. God started a renovation project on my spirit; He hasn't missed one day of work since. I soon found myself on a plane headed to Illinois. When I arrived, I was introduced to about twenty-five men, an old brick building, and a program that changed everything.

That was ten years ago. Today I am sober. I work for all of you; I have a beautiful wife. I have a home, a car, and a baby boy due in February.

See, I didn't know why the Lord chose to save me. I could not understand why He would have

picked me when so many others were more worthy of His Grace. Each day He shows me a larger piece of His reason. I now understand that He brought me to RU Recovery for a purpose far beyond what I thought at that time.

Who is Brad Woodbury? He is nobody special; he is just a guy who owes his entire life to the program of RU Recovery. I will immediately admit that I do not have the answers we need. But thank heavens, this isn't about me; it's about RU Recovery and OUR combined obedience to the Lord. What you're about to read is how God has made all our decisions and navigated the journey of RU Recovery. I just happen to be the one in the driver's seat right now. Like all of us, I am and always will be a student.

That's already too much about me; let's get back to the story. It's the end of 2017 and this Southern boy is once again covered in snow.

2 Million Dollar Decline in 8 years

When Pastor gave us access to all the books, I looked at the financial reports from the past ten years. I knew that our 990s had once boasted a net worth of over three million dollars and the current worth was just over one million. This had already stirred both curiosity and concern.

- What caused the decline?
- What could have been done differently?
- Can we implement a new business model that works?
- Can RU Recovery be successful today?
- If so, how can we work together to ensure this is resolved and doesn't happen again?

With God's help, we focused our commitment towards reversing this trend and ensuring brighter days ahead! I was raised with a simple business mindset, so I started my review by looking at some basics. Where were we? What happened, and where are we now? RU Recovery began twenty-five years ago. The business landscape has evolved since then, but its fundamental principles remain true: meet a need in your community; have something valuable to offer. Good ole business 101, Supply and Demand. We have both in abundance.

ONE: The need for addiction recovery has never been more evident.

TWO: The RU program works and is valuable to those who need it.

The Finances at that time presented RU Recovery with a debt of 1.2 million dollars. The bulk of this debt was a 900-thousand-dollar mortgage. The major assets securing that note were four real estate properties.

- 610 Mulberry Street (The Graduates Home)
- 4149 Safford Road (The Men's Home)
- 310 Arnold Avenue (The Women's Home)
- 333 East State Street (RU Headquarters)

Their combined value at that time was based on a 2017 appraisal which placed RU with approximately 400 thousand-dollars in real estate equity.

Brother Farley and I worked together to navigate business challenges, all while trusting God's blessings to keep gas in the tank. We cut unnecessary costs, tightened our spending practices, and set our sights on a conference one year away. God quickly began to show us that we were on the right track.

Personal Thought:

(God did not provide on a weekly or even monthly basis. His gifts came each day and sometimes at the final hour. Despite my doubt and skepticism, He proved faithful and dedicated to seeing RU Recovery continue. To this day, that provision has never wavered. Nothing I have ever read or heard could have allowed my Faith to grow like it has while witnessing God's Hand in RU Recovery over the past five years.)

The following changes were made immediately:

- Cut monthly spending by over 20%
- Bi-Weekly Payroll reduced 22%
- Annual Insurance expenses reduced 24%
- 610 Mulberry Street property was liquidated
- Travel expenses cut 100%

2019 Announcement to Sell Property and Restructure Finances

We forged into 2019 with the following leadership team:

- Paul Kingsbury (President and Chairman of the Board)
- Tim Farley (Executive Director)
- Ben Burks (International Chapter Director)
- Cisco Cervantes (Housing Director)
- Brad Woodbury (Administrative Director /CFO)

During the 2019 National Conference, the RU Ministry committed to becoming "Debt Free." We shared this new Vision on the final evening of the conference. Pastor Kingsbury and I were onstage together, discussing these plans with all of you. (Those of you who were in attendance.) It was simple. We planned to liquidate some assets, reduce expenses, and reorganize operating structures. We had no other choice, something drastic had to be done, or our beloved RU would close completely.

After the 2019 Conference, the leadership team established some processes to accomplish these plans. All RU Real Estate properties were listed for sale. Shortly after making those moves, a few

other things were set in motion.

Brad Woodbury's Personal Commitment to RU

Earlier in the year, God sent me the greatest gift of all, my wife. I married Katie Outler in April 2019. I now had to consider a life with someone else, her retirement, and a possible family. Katie and I were dedicated to RU; at the time, she and I both averaged over sixty hours each week for the Ministry. We loved RU, but we knew it could not support us and provide long-term security. She and I had been praying for the Lord to open a door. After a short visit home, I felt like God was speaking loudly. My Mother had been diagnosed with memory problems. Alzheimer's and dementia run on both sides of her family, so the concern was prevalent.

After a long talk with my Mother and Father, it was decided that Katie and I would move home and help my parents operate the family business. I knew this was God's precise way of providing a future for my family and me. I made an appointment with Pastor Kingsbury and explained the situation. Pastor asked Katie and me to remain with RU until it rebuilt a solid financial foundation. He asked me to remain in Rockford for one year and manage the liquidations and reorganization. After the year, we could move and work in finance remotely if needed. We also discussed my desire to travel and promote RU from South Carolina. He agreed, and so did we. Katie and I then shared our plans with Brother and Mrs. Burks, and we all got busy working together to revive the RU Ministry. That brought us into the spring of 2020.

2020 Worldwide COVID-19 Pandemic

We never imagined what the world would throw our way in the following year. COVID-19 was something no one was ever expecting. All the plans to restructure and reorganize were taken off the table as we were now looking to navigate the uncharted waters of operating two residential student facilities. All focus shifted to the homes. Both were listed as "Congregate Care Facilities" by the Winnebago County Health Department. We were quickly forced to comply with all nursing home and hospital regulations. The list of requirements and processes requested would fill an additional twenty pages. It was overwhelming.

In April 2020, the state of Illinois and the rest of our Nation were presented with mandates to stay home. We closed our doors and helplessly watched you do the same. Churches and chapters across the country all faced the same regulations. *"Close your Doors! Do Not Meet by order of the Law! Shut down your Church!"* Like you, we scrambled to implement a way to operate and function within the boundaries put in place by our local and state authorities.

Our residential homes were governed and inspected by the Winnebago County Health Department. We were not allowed to accept any new students. All staff members had to remain on the property. Brother Cisco Cervantes lived at the men's facility, managing that home along with Axel Wittig. Ms. Mary Beth Grindinger and Jennifer Bennett managed the ladies. No one could leave, and no one could visit.

Although we had never faced this situation, God provided the means for us to continue operating. Our relationship with the local government made way for the mayor to grant us special permissions. Our vehicles were allowed to travel and transport food, supplies, and encouragement to each residential facility.

The students and staff remained focused on God and His plan for the following two weeks. Katie and I, along with Lisa Hyde and other dedicated staff members, traveled between the two homes. We all did our best to encourage one another. Funds were limited, but God provided.

Those months would later show a 92% decline in income, but the long-term devastation would be much worse. RU inevitably lost hundreds of chapters because of the COVID shutdowns. Chapters that had previously been struggling were unable to reopen. Those that had just started were now lost in the chaos. We even saw large, successful chapters close along with their church.

Did RU Take any PPP Loans or Pandemic Assistance?

While the COVID crisis would eventually cause our Ministry to lose over 45% of its income, the emergency funds provided allowed us to continue operating. At that time, there had been no interest in any real estate properties and no additional funds to implement a new financial structure. RU was quickly coming to an inevitable bankruptcy. If it had not been for the PPP loans and government incentives, RU Recovery would have dissolved at the end of 2020.

We prayed and sought God's wisdom each time the government announced a new plan. (I'm sure you did the same?) Should we apply? Is this what the Lord would want? We sought the advice of two outside financial experts and applied for the programs we qualified for. The board of directors and Ministry leadership followed God's prompting and worked together to make the "next right decision."

We were ultimately granted two separate amounts of assistance. Ninety percent of the RU staff were laid off and filed for unemployment, while volunteer hours kept the Ministry operating. Once the threat started dissipating, and all the pandemic funds were utilized, RU was granted forgiveness for 100% of both PPP loans. Once again, God had provided a way to keep RU open and operating.

Post-Pandemic 2021

During the final months of 2020 and into the first few months of 2021, we had an excellent opportunity to return our focus on order and structure. As our world slowly adopted a new normal, we also returned to a daily operating schedule. Despite any delays caused by this period in history, we still needed to carry out the plans set up before COVID-19's disruption. Now they were more important than ever!

RU Finances after COVID

Post Pandemic figures presented the homes with an overall loss of 42%. (Remember, they were already operating with a deficit.) Designated funding for the homes was reduced by 38%, and tuition funds suffered a loss of 72%. (Total Impact = a net quarterly loss of approx. 21 thousand dollars.) RU still owned three buildings. Each one demanding over nine thousand dollars per month to operate. All of this combined created an overall deficit of over 65%.

Once again, we were on a path leading to RU Recovery's dissolution. God's divine intervention was our only hope. I did not want anyone to be surprised or misled, so I shared this news with staff members. We had an urgent call for prayer, and I asked them to commit their hearts in earnest Faith that God might open yet another door for His Ministry and their lives. We were all in the same boat, depending on the same engine. It would have been unfair to be dishonest about the amount of fuel in the tank.

The Ministry's assets were still held in the three real estate properties. Our original goal had been to sell those facilities and relocate to smaller, more economical properties. However, we were now entering our third year of properties being listed with no offers. We reduced the asking prices, promoted discounts, and took other steps to generate interest and appeal, but all efforts fell on deaf ears.

What Lawsuits are RU involved In?

While we prayed for a buyer or interested party, RU Recovery faced other unforeseen challenges. Our original home and founding church, North Love Baptist Church, had recently been mentioned in a legal dispute. The lawsuit presented allegations between one of its members and a former student of North Love Christian School. During the weeks that followed that initial lawsuit, three additional cases would be presented to NLBC, and RU Recovery would also be listed as a defendant.

We read each lawsuit and reviewed the allegations to determine how they related to RU. The allegations in each case took place during the first few years of RU Recovery. They do not involve an RU-owned property, current staff member, or student, so there was little information to investigate. The lawsuits were turned over to our legal counsel, and we complied with all legal requirements. These cases remain open today, and we continue to reply as needed. We continue to pray for God's will and justice.

What about Steve Curington?

The lawsuits and allegations presented brought an absurd amount of attention to North Love Baptist Church, and RU Recovery did not escape the negative repercussions. Within a few days of our mid-summer board meeting, the board of directors was presented with an allegation of immoral actions involving our founder, Steve Curington.

(The specific details and actions that followed the accusation molded the foundation that RU sits on today. I have discussed this with many of you and have included details in previous letters and updates. As stated before, the board of directors and leadership reviewed the issue and made an official statement during the same month. We also ensured that provisions were in place to prevent any other occurrence.)

What Happened in August 2021 that Changed Things So Much?

Negative remarks had already started to mount despite any attempts to move forward. This created an uneasy and uncertain atmosphere within the Ministry. August would bring what I now call “The Great Resignation.” Pastor Paul Kingsbury resigned from his position as Chairman and President. Two other board members relinquished their seats after a plea for their additional time and presence. (A review of their schedules and current location would not allow them to serve adequately.) Within the following 48 hours, the allegations of brother Curington were made public. And both Ben and Wendy Burks resigned from their positions with RU Recovery.

Since the dawn of the Ministry, a list of RU Leadership has always included those three I just mentioned. That statement was no longer valid. Once the gravity of that week was set in my mind, I found myself reeling with thoughts. God had allowed me to find RU and get my life back in His will. I felt His spirit guiding my wife and me to stay for a short time. WE LOVE RU, but I had accepted this responsibility believing there would come a day when I could return home and pass the reins to someone else. This was not my plan or what I thought God wanted for my life.

I did what the program of RU taught me and took my burdens to the Lord. He quickly brought supernatural calm and peace into my spirit. He led me to scripture (Job 28) that reminded me of a few facts. (He spiritually slapped me in the face!) None of this was a surprise to God. He had allowed Katie and me to remain here in this position. I could hear God saying, “My program is too important, do not let it collapse.” After all, He had taken care of everything so far; why should I stop trusting Him now?

The days and hours that followed were filled with His confirmations. God’s message was clear. He wanted us here to support every addict, every staff member, and every chapter in whatever capacity needed. The Lord even removed my burden to move home and help my parents. My Mothers’ latest news was that she no longer needed the memory medication. The progressive loss of her memory was no longer a concern. That knowledge gave us newfound optimism and affirmation of His loving guidance over our lives and RU Recovery.

Each remaining board member found similar confirmations in their own lives. We quickly knew that God had allowed this small group to remain. And then we realized that He had tasked us with an extraordinary responsibility. Although we were facing an uncertain future, the Holy Spirit flooded each board meeting with the fortitude to continue His Ministry. The board of directors asked me to take the combined CEO and Executive Director positions. We re-elected new board officers and kept pressing forward.

Did RU Lose Chapters Because of Lawsuits?

The RU Family has taught me many things, but this may be the most prevailing. *When God blesses something, the enemy will stop at nothing to destroy it.* Satan's attacks were (and still are) abundant. Chapters were hearing rumors and talk that painted RU Recovery in a terrible light. Untruths were posted on social media. Spiteful statements were made against staff and leaders. A handful of directors and Pastors called immediately to announce plans to end support. Some chapters created similar formats and named them something different. Some changed their names and removed the RU Logo from their signs and promotions. Sadly, a few churches stopped all addiction help services.

What Would You Have Done in My Position? God Always Wins.

My Flesh wanted to jump up and defend RU. I wanted to post my knowledge of the issue or "thing" being said. I was petrified that our world would lose this desperately needed program.

If we had all been in a room, I would have shouted:

"Hey friends, please listen to me for one moment. Much of what is being said on social media, I have heard myself. I also suspected some of the same things; that's one reason I looked back as far as I did. I have looked at all the books since 2010. I've read meeting minutes, insurance policies, emails, by-laws, personal notes, and former staff files. I've also been privy to all Ministry head decisions for two years. Please trust me when I tell you there is no 'Sinister Sam' with an evil plot to fool everyone, steal the money and get rich. RU leadership has made some poor business decisions, and YES, RU has some issues. But God has continued to change lives and bless this Ministry. GOD is here, and He has anointed this Ministry. DO NOT Throw away RU. If WE take OUR bitterness, pride, and personal feelings out of the equation and focus on CHRIST ONLY, He will take RU to a place we can't imagine, and He may allow us to come along. I promise you!"

That would have been my words to all of you. That would have been my statement to the RU Nation and the world. That is my overall statement now.

Thankfully, God had placed some wise mentors in my life that were much smarter than me. They each advised me to remain quiet, not respond and allow the Lord to handle things. (*One prevailing voice was my wife's.*) I was told to be patient and allow the Lord to speak for RU. That's what I did, and that's what RU did. No official defense was posted, and little has been stated since. All public responses and official statements since August 2021 were shared with you via email, posted on our Facebook pages, and remain available at: rurecovery.com/update. We remained quiet and focused on the job and the chapters that needed products.

RU's Relationship with Chapters Now

Those were difficult days filled with tears and sleepless nights; however, one blessing was huge

during this time. I developed a relationship with many of you. It has been an honor and privilege to converse with hundreds of pastors, directors, deacons, and students within the RU family. Only a few staff members remained, and your calls ultimately became my responsibility. Each call presented specific situations, but all remained united in purpose. Everyone I spoke with displayed a desire to support their community and bring recovery through God's word. Everyone agreed that the focus is Christ, not man. Each conversation gave me a more profound sense of inspiration and dedication toward keeping this vital program accessible to all who need it.

What Do Other Chapters and Supporters Have to Say?

“No matter what, I have never known a program more effective at helping addicts and winning lives to Christ.” –*Corbett Stone, Florence SC, Chapter Director.*

“Reformers Unanimous is anointed by God, it is evident.” –*Dr. David Gibbs.*

“I have never experienced anything that taught me more about God and the Bible as this program. It's a program of restoration and healing... I believe that RU Recovery embodies the true heart of our God.” –*Ramona Schultz, New RU Board President.*

“I am so grateful that you all stayed and kept things going. This is an amazing ministry.”
–*Cheryl Gollenbusch, RU Chapter Secretary and Ministry supporter*

“My husband and I spent years promoting RU. We saw miracle after miracle...”
–*WendyJo Householder, RU Representative, and Ministry Supporter*

“We are looking forward to seeing what God does next.” –*Kent Fluke, RU Director and Ministry Supporter*

“This program is far too important to God's mission to let it close. We will do anything we can to help.” –*James and Carleen Richardson RU Director, Donor, and RU Inside Director*

These are a few statements pulled from the tidal wave of encouraging discussions I had during those days.

God's BIGGEST Miracle

I knew God had a plan, and I could feel His spirit behind us, but what do we do now? That was the lingering question in the fall of 2021. The resignations were now filed, and the original shock of everyone's exit was now fading. RU Recovery was now a handful of board members, a student from the Carolinas, a few dedicated staff members, and about five hundred active chapters. We kept doing what we had done for years. We filled orders and managed that day's problem as best we could.

The leadership team in the fall of 2021 was:

- Brad Woodbury (CEO/Executive Director)
- And the RU Board of Directors.

We had a vision of God's overall plan, but we had no idea how He would make it work. While scratching our heads, God sent an answer. In short order, no doubt. To this very day, this miracle brings me to my knees each time I roll the tape within my mind.

One unforgettable Tuesday in September, our realtor called with surprising news. Not only did we have an offer on the men's home, but within just one hour, there was also interest in purchasing the ladies' home! If that wasn't enough of a blessing, another proposal came through two hours later regarding the men's home. But God wasn't done yet. As I was leaving the office, I got a call from a tenant asking if I could meet someone interested in the downtown office.

We call it the "Miracle on State Street." Our realtor was astonished. (He recently called to say Merry Christmas, still blown away by God's power.) Rockford, Illinois, commercial real estate market was at an all-time low. Buildings were selling at 30 to 40% less than five years prior. Yet, in one day, God sent viable offers on three properties that had sat dormant for almost three years. Four separate buyers were interested. I now had zero doubt that GOD was leading the way, and I had the first glimpse of a financial resolution.

God's provision would continue throughout the sale of each individual property. Each sale was a cash purchase. We still had students in our homes, but each buyer worked with us to allow all current students time to graduate. Each buyer also agreed to our terms of vacating the properties. The list of miracles follows us all the way to today, and they continue to flow. But the circumstances surrounding the sale of properties will forever remain the most significant answer to a prayer I have ever witnessed.

Why Did RU Close the Residential Homes?

Although we now had offers for each property, the decision to close the homes still needed to be made. Our hearts refused to see that. We moved forward with the previous plans. We would sell the current buildings and relocate to less expensive facilities. We planned to restructure tuition and admissions, reduce capacity, and adopt a more manageable operating budget. Once again, the Lord intervened.

While the sale of each property, we started the process of relocating each home. Within the first few weeks of planning, it was evident that God did not want us to pursue that path. We quickly had a list of problems that made the project impossible. Location, permits, new regulations, and city ordinances were a few on the list of obstacles. The bottom line was money and time. As we all know, nothing is impossible for our God. He made it clear that it was NOT the time to re-establish the homes. If we had followed that path, we would not have RU Recovery today. We sharpened our focus and set our target on preserving the program and growing its presence. I will gladly discuss these issues in detail with anyone interested.

(Additionally, more details are listed at rurecovery.com/update.)

Will the RU Homes Reopen?

In February of 2022, I sent an update to all pastors, directors, and chapters announcing the closure of our residential homes. I included several details that led to that decision and a glimpse into the financials I am sharing now. We are aware of the need for Faith-Based residential treatment options. We remain dedicated to seeing the RU Schools of Discipleship reopen. God has made it clear that He wants the same. He has brought six significant opportunities to our door within the past ten months. We are following each one and maintaining that momentum.

What Will Happen to the RU Homes Program?

We started looking at the impact of “no more RU homes.” We realize we have been reluctant to share our residential policies and procedures. In the past, many have asked for our residential program. We always encouraged you to send students to Rockford. Although we had the best intentions, the current leadership team wants to ensure that the program is available to anyone who would like to utilize it. Like all parts of RU Recovery, the homes program is not ours; it belongs to God.

Currently, we are packaging the residential program for anyone interested in starting a home or long-term facility. We will soon offer a new product, “RU Residential Student Program Manual.” (Or a similar name) This product will be a set of three-ring binders with everything needed to start a student facility. The RU Residential program is effective, it works, and thousands of alums will attest to its success. I’m delighted to see this finally offered as a product to anyone interested in helping addicts through biblical structure and teaching.

God’s Miracles Continue in 2022

2022 was packed with many changes for RU Recovery, its staff, its partners, and its supporters. It was a year of reflection and review. I saw the light at the end of our tunnel, but we needed to increase our income. My first inclination was to act quickly and create new chapters. I wanted to branch out with new programs and create interest. I planned to flood the Nation with RU materials and get this program into the hands of every Pastor in the country. Create a positive cash flow so RU can grow again. Nothing is holding us back; LET’S GO GO GO! Some of my first updates expressed that desire. If you read those first updates posted in 2021 and early 2022, you will see my initial reaction to implement a quick fix and get started on rebuilding.

This is where I drop my head and apologize for stepping over God’s plan. I am humbled and grateful for the lessons learned through my attempts that were not within his will. Each attempt I made to “GO” was met with a delay. I never felt led to stop or retreat, but something always prevented momentum. Small things that had to be handled would always interfere and absorb entire weeks. Today it is clear. God took my plans and wisely set up orange cones around them like roadblocks with a sign saying, “slow down.” Since then, He has clarified what HE has for RU

Recovery and that HE will lead this Ministry. God's Message was, "Get all the Ducks in a Row FIRST!"

RU's Refocus and Restructure

I accepted my lesson and got out of God's way. I realized I had to stop pushing something that was not His will. I needed to refocus and realign our mission with God's instructions. It was during this same time that I was communicating with several chapters. One common theme resonated from those conversations. He was calling my attention to one major flaw that has been an ongoing problem. "Promises made are too often not kept." Through the candid conversations I mentioned above, it's clear that Pastors and directors agree: RU needs an attitude adjustment! I humbly take responsibility for this and vow to change as we renew our Vision. I know we can transform and redeem how people view RU, and I refuse to allow new chapters to feel that same frustration.

With a spirit of humble dedication, we took the time to consider our message and materials prayerfully. Reflecting on who we are as an organization and how best to spread hope across America, it was clear more improvements were necessary before RU could reach its fullest potential. And while this wasn't necessarily easy or comfortable, God has blessed us with His grace during the entire process—allowing us now to continue moving forward while improving along the way.

What is the Current Path of the RU Leadership?

RU Recovery has adopted a renewed focus on growth and improvement. The Leadership and staff stand firm on the Faith that God will use this program as He chooses. We trust His guidance and place the materials in His hands. As we review and revise RU Recovery, we vow to remain committed to these key ideas:

- Maintain the core values and principles that make RU successful.
- Make this program available to everyone.
- Provide a professional, economical program that is easy to follow and relevant.
- Build a solid business foundation so this curriculum may endure for future generations.
- Most importantly, we must ensure that our organization, its materials, and its leaders elevate and honor only CHRIST.

What Does RU Need?

Each day God opens another door and offers a glimpse of tomorrow. Our current "TO DO" list is too large to look at all at once, so we are taking a note from the book of Matthew and walking one day at a time. We humbly ask that you remain patient as we sort through the specifics that have been in place for so many years. We are looking at a new business model to fit the RU Recovery of today.

In October of 2022, I sent each of you an update outlining several new programs and processes.

The RU staff is working hard to bring all those things to fruition. In that update, I mentioned “getting our ducks in a row.” Now you know that God was the one who let us know that our ducks were out of line. We are reviewing and revising issues as they arise while aiming for a soft relaunch in the spring of this year. We are working with those ducks every day, and their rows are getting more organized all the time.

Let’s discuss some specific details and get to all the questions I mentioned.

Will the RU Curriculum change?

One thing we are doing now is reviewing and revising all materials. The RU Curriculum has always been an evolution of materials. The main focus and core values have remained consistent, and they will continue to be preserved. However, focus and attention have been diverted in many directions and included many contributors. The Ministry holds five base programs and eight separate branches of the curriculum. Altogether this amassed a warehouse that carried over 800 products.

We are currently focused on the core curriculum—specifically, the first phase materials. Since the original curriculum was first drafted, countless revisions and changes have been made. The last major edit occurred in 2012, leaving the current materials with outdated programs and instructions. Many things need to be removed or updated. Additionally, technology has advanced exponentially in that short time frame, and we now have many new ways to communicate with students.

We are working with professional sources to ensure that all materials are grammatically correct. We are repairing incorrect Bible verse references and fixing misleading words. For this Ministry to present a challenge to other addiction recovery options, we must meet the advanced options they offer. We also intend to ensure that RU Recovery remains ever-diligent in following all regulations and guidelines placed on professional publications.

What is RU doing next?

Aside from the revision project, we are also working on a National promotion. Three years ago, the Lord opened a door that led me to a connection with a group from the Ministry’s past. I received a call from the promotional group Brother Curington had hired before his death in 2010. We remained in contact with one another. This past December, the Lord paved the way for this same group to assist with a national relaunch this spring and a conference in the fall.

We are currently working with them to plan the next phase for RU Recovery and bring our renewed Vision to reality. RU Recovery will move forward with a focus on the key ideas above and a dedication to its chapters. We plan to eventually have representatives across the Nation with the ability to start and support chapters.

What about RU Finances? Debt-Free? Did that ever happen?

I remain bewildered each time I now tell you about our current financial position. We are debt-free today through the unimaginable Grace and works of our heavenly Father. In September 2022, One year after the “Great Resignation” (August 2021), we were finally able to make that statement. I wish you all could have watched how the Lord put that together.

That spending reduction in 2018 and better control of finances in 2018 allowed us to make some significant progress in mortgage reduction. In 2020 (before the pandemic), we made the final payments on our fleet of vehicles and two other considerable obligations.

My friends, I pray that my words convey how incredible and miraculous it is to make that statement. God is here 100%.

Is RU Still Operating from 333 State Street?

Selling our buildings was an obvious answer to debt reduction. But without facilities, how do we operate? God has provided an ever-changing answer to that question all along. Although the final solution has evolved, we have always had an idea of how the Ministry would continue. The new owners of our state street office building have been incredible partners over the past year. They have allowed us to slowly reduce our footprint within the building since the final sale in June of 2022.

Twenty-four-plus years of operating an international Ministry have been piled into three stories of 333 State Street in Rockford, Illinois. The task of relocating and moving has been monumental and continues today. The warehouse and National representatives still reside in the building, only now RU Recovery is a tenant of the new owners. RU has a short-term lease on the structure and will soon move to a smaller, more economical facility. Although our monthly rent is fair, the Lord has provided an even more reasonable facility. The move to that location is currently underway.

This new location will provide a space for the warehouse and administration. All supporting staff are working remotely, which will continue once we have left the state street facility. With a smaller in-office team, we plan to focus on perfecting customer service. We will not be outsourcing materials at this time. It's essential to control what chapters receive, maintain personal relationships, and keep costs low.

Are There Plans to Promote or Rebrand RU Recovery?

Once relocated and settled into a new facility, RU Recovery will need less than 20% of the funds previously required to operate. We are working to reduce that further so that more funds are dedicated to growing the Ministry and increasing the awareness of Faith-Based Recovery for America. Remember the grassroots effort we started before the pandemic? In 2017, RU Recovery purchased the trademark for that initiative, and we feel God allowed that for a reason.

The National launch for RU Recovery in 2023 will be based on and formed around “Faith-Based Recovery for America” hosted by RU Recovery. We can’t wait to see what HE has in store.

What is the RU Staff Doing Now?

The current staff works hard daily to create a clean, easy start for new chapters. Over twenty churches are awaiting new curriculum and program guidelines. Once the warehouse is relocated, we will be adding new products and merchandise. That merchandise will come directly from RU, not third-party vendors. We will have a new inventory and financial processing system. Eventually, all materials will coordinate with one centralized look and theme. I could list planned changes for another two pages, but I will save those details for future updates. Let’s go over a few facts about RU Recovery and answer some questions that I may still need to cover.

Who is in Charge of RU Now?

Short answer:

- The Board of Directors and the Executive Director
- Ramona Schultz, Board President
- Randy Grindinger, Secretary for the Board
- Barry Molencupp, Board Member
- Cliff Westerlund, Board Member
- Brad Woodbury, Executive Director/CEO

Our board of directors comprises four individuals devoted to our mission. Their personal devotion and Faith have allowed us to operate. This group did not waver. They each expressed their belief that RU is too important to dissolve. Though we have room for additional members, the restructuring and reorganization within the Ministry have made it challenging to ensure that new recruits would receive a proper orientation. Therefore, we have elected not to fill these empty positions as of now; however, in due course, when all needed adjustments have been put into place with certainty, we look forward to welcoming more like-minded folks on board!

Is RU Still with North Love Baptist Church?

YES (however), the closure of our Rockford facilities, the resignation of Pastor Kingsbury, and the reduction in our staff have removed our daily involvement with NLBC. RU has always been its own entity separate from NLBC, but their close proximity made it difficult to differentiate between them at times. However, North Love Baptist Church will forever remain our first home. We remain humbly devoted to continuing a Ministry to addicts through this Founding Chapter. We are ever so grateful for the dedication of Joe Livingston, Dale Akin, and Ed Force, who have worked hard to keep our beloved Chapter K0001 alive and well.

Who Took Over for Pastor Kingsbury?

Pastor Kingsbury served RU as its board President and CEO. His seat on the board has been filled. And the duties of the CEO are now separate (as they should be) and are performed by the Executive Director. Launching a new vision allows us to grow while remaining dedicated and optimistic about where God will lead. We are firmly committed to honoring God's leadership and remaining under HIS authority. Once our fiduciary foundation is stable, we will expand our board of directors. In an effort of utmost obedience, two special board seats will be reserved for senior Pastors who share our Vision.

Who Took Over for Ben Burks?

No one. The position of International Director will not be filled. Within the new structure, there will be several individuals representing RU Recovery. Currently, two individuals are launching new chapters. Each weekend entails a trip to train, retrain, or encourage an existing chapter. They have started over 18 new chapters with zero publicity or promotion in the past twelve months. As we move forward, our chapters will enjoy service from a team of representatives. God has far too much business lined up for one person, and we are excited to see who He brings to the team.

What has RU Learned Over the Past Two Years?

I included this question because a Pastor asked me this last week. If I had to list one clear truth God presented during this time, it would be this. This Ministry and this Program belong only to God. He crafted its structure and words through Brother Curington and many other dedicated servants. He has allowed us to share a bit of the Glory, but He owns it all.

Final Thoughts

For six glorious years, I sat on the front row and watched God guide this Ministry through turbulence that would have overtaken any organization. Though the enemy has tried his hardest to keep RU underwater, RU continues to rise again and again and again... There is a driving force that prevails against any odds in its path.

I am beyond blessed to be a small part of this incredible organization with each of you. The staff and RU leadership team are all confident that God has an incredible plan to make RU Recovery a nationally recognized option in the battle against addiction.

We remain humbly dedicated to seeing millions redeemed through the power of Christ, and we cannot do it without your prayerful support!

Thank you again for standing with us during these times - together, let's bring hope into every home and transformation to people and communities everywhere!

With Kindest Regards,

Brad Woodbury, *CEO / Executive Director for RU Recovery*