

Healing Hearts – Mike and Veda Goushaw

Mike and Veda Goushaw are the former leaders of the Healing Hearts group formerly meeting in Davison. They have four children, including their youngest son who is a homosexual. Mike shares the story of their journey of learning about their son's homosexuality, and moving from their painful silence and into a healing community in the Body of Christ.



My wife, Veda and I married when we were very young. We had both known about Christ as children, but after four years of marriage and having three daughters, we realized that we hadn't really asked Jesus Christ to be our Savior. On October 28th, 1966, we both asked Christ to be our Lord and Savior. As I look back now, I realize that there was something lacking in our little church and in many churches

today – someone to disciple us. Growth without someone to help is slow and painful. Two years later our son was born. My wife and I both came from homes where we were not taught good parenting skills, so we made many mistakes while raising our four children. I was raised by an angry, strict dad, and became a dad just like him. My wife was also strict. We put our kids in a Christian grade school, and brought them to church every time the doors were opened. I was not consistent with our family devotions, and by the time our kids were teenagers, we didn't have devotions together at all. I guess I hoped that Christian school and church would do the job of making them good Christians.

When our son was a teenager, he was caught stealing pornography. We went together to see our pastor. I only remember talking with my son once about pornography and homosexuality. Unfortunately, we never talked about it again. That was a big mistake.

Our son worked at a fast food restaurant during high school and went on to college to pursue a business degree. He spent his first year in a Christian college where we later learned that he was involved in homosexuality. After his first year of college, he began to move around a lot. He finally moved back to Flint and finished college at the U of M Flint where he received a business degree. He eventually got a good management job with another fast food company. I was in denial about his homosexuality during his teens and early twenties, but now I realized that it was a part of his life.

Driving to work one day in 1998, he was involved in an auto accident and suffered a back injury that would require surgery. He stayed at our home during his recovery. He went to church with us during these few weeks – something that he hadn't done for years. This gave us a glimmer of hope. That hope was dashed when he left our home after recovering from surgery, and we found out that he had been viewing pornography on our computer while we

were at work. He could no longer work in the fast food industry because of his injury. He decided to move to Columbus, Ohio where he heard that there were good job opportunities. He also found a good pain clinic at the Ohio State University to help him with his chronic back pain. He found a job in banking and has lived in Columbus ever since.

In September, 2003, my wife called Focus on the Family about a book she wanted, and they asked her if there was anything that they could help her with. She then poured out her heart about our son and asked where we could get help for him and us. They referred her to a ministry network who referred her to Reconciliation Ministries (www.recmin.org) and Dan Hitz. Dan referred her to Healing Hearts, a support group for parents of gays and lesbians. We went to our first Healing Hearts meeting in October of 2003. My wife had shared about our son with a few close friends and pastors, but I had never told anyone that our son was a homosexual. We felt right at home with those parents at that first meeting. We could talk openly with people who understood our pain. I borrowed the book *You Don't Have to be Gay* by Jeff Konrad and learned so much. I was given hope that by God's grace, our son could be delivered from this life.

My wife and I attended Focus on the Family's (www.family.org) *Love Won Out* conference in Nashville, Tennessee in February of 2004. Many of the speakers were those whom God had delivered from homosexuality. There was so much to digest in one day. We bought tapes of all of the sessions so we could listen to all of this good information again when we got home and share it with others. We also bought many books that deal about homosexuality. There are many misconceptions about this issue in our churches. It is viewed as a problem "out there in the world" and not a problem within the church. It is often viewed as the "sin above all sins", yet if we were as repulsed by our own sin as we are about homosexuality, we would see a new level of holiness in our churches today.

I was finally able to break my silence with my friends at church and shared with my Sunday School class about our son, and what we learned at the *Love Won Out* conference. After the class, three ladies approached my wife individually and told her about their own children who were struggling with sexual sin. It was the first time that one of them had ever told anyone that her son was a homosexual.

People need a safe place to share their hearts with others in the Body of Christ. It is our desire to see families attending the Healing Hearts, and that the strugglers attend a good support group. If you are a parent or sibling of someone struggling with homosexuality and would like a safe, Christian place to share your heart, please call Reconciliation Ministries for more information. The number is 586.739.5114.