

A Word from the President and the Executive Director

Dear Friends of Pathways,

This letter is to serve as a letter of appreciation for our former Lead Consultant/ Executive Director, the Rev. Jermine Alberty, to provide an update on what we accomplished in 2022, and to share our direction moving forward with you.

In 1988 a visionary group of people from various faith communities formed Pathways to Promise (P2P) because they saw a deep and wide need for faith communities to reduce stigma and to better serve people with mental illnesses. In 2006 I, Mark Stephenson, joined the board of directors and, over the years, had the privilege of serving with many dedicated to Pathways' mission and vision, including Rev. Jermine Alberty, who in May 2016 joined as the Lead Consultant of P2P.

Recently, the Board of Directors decided to move to a staff-led model for our organization from the consultant-led model we have had for years. Though difficult, Rev. Alberty conveyed that he thought it was the right choice for him, given the circumstances presented by the board, to resign as Lead Consultant/Executive Director effective January 31, 2023.

The board of directors would like to show our appreciation for the work and dedication of Rev. Jermine Alberty. When Rev. Alberty became Pathways' Lead Consultant/Executive Director, we had a helpful website and many resources available for faith communities to download or purchase to assist them in ministry with people with mental illnesses. Rev. Alberty poured through those resources and found one that he envisioned not just as a resource but as a movement: three slide decks created by Rev. Craig Rennebohm called Companionship.

Drawing from his profound and rich experiences working in churches and community mental health and teaching Mental Health First Aid, Jermine worked with Craig, Jessica Dexter, Kae Eaton, and others to create a system to train people throughout the country in the practices of Companionship. Over the years many people around the country were trained and are now serving as Companionship instructors, including 36 people in 2022 alone.

Thanks to Alberty's vision and hard work, along with the work of many others, hundreds of people across the United States have been trained in the deeply compassionate, relational practices of Companionship, and the world is a more caring place. We are grateful for his service, and as a board, we wish Rev. Alberty well as he applies his prodigious gifts to future endeavors.

With the support of the board, our team of consultants, and our former Lead Consultant/ Executive Director, we would like to share with you what we accomplished in 2022.

In 2022 Pathways continued to offer resources and training to those who serve individuals living in circumstances of isolation and distress.

Pathways to Promise continued to help faith communities build the skills to engage and support individuals with mental illness, thereby decreasing isolation, increasing connection to community and a circle of care, and fostering individual agency regarding their wellness and recovery.

P2P provided consultations, congregational assessment surveys, and developmental plans. We also produced resources and spotlights for the Mental Health Ministries (MHM) website, managed The Companionship Movement, and conducted instructor training and workshops. We continue to work with National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) affiliates, the Association for Catholic Mental Health Ministers, and we launched the Catholic Adaptation of Companionship, with which we trained nine instructors. In addition to presenting at numerous conferences, our former Lead Consultant/ Executive Director conducted 10 Companionship Workshops for NAMI San Antonio, secured a NAMI mini-grant for the Pathways to Hope Conference in partnership with NAMI NV and NAMI Southern NV, and was interviewed by “Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries” on a video project to promote Companionship.

In 2022 MHM expanded the types of resources we promote to include a greater range of subject matter, including LGBTQ+, BIPOC communities, moral injury, spiritual trauma, and more.

Since MHM became a program of Pathways to Promise, it has allowed a significant crossover to develop in the people we serve, which helps MHM, P2P, and The Companionship Movement to continue growing its reach in communities throughout the US. One of the final things we would like to celebrate is that, for the first time in MHM history, we can actively collect data to analyze our readership and how the resources we share are received!

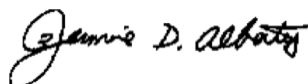
As you can see, we have done a lot and intend to do even more in 2023. We invite you to learn more about our work when you visit our soon-to-be-released new website at www.pathways2promise.org. There you will find one site where you will be able access resources from Mental Health Ministries, Pathways to Promise, and The Companionship Movement. Watch the website for the full-time, Executive Director job description too, which we'll post very soon.

As Pathways seeks new leadership, the board of directors has appointed a transitional committee to lead P2P under the direction of our Board President, Mark Stephenson. If you have any questions, please contact him at mstephenson@pathways2promise.org or call him at 314-810-2234 ext. 1.



Mark Stephenson

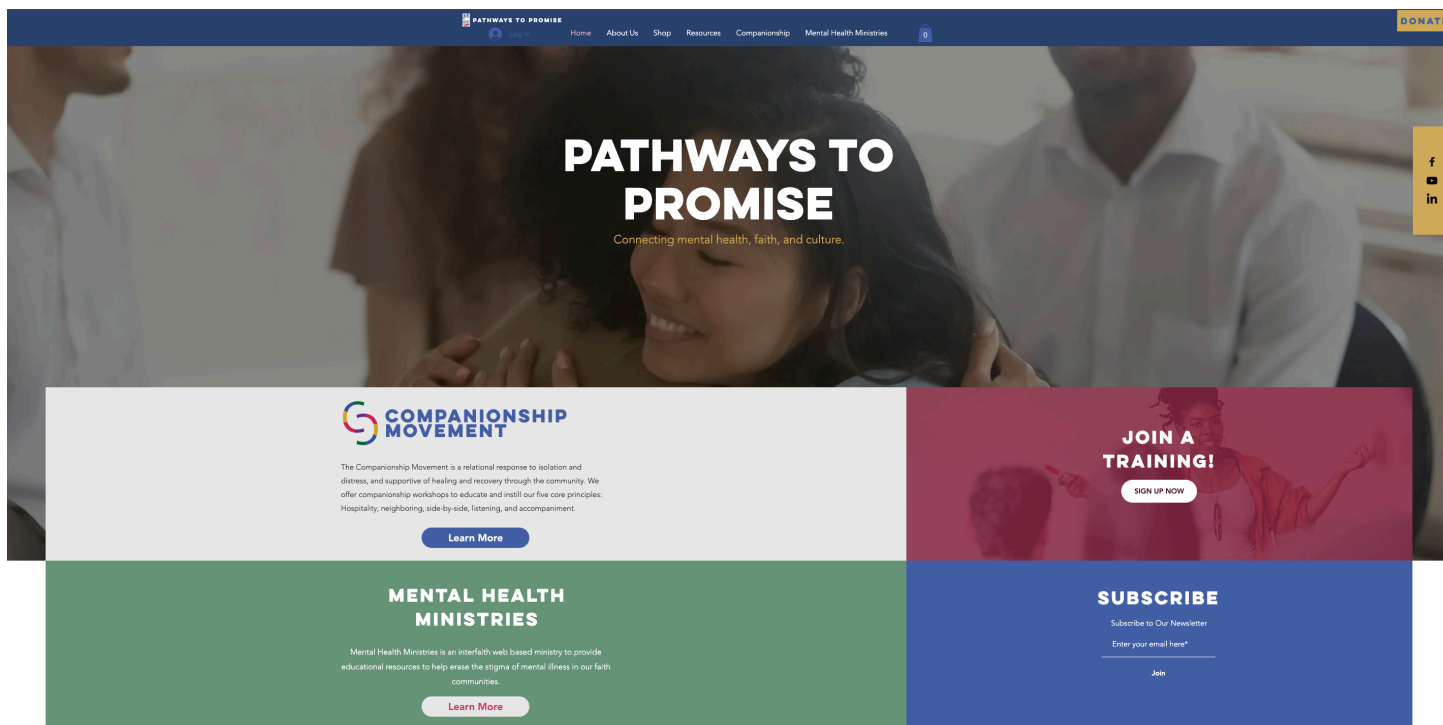
Pathways to Promise Board President



Rev. Jermine Alberty, BSBM, M.DIV

Pathways to Promise Executive Director

Pathways Launches New Website



P2P contracted with Andrea Williams, owner of AW Digital Marketing, this last year to develop our new website which pulls together the Pathways to Promise, the Companionship Movement, and the Mental Health Ministries platforms into one place.

AW Digital Marketing is a full-service marketing company that ranges in marketing dynamics from consultations/advice, website design, social media, and much more. They stand on their EAT guide to grow businesses that achieve brand's goals while captivating industry trends.

The website will launch early in February. Be sure to check it out! The URL will still be www.pathways2promise.org.

Where's Jermine?: Following Pathways Executive Director over the Last Year

2022 has been a busy year for our executive director. He has been an ambassador for Pathways as well as for the cause of mental wellness and how to support those with mental health issues and those who know and love them at several events around the country. Rev. Albery has been a presenter for several mental health conferences throughout the year:

- **May** – The Lutheran Foundation **2022 Look Up Conference on Faith & Mental Health** with board member Robert Skrocki



This was a one-day event attended by more than 400 people who convened to learn approaches for addressing mental wellness and reducing stigma around mental illness. Rev. Alberty spoke on “Emotional, Physical, Spiritual (EPS) Check-up: Your Wellness Matters”

- **August** – The Lutheran Foundation “**Train the Trainer**” Companionship Workshop for Ft Wayne, Indiana, African American faith leaders

This event was held in response to requests from the community for additional mental health support and resources due to an increase in African American suicides in Ft Wayne over the past year. Led by Rev. Alberty, participants had the opportunity to experience the 4-hour Companionship workshop firsthand, and then went through the 1.5-day long “Train the Trainer” portion to learn how to lead the Companionship workshop in their churches and communities.

- **September** – American Baptist Home Mission Society **Space for Grace** Conference



Rev. Alberty pictured here with P2P Communications Associate Rev. Robin Sandbothe and author and retired professor Dr Richard P. Olson, participants at the conference.

The conference theme, Testify!, spoke to the need in these times for diverse voices sharing genuine, honest dialogue about issues of Christian leadership, discipleship, and justice. Rev. Alberty led a break-out session on *Recovery of Self & Community – Models for a Healthy Way of Life That Reflects God’s Vision for Us*.

- **October** – American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APAF) **Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership**



This meeting included much-needed conversation on ways to improve links between faith communities and mental health providers in order to increase access to care and improve health equity. The goal of the meeting was an opportunity for mutual dialogue and learning among members of the faith and psychiatric communities. Rev. Alberty spoke on “Caring for the Caregiver: Addressing Burnout and Mental Health Needs of Faith Leaders and Psychiatrists/Mental Health Providers.”

Engage, Learn & Network Leadership Forums

Pathways holds virtual bi-monthly forums for constituents to engage, learn, and network around various topics and to share their work around the country. Speakers and topics this year have included:

- Jeff Ellhart, Author, Advocate – *be nice. 4 Simple Steps to Recognize Depression and Save Lives*
- Dr. Vicki K. Harvey, Clinical Psychologist – *Transforming Faith Landscapes with WISE: How a Journey into Mental Health Justice Brings Communities to Wholeness and Life*
- Mr. Lyle Griner, Peer Ministry Leadership Director – *Peer Ministry*
- Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, Author, Board Member of P2P – *Blessed Union: Breaking the Silence about Mental Illness and Marriage*
- Rev. Dr. Jermine Alberty, Executive Director of P2P – *Creating a Culture of Well-being Through Collective Care, Self-Care, and Companionship*
- Mr. Lyle Griner, Peer Ministry Leadership Director – *Youth Are Either Leading or Leaving*
- Participants – *Sharing What Your Organization Is Doing*



The Companionship Movement



Rev. Veron Blue: A Profile in Courage

A Story of the Companionship Movement's Impact

Companionship training changed everything about Rev. Veron Blue's life. Blue recalled that her friend told her about the training and said it would be right up her alley. She decided to give it a try: "I said yes, and I never looked back. It has changed my life on every conceivable level." Now, not only has Blue had the Companionship training, but she has gone on to be trained as a Wellness Champion for the Rapha Cohort of congregations, one of eight such cohorts who have been trained on mental health issues through Bridges to Care San Antonio.

In 2020 Pathways to Promise Executive Director Jermine Alberty connected Doug Beech, Pathways board member and the president of the San Antonio branch of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, with Bridges to Care in St. Louis. A year later they coordinated with NAMI and the city of San Antonio to bring Bridges to Care to San Antonio and began training congregations. They started with 25 churches and now have 54 organizations involved. Companionship is the centerpiece of that training.

Rev. Blue, who co-pastors Family Life International Ministries with her husband, says that because of the Companionship training, she has a new understanding about people – that life is not transactional, but,

rather, is relational. The training has changed how her family communicates, as well as how her church communicates. Now they talk about mental health issues, which they didn't do six months ago. The stigma attached to mental health problems was part of that lack of

Rev. Blue applies one of the principles of Companionship every day, even if it is a self-care issue:

"Taking time for self-care is major for African-American women. Companionship taught us to stop and pay attention to us. Now we give each other space when we say we need a day for self-care. We recognize signs of being stressed and know what to do to relax."

communication, but it was also they didn't have the language to talk about it. Now they talk about therapy, about suicide, and simply admit when they are feeling bad and have words to express when they are going through a dark time. Recently Blue asked a member of her congregation if she was thinking of harming herself. She said would never have done that before her training.

NAMI President, Doug Beach, advised there was a lot of interest in bringing Bridges to Care to San Antonio and the funding for the training came quickly. There was not much interest for the training, however, in the African-American community. Beach advised Rev. Blue's involvement made the difference:

Veron has been on fire. It is amazing the work she has done. It's incredible. She is insightful about the language and has adapted it to the language the Black church and community uses. She started a women's group called Sippin' with the Sistahs and a men's group called Bro Talk where they talk about mental health issues. Veron is now establishing a wellness center in her church. When someone in the congregation needs professional help, they have practitioners and clinics they can send them to who have an understanding of the life issues Black people face.

"It all started with the first Companionship training," says Blue. "I incorporate the concepts in my preaching and will be leading the training once a month with Bridges to Care, as well as serving as a community liaison. Our church's mental health initiative includes Companionship training. Members cannot become church leaders without going through it. The training has made them more sensitive to each other and to the community. On top of everything else, I have found my life's calling. It's all I talk about, all I do."

Church Leaders Transformed by Companionship

A church leader of Family Life International Ministries was having a conversation with a member who later learned she had bipolar disorder. He is now her companion. She was having a breakdown when they had the conversation, and he recognized the signs because of his Companionship training.

Another member recently returned to the church after being away for about 10 years. Church leaders trained in Companionship could immediately see something had changed. They knew how to surround him with love. They understood and were not intimidated or afraid. They connected him with a therapist who diagnosed him with paranoid schizophrenia. Two months later his life had changed. He now has a job and no trace of the illness.

Pathways has hosted Companionship workshops and certified Instructor training throughout the year. 54 Companions and 36 instructors were trained via the Zoom platform, which allowed participants from across the country. Additionally, P2P anticipates offering a minimum of 12 consultations of congregations or organizations, which we hope will lead to developing training opportunities and creating mental health training collaboratives.

Mental Health Ministries

To erase the stigma of mental illness

A Program of Pathways To Promise

Mental Health Ministries

As a program of Pathways to Promise, Mental Health Ministries (MHM) continues to support individuals, congregations, and organizations through our website, social media, and our quarterly spotlight e-newsletter.

MHM continues to provide all forms of information and resources designed to help faith communities be caring and welcoming spaces for persons living with mental health challenges and those who care for them. MHM also has made an effort to expand our content to reach other faith communities other than Christianity and to provide resources to LGBTQ+ communities. We will continue to seek quality resources that incorporate a person's faith/spirituality in their treatment and journey toward recovery and wellness.

- 2 individuals reached out to MHM directly to ask for help and we were able to support both individuals, sharing with them resources to address their specific needs.
- MHM posted 185 Facebook posts this year, each post averaging a reach of 1,375 individuals, 66 likes/reactions, 5 comments, and 14 shares. Here are some examples of these posts:

When someone is going through a rough timejust sit with them. No preaching, no advice. Just be there



November 21, 2022, Post

Interactions



410 reactions



39 comments



49 shares

Performance

Reach ⓘ

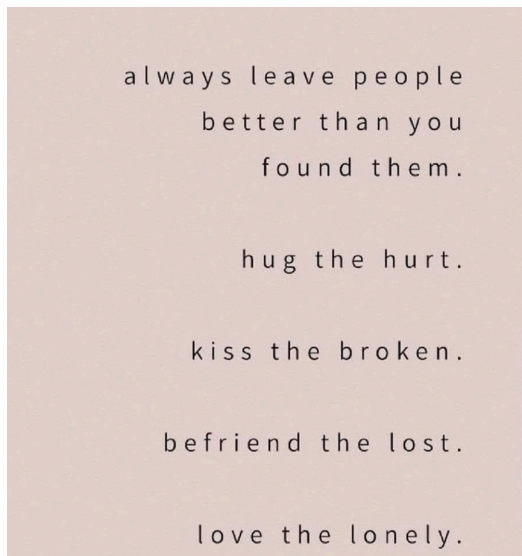
Total

5,637

Engagements ⓘ

Reactions

410



November 1, 2022, Post

Interactions



160 reactions



8 comments



29 shares

Performance

Reach ⓘ

Total

2,234

Engagements ⓘ

Reactions

160



December 23, 2022, Post

Interactions



100 reactions



8 comments



41 shares

Performance

Reach ⓘ

Total

2,811

Engagements ⓘ

Reactions

100

Throughout this year, MHM has expanded the types of resources we promote to include a greater range of subject-matter including LGBTQ+, BIPOC communities, moral injury, spiritual trauma, and more. With the enthusiastic support of MHM founder, Susan Gregg-Shroeder, these resources give readers greater access to educate themselves, find support, and/or give effective support to others in need.

MHM becoming a program of Pathways 2 Promise has allowed a significant crossover to develop in the people we serve, which allows MHM, P2P, and Companionship to continue growing its reach in communities throughout the US.

For the first time in MHM history, we are able to actively collect data to analyze our readership and how the resources we share are received! The Spotlight, MHM's e-newsletter, has readers in at least 9 countries other than the U.S., reaching an average of 2,573 per Spotlight. In 2022, the Spotlights' open-rate has increased nearly 18%, with an average of 97 people clicking on resources each quarter.

Change can be a positive thing, which is evident in the growth MHM has seen in the past 8 months alone. MHM has attempted to grow, encouraging our readers to explore resources that may be out of their norm; however, there is a delicate balance between pushing boundaries and respecting individual choice. MHM has learned how to better balance these things, supporting our readers, and giving them the opportunity/option to learn more without alienating them.

Click on the links below to view the Spotlight e-newsletters from this last year:

[Winter \(January-March\)](#)

[Spring \(April-June\)](#)

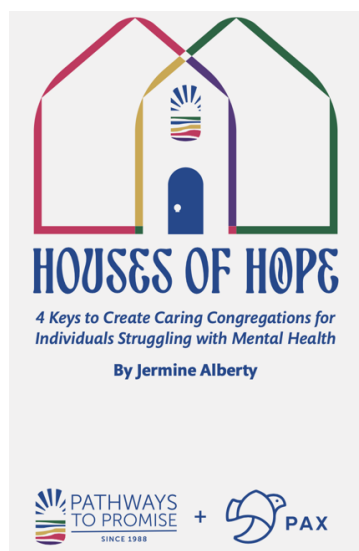
[Summer \(July-September\)](#)

[Fall \(October-December\)](#)

Partnerships and Collaborations

Made for PAX

This year Rev. Jermine Alberty created a partnership between Pathways to Promise and Made for PAX. Members of the PAX team share about the mental health challenges they have encountered – in their own lives and the lives of their loved ones – and how God has worked through those challenges to transform their behavior and shape their character.



Through their experiences, we see how paying attention to our mental health can empower us to become more Christ-like and contribute to the bringing of shalom in our world. Together, Pathways and Made for PAX created a resource for faith leaders *Houses of Hope 4 Keys to Create Caring Congregations for Individuals Struggling with Mental Health*. The resource covers four areas in which churches can offer support to those with mental health challenges and their family members through offering helpful tools and resources to build these competencies in churches

Visit www.madeforpax.org to download the guide.

Catholic & Spanish Adaptation of Companionship Curriculum



The Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers, which supports Catholic parishes and dioceses in establishing mental health ministries, has partnered with Pathways to create a Catholic adaptation of the Companionship curriculum to meet the needs of those being trained in the Companionship Movement.



Participant Guidebook
for Catholic Communities

From the introduction to the adaptation:

One of the primary goals of the CMHM is to provide the tools, methods and insights that allow parish communities to confidently minister to people with a mental illness without fear or prejudice. This Companionship training program helps meet that goal.

Soon a Spanish adaptation of the curriculum will be created in partnership with Aurora Health Systems for The Soul Ambassador Program.

Featured Interviews and Media from the Executive Director

Hope Made Strong Podcast – Click on the image below to hear the podcast

Ep. 27

THE COMPANIONSHIP MOVEMENT
REV. JERMINE ALBERTY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PATHWAYS TO PROMISE

[Listen Here](#)

the **CARE**
MINISTRY
>>>podcast

Sanctuary Mental Health Interviews – Click on the images below to hear the interviews

“What is Companionship?”



“What are the gifts of being a companion?”



2022 Lifetime Achievement Award Granted to Gunner Christiansen



The Lifetime Achievement Award is intended for individuals with at least 10-20 years of documented accomplishments in mental health and faith-based who have had a significant impact on a large number of individuals and organizations. This year in a partnership between NAMI National and Pathways to Promise, the award was granted posthumously to Dr. Gunner Christiansen.

The award was presented on Saturday, August 27, 2022, at the 2022 Pathways to Hope Conference by Paul Lu, FaithNet Coordinator, NAMI Orange County to Susan Christiansen, wife of the late Dr. Gunnar Christiansen.

Recommended for the award by president of NAMI San Antonio, chair of the FaithNet Advisory Group, and vice president of Pathways to Promise board of directors Doug Beach, Dr. Christiansen, along with his wife Susan and mental health advocates in the faith community, 30 years ago founded FaithNet as NAMI's outreach to faith communities. Christiansen was instrumental in gaining approval from the NAMI national board and was the driving force behind the movement to include faith communities in the support system for people impacted by mental illness. Without his decades-long support for NAMI FaithNet it would not exist today.

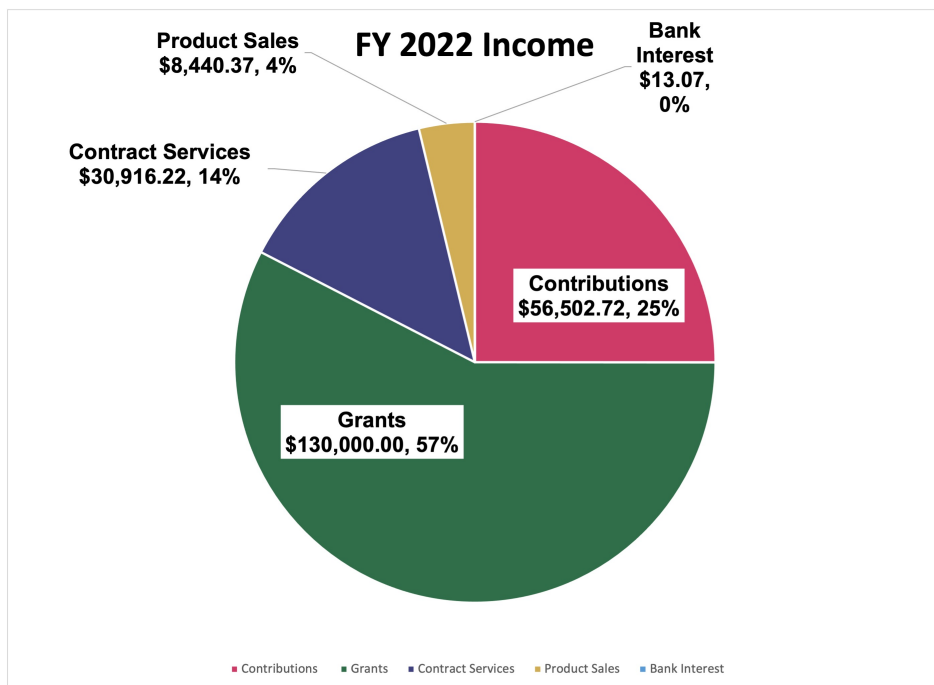
Dr. Christiansen, a retired ophthalmologist, veteran, and father of a son diagnosed with schizophrenia, devoted a significant part of his life during the past twenty years advocating for an improved world for those suffering with mental illness. Christiansen passed away on March 24, 2022.

Click on the image to view the presentation of this award:



Financial Reports

The income for FY 2022 was \$227,173.79, comprised of contributions, grants, contract services, product sales, and bank interest.



The expenses for fiscal year were \$173,317.26 and comprised of administrative expenses, office expenses, travel expenses, professional fees, business consulting fees, operating expenses, and resource production.

