

Christmas in prison

by Pastor Rick

The words “Christmas” and “prison” don’t seem to go together.

Yet many individuals in Iowa and other states spend Christmas behind bars. It’s certainly not easy for them. In fact, the holidays can be an emotionally trying time for those who are incarcerated.

As they watch holiday movies on the Hallmark Channel, they long for home. Being home for the holidays means gathering around the Christmas tree with the family, opening gifts, and enjoying sweet treats like candy canes and chocolate fudge. It’s a difficult void to fill.

During the Christmas season, New Life seeks to lift the spirits of those

in prison. We’ve scheduled a special Christmas service on December 19. The service will feature baptism and professions of faith. There will also be special music from volunteer Erik Kamp, who plans to play “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” on his harp. Each person who attends will receive a Christmas card to place on his bulletin board. After the service, we’ll enjoy cookies and lemonade during our fellowship time.

Overall, it’s the ambition of New Life Prison Church to place the focus firmly on the birth of Jesus Christ. He is the One who makes his presence known to us during times of personal crisis. He is the One who provides hope for the prisoner.



Blessed

by Pastor Rick

The year 2019 is nearly over and 2020 is almost here. (Somehow, it seems like a bigger deal when the number of the year ends in zero.) For some of us, 2019 has been a difficult year marked by doctor visits and hospitalizations; we long for good health. For others, 2019 has been a challenging year of incarceration within a correctional facility; we long for freedom. Overall, we hope and pray 2020 will be a better year.

For my family, 2019 has had its challenges; Rose has struggled with chronic pain. However, 2020 is the year my daughter, Annaliese, will graduate from

Prayers & praises

by Rose Admiraal

We give thanks and praise for:

- ...family relationships that have been restored.
- ...an incredible Brothers in Blue weekend in November.
- ...the men who will be able to spend Christmas on the “outside” this year.

We ask for prayer for:

- ...families who are separated during this Christmas season.
- ...unity among the believers at Newton.
- ...men to find forgiveness, grace, and joy through Jesus Christ.

Pella Christian High School. It’s something for us to look forward to as a family. We truly feel blessed. As the end of 2019 rapidly approaches, we remember God’s blessings, mainly the birth of Jesus and the priceless gift of our salvation. The men of the New Life prison congregation thank God for all His blessings. Since God has blessed each one of us, we are inspired to give with grateful hearts. The story of Abraham reminds us that we are blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12:1-3). In your year-end giving, please consider blessing New Life Prison Church with a donation.



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www.facebook.com/NewLifePrisonCommunity

Be a blessing for New Life

Contributions may be sent to: **New Life Prison Community, 408 Maple St., Pella, IA 50219**

I'd like to donate \$ _____ to New Life to support

New Life Prison Community.

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____



Brothers in Blue impacts lives

by Pastor Rick

Brothers in Blue hosted four-day spiritual retreats at the Newton Correctional Release Center (September 26–29) and the Newton Correctional Facility (November 14–17).

Brothers in Blue makes a big impact on the hearts of men, presenting God’s amazing grace. I could tell you all about it, but it would mean so much more if you heard the testimony of the men who attended.

“I praise God for Brothers in Blue. It was the best four days of my life. I got a big burden off my chest.”

– Joseph

“I lost everything, but now I have Jesus back and my kids back in my life. We love each other.”

– Travis

“This weekend turned my life around. Now I’m counting on Christ.”

– Gary

“I just want to thank God!”

– Brandon

“I have only one word—hallelujah!”

– Anthony

“I learned one thing—forgiveness.”

– Randall

“God has truly blessed me.”

– Richard

“It’s been a touching time for me.”

– Dillan



“I’ve seen the light, and I’m very grateful.”

– Jeddy

“I’m a child of God. I do have hope—hope in God.”

– Davis

“I appreciate all your prayers.”

– Nick

“It’s been the best experience of my life.”

– Scott

New Life Church status update

by Pastor Rick

At this time, New Life Prison Church is in the process of becoming an established congregation.

Two other prison congregations in the denomination have taken this step: Cornerstone (Sioux Falls, SD) and Celebration Fellowship (Ionia, MI). We’re grateful to God that they are showing us the way forward.

Having already received preliminary approval in September, New Life will seek final approval at the February meeting of Classis Central Plains. What does this involve? First of all, an ad hoc committee from Calvary Christian Reformed Church (my calling church) is drafting an overture to be presented at the next Classis meeting. Second, we need to recruit at least 30 people to become commissioned members. Each

person would have a dual membership, so they would belong to both the outside (sending) church and the prison church. So far, 22 men and women have made this step forward. Pray that God will inspire eight more people to make this leap of faith. We thank God for His faithfulness to His church inside and outside prison walls.



New Life Board Members

- Sheryl Hanthorn** (Grace Fellowship)
- Don Rouwenhorst** (First Reformed)
- Fran De Haan** (Calvary CRC)
- Marcus Van Zee** (Trinity Reformed)
- Marv Goodyk** (Sully CRC)
- Duane Bruxvoort** (Federated Fellowship)
- Pastor Rick Admiraal** (New Life)
- Tim Franje** (Peoria CRC)
represents the Classis Missions Committee.

Note: If the Classis approves the organization of New Life as an established church, the Board will systematically transition to become an outside council in 2020.