

“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak...let each of us please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.” (**Romans 15:1-2**).

“Oh no John, [it] only matters, if it’s your kid.”

While I was in the midst of suggesting a few post-prison options for this women’s son, she blurted out this response. The mother was quick to remind me that no one wants her “son around now that he has a criminal record.” I told her about all the programs and people that are helping inmates and the recently released, but to be honest, the conversation seemed to end without me giving her any great words of comfort.

Later that day I was reminded of you – the reader, the volunteer, and the faithful supporter – and how you continue to help Life Abundant fulfill the “Great Commission to Corrections.” It is because of your commitments, and others, that I am assured this mother will, at some point, see her son embraced by a community that deeply cares about him.

Former inmates Rasheeda and Peter also remind me that there is hope for this mother’s son, and for many others:

“During a time when I felt all alone, in a place where it felt never-ending. I would always look forward to my visit with my mentor. There were some days when I felt like no one cared, but I was certainly mistaken because there she was, every week, faithfully. My mentor continued to give me hope when I needed it the most. I am forever grateful that I had the opportunity to spend time and worship with her...” *Rasheeda*.

“In an attempt to ‘get ahead,’ I committed embezzlement, forgery and identity-theft. I lost my marriage, custody of my children, the respect of my family, friends, and ended up in prison. But GOD was bigger than my problems and He began working on my soul as soon as I entered prison.

While I sat in my cell feeling completely empty and alone, God touched me. Over time, God put believers in my path...my life was never the same.”
Peter.

These testimonies are examples of what happens when we ‘do good to our neighbors and build them up.’ When we truly serve others and ‘bear with one another’s failings,’ we not only please God, but we also edify the local church and strengthen our own communities.

Although we can easily see that incarcerated men and women are suffering from the pain of loneliness and separation, it is often easy to forget that family members and community members have been impacted by incarceration as well. It is my prayer that you will remember to reach out to your neighbor and build them up...whether that is at the local jail or right in your own housing development.

The impact of our concentrated efforts for the first half of this year has already exposed approximately **2,150 inmates** to the Gospel message!!! In addition, **41 men and women** have participated in the mentoring program.

Upcoming Events

Male Volunteer Training and Gathering
October 20, 2018

8am-11am

Doylestown United Methodist Church
320 Swamp Road (Rt. 313)
Doylestown, 18901

Female Volunteer Training and Gathering
To Be Announced Soon!!!

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.
I have come that they may have life, and that *they may have it more abundantly*.
(John 10:10)

In His Service,
Jonathan H. Lewis, *Executive Director*
Regina Bready, *Administrative Assistant*