

www.lifeabundantinc.org | 215.489.0200 | P.O. Box 412, Doylestown, PA

Reflection

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time ” (1 Peter 5:6).

In prison and jail ministry circles, it is often said that incarceration has a way of humbling a person. Prisons and jails have afforded its residents some time to reflect and to assess their circumstances.

While imprisonment is never ideal, we know that God can use any situation to bring men and women into his saving grace. God *restores and repositions* those that hear the call. AMEN!



We’re Out and About!!!

Although COVID-19 has negatively impacted our ability to stay connected with some of the men and women at BCCF, we have been able to meet and assist some who were recently released. Through our **Direct Aid Fund**, we have been able to meet some of the physical needs of those returning to their communities.

We have also focused some of our energy on assisting families of the incarcerated. We more than understand how difficult it is to try and navigate the judicial and correction systems alone. In a recent conversation with **Shannon**, she shared that “it is overwhelming to not know where to turn for help.” Her loved one is due to be released soon.

Life Abundant continues to maintain an active role with the **Bucks County Reentry Coalition** and **CMCA** (Correctional Ministries and Chaplain’s Association).



Mentee Debra post-release. (June, 2020)

Testimonies - God at Work

“I would like to tell the bible study facilitators and bible mentors about the far reaching impact they have in the lives of the individuals in the facilities. Even at times when only a few people attend, the inmates will often continue the discussion in the dayroom and sleeping quarters. Inmates overhearing the discussion will often join in. Many a Bible, which has verses underlined by the inmate, has been read in the quiet moments. I want to thank all of you for sharing yourself and your love of God with all of us.” **Debra F.** then shared one of her favorite verses:

...now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to Others. 2 Timothy 2:2

After being released, **Joseph F.** assisted Life Abundant by taking on the role of a resident assistant. In this role, Joe was able to model a “life after prison” and help other men see their full potential. Joe eventually transitioned to a new residence and landed a full-time job. For years, he has been a guest at our annual banquets and was even a guest speaker on one occasion.

Now as a manager at a local chain, and still committed to maintaining his faith and freedom, Joe is a demonstration of **what can happen when we work together to support those impacted by incarceration.**

“The true measure of our character is how we treat the poor, the disfavored, the accused, the incarcerated, and the condemned.” -- Bryan Stevenson

Our Impact

In February of this year, our last full month of volunteer programming at BCCF, we received 11 requests from the men's side for our Mentoring program. **We selected 7 of the 11 for the program.** Although we were not able to meet with all of them throughout the restrictive period, we were able to at least present Bibles and send letters of encouragement to all of them.

Also, just as Debra was able to meet with her mentor post-release, a few of the men were able to connect with their mentors as well: **Joe L., Evan and Allan.**

To date, we have placed **34 Bibles** directly in the hands of men and women at BCCF. We have also distributed a number of Bibles to family members and friends of the incarcerated.

Stories from the Field

At the end of my last Bible-based Trauma Healing session, Robert found me to thank us for hosting the sessions. During our conversation, I asked him which part of the lesson did he find most beneficial. Robert told me the idea that "God is a Restorer; that God can make all things new."

As part of an assignment, Robert sent me a drawing that illustrated one of his deepest regrets: it was a sketch of his only daughter learning to ride her bicycle without training wheels while he was incarcerated. I believe Robert left our session with a new found belief that things could be different and that God can fully restore him and some of the relationships that were damaged.

*We're praying for Robert and Lana's relationship.



What's New?

Regina, our Women's Ministry Coordinator, has been busy! While COVID-19 protocols remain in place at BCCF, Regina has been coordinating meetings with returning citizens and many of our female volunteers.

She has hosted several small gatherings for our volunteers (both physical and virtual). Regina has also led several **letter writing workshops** and is now planning **webinar trainings** that will include new guidelines from the Bucks County Dept. of Corrections.

If you are interested in being involved, contact Regina at: ReginaB@lifeabundantinc.org

Coming Soon: Men's Fellowship.

After much discussion, we have decided to launch a time for the male volunteers to connect as well. We realize that some may be feeling a bit disconnected while restrictions at BCCF are still in place. We are aware of the importance of fellowship and we're here for YOU!

If you're a volunteer, look out for an email from myself or Paul, our Men's Ministry Coordinator.

UPCOMING EVENTS

In coordination with the Bucks County Reentry Coalition and BCCF, I am scheduled to host a series of training webinars to update volunteers, and the general public, on new procedures and updated correctional and ministry guidelines.

All 2020 dates will be posted on our website and social media pages.



In His Service

Jonathan, Regina, Paul and Ruth.