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KINGSWAY BANNER Christmas 2020

A Gift

Christ received rejection when He came to Earth even from his friends, His own family. He had so much inside He wanted to share. But so many people didn't care about looking beneath the surface; they had other places to go, other people in their lives who were more important, more interesting. Part of the Savior's suffering was rejection. It involved people ignoring Him, turning their back on Him, Walking away from Him.

Yet He was a gift from God sent to this Earth for mankind's salvation. Let us take time during this season to **Thank God for the Gift. Also, to remember why He came.**

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13



Our Mission:

Our Mission: "Ministering through the heart of Jesus to the broken hearts of those impacted by the criminal justice system, both those incarcerated and re-entering and their families."



Apple Tree Project

For 35 years Kingsway has collected gifts for children with a incarcerated parent. This program lets the families know that they are not forgotten.

This year is very unique with the challenges Kingsway is facing. Due to Covid-19 a lot of churches are not meeting in person so participation rate in **The Apple Tree Project** is down. Last year **46** churches participated, this year only **20** churches are participating. Keep us in your prayers as we go forward in faith with this project.

Through **The Apple Tree Project** God's love shines and Christmas is about **JESUS**, God's gift to all mankind

A Re-entry story

When working with Re-entry you never know what to expect. One day someone needs a phone, the next a gas card or laundry soap or rent or help finding a place to rent, but how do you help someone that had a heart attack, just released from jail with no place to go. This man was taken to the hospital for a couple of days and the hospital social worker called Kingsway to help him. His criteria didn't fit anyone else. How and What could be done...he was not an alcoholic or drug addict and he wasn't even a felon. He was in jail a few months for a misdemeanor, but sentenced to a year probation and restitution which he had already paid. The man was legally blind and walking with a walker. Kingsway couldn't leave the man homeless on the street in his condition. Kingsway paid his motel bill for a month while we tried to get him cleared to go back to North Carolina where he had family to take care of him. He even had a ride to NC, but he was court ordered to stay in Harrisonburg. We worked with his probations officer, the City Clerk's office and the Commonwealth Attorney and finally got him back in court and released to go back to NC only to find out there is a 90 day waiting period for his insurance to be good in NC. He is now in a home with a family waiting his 90 days to get home where he will have family to care for him.. Thanks to Our Community Place for taking him food as he was afraid to go into stores for fear of Covid-19.

Kingsway's Programs Even in Lockdown

Inmate Christmas- 6,000 gifts for Inside facilities

Over 60 Birthday Cards a Month sent to inmates

Average of 5 people per week with re-entry needs such as housing, Boost phones, gas cards etc.

Sent-500 devotionals into the facilities till volunteers can go back inside to minister.

Encourager Program- Correspondence with those on the inside.

The Apple Tree Project- Averages 400 children of inmates in the past



Louise Birthday

October 23rd was my birthday and it was amazing the number of Birthday Cards I received from inmates; many of them addressing me as Mom or Grandma. One inmate I met in the 80's at Staunton Correctional Center has never missed sending me a birthday or mother's day card. I also got cards from a few guys that have been released and are working, two of these now send monthly donations to Kingsway.

I was also blessed with a nice donation from the birthday fund raiser on Facebook. ***I really feel blessed.***

A Changed Heart

By Judy M

"Let's get this over with!" I grumbled to myself as I helped the church chorus set up equipment to sing at the prison. The smile on my face didn't match the thoughts clamoring through my mind. "What *are* we doing here? These men have gotten *exactly* what they deserved," I murmured silently. Such was the condition of my heart as I climbed the risers to begin singing praises to our Lord.

We were half way through the first song when the Lord addressed the hypocrisy of what was occupying space in my heart and what was being proclaimed from my mouth. As I sang I saw an image of Jesus out of the corner of my eye. He was standing in the midst of the prisoners with his left arm extended out as if embracing the shoulders of the 200 men who were present. "***These are my people - I love them. Can you love them too?***" He asked firmly, yet with compassion and love.

His words pierced my heart deeply and I began weeping uncontrollably throughout the performance. Using up all the tissues in my pocket, I proceeded to use the sleeve of my robe to wipe my eyes and nose - I was not a pretty sight! As I stood crumbling emotionally on the risers, my brokenness evident before all, I silently prayed, "Oh God, I have been forgiven of so much. You took a broken, ugly life of sin and freely offered compassion and hope. I've been shown so much grace. How could I be so unforgiving of others who have been ensnared and crushed?" I ached inside as he brought conviction regarding the judgment coming up out of my heart for those who had been imprisoned by the deceit of the world.

After the program, with tear-swollen eyes and quivering voice, I shared what had happened. I told them how Jesus held them in his arms, proclaiming his love for them. Then, from a changed heart, I asked them for forgiveness for my condemnation and judgment. The men I had condemned stood and clapped as they freely forgave and hungrily received the declaration of God's love for them. I somehow felt their pain in my spirit and it reminded me of my own torment from the choices and actions of the past. It's a torment that reaches down inside with devastating shame tearing away at our very being. *Yet, somewhere in those dark and lonely places we all long to believe that there is something within us that is worthy of being loved.*

I left the prison with joy in my heart that night but God wasn't finished with me. You see, the very people I had resented became the people I wanted to serve. The cynical arrogance within my heart had turned to love and my husband and I began ministering in the prison every Friday night for more than two years. We were blessed over and over again by the very men I had deemed as unworthy.

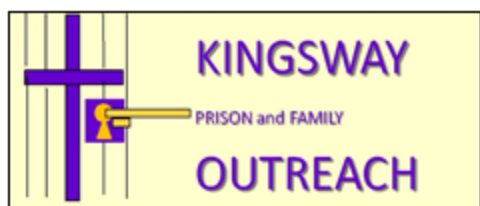
Hosea 11:8 says, "My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused." And 1 Cor. 13:4-8... "*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*"

Thank you, Lord, for the tears that cleansed by your Spirit, bringing purity to see as you see and to love as you love.



Encouragers Needed

Calling Christian men to write to inmates thru the Kingsway Encourager program. If you are willing to write please contact Carleen Loveless, coordinator, LouiseJennings1975@gmail.com or call 540-433-5658 and leave a message. This is a safe program.



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In This Issue.....God's Hope



Louise's Corner

Preparing for Christmas this year at Kingsway has been different – But God has been with me all the way. First we needed space – usually I make a call to our landlord's office and they have an empty space we can use. Even that was different, but there was an empty space still under lease and the manager at Go Powertrain donated his space. Thank you Mr. Barnhart. This year we have had to order the notepads and the Lip balm. I found good suppliers that gave us great prices for 6,000 of each. Now we hope you will help us pay for them. We still need approximately 4,000 6 ounce or less individual boxed tubes of toothpaste. Dollar Tree has the toothpaste for \$1.00 a tube and we also need about 3,000 yellow # 2 pencils **not** sharpened. If your church or children's group can help with a collection of the toothpaste and pencils please let us know. You can reach me at info@kingswayoutreach.org. If you still have the Hotmail email address for me it will no longer work so please make note of the new email address. Checks payable to Kingsway Outreach can be earmarked Inmate gifts or you can donate on the website: kingswayoutreach.org or call Louise 540-830-7000. Or Pam 540-433-5658

Stay safe
Louise

The Banner is published as a bridge between you, Kingsway's supporters and the hands-on prison and family outreach ministry of Kingsway.
The Banner welcomes your comments, suggestions, and questions.
Is there something of interest you would like to know about?
Let us know.

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