

Torres Chapel – God’s Special Time

On Thursday, July 11, 2019, the new Torres Prison Chapel, Hondo, TX was dedicated, with faithful volunteers having tarried for twenty years until God’s time was here. The joyous event was celebrated by TDCJ leadership, Torres Unit Warden Kimberly Woodall and her staff, generous donors and loyal veteran volunteers. A fellowship lunch followed. This chapel is a testament to hope, new beginnings and abundant life. It is designed as a sanctuary - a safe and holy place. It is evidence that God is indeed honoring God's word to deliver captives to abundant life as His word tells us in Exodus 3:7-8.

There have been faithful men and women ministering the love of God in the Torres Unit for many years. On January 4, 1999, the first business day of 1999, a group comprised of one woman and six men formed a Texas non-profit corporation named Chapel of God's Country Ministries, Inc. for the purpose of providing counseling and constructing and operating a chapel for moral and religious training. One of those persons is still alive and is here today-Wilbur Lehmsberg. Wilbur and those men and woman received a call from God-a call to love and care for God's people. They acted on that call and through the years raised money, spent money and had architectural plans drawn up for the chapel to be built at Torres. In 2014, Chapel of God's Country Ministries received a challenge grant of \$500,000 to build the chapel. I started participating at Torres through Kairos Prison Ministry in 2013. I'm the enthusiastic, passionate type and share freely the awesome passion of God I see being poured out in Torres not only to but also through men-in-white. In late 2014, one of the men in my prayer group attended Prayer and Share at Torres on a Wednesday night with me. The purpose of Prayer and Share is for men-in-white to pray and spare openly with each other. Two days later, my brother in Christ called me to say that one of the men-in white reminded him of his grandson who was going through a difficult time. He said that he and his wife would give \$250,000 toward building the chapel if I agreed to lead the capital campaign. That is a call! From then through 2017, many of us worked diligently, receiving lots of help, to raise the needed funds. We have seen God's work in action-generosity poured out, sometimes from the most unexpected sources. And we have been covered in prayer and encouragement. Like me, each of you here also received a call, a call that you have answered by helping make this chapel a reality. Thank you for doing your part! Thank you! Thank you!

May this chapel truly be a sanctuary-a place of blessing, of new beginnings, of renewed hope. And may the people who worship, study, sing and praise here be filled with the spirit of God.