

Titus House Newsletter

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059

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“Sex offenders’ prison deaths often are ‘choreographed’ By [Chandra Bozelko and Ryan Lo](#)

By [Chandra Bozelko and Ryan Lo](#) . . . Many people aren’t buying the official “suicide” story from the Manhattan Correctional Complex that housed financier and registered sex offender Jeffrey Epstein on suicide watch until late July. Theories that Epstein was murdered to protect any number of political cabals are widespread on social media. President Trump has suggested that Bill and Hillary Clinton were involved and the Resistance is convinced that someone offed Epstein to protect the president.

That dead men tell no tales is a seductive explanation for Epstein’s expiration, but it ignores correctional reality. Epstein was vulnerable for reasons that have nothing to do with the ostensible secrets he might have kept on powerful people. Because he was convicted of sex crimes against children, Epstein was one of the most likely prison targets.

As former prisoners ourselves, we know violence and abuse in prisons aren’t always the result of supervisory vacuums. In fact, deaths of people accused of sex offenses are rarely accidental; they’re highly choreographed and implicitly endorsed executions.

No woman convicted of a sex crime has ever been killed, but they’ve been beaten, usually under the guise of another dispute. The same is not true in men’s prisons, where the ire directed at sex crimes can be fatal.

The Associated Press ana-



lyzed data on murders of sex offenders behind bars. Until 2007, reports of prisoner homicides didn’t include the crimes that incarcerated the victims, so, historically speaking, killing sex offenders might have been a bigger problem than we know.

The AP found that, in California, a third of all inmate homicides happen to sex offenders. That may not seem like much. But when you consider that the California corrections system is rife with gang warfare, the fact that one third of these victims were almost definitely not in gangs is telling. Years ago, half of all inmates murdered in Maine’s prisons system were convicted of sex offenses. A quarter of Oklahoma’s inmate homicide victims in 10 years bore convictions for sex crimes. At a conservative estimate, 75 percent of murder victims in Nebraska prisons were sex offenders. None of these statistics offends many people; safeguarding sex offenders is repugnant to most.

If, in theory, Epstein was murdered by another inmate (right now there’s no public evidence of that) we must use this opportunity to remind people that prisoners who’ve been convicted of

sex offenses don’t deserve to be dispatched without due process. We’re not pleading for sympathy for people who cause sexual harm. Rather, we are pointing out that labeling them as subhuman has completely warped our understanding of crime and accountability. Murder is practically approved when it comes to this class of inmates. Twitter wove threads of glee at Epstein’s demise. Prison administrators are often complicit with these homicides. When one inmate in the Tarrant County, Texas Jail killed his cellmate, a man convicted of sex crimes against children, an officer and two nurses watched the attack for 11 minutes before intervening. While investigators ferreted out and charged the inmates who assaulted guards and started fires in the 2015 Nebraska prison riot that left two men convicted of sex crimes dead, no one has solved the murder mysteries from those same events.

When prisoners are charged with violently taking the life of a sex offender, the public hails them as heroes as they did with Steven Sandison, a Michigan inmate who murdered his cellmate because of sex crimes he committed. Sandison had asked not to

be housed with his victim because he knew he would kill him, yet authorities paired them up anyway.

We live in an era of exoneration, and that applies to sex crimes, too, although we don’t know how much. A study conducted by the Urban Institute that used DNA analysis to retest certain crimes found that, out of 422 convictions for sex crimes, subsequent forensic testing was inculpatory — supporting guilt — in only 187 cases, or 44 percent. That means that 56 percent of convictions of sexual assault might be attached to innocent people. Killing sex offenders isn’t just morally unjustifiable; sometimes it’s based on misinformation.

More than just the nature of sex crimes fuels the rage against people who’ve committed them, like the fact that police so often ignore and doubt complaints of these offenses. Out of 1,000 sexual assaults, 995 perpetrators escape responsibility. Indeed, even Epstein received special treatment in being allowed to leave the Palm Beach County jail six days a week. Justice eludes sex-crime victims so often that we seek any form of answerability, even if it means supporting the commission of another violent crime. Let’s not forget that there’s a middle road to take, one where we can administer accountability to people like Epstein and restoration to their victims, but also recognize our ethical obligation to protect life and refuse to celebrate an untimely death.



NC Supreme Court affirms limitation of lifetime GPS monitoring for registrants by Will Doran

. Sex offenders have rights, too, and in some cases the state has been violating those rights, the NC Supreme Court ruled on Friday.

The ruling concerns people who have been ordered to submit to satellite-based monitoring for the rest of their lives, which forces them to wear a tracking device so law enforcement can track their location via GPS using an ankle bracelet.

Most states don't have lifetime monitoring at all, the Supreme Court wrote. And only in North Carolina and California can offenders be forced to undergo lifetime monitoring without the option for appealing it, and without regard for the severity of the offender's crime.

But in North Carolina, that rule is now no more. In a ruling written by Justice



Anita Earls, the court ruled that it's unconstitutional for North Carolina to order people into lifetime monitoring simply for recidivism — committing a second offense — and no other reason. “We conclude that in such circumstances, the Fourth Amendment . . . prohibits the mandatory imposition of lifetime SBM on this class of individuals,” the court wrote, using SBM to refer to satellite-based monitoring.

The judges cited a 2018 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that the Fourth Amend-

ment is intended in part to “place obstacles in the way of a too permeating police surveillance.”

Once people are done with their prison sentence, probation or parole, the court wrote, the state can now only order them to undergo lifelong GPS monitoring under certain circumstances.

Depending on the details of the crime, an offender could have what are called “aggravating factors” on his or her record. Having aggravating factors is one reason the state can still order lifetime monitoring. So are a few other specific circumstances, such as an adult convicted of statutory offenses with a victim under 13 years old, or someone deemed to be a sexually violent predator.

Early Days with Don Johnston by Alice Benson/Johnston

Someone from prison wrote me a letter dated November 27, 2006. He referred to Joseph's House which I had considered organizing after visiting a friend in Los Lunas prison. My correspondent asked for information about the program since he was to be released in 14 months. The letter was signed Don Johnston.

I had been working with David S., also in prison about putting together a program for prisoners coming out of prison and at first, we called it Joseph's House and soon changed it to Titus House, based on the Biblical book of Titus.

I decided to write back to Don Johnston and made plans to visit him. Soon I found myself driving to Santa Rosa. I signed in, waited quite a while then found my way to the visitation room. There Don was waiting to meet me. We had a pleasant chat and he liked the idea of writing a program for sex offenders. I had barely heard the term “sex offenders” at this time. We made plans to meet again and discuss how we could meet this specific need that society was talking about. At about the same time I visited David S. whom I had known at

my church on the westside of Albuquerque. We worked together over a period of six months and produced the first draft of what today we call Titus House Newsletter.

David was then released and soon after so was Don. I met Don's mother who lived in Albuquerque. She invited me to lunch one day – she drove and we had a great time discussing her life as the mother of several sons, Don being the eldest. Little did I know Don would ask me for a date, we had lunch at the Casino as a support group we had joined was displaying materials specifically for those interested in ministry to sex offenders.

One thing led to another until November of 2010 Don proposed to me and we got married on Nov. 30th 2010. We had friends cheering on both sides of the issue. So we fooled everyone except our dear friends, Leo and Cathy, who owned a little restaurant. One Monday morning in November we called them and Cathy, a licensed minister married us.

It was really fun to shock some of our

friends. Of course we still have the pro and con people, much to our dismay that their former pastor's wife has married someone from prison. Incidentally, didn't some people have the same idea about the Apostle Paul? Paul, by the way, wrote the majority of his books from prison. We are so blest today to be welcome at Foothills Church on the east side of Albuquerque. We bring or invite friends with a similar background to worship with us. One of our “guys” plays in the worship team and another does janitorial work.

Don is totally dedicated to this ministry, knowing hundreds of men by name, answering their phone calls at any time of day. His phone travels with him and they know they can call for his help. You will see phone numbers on the last sheet of this newsletter. We collaborate with NARSOL and other similar groups. Call us anytime if we can be of help.



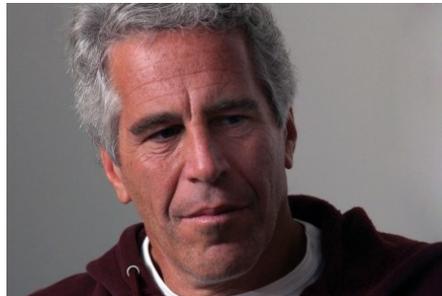
The System Failed Jeffrey Epstein. By Larry Neely

For those who cherish our Constitution, this is a sad time for our country. I deeply believe in the presumption of innocence and that the presumption of innocence follows those who have been charged with crimes through the duration of the process until they either plead guilty or are convicted by a jury of their peers. Despite the protests of victim advocacy organizations, this is the America I believe in and will champion at every possible opportunity. I also deeply believe that persons who are presumed innocent should be released pending trial so that they can assist with their own defense. There is no question that persons held in detention cannot have the same access to attorneys or resources which permit them to assist with preparing for trial that those not in custody have.

Prior to the Bail Reform Act (BRA) of 1984, it was very uncommon in the federal system for people to be held in detention unless they could not post a monetary bond. That all changed when President Reagan signed the BRA into law. The BRA made it possible for the prosecution to move for pre-trial detention, regardless of whether or not the person could post bail. The Supreme Court upheld the BRA in 1987 on a 7-2 vote. See *USA v. Salerno*. Now after more than three decades of the BRA, nearly everyone accused of a federal crime is subject to some type of confinement pending trial, which can range from house arrest to confinement in a halfway house or correctional facility. This was the case for Jeffrey Epstein; he was confined to the Metropolitan Cor-

rectional Facility (MCC) in Manhattan, one of our nation's toughest prisons.

Many victims' advocates contend that Epstein was a coward who, with his suicide, took the easy way out. Of course, they are entitled to their opinion, but it is one with which I disagree. I believe that Jeffrey Epstein probably was totally dejected once he recognized that the American system he believed in did not exist. He presented many options for his pre-trial release that were



categorically rejected by the court because to grant release would have enraged those who advocate for the victims. These advocates do not share my belief in our Constitution's presumption of innocence.

Mr. Epstein complained about the harsh conditions he was subjected to at MCC. Could it be that he gave up on life once he realized that the system does not care? Many of our supporters agree that improving conditions in our jails and prisons is a goal worth pursuing. If that is what one believes, how can the opin-

ion that Mr. Epstein, or anyone, deserves such harsh conditions be justified?

The ultimate tragedy is that we will never know if the government had a strong case or if they simply filed charges to satisfy the angry mob. This is the same angry mob that drove Alex Acosta from his job as president Trump's Labor Secretary for his decision not to prosecute Epstein years ago. And it's the same angry mob that drove Judge Persky from office in the case involving the Stanford University swimmer. As far as Mr. Epstein, it is my personal belief that major contributing factors to his prosecution were greed, desire for fame, and class envy, which is sad.

My final comment is that our system of justice has lost, and only the people alleging to have suffered abuse at Epstein's hands have won. He is now dead, which opens the door for many to make allegations which may or may not be true. The angry mob will feed on the carcass of the Epstein estate until it is completely decimated, and then they will go after the insurance companies. It is with sadness that I may be one of the few to understand the long-term damage this does to our nation. This situation, coupled with the abolition of the statute of limitations and the constant erosion of the right of confrontation, which victim advocates insist is revictimization, is allowing due process to crumble before our eyes, and there is hardly a whimper from the citizenry.

Litigation Update (continue on page 4)

Liberty & Justice Coalition has received dozens of letters since the last Titus House Newsletter was distributed. We are so grateful that everyone was concise and kept the letters to two pages as we had requested. Some of the accounts we heard are shocking and we are committed to moving forward as quickly as possible with our litigation. Everyone who has written us can be assured that we will contact you if we need additional information.

The issues raised concerning the Parole Board impact many offenders in New Mexico. Based

on the mail we have received, there are three issues we have identified as priorities for LJC. This doesn't mean we are not concerned about the other issues such as compassionate release for those with severe physical ailments. It simply means we must allocate our limited resources to the priorities our board has identified.

Issue 1: There are an untold number of offenders who have never been released from prison even though their sentence has been completed due to lack of an address. We believe continued detention of those in this category is unlawful.



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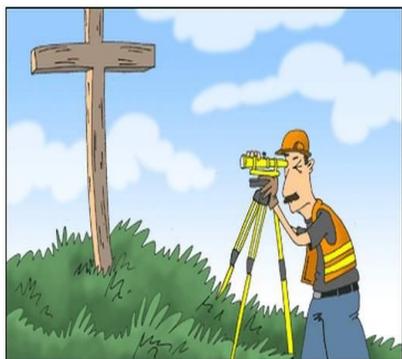
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Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Remember if you change your address you need to let us know if you want to continue to receive this newsletter



EVERYBODY ELSE MERELY TALKS ABOUT SURVEYING THE WONDROUS CROSS ... HE ACTUALLY DID IT

Help

There is a number of things Titus House does for those who are incarcerated and for those that are in the free world. We have listed them before in this newsletter from backpacks to housing information. We hold our monthly Circle of Concern, "Our Daily Bread" conference call, which is held 7 days a week for more info about this contact Don at (505)315-7940. We also hold our annual Christmas party and produce this monthly newsletter.

The reason I am writing this is we could not do this without your help. We ask you to help us by praying for us and to be a financial partner in Kingdom work. Thank you and God bless.

Issue 2: There are a significant number who have been released and have been returned to prison for alleged violations without due process. We believe this violates the constitution.

Issue 3: The plain language of the indefinite parole statute requires that periodic reviews be conducted after five years on parole. The statute does not require that the five years only count for the time the person is outside the walls. These reviews are not happening which is a direct violation of the statute.

LJC is unable to provide a timeline for when we will launch a lawsuit concerning any of the aforementioned issues. Please know that we are deeply concerned about your being stuck in prison due to issues with the Parole Board. We will continue keeping you informed through the Titus House Newsletter going forward. You can be assured that there are many people working to bring changes to how the Parole Board is conducting business.

Circle of Concern

Circle of Concern is aimed at breaking down isolation and fear by providing a safe place for registrants and their loved ones to get together, build community, and learn ways to step out and take charge of their lives and overcome the stigma

they face. The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on September 15, 2019 at 4 pm—6 pm. We will be having a potluck. We meet at Foothills Fel-

lowship Church, corner of Tramway and Candelaria on the far east side of Albuquerque. We encourage and try to help each other. It is a safe place to share our strengths and struggles. We hope you will join us. If you are planning to attend call Don at (505) 315-7940.

Thoughts from Alice

We read that people really hate sex offenders and usually they are pointing at someone other than themselves. You can find online at least 21 ways you can be a sex offender. You can read porn on line sent to you from distant countries, you can run around the house or the yard almost nude on a hot summer day where children can see you, you can be homeless looking for a bathroom or you can be sexually interested in someone who declares he or she is 18. You might be living with a man not your husband who takes a liking to your young daughter. There is every type of circumstance to trap you. Some we know are doing a lot of prison time for believing their sexual partner was really 18, but actually 14.

The Bible has a lot to say about sex. The book of Romans, written by a former sinner of all time, says in Romans chapters one and two that sexual sin will be judged by God. Chapter two declares we are all guilty, God will judge us and the consequences are eternal separation from God. We don't like reading this stuff because some of us would like to say, "Not me, I would never do that." In fact there are churches today who are not at all welcoming to "sex offenders" with the excuse that they have children present. I was actually in a church once where all the sex offenders were marched in, sat in a specific pew and before the planned lunch time they were marched back out to a waiting van as the more holy attendees sat down to eat.

Am I guilty of impure sexual thoughts and even behavior? Of course and so are you. Please stop separating yourself from the sinners in your midst. They might even recognize you from the days you used to party together.

