

Titus House Newsletter

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

SEPTEMBER
2022

LAM Ministry Update



Greetings to my brothers and sisters inside the fences. Remember, prison is not a place of confinement. It's a state of mind! Just wanted to give you all an update as to the status of the Returning Citizens Project and the Sukkot house. Both of these projects are a work in progress. While, LAM is a recognized 501©(3) nonprofit and we are only able to receive those who are off parole, if they qualify by application. The DOC does not yet recognize us as a **"approved vendor"**. Therefore, hindering us from receiving anyone still on parole. I am currently gathering letters of support from high-ranking officials and business leaders in our community that wish to partner with and support our efforts. These letters will be used, to present to the DOC in due time. We recognize the extreme lack of resources for men and women with the SO label. Some of you have already written me and told me that your case managers will not recognize us until directives are handed down from the hierarchy. Please bear with me brothers and sisters, this is a monumental task and requires time and effort. And I am already juggling two businesses and a farm to have places of employment upon your release. The next phase, prior to approval from the DOC, is to get construction underway for the Sukkot house. This is to be an eight dorm room facility. Which takes time, effort, and money. Remember I am only one man, and I need dedicated devoted individuals who, like yourselves, believe in the cause and wish to come alongside us and incorporate your special skills to help in the development of the greater mission of helping returning citizen. First and foremost, your heart and mind must be renewed. You must be able to control your vessel, thinking, and behaviors. Keep in mind, there is an application process for anyone who desires to be a part of this ministry. Remember, God spoke everything into existence by the word of his mouth. Then he made us in his image. That tells me speaking things into existence is how it is to be done. I wish I could help each of you. The reality is, there is a lot of work to be done here in Tucumcari. I am prayerfully reaching out to people who feel led by the Holy Spirit to be a part of this ministry, organization, and community. Anything worthwhile takes a lot of effort. I know and believe that you are worth it. Please prayerfully consider what God is calling you to be a part of. I can tell you after 8 ½ years of release from the DOC, that life is what you make it. Fear should have no place in our lives or kingdom business. If God be for us, who could be against us. He has made us more than conquerors through Him who loves us. There is a world of opportunity available here for the committed, dedicated, serious and entrepreneurial minded people. The only thing I can promise you my friends, is that, I will follow these projects through and be an edifying friend. As iron sharpens iron, we will walk out the victorious life that the Father has planned for us, without fear, from the enemy. I know that's a mouthful. But start speaking, peace, prosperity, safety, security over your own lives and it shall come to be. If, we have the God of the universe living within us. How can we be defeated? Wow, what an awesome thought. It takes effort to remember that, because the enemy comes to kill, steal and destroy. Be victorious. LAM (Legacy Acres Ministries) PO Box 473 Tucumcari NM 88401



L.A. sheriff's deputy charged with over 30 counts of sex crimes involving children

A Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy has been charged with over 30 counts of sex crimes involving children, [CBS Los Angeles reports](#).

"Sexually assaulting a child not only robs them of their innocence but also leaves lasting mental trauma. This is one of the most egregious crimes my office encounters and it is made worse when the crime is committed by someone who has been entrusted to protect them and our community from harm," District Attorney Gascón said.

On Tuesday, Deputy Sean Essex was indicted by a grand jury on 18 counts of oral sex acts with a child, 12 counts of lewd acts on a child young than 14 years old, two counts of sexual acts with a child younger than 14 and one count of possession of child porn — a total of 33 counts. The charges include a case from 2006 that was previously declined

by the District Attorney's office.

In this July 19, 2016 photo, Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy recruit Renata Phillip, right, listens to recruit training officer Sean Essex, center, at the Biscailuz Regional Training Center in Monterey Park, Calif. JAE C. HONG/AP

Essex pleaded not guilty during his first day in court. If convicted, Essex would face 32 counts that would end with life in prison.

The Sheriff's Department fired Essex after a criminal and internal investigation in 2018. According to the department, the termination was overturned by the Civil Service Commission, which ordered that he be reinstated.

"Mr. Sean Essex does not reflect the values of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department or those of the dedicat-

ed men and women in law enforcement who proudly serve our communities each day," the department wrote in a statement.

The department also said Essex has been "relieved of duty" again and officials were working to remove his pay.

"The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department expects all of its personnel to hold themselves to the highest ethical, moral, and professional standards at all times. Department members who engage in misconduct, especially criminal misconduct that preys on a vulnerable population, will not be tolerated and will be investigated and fully prosecuted. Society expects peace officers to hold themselves to the highest moral and ethical standards, as does the Sheriff," the department wrote.

Alice Johnston

By Don R.

Alice is the Director of Titus House Ministries, a woman in her 90s who works with those who have sexually offended, people often referred to as "registrants" because their names are on the state or national registry. She became interested in registrants because of a man in her church, a Sunday School teacher, who was charged with such an offense. He was arrested and sent to prison for supposedly abusing his own children. Alice always felt he was falsely accused, and often defended him to others. As a result Alice became the target of persecution, as people refused to talk with her, and she was even refused entrance into a church that she and her husband had founded.

Prior to these events Alice had no idea what the term sex offense was. She and her husband had been missionaries overseas and were also involved in Christian radio. But once she began working with people on the registry, she was informed by the receptionist at the radio station that she could no longer visit the radio station that her late husband helped found.

Alice and her current husband now have a full-time ministry in this area, which involves a monthly newsletter, advising people accused and convicted of such activities, writing letters to prisoners, and assisting those released from prison in adjusting to the outside world. They also lead a morning de-

votional group by phone. If you would like to join us for this morning devotion call Don at 6:45am at (505) 315-7940

For a number of years Alice also visited people in prison. She has a heart for the men and women who are registrants. She tells me there are almost one million people in the United States who are on the registry. Their families are also targets of abuse from the general public as well, even though the large majority of registrants never repeat their actions. God's forgiveness and personal encouragement are major aspects of her ministry as well as that of her husband.



Joliet mayor Bob O'Dekirk, please do the right thing

By Sandy . (from NARSOL) . Much has been made recently of an apartment building in Joliet, Illinois, housing six individuals on the Illinois sex offense registry. Joliet's mayor Bob O'Dekirk has consistently supported attempts to have the men removed. He has been very vocal about this.

Frustrated by a federal ruling superseding the state law that allows only one registered person at any given address, Mayor O'Dekirk has now announced his intent to build what is known as a "pocket park" in order to have the registrants forced out. A state law requires registrants who were convicted of offenses against a child (defined by the statute as anyone under the age of eighteen) [to live more than 500 feet](#) from schools, playgrounds, and child-care facilities. The apartment building is in compliance, as, [according to their website](#), are all NewDay apartments.

According to his statement, the mayor is putting forth to city council at their August 2 meeting a proposal to purchase a home he has located within 500 feet of the apartments. The plan then, apparently, is to move or demolish the home and do what is necessary to declare the lot a children's playground, thereby putting the property off limits for anyone convicted as a child sex offender.

While everyone understands and agrees with the need and duty to protect children from harm, this will best be accomplished by actions grounded in empirical evidence and with truth and facts rather than hyperbole, fear-mongering, and falsehoods.

The mayor, in an interview posted on Facebook, repeatedly attacked the owners of the apartment building in question, attacking them for building

it in Joliet, "on the other side of the state" from where they lived, rather than in their own area.

The headquarters of NewDay Apartments is in Lake Zurich in Lake County. NewDay owns a dozen properties in Lake, Kane, Will, and Winnebago counties. The properties are all approved by the Illinois Dept. of Corrections and in compliance with state laws.

The rules for their tenants are strict: only one non-violent (as defined by Illinois law) sexual offense is allowed; to be considered, applicants must have no other felonies, including drug offenses; applicants must pass extensive criminal and credit background checks.

As the rationale to support his position, Mayor O'Dekirk made loud claims that recidivism among those on the registry is "extremely high," one of the highest of all crimes.

Every aspect of that is false. Reoffense among registrants is very, very low, an [average of around 5% from all reporting states](#), and reoffense among those with a single, non-violent offense is extremely low. The most recent Illinois study showed an across-the-board [reoffense rate of 2.4% after three years \(p.17\)](#). Many studies refer to sex offender reoffense as lower than every other category of crime other than murder.

The mayor is perpetuating the outdated and debunked "stranger danger" myth in taking this action. [The overwhelmingly greatest threat for sexual harm to children comes from those close to them](#): family members, peers, and trusted acquaintances and authority figures, not strangers who may or may not also be registered

persons.

When asked, a spokesperson for NewDay Apartments said, "The city of Joliet's position that the Cora St. property should be shut down will do nothing to protect the local community. If the city decides to build a 'pocket park' near Cora, NewDay will simply place registrants who are not subject to the 500' restriction at the building. The city's efforts will only result in the names of the registrants at Cora St. changing. NewDay will continue to protect communities by providing safe, affordable housing to registrants to help ensure they comply with all local laws and regulations. To date, not a single tenant at Cora St. has even been accused of a new crime, much less convicted of one."

The bottom line is this: Illinois law has created a large [homeless population among registrants](#) due to residency restrictions. Providing housing for as many of these individuals as possible, aside from the positive benefits for the registrants, helps create safer neighborhoods.

Mayor O'Dekirk is in a position to be a positive influence in his community simply by telling his constituents the truth. Communities are safer when those who have taken responsibility for their actions, served or are serving their punishment, and wish to build a law-abiding life as a productive member of society have access to the means with which to begin that journey.

Everyone bears the responsibility of protecting our children and maximizing the resources we have. These goals can only be reached by building on a foundation of facts and truth.



Titus House Ministries

PO Box 2376
Tijeras, NM 87059

Phone: (505) 286-8807
Alice's Cell (505) 259-0867
Don's Cell: (505) 315-7940

Email: donmagicjohnston@gmail.com

We're on the Web
titushouseministries.org

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



In Wisconsin: Important Seventh Circuit Decision on the

By Adele Nicholas .NARSOL . . We achieved a small but important victory in the Seventh Circuit this week. The Seventh Circuit found that a municipal ordinance enacted by the Village of Hartland, Wisconsin, that banned registrants from establishing a home in the Village is retroactive within the meaning of the ex post facto clause. The ruling opens an important avenue for persons with past convictions to challenge burdensome restrictions that are regularly heaped on them by local government entities that would like to banish them from their communities.

The case overturns a rule concerning "retroactivity" adopted by the Seventh Circuit in 2011. In order to prevail on an ex post facto claim, a plaintiff must prove both that a law is "retroactive" and that it is "punitive." In the 2011

case *United States v. Leach*, 639 F.3d 769, 773 (7th Cir. 2011), the Seventh Circuit held that the federal Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act was not "retroactive" as applied to a person convicted of his offense prior to its enactment. The Court's logic was that the registration requirement only applied to "conduct occurring after the law's enactment—that is, a sex offender's failure to register or update his registration following interstate travel." The Court applied this "retroactivity" rule again in the 2018 case *Vasquez v.*

Foxx, holding that an Illinois statute that prohibits individuals classified as "child sex offenders" from living within 500 feet of home day cares was not retroactive because it applied "only to conduct occurring after its enactment—i.e., knowingly maintaining a residence within 500 feet of a child day-care home or group day-care home."



Circle of Concern has gone **ZOOM**

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 18, 2022** at 3 pm—4 p.m. MST. We will meet on Zoom. 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.. He will send you the link to join by computer or phone. You can contact him at the number above or email him at

donmagicjohnston@gmail.com