

# Titus House Newsletter

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

February  
2018



## Meet Wilfred Platta

**FREE AT LAST, FREE AT LAST,** After 17 years I am free at last. My name is Wilfred Platta and I am a Mescalero-Apache Native American. I used to live on the Mescalero reservation. I was discharged on January 8, 2018. I did my in-house parole without my knowing. Don and Alice from Titus House Ministries picked me up from Los Lunas. I want to say "HI" to all my friends I left behind in Los Lunas and in Hobbs. It is so nice to be free under the blue sky and amongst the pine trees and yucca plants here in the mountains. I am staying in

Don and Alice's RV. They bought me some clothes and took me to get my food stamps and to the Social Security office and get my health care situated. They also took me out for my first real food in a long time. I thank the Great Spirit, God and my Lord Jesus Christ for the freedom I am now experiencing. My goals are to go back and see my family in St. Louis. I want to go back to Independence, MO and volunteer for Indian ministries and visit some tribes all over the United States. I want to start a new life but the state of New

Mexico is requiring me to register for life as a sex offender. I did my time but there is no forgiveness from society. I thank God that He has forgiven me. I have been going to AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) with Don because I never want to return to my old way of life. While I am here in Tijeras, New Mexico I want to help out with Titus House Ministries.

A-HO my brothers and sisters.



## Pat AVCF Colorado

In the mid 70's I learned about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That started what I call "my religious roller coaster". I was raised knowing about Jesus, but I didn't know Jesus. I would call or visit the man who "planted the seed" and have a Bible study. Then fire up a joint on the way home from work I would stop by a strip joint or adult bookstore. After supper read the Bible. My son's mother and I divorced and I had a number of one nite stands. Eventually I married a woman and started attending a small church. I became the Personal Ministries Leader and between Sunday school and the service would stand

before the church and encourage them to go out and witness about God's grace. Unknown to everyone I was stoned as I spoke to them. I quit a good paying job driving semis to become a literature evangelist for the church selling Bibles stories for children. If I had a lead out of town, a woman I was having an affair with would go with me. After selling a family a set of books so their kids would learn the Bible, this woman and I would get high and have sex. My sales were down, my marriage shaky, bills piling up and I would get mad at God "I'm reading your word, selling your books, got to church, why are you not helping me?" I even got baptized. I

went into the water a sinner and came out a wet sinner, nothing changed, because my heart wasn't right. In the Fall of 2001 I made the biggest mistake of my life and now 16 years later I'm paying for it and only God knows when I'll be paroled. When I was in County I was doing Bible studies and having prayer circles. One night on my knees I prayed "Lord I have no idea what's in store so I'm asking you take charge of my life, wherever I go be with me, protect me and fill me with your Holy Spirit so I can be a witness for you". I felt a shiver like a blast of cold wind go thru me and I wept uncontrollably. When I left my cell one of the guys

playing cards looked at me and said "Man! You're glowing!! I don't know what's going on in your cell, but I want some." I have never been bothered or threatened, always had good cellies and jobs and have told a lot of men about the free gift of God's salvation. I knew about Jesus as a young man, now for over 16 years I've known Jesus as my Lord, savior and best friend. Going to church or reading a Bible doesn't make you a Christian anymore than going to McDonalds make you a cheeseburger. I highly recommend developing a relationship with Jesus, I can guarantee you'll never regret it!



## Second Chance People

I was in prison and you came to me....Truly, I say to you as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me. Matthew 25:35-46

During his trip to the United States in 2015, Pope Francis visited inmates at the Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility in Philadelphia. "[Christ] teaches us to see the world through his eyes,"...eyes which are not scandalized by the dust picked up along the way but want to cleanse, heal and restore." .....mercy requires not only an end to suffering but an ongoing commitment to human dignity. He said we must accept the lost and the sinner as our own and give them the aid they need to "cleanse, heal and restore" their lives. Those in prison and returning to the community have done wrong--sometimes the unthinkably wrong--but

there is no wrong that cannot be forgiven and no life that cannot be saved.

Every year over 650,000 men and women are released from state and federal prisons -- (Over 75 percent -- 487,500 individuals-- are re-arrested within five years). They have great difficulty finding employment and housing and many are dealing with alcohol or drug addiction. Most re-entering persons do not immediately obtain health insurance and thus do not have access to medical or behavioral health care. Prison may be punishment by design but people who are re-entering civic society ought not be punished anew by neglect, indifference or, worse, contempt.

But the "scarlet F," for felon, now effectively precludes re-entering individuals from most public and private employment as well as housing. ....many are also ineligible for many forms of housing assistance. ....

Those coming back into the community from prison are not disqualified from salvation, nor are they undeserving of the mercy the rest of us so often enjoy. They are representatives of all of us: The Zaccabees, prodigal sons and adulterous widows of the world, who are the least worthy but most loved. Christ came for the sinner, and it is the church's imperative to give the sinner a second chance at salvation. "Re-entry" is a Christian idea, and that means assisting returning persons to restore their lives to a healthy and virtuous place. Its time has come. (*Taken from AMERICA Magazine, 10/2/17 & written by Jim McGreevey/executive director of the Jersey City Employment & Training as Program & Chairman on the NJ Re-entry Corp. -- He is a former governor of NJ; with Katie Forkey providing research assistance for this essay.*

## It's Better to Light a Candle than Curse the Darkness

**From:** Alice

Dear East Coast Inmate,

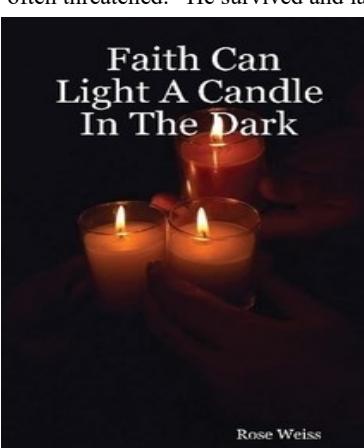
I am going to try and answer your mad letter. First of all, I am the grandchild of immigrants – from Scotland. I have never been there but would enjoy a visit. We all know the first inhabitants of the US were Native Americans (at least we think so). Oppression in other countries and also a sense of adventure brought all kinds of people here from other places. This has been a country of extreme challenges. My grandfather from Canada came to Colorado to work in the mines. It wasn't easy and because he was a Christian his life was often threatened. He survived and later

went to college and started a Christian church in NYC. My family has been pioneers of a sort. My late husband and I went to the Philippines to start churches and after 16 years came to Albuquerque and did the same. He died 13 years ago and now I am married to Don Johnston and we love helping survivors of 15 to 30 years in prison. Why are the laws prejudicial? Because most people hate "sex offenders", usually not knowing exactly what they did. There are at least 21 ways you can be a sex offender, many of which do not involve touching a child in any way.

Can you or I change these laws? – Perhaps some but not many. People have their minds made up and we can sit and swear, throw things, write letters to the editor of newspapers and probably nothing will happen. What Don and I do is

to help SOs coming out of prison, and those still there by trying to encourage them. We tell them God has a plan for their life, in spite of what the public has done to them. The Apostle Paul in prison, sitting and writing books of encouragement to church folks, believed God had a purpose for his life. He was eventually killed and we will get to greet him in heaven! People of all colors of the rainbow will be in heaven and many of them were killed to get there. If Jesus and Paul couldn't convert everyone to a better point of view perhaps we won't either. But right now at 88 years old I am trying to spread the word about Jesus to inmates, to residents of a halfway house because God has told me to do so.

Remember, your job is to forget what color you are (temporarily at least) and focus on God's plan for you, right now, where you are at. Stop screaming at evil, do something positive while you have the strength and time. Much love, Alice



### Prayer Requests

Frank Alvey ask us all for prayers for the passing of his mother Mary. Please pray for him and his family.

Pray also for those who need a parole plan.





## Wearing our scarlet letters

From: SOSEN– Sex Offender Solutions & Education Network

When I was 18, I joined the military. The first stop for an enlisted member is, of course, Boot Camp!! At boot camp, for the first time, I saw some impressive men and women who had a unique job of breaking down 100 18-30 year olds and building them into a unique group of young men and women. It is, of course, deeper than that. The drill instructors are there to teach many things, like how to survive, to move forward without stopping, and they pick lives up where mom and dad left off. They have a unique and rewarding job that takes long hours, intensive training, and unbelievable devotion.

One drill instructor stood out from the rest. He was actually a junior drill instructor, possibly the most junior. While most of them showed off a chest full of ribbons, this guy did not...he only had 4!! It wasn't his rank and it wasn't his chest of accomplishments that were impressive, it was his uniform that stood out from the rest!! This guy's shirt and trousers' creases were ironed to the point they would cut your eyes if you looked at them for too long (he would make you regret looking at them, too....WHOLE different story!!) His shoes-they were literally shined to the point that when you were pushing the ground and he walked by, you could see your own sweat in them!!! (And god help you if you dripped on his shoes!!) This man was SQUARED AWAY!!

It goes beyond the uniform, though. This junior drill instructor was one of

the toughest in the training camp. He caught everything. We could not get away with ANYTHING. We spent more time in front-leaning rest for him than any other...but it goes beyond that, too. While he would go around striking fear and discontentment, he also had a deeply human, deeply caring personality. As a part of our training, we have all of our wisdom teeth pulled. Mine were exceptionally stubborn, requiring 2 days in the recovery ward....which is bad, considering I would miss 2 days of important classes. Guess who stopped in those 2 days to tutor me through the classes!! He was NOT the person I wanted by my side when I was miserable....or so I thought!!

As my 2 days progressed into 3, This tough guy spent several hours at my side and at the side of other sick and sore recruits, bringing us ice water, classroom assignments, talking to us, not making friends, but making small talk and simply showing compassion.

As my 8 weeks drew to a close, I saw less of him, but he was at my graduation, he met my parents and the proud parents of the other 30 or so who made it through the training program. Finally, as I climbed into the car with my family to return home before heading to my first duty billet, I parted company with the Training Center and all of the greatest teachers I have ever known.

So WHY, exactly, do I share a boot camp memory with everyone?? Well, I

layed awake last night thinking about the unique position we all live in. We all wear a common scarlet letter, something that, like a military uniform, unites us into a unique group. In the eyes of the community we live in, we are all in a category that is separate from the rest of society. We all appear the same to the others around us. To most people, RSOs and our families are simply set aside from the rest of society, wearing a common scarlet letter, the outcast.

While we are lumped into a category, we lose our individuality. Like the drill instructors at Boot Camp, we are all looked at as "them". We are to be avoided, we all might bite!! We have a reputation for invoking misery and discontent among the people we live around.

We DO have the opportunity to shine, however. Like the D.I. that I spoke of, we each have an unique opportunity to stand out among the rest. It goes deeper than simply living. I know, some of us have different levels of restrictions, I am blessed in that I have almost none. We can, however, dedicate ourselves to our families, our communities, and our churches. We need to socialize, to mix in and to volunteer where we can and where appropriate. At work, work hard, be the first to accept the undesirable projects. (I just accepted one as I am writing this...work called, I said yes). OWN that project...you know what I mean??? **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## Feed Back form a Titus House Supporter

Your article in the last newsletter "Closing our eyes to prisoner abuse must stop" hit my sympathies the most. Why? Because I have seen this kind of inmate prejudice so long. How in the world murderers, thieves, drug dealers, and other can feel OK harassing even killing S.O.'s when they, themselves know deep down that **they are the same thing!** Take me for example: I'm a sex offender, myself. Just never got caught. Sure, it was consensual, but we are talking girls under age. In a couple of cases QUITE under age. It kind of speaks about this latest sexual harass-

ment "thing" going on among celebs and politicians. Of course, I am not justifying these dirty old men, making young girls sleep with them so that the girl can get a leading role, or having sex in the Oval Office. But in some of these cases, it was merely certain comments made, or maybe even a touch or 2, but no real "sex" at all. Again, I know God doesn't like even this. Jesus said that even to look at a woman with lust is like unto adultery in God's eyes. I still at age 73 have to repent of this at times. But my point in all this is merely that most of us men including they were

totally honest, have histories of such things! Sure, on the one hand, it is good that we have even a thread of ethics left that perhaps senators or movie producers may now have to cognizant about. But here is a growing irony, in that the hypocrisy quotient in this culture is alarming. They watch sinful things all the time on TV and at the movies, planting seeds of lust and sin in their hearts, then scream when someone in the lime-light gets caught doing their own fantasy. Hypocritical.



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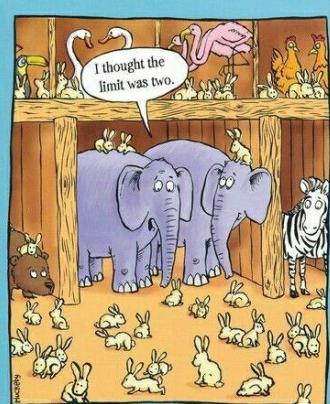
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Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

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



**DAY 39 ON THE ARK.**

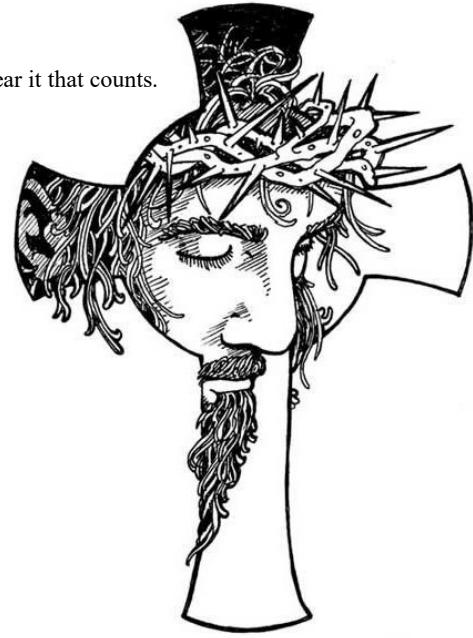
Life takes more than participation. It takes commitment. We, more than any other group of people, need to give more to society than any others. We have an unique set of obligations, we have to check in here, stay away from there, and avoid this, and always be sure another person is around to account for us when we do that. We also have a unique opportunity to shine through it all.

You see, the drill instructor that stood out from the others was really no different than the others, but he found a way unique to himself to stand out from the woodwork. I invite everyone to join me in my personal challenge to step out from the rest. Imagine, an entire population of RSOs who put their 110% into living above and beyond the letters we wear. Of course, it isn't easy....nothing that brings about good ever is. It is early here this morning. This means we have a whole day to get started.

It isn't the scarlet letter we wear....it's how we wear it that counts.



**John 8:36-So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.**



By Michael Scott

**chainsawsuit.com**



## 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 offenders, family and friends that meet together on the 2nd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on February 11, 2018 at 6 pm—8 pm. We will be having a potluck. We

meet at Foothills Fellowship 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.