

AUTUMN 2019

THE NEW GATE



Events 2019

OKC Exodus House
Thanksgiving Dinner
Wesley UMC, Nov 13 @ 6 pm

OKC Exodus House
Resident Christmas Party
Wesley UMC, Dec 11 @ 6 pm

Penn Avenue 25th Anniversary
Penn Ave UMC, Dec 15th
Service begins @ 10:45 am

Upcoming Events 2020

CJAMM Volunteer Luncheon
Place TBD March 28, 11-1

New Day Camp One June 5—8
Cross Point Camp, Kingston, OK

New Day Camp Two June 8—12
Cross Point Camp, Kingston, OK

New Day Camp Three
Time and Place to be announced



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From the Director:



Greetings from the Office,

Fall is my favorite time of year. I am not just excited for the pumpkin spice, the cooler weather, football/soccer, sweaters, and the food. I am most excited to reflect on what has happened this year and think about what we are most thankful for....the lives changed.

I am amazed each year to see the growth in our programs. This year we were able to launch a true New Day Three and Wrap Around Care for graduates from the Exodus House. We have been able to serve over 7,000 people through our Redemption Missions, over 120 kids through New Day Camps, and 40 through our Exodus Houses, 10 through our Wrap Around Care, and let's not forget the thousands of people our volunteers visit in prison.

Our numbers seem impressive, but this newsletter is centered around meeting the people who you have helped to change their lives. Without support from volunteers and people just like you, we would not be here to break the generational cycles of incarceration.



Pictured: Tony & Sherry Altizer

My heart jumped for joy when Tony got married and started his own business after graduating Exodus House and working for us the past few years. I was impressed when Donte (former camper and now adult leader) showed me that he was attending college and that he is a spokesperson for his college admissions office. I love to hear from "Big Country" that he is doing well and has been promoted to bigger things in his work field since he graduated Exodus House and Redemption Missions in OKC and Tulsa. My soul is happy when I go to Eddie Warrior Correctional Center each week and am able to teach a class on Sexual Abuse Recovery allowing women to learn proper boundaries to have healthy thinking. I am most impressed at the changes in their lives because they had the opportunity to excel through CJAMM.



Pictured: Donte Chattman



Pictured: Big Country

As you read the articles, remember that you are helping to change lives.

Blessings,
Kristen Harlin

CJAMM—Welcomes New Office Staff

CJAMM is excited to announce that Blake Whisenhunt will be working for CJAMM as our New Day Camp Director and Office Assistant. He is an OU graduate, has been a dean of New Day for four years (worked many New Day camps), and recently left Grace United Methodist as their Youth and Young Adult Director to come to us. Welcome, Blake!!



Pictured: Blake Whisenhunt & New Day camper

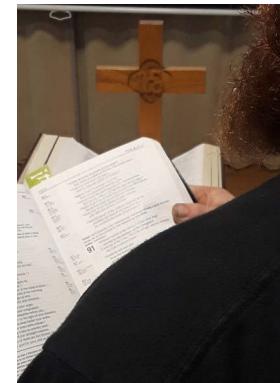
TULSA REDEMPTION MISSION

His name is Cody. Soon he will turn 33. He is married to his loving wife, who is his best friend and he has four beautiful daughters. Cody was an IV drug user. He was an alcoholic. He is also a child of God, redeemed and made new. Cody's deliverance was made manifest in his sobriety of one year this September. He is clean and that was possible because of the blood shed by Jesus on Cody's behalf, as well as on behalf of all of us.

Cody has been coming to Tulsa Redemption Mission for six months. When I asked what coming to Redemption has meant for him, Cody said "It has taught me how to be a leader in church, to be involved more, to step out and be a volunteer in service to the church. I just love being part of the church and Tulsa Redemption has given me that opportunity. Discipleship, leadership, and Christian life I can apply that to the new life ahead of me and in the plans God has for me."

When Cody releases he looks forward to moving home to his family and returning to his home church. He is looking forward to going to basketball games. He and his pastor started a "Church in the Dirt" meeting and he wants to continue to grow that ministry when he returns. He looks forward to working with a sober living ranch that works with young men and women using horses and hard work as a way forward to recovery.

At the end of our talk I asked Cody if he thought that when he mentors others he would use his life as an example. He said "Yes, we are not all perfect. People may fall into a place of condemnation...maybe I can reach out to someone and I can lead them to forgiveness and redemption." God bless you Cody.



TULSA EXODUS HOUSE & PARSONAGE HOUSE

Namaste,

May our spirits speak to your spirits.

Fall is in the air, kids are back in school, leaves are falling and it is nearly time for the holidays. All my graduates and residents are doing well, they are becoming self-supportive, and transitioning, but two current residents stand out as going above and beyond to help others and giving back what they've been so freely given.

Robert Nez, The Parsonage House resident and Christian Borynack, Exodus House Tulsa resident are two very determined individuals who are both SELFLESS in their actions around others, givers of their time and energy, both help with donations, and chores, no questions asked.



Pictured: Robert Nez

Robert Nez was released on July 10, 2019. Nez went to work at CEO immediately, worked with a willingness and soon was hired by AAON Heating and Cooling Products. On his days off he calls to check in. Do you need me to help with anything? His attitude is, "let's get it done". No matter what it is, he is ready to help and that makes a difference in the way others perceive this program. Attitude is everything and Robert has an outstanding attitude. He goes above and beyond to help at church, at the Parsonage House and also at the Exodus House. We applaud his energetic attitude to go above and beyond to overcome the past. We thank the Lord for all that he does.



Pictured: Christian Borynack

Christian Borynack was released August 16, 2019. Christian is a woman who shows her gratitude by getting up then mowing, pulling weeds, and weed eating every Saturday morning early without having to be told or asked. She encourages others to ride the bus and take classes to better themselves. Christian was recently interviewed on the same day by Senator Wayne Shaw and *The Tulsa World*.

Christian is due to start a new job on Monday at a good wage. We at Exodus House love her love of the Lord. She is a prayer warrior and her praise and worship spills out onto others here. That makes a difference in all our lives. Let us all learn to be givers of our time and become selfless like these two individuals. We thank her for her gratitude and willingness to share her transformation with others so that they too can know who set them free.

—Estelle Turbyfill, Case Manager, Exodus House/Parsonage House Tulsa—cell (918) 231-4013, fax (918) 382-9793

NEW DAY CAMP

This year was very successful for New Day Camp. We are working very hard to ensure that the campers that come to New Day are empowered to end the generational cycles of incarceration. All of the work that is done is only possible because of our wonderful volunteers. It is a great joy when those volunteers are former campers such as Devery Green. Devery attended both New Day 1 and 2 for six years as camper and now returns as a volunteer each year. He says what keeps him coming back is seeing the kids actually being kids and having fun because we don't know what their life is like at home. Devery is a Senior at Minco High School and will be graduating this spring. His favorite hobbies include: hunting, fishing, playing video games, working on cars and hanging out with friends. Devery has been concurrently taking classes at Canadian Valley Technical College working to get his PC Pro certification, along with his A+, Network+, and Security+ Certifications. He then plans on going to Rose State and taking their Cyber Security program. Devery has been part of the Leader in Training (LIT) program and one of the things he loves most about camp is connecting with the kids because he was a camper and knows what it's like to have a parent incarcerated. When it comes to dedication, patience with campers, and overcoming adversity Devery is a great example of the leadership that is necessary to make camp work. We are so proud of Devery and look forward to where his leadership skills take him in the future.



Pictured: Devery (back row) serving as a LIT at New Day Camp One in 2018

If you interested in getting involved in New Day Camp either by providing needed items, helping with transportation or volunteer, you can contact Blake Whisenhunt at (405) 530-2018 or by email at bwhisenhunt@okumc.org. Camp One will be Friday, June 5, 2020—Monday, June 8, 2020 and Camp Two will be Monday, June 8, 2020—Friday, June 12, 2020.

OKC EXODUS HOUSE

Reflections: That is the place my mind is today as I reflect on the 10 years I have been with this Ministry and a part of the Exodus House in OKC. I think of our CJAMM Ministry and a man named Rev. Dr. Stan Basler who had a vision for what we could do and be to those incarcerated, their families, their children and their faith journey. He was Executive Director then and Pastor of Redemption with Steve Byrd as Director of Exodus House OKC, Lesa Rhoads as Stan's Assistant. New Day Camp for the children of those incarcerated parents, Redemption Churches for the offenders and their families, too many Methodist churches to name and all those who also were part of the CJAMM mission and journey. So amazed at the Grace of Jesus Christ over ALL of our lives and for those who are the new leaders of CJAMM today: Executive Director Kristin Harlin, Asst. Director Lesa Rhoads, Blake Whisenhunt, New Day Camp Director, myself and Estelle Turbyfill of the OKC/Tulsa Exodus Houses, Pastor's Stan Basler and Brad Rogers of Penn Avenue Redemption, Rev. Lory Fahle of Lawton Aldersgate Redemption and James "Buster" Hall of St. Luke's Redemption Mission in Tulsa.



Pictured: Donnelle Lister and his family with CJAMM Director, Kristen Harlin



We want to welcome our new part-time Facility Manager Donnelle Lister, who is a graduate of Exodus House OKC and is a true success in our eyes. He came here and immediately took custody of his 3 children. They are such a joy to have here. He went to school to be an electrician and works full time at Coca Cola and part time for us. He has a true heart to give back to our ministry. He is a wonderful father and mentor to all he meets. To see him grow in his faith and his recovery, to struggle to find a job but never giving up, to take time always to be with his children and do family outings together, it really is such a blessing to be a part of his journey and his children's. Lives changed.....

I have watched all our apartment sponsors and our local churches living our mission, and our motto of Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors to countless people over these 12 years and I am HUMBLED, BLESSED and GRATEFUL for ALL of You!! To watch each of you in action and know we all have struggles in our life but God's call on our lives to be His hands and feet, to break those chains, to love all people, is a call we choose not to ignore!! Lives are being changed!! What better joy than to see a father and a mother hold their child, to eat a meal with family, to grow in their spiritual journey through your love and mentorship. To share in a Thanksgiving meal, a Christmas picture or gift, a meal with those they love. To see and experience those moments are my absolute favorites! You are my favorite people!! Thank you for being a light of Christ in a dark place for those we serve! Thank you for being a part of our CJAMM Ministries and to our Exodus House families. We hope your holidays are filled with God's blessings, His Grace and those moments of reflections of the joy of His presence throughout your lives and those lives you have touched. Thank you for being a light of Christ in my...our lives!!

SAVE THE DATE: We had a great Exodus House OKC Graduate Reunion and had over 70 in attendance. We will be having our **Thanksgiving Dinner at Wesley UMC on November 13, 2019 at 6 pm and our Christmas Party for our residents at Wesley also at 6pm on December 11, 2019.**

You can call Donnelle to arrange to pick up donations locally, in Edmond and surrounding areas or drop your donations here at Exodus House.

-----Director Robin Wertz, C.M., CPRSS ----- (405)-525-2300
-----Donnelle Lister Facility Manager----- (405) 417-1189

OKC PENN AVE REDEMPTION

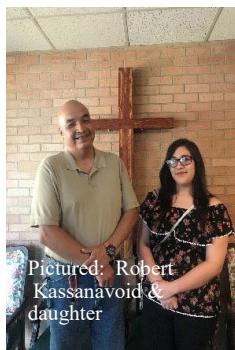
We are excited to welcome our new Lay Servant ~ Joyce Stoneman. Julia Cox, Linda Leonard, Bud Manning, Marcia Manning and Theresa Owens continued with the Advanced Lay Servant studies. Julia is working toward becoming a Lay Speaker as well.

My name is Robert T. Kassanavoid, Jr. I have completed the step-down procedures of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. I have successfully completed the six-month sober living facility named The Exodus House in Oklahoma City. This is a very gracious and hard-working program for a person such as myself, who wants so desperately to be and stay sober. There is also a spirituality road that will be found when that time is reached. While in sober living, I have a supervisory position and reestablished my relationship with my only child/daughter who now lives with me. I am a Bible study teacher at my church, Penn Ave Redemption UMC. As a graduate from the Exodus House, I mentor and support the current residents. The change in my life is gracious and fulfilling. I owe my blessings to my creator and carry on the light which has been given to me.

My name is Nancy Robinson. I have been attending Penn Ave Redemption Church since August 2018. I became a member of the church, and was baptized on June 26, 2019.

This was a wonderful experience. I'm part of the Redemption family. Since coming to the church, I found people who love and welcome me with open arms. My faith in God has grown so much. I could not have found a better church! What this church has done for me is unexplainable. The classes on Thursdays are remarkable. I chose Anger Resolution because it's what I need work on daily. I look forward to my Sundays and Thursdays because I know my church family is there and I get to lay everything on the altar.

Blessings,
Marcia Manning



Pictured: Robert Kassanavoid & daughter



Pictured: Nancy Robinson and Rev. Dr. Stan Basler

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Blake Whisenhunt, New Day Camp Director, 405/530-2018
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www.cjamm.org

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LAWTON REDEMPTION MISSION

A Tale of Two Lives (with apologies to Mr. Dickens)

In looking over the various people who have come through the Lawton Redemption Mission, both as volunteers and the offenders they serve, I am struck by the dedication of so many people. We all know some of the names, some have gone home to the Lord, others have moved away or are unable to attend any longer. But there remains a strong core of volunteers that continue to serve day after day, week after week, year after year. We are blessed to share space with them, blessed to spend time with them, blessed just to know each of them.



Pictured: Larry Jernigan

And the lives they have touched...so many, but not enough time or space to tell about all of them. However, there are two that I want to mention. The first, Larry Jernigan, was in one of the very first groups to go through Redemption in Lawton when we were still hosted by Lawton Wesley UMC. Larry's first incarceration was in 1992, but it would not be his last. It wasn't until after 2000, when Larry was incarcerated again, that he found out about Redemption Mission. When he was eligible to come, he did. He has admitted that at first, like so many others, he came for the food and the opportunity to simply "get away from the center." The joy of not eating prison food cannot be underestimated. But he realized quickly that for him, "it was the first time I ever went to church and no one judged me, everyone accepted me and showed me that there are people that truly care."

For Larry, it was this part that also brought him back to Redemption Mission after the passing of his mother. Not only did he want to continue to have that same sense of acceptance, but it became so very important to him that he be allowed to show the guys coming now that there are truly people who "care and want to see them succeed on the outside." Not only does Larry do that at Redemption Mission every Sunday and Thursday, but he also teaches a class at LCCC on Friday, titled "Unlock Your Thinking." He has already had three groups complete that class and will start the next class on Friday, October 11.

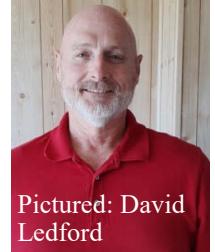
The second is David Ledford. David's first incarceration was in 2015, and it also would not be his last. However, David discovered the love of Christ while serving part of that earlier sentence but didn't quite know exactly how to deal with the outside world and follow Christ at the same time. Fortunately, he found a good chaplain who helped him learn to study the Word. When he arrived at LCCC, he heard about Redemption Mission and thought that sounded like something he wanted to try. He also attended some other churches in the area as well.

Eventually, David found a job that he knew he would be able to keep even after he got out. His bosses like him and his work so much that they helped him with housing and transportation, as well. He continued to come to Redemption Mission, as well as Landmark Pentecostal Church on a regular basis and became known, while still incarcerated, as one of the "helpers" at the church.

Now David is on probation, is still working at that job, has a nice place to live and a vehicle to get him back and forth to the various places he needs to go. He also continues to attend Redemption Mission, stating that he also wants the other men to understand that they can succeed, but they must be willing to let God do the leading.

How many more lives will be touched by Lawton Redemption – only God knows!

Blessings,
Rev. Lory J. Fahle



Pictured: David Ledford