

Alpha Prison Ministries Newsletter

August 2024 Edition

"I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25:36

Life Sentence Inmate Seeks Residency

The following inmate letter inquiry we received is a bit of an unusual request but it could become more common, which is easily evident just from reading the letter itself—the first paragraph in particular. To a degree, life sentences being reconsidered is a good thing provided they are handled with discernment, an obvious matter of prayer at every level.

I'm contacting Alpha Prison Ministries at this time due to recent developments in an anticipated Michigan Supreme Court case ruling in a few months which will in all likelihood result in me, and quite a few others, being released from incarceration.

I am a "Lifer," and for the last 15 or so years, have been an Elder and Associate Pastor in the Prisoner of Christ Church here in the Ionia Correctional Facility.

To date, I have served over 50 years on a life sentence, and needless to say, having a home placement was not something of a top priority in my day-to-day existence...that is, until the news of this forthcoming court ruling manifested itself.

Needless to say, being in a state of enforced seclusion for over a half century, one tends to lose contact (as I have) with those who could assist in providing a home placement—which brings me to the purpose of this correspondence.

The information that I am currently in possession of indicates that Alpha has housing available that could help me. As you can imagine, I would like to lay the foundation to possibly finding a suitable living space in the time I have left before this court ruling takes effect this fall.

If there are any applications or forms that must be filled out to qualify for housing placement at Alpha, I would truly appreciate it if you could provide me with a copy, or any other relevant information regarding possible placement.

In closing, I'd like to thank you for your time and patience in considering these inquiries.

Respectfully,
Stephen

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- ◆ As mentioned in our featured "lifer" inmate letter we received, the Michigan Supreme Court is expected to hand down a case ruling that could result in many life sentence inmates being released. Given how our justice system has handed down some of these sentences, this offers potential good but could also be a double-edged sword. Praying for discernment for justices and authorities would be a biblical and wise thing to do.
- ◆ In situations like Stephen's who wrote to us, getting released also poses unexpected challenges for inmates they never anticipated having to face which includes factors like the loss of all connections over their years in prison. Please pray for Stephen and others like him.
- ◆ We previously mentioned our long term APM board member and volunteer Bill who had a serious falling accident and continues to need prayer.

Prayer Requests

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Please cut around these prayer requests and use this as a bookmark in your Bible.

Alpha
Prison Ministries

ADVOCATE

Letters of Recommendation for an Inmate

Part of the normal process involved for an inmate seeking residency in our Alpha House transitional housing before being released from prison is to seek out letters of recommendation. Glenn, an inmate at Muskegon Correctional Facility recently sent these two letters which were preceded by an email from his Chaplain (not included here).

Letter from Glenn's Tutor

I am writing to you in support of Glenn, who has been in Prison Fellowship's Reentry Academy, of which I am a tutor, for the past year. According to my records, Glenn has completed 7 Prison Fellowship classes and is currently enrolled in 4 others.

In addition to the 11 required academy classes, Glenn has completed 24 peer-to-peer classes on his own initiative. One of the classes he co-facilitated with me was on recidivism reduction. Thirteen of the classes were Christ-centered.

Aside from Glenn's commitment to completing classes, he also demonstrated a willingness to participate appropriately. He arrives to class on time, prepared, and in good spirits. He freely shares his testimony just as he freely shares his time and attention. And while he readily adapts advice and skills for recovery, he is always quick to give God all the glory for whatever progress he might make in recovery.

Of the 25 men in Grace Group (i.e. Prison Fellowship's Group G), Glenn is in the handful that appear to be the most engaged in both the curriculum and the community here. Of the 160 men in the unit, Glenn has proven to be consistent in his walk with Christ and his peers.

If you give Glenn reentry assistance, I believe you will be satisfied with your choice. He has been a contributing member of our community that we will remember as a great brother in Christ. God bless you.

In Christ,
Bruce

Letter from His Dorm Unit Clerk

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Glenn who stated he is seeking residency in your program upon his release. Please accept this letter of support for him as I believe that he would be a worthy candidate for your program.

I've known Glenn since his arrival in the Faith Dorm here at Muskegon Correctional in fall 2023. One of my primary interactions with Glenn has been through my role as unit clerk managing a small library of resources in the unit. Glenn has been a regular patron of seeking information about the word of God, gaining knowledge about health care issues, and building his vocabulary.

In addition, I have been the beneficiary of Glenn's job as unit laundry porter where he works to coordinate the weekly laundry collection and cart delivery in the evenings. Most importantly, I was blessed to be able to participate in a Bible-based 12-step recovery group with Glenn over the course of more than four months.

During that time, Glenn was diligent in his attendance and his recovery efforts. Glenn was always ready to offer encouragement, Scripture, and an ear to listen. We've worked through some challenging issues together and I'm grateful for his presence in the unit.

As a fellow resident of the community, I have observed Glenn to be willing to offer help when needed, such as filling a water cooler during heat advisory days. I've also noted that he has demonstrated an ability to work through conflicts with others, applying skills learned from programming he's done here, including the MDOC class he completed and the Prison Fellowship Academy one-year program in which he is an active participant.

In conclusion, I can say that Glenn's seemingly boundless energy and zeal to live for Christ is quite extraordinary. His desire to continue to grow in recovery and as a child of God is contagious. Based on my experience, I believe Glenn would bring that same energy to the Alpha program.

Sincerely yours,
Anthony

Residency Inquiry from a Texas Inmate

We received a request for information from a Texas inmate named Jack who "heard good things about our organization" and expects to be released this fall. Although Jack is incarcerated in Texas, he is a Grand Rapids native who graduated high school here and held a number of high ranking positions in automotive sales before going off the rails and ending up in prison. He seeks not only residency but the help we specialize in for getting his life back after hitting bottom.

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Newsletter written/edited by APM Board member Steve Chittenden

APM is an **undenominational Christ-centered ministry** to prisoners and ex-offenders

APM Financial Summary January-June 2024

Total Income: **\$49,360.62**

Total Expense: **\$58,755.28**

Net Income: **\$-9394.66**



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