



Hope Beyond the Bars

1st Quarter Newsletter

for 2021

I pray that this newsletter finds you healthy and in good spirits. 2020 is behind us and better days are ahead.

Hope Beyond the Bars began this new year with a broader view of our ministry. We are putting a larger focus on fellowship and Bible study and to draw more and new interest in our ministry, we have invited our artists to submit any type of art they feel led to create and are able to mail or ship.

We have some artists that do work on handkerchiefs that are then stretched over a 12x12 inch artist canvas. We offer 8x10 and 11x14 framed or unframed prints and handmade bracelets with beads made from pencils and painted in several colors. We will still offer a variety of greeting cards and laminated bookmarks. All the artwork submitted will include a passage of scripture that in some way relates to the piece of artwork.

The Church Administrator's office at Scottsville UMC will serve as a mini gallery to display all the Hope Beyond the Bars artwork available for our donors to choose from. We plan to travel with our gallery display to conferences and retreats to share our ministry and our artist's work as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our Bible study program for inmates in the Virginia Department of Corrections was introduced in January and we have 12 men currently participating, 7 registered and 1 more expected to begin with our next study group. Each participant will receive a study book to read and study questions to answer on their own. Each week, they will email their answers to the program leader who will compile the answers to share with the group. This will give everyone a chance to see others perspective and insight as we learn and grow in our faith together.

We had to close registration in the first Bible study so we could get the books ordered and wait for each institution to distribute them to the participants. This process takes about 4-5 weeks.

We have been very blessed to be the recipients of a \$2,000 Foundation Grant from the Virginia UMC and a \$2,500 Common Table Sustaining Grant from the Virginia UMC. With these funds, we have already exceeded our goal to have 15 men registered in our program by the end of 2021.

Hope Beyond the Bars began in the Fall of 2018 with one artist and one ministry volunteer with a mission to introduce inmates to the glory of God through the gifts of their own artistic talents. To offer encouragement, fellowship, and opportunity as a way for these men to see themselves as worthy. In doing so, these men will become a better community member improving relationships with other inmates, prison staff, their own families, and friends, as well as creating Godly men to return to our communities upon their release from prison.

Eighteen of the inmates currently in our program are scheduled for release at some point and this past week, we enrolled our first participant that will never again know life outside of prison walls. All of our participants, maybe especially the "lifers", need to know God loves them, forgives them, and finds them worthy of redemption. While validating the artist's gifts, the unique pieces of art available through Hope Beyond the Bars also become an opportunity for conversation that will increase awareness of the problems associated with mass incarceration and our justice system as a whole.

We had originally planned to increase our quarterly donation for the Bible study participants from \$25 to \$35. With the number of registrations coming in, we felt it necessary to maintain the \$25 amount to include more participants in our ministry, thus getting more men into the Word which is our primary goal. The outline of expenses below takes these changes into account reducing the annual cost by \$50 per person.

If you would like to make Bible study possible for another inmate, you may choose to sponsor in two ways:

You may donate \$100 for Bible study materials only.

- Bible study books, Jpay email stamps and snail mail stamps for weekly participation are approximately \$25 per quarter or \$100 per year. (Jpay is the monitored, prison email system that we use to send communications back and forth)

You may donate \$450 to cover all ministry expenses for one inmate for one year. Additional program costs per participant are approximately \$350 per year and includes:

- You may donate \$450 to cover all ministry expenses for one inmate for one year. Additional Program costs per participant are approximately \$350 per year and include:
- Donation to commissary as incentive for continued participation \$25 per quarter + \$5.95 fee = 123.80 per year
- Jpay stamps for 3 emails per week with director w/ return stamps \$1.50 per week @52 weeks = \$78.00 per year
- 2 cards/letters per month \$3.00 per month = \$36.00 per year
- Commissary donation for birthday gift \$25 + \$5.95 fee = \$30.95
- Commissary donation for Christmas gift \$25 + \$5.95 fee = \$30.95
- Advent, Lent, and daily devotional materials \$50 per year
- Bible Promises for You book sent upon registration in the program \$5

To donate, checks may be made payable to Hope Beyond the Bars and mailed to PO Box 280 Scottsville, VA 24590 or credit/debit card payments made on-line at HopeBeyondtheBars.org. *Please specify if your donation is specially for Bible study sponsorship.*

Please feel free to contact us at Hopebeyondthebars@gmail.com or 434-286-4736

Please keep our Hope participants and volunteers in your prayers

Abigail	David	Margaret	Tarelle
Andrew	Gary	Matthew	Tavoris
Ann	Jesse	Maurice	Thomas
Brian	Joe	Michael	Tyler
Carlos	Kevin	Robert	Yahshau
Christopher P	Ludwig	Steve	Zachary
Christopher R			