

# Cornerstone Transition Home

## October News

*"Is not this the fast that I chose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"*  
- Isaiah 58:6-7

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### Christmas in Prison

During her 11 ½ years of incarceration, Jennifer Smith, House Manager, remembers receiving Christmas bags which would include the "good smelling" soap. She shares, "I treated that bar of soap like it was a prized possession, and to me it was. I only used it on special occasions, like when I had a visitor or some special group was coming in for an event. I would ration that bar until about November, and then I would use it everyday until it was gone because I knew December was coming."



Our Cornerstone team desires to demonstrate the love of Christ by blessing each lady in the McPherson prison with two bars of soap. Collection is underway with a goal of accumulating 2,000 bars of soap by December 1st. Each woman's Christmas bag will include a t-shirt, a pair of socks, a washcloth, lotion, 2 bars of soap, deodorant, fresh fruit, a bag of candy, and other food items. You are welcome to join us as we collect "the good" soap.

Jennifer and I are badged as volunteers at the prison which gives us access to all the barracks. Currently, we both teach in the Principles and Applications for Life (PAL) program. We can openly share the truth of scripture. The majority of the women are hungry for the Word. They are so thankful for the time that chaplains and other volunteers invest in them week after week.

### Life at Cornerstone

*"Remember your body language,"* I silently reminded myself. *"Look into her eyes, lean in, listen intently, stay focused. Don't drift because this girl is chatty, filled with lots of words!"*

I've heard that the best form of communication is the ability to truly listen. I admit, I was struggling that day even though her bubbly personality usually captures my undivided attention. Honestly, I just had so much to do. Something she said, though, rattled me. I sat straight up in my chair and asked, *"What did*

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*you just say?”*. I asked her to write down the events so that I could share parts of her story with you. She had gone to look at a trailer to rent with a “friend who had a friend”. She entered the trailer alone.

She shares, “I looked the trailer over from one end to another and headed to the door, but it was locked from the outside, and then I realized there were bars on the windows. Panic struck me. I began using my cell phone to call for help. I couldn’t call the police because I feared going back to jail. It wasn’t long until the man who showed me the trailer came back for me and forced me into his truck. By now my phone was dead. The man spoke a language I did not know.”

“I was taken to another house where I was forcefully locked in a room. Eventually, a young man entered the locked room with me. He looked to be about 20. He said words I couldn’t understand. What I did understand was, ‘You be my wife forever’. I tried fighting him off until I grew tired and just gave in to the man. When he was finished with me, he took a shower, got dressed, and left the house like it was nothing, like what he had done to me was a normal part of his life and that I should be okay with it, too. The sad thing about it all is that I was okay with it. I was just relieved that when the man left, I could get out of the house.”

Sadly, this story that is unique to her is very familiar. Most of our women have been treated like they are nothing until they’ve come to believe that the lie is true. Their abusers have been strangers, “friends”, fathers, mothers, and grandparents. The enemy’s attack is on the family, but our ladies are fighting the good fight. They want to stop generational cycles of dysfunction.

This story is a reminder of why Cornerstone was born. Praise God for the hope we have in Jesus. What the enemy intends for evil becomes a testimony of redemption. The most difficult battle in this ministry is to help our ladies stay focused on Jesus and His plans. The world, the enemy, and the flesh relentlessly work to chain our girls back down to the same addictions, relational strongholds, and impulsive thinking patterns that God has released them from. However, there is no hold that can’t be broken. God is willing, and His grace is sufficient.

Currently, there are 16 women living onsite. Our program requires a stay of 90 days; however, women can stay longer if they abide by our house rules and desire continued accountability. We also offer step out housing. This option comes with a high level of commitment and conditions such as program attendance and random drug testing. Each week we minister to approximately 30 women and children. Discipleship beyond Cornerstone is vital for spiritual growth.

*“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” 1 John 4:4*



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## Rebecca's House of Hope

The renovations at Rebecca's House remain at a standstill; however, this ministry extension continues to meet needs. The ladies in the picture are swapping out their seasonal wardrobe in our clothes closet upstairs, a large room with a variety of clothes in all sizes .

We continue to receive furniture and other household items that we can share with others or sell at our garage sale fundraisers. We store these items in our large, recently donated shop beside the house.



We hope to finish the renovations by the end of the year. We are eager to resume classes at this location where there is more space for classes for women, teens, and our Cornerstone Kids. In the meantime, Cornerstone gets extremely cozy and tight at times, but oh what a blessing to behold!

## The Corner Kitchen



Thanksgiving lunch is tentatively set for November 20th! This will be our first meal to share with our community, specifically geared for those who are considered "food insecure".

Since we said "yes", the building has been purchased and the inside has been cleaned. We're hopeful that the painting, inside and outside, will be complete by the first of November. We've sent our paperwork to the Health Department and hope to receive our license very soon. Our ladies are eager to serve others the way they've been served in the past. They tell stories of how they often survived while in their addictions by eating at soup kitchens. They were either homeless or without water and electricity in whatever house they happened to be staying in at the time. They've never forgotten the kindness shown to them. No judgment, just love.

The Lord has prepared the way for this new ministry outreach faster than we ever dreamed possible. The location is optimal for meeting the needs of people who live within walking distance. Only God could have hand-picked this spot. The purchase and renovations are 100% funded by donations, and we're in awe that people have joined us. We give all the glory to God!

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## Thank you!!

There is absolutely no way we could operate this ministry apart from God's provision. He makes a way when there seems to be no way. He gives the vision beyond what we can imagine. God has called out people from various states all over the United States to invest in what He is doing in Newport, Arkansas. He has invited you to join His work, and you have said, YES!

Thank YOU!

*Bethany Davis*, a follower of Jesus Christ, my Savior



This group picture was taken in front of Rebecca's House and includes residents, ladies in our step out ministry, graduates and their families who remain connected in the community, volunteers, staff, and board members. There were many who couldn't join us for the picture, so we hope to gather for another picture by December 12th, our 5th year anniversary!!

Follow us on Facebook for more updates.

*Cornerstone Transition Home*  
*PO Box 1090*  
*Newport, AR 72112*

Cornerstone Transitional Housing Ministry, Inc.  
dba Cornerstone Transition Home,  
Rebecca's House of Hope,  
& The Corner Kitchen  
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