

Overisel Overview



Staff Spotlight

John & Jennifer Tenpas – Hall Custodians

John and Jennifer have three children, daughters Hannah and Jordan, and son Michael. Hannah and Jordan recently bought a house together and have officially left the nest, while Michael is in 5th grade at Hamilton Middle School. They have attended ORC since 2020, and have enjoyed getting to know many of you but are still meeting new faces! Michael is in Cadets while John serves as a leader, and they have really appreciated all of the opportunities that program has given them. Michael is also a Cub Scout, and John serves as a leader in the Hamilton Cub Scout Pack.



John and Jennifer met while working together at Family Fare in high school (ask Lyn Becksford about that!), and were married at Hamilton CRC, where Jen grew up, in 1997. They now live in the Bentheim area. Jennifer works as an Interventionist at Blue Star Elementary School. John is a civil engineer at Driesenga & Associates in Holland (and while in college, during the summer of 1996, he tested the soil and concrete for the foundation of ORC's building when it was constructed!). They have been custodians for the Hall since 2021.

As a family, they enjoy taking vacations (such as their recent trip to the Ark Encounter and New River Gorge National Park), going to the Unity Christian Music Festival, and taking bike rides to Fantasy Twirl, and are hoping to get out and do some camping soon!

2025 Consistory

Pastors

*Rev. Mike Pitsenberger
Pastor Ken Kleinheksel
Pastor Kevin Kruizenga

Elders

Brent DeWeerd
Steve Schrotenboer
*Glenn Kleinheksel
*Keith VanLiere
Nate Genzink
Bob Reimink

Deacons

Ryan Genzink
*Lee Lubbers
David Kraker
Justin Machiela
Dean Jipping
Craig Theodore

*Executive committee

A Note From Pastor Ken

Peace

1 Peter 5:14b – Peace to all of you who are in Christ

What a short, but powerful, statement. There are countless people today who are looking for peace. We hear almost every day of war and strife and murders and beatings. But we don't hear much about peace. Maybe that's because news about good and peaceful things doesn't make for good ratings.

Peter uses this statement as a kind of benediction or blessing for the people he is writing to. But it can also be used as a testimony of those who are in Christ, a statement of faith, as it were. No matter what we are experiencing in our life or in the world, we can profess that there is a peace in the midst of it. A peace that can only come from above, from a relationship with Christ. As Isaiah 26:3 states, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." So in all the chaos going on in the world around us we can be at peace in our soul. But only if we trust in Christ.

Now I have to admit that there are times when I lose sight of Christ, and lose that peace, because I let my own will or the events happening around me get my focus off of Christ. That's when anxiety and fear and despair come crashing in. But the good news is that when I, through the power of the Holy Spirit, refocus my mind on Christ he restores that peace that passes all human understanding.

So what about you? Are you being a witness of peace through Christ to a world of chaos? Is your first response to bad news to immediately pray for those involved? When something unforeseen comes your way do you ask for the Lord to be with you as you deal with the situation? The only way to do all of these things is to be "in Christ" as the verse says.

As October comes our way and the year seems to be going by so very fast, let's remember to be in Christ and to trust him always. If we do that we will be a peaceful witness to God's saving and sustaining grace and peace. And I can't think of a better way to spend the month. Have a great month and I'll see you on the journey! God bless!

Pastor ken

HAPPY birthday 2025 October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Al Avink	2 Izzy Essenburg Al Naber Karen Naber Sharon Nyhof	3	4 Sally Kreuze Kim Mentzer Jael Tirado
5	6	7 Brady Genzink Foster Kooyers	8 Nathan Nagelkirk Valora VanVuren	9 Lynn Bos Roger Slotman	10 Megan VanHaitsma	11 Kerri DeWeerd Sonia Gemmen Kelsey Helmus Chris McDonald
12 Cody Brinks Luke Siriano	13	14 Bonnie Garvelink	15	16 Elaine Flokstra Kaitlyn Lubbers Carol Nagelkirk Mary Okkema	17 Madison Heavener Erin Rathjen	18
19 Larry Sternberg	20	21 Gina Pitsenberger	22 Cindi Kooyers	23 Mollie Borr Paige Genzink Jose Tirado Betty VanderVeen	24 Mary Geurink	25 Tracy Lubbers Jane Naber Jenna Smallegan
26 Jill Jipping Liam Pothoff	27 Keri Boeve Hannah Valkema	28 Linda Johnston	29 Jessica Nagelkirk	30 Christine Andersen Ethan Andersen Eloise Rathjen	31 Lyn Becksford Mike Verkaik	

Milestone Birthdays



10/31 - Mike Verkaik (50 years)



10/26 - Jill Jipping (50 years)

Happy Anniversary

2025

October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Aryn & Justin Machiela	3	4 Brenen & Becca Louwerse
5 Jeff & Barb Laarman	6	7 Tim & Tracy Lubbers John & Beth Zoet	8 Kevin & Carrie DeNeef Lon & Carole Koops	9	10 John & Joni DeNeef	11
12 Lester & Faye Eding	13	14 Hunter & Rebecca Smith	15	16	17	18
19	20 John & Emily Bronson	21	22 Brent & Kerri DeWeerd	23 Ken & Nancee Kleinheksel	24	25 Dave & Kathy Jurries Jeff & Nancy Snay
26	27	28	29	30	31	

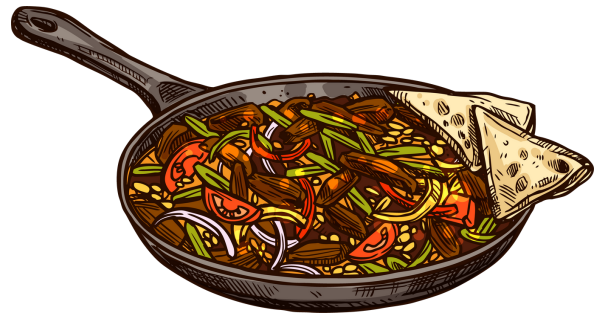
Milestone Anniversaries

Mary's Monthly Meal

Fajita Chicken Casserole Bake

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 CUPS SHREDDED CHICKEN
- 2 CUPS UNCOOKED INSTANT RICE
- 1 CAN CREAM OF CHICKEN SOUP
- 1 CUP SOUR CREAM
- 1 CUP FROZEN DICED ONION & BELL PEPPER
- 1 CAN TOMATOES W/ CHILIES, UNDRAINED
- 1 ½ CUP CHICKEN BROTH
- 1 PACKET FAJITA SEASONING
- 1 BAG MEXICAN-STYLE CHEESE



DIRECTIONS:

- GREASE 9X13 PAN
- IN LARGE MIXING BOWL COMBINE CHICKEN, RICE, SOUP, SOUR CREAM, FROZEN VEGGIES, TOMATOES, CHICKEN BROTH, FAJITA SEASONING, & HALF OF CHEESE. MIX THOROUGHLY
- SPREAD INTO DISH
- COVER DISH WITH FOIL
- BAKE @ 350 DEGREES FOR 35 MINUTES
- REMOVE FOIL, ADD CHEESE, AND BAKE FOR ANOTHER 10 MINUTES

INTERESTED IN JOINING A BOOK CLUB?

Every third Tuesday of most months, a group gets together to talk about the book chosen for the month. Everyone is invited at anytime to come and enjoy these discussions. Here is the list of the books that we are doing for the coming year.

SEPTEMBER:

The Ride of Her life

by Elizabeth Letts

OCTOBER:

The Dressmaker of Auschwitz

by Lucy Arlington

NOVEMBER:

Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

by Mary Rowlandson

JANUARY:

West With Giraffes

by Lynda Rutledge

FEBRUARY:

The Personal Librarian

by Marie Benedict

MARCH:

Lemons on Friday: Trusting God Through My Greatest Heartbreak

by Mattie Jackson Seleckman

APRIL:

Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind

by Ann Ross

MAY:

Girls of the Atomic City

by Denise Kiernan

JUNE:

Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farms

by Kate Douglas Wiggin

R E F R E S H

E	A	O	I	X	A	A
A	C	R	S	P	L	V
C	H	G	E	R	V	E
H		I		E	A	
	O	V	U	S	T	I
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	R	S	O	H		E
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Submitted by a church member

Missions Updates



Spreading the Good News of
the Gospel around the world.

Stand With Us!

a mission to live by - Ez. 22:30

La Misión Church

*"My Father is glorified by this,
that you bear much fruit, and
so prove to be My disciples."*

John 15:8 NASB

KNOW - SERVE - GROW - SHARE

*"Living a practical live of
simple faith, for the glory of
God and for the good of
others"*



Family Matters

On the last months we have taken a journey into a series of sermons focussing on the family. Looking back to the things that matters and investing in things that last. We took advantage of *Chuck R. Swindoll's* bible pillars on family.

- + We need to live by **principles**: *"Biblical principles are more important than traditional opinions."*
- + We must cultivate great **relationships**: *"Mutual relationships are more valuable than individual accomplishments."*
- + We need to set **priorities**: *"Domestic priorities rate higher than church programs."*
- + We have a call to **acceptance**: *"Positive reinforcement is better than negative reactions."*
- + We are to give and offer **forgiveness**: *"Unconditional forgiveness is much preferred to lingering probation."*
- + We must show **respect**: *"Mutual respect is a greater concern than chain of command."*

Let me tell you that this has been a time of reflection and healing in our congregation; we are grateful for what the Lord is doing in our house.



"Right after the service, the youth team formed a cross outside, a simple yet powerful reminder of their faith and creativity."

https://mynsc.onlinegiving.org/donate/guest_donate?&fund=In+the+Gap&lf=1

Officially Stablished

Centro Cristiano de Adoración "La Misión"

Big news! After a long process that took over three years, we are thrilled to announce we are now officially a legally recognized church ministry!

This milestone not only allows us to continue preaching the gospel of Jesus but also opens the door to many future ministry opportunities—such as starting a children's home, creating social programs, supporting other churches, expanding our ministry programs across the country, and much more. We praise the Lord for this incredible victory!

A special thank you goes to New Song Church, Rich & Sue Schieber, and Stanley Robinson for their invaluable support in making this possible.



Mother's Day

We had a wonderful time celebrating Mother's Day with all the moms from our church and discipleship program! It was an amazing night filled with fellowship, laughter, prizes, and plenty of surprises. God is truly good!

As we all know, children come with no instruction manual. On this occasion, we had the opportunity to explore the topic of **"Correction vs. Destruction"**—a very meaningful theme when it comes to raising children and knowing what to do when it feels like you've lost the battle. We discussed biblical principles that guide us in making the necessary corrections with love and wisdom.



For donations please go to:

https://mynsc.onlinegiving.org/donate/guest_donate?&fund=In+the+Gap&lf=1



Music Program

Los Seguidores Music School

It's been a couple of months now that our music school started and already is bearing its fruits. 21 students from our discipleship program are now learning to play an instrument, this is something amazing and unstoppable!

We are planning on a recital this coming fall, **November 15th 4:30**

Andrea and I would like to mention the teachers happen to be our 4 children and that we are very proud of them.





Our daughter Madison, together with a group from the youth team, is putting together a musical play titled **"Under The Same Roof."** It's a creative retelling of what could have happened inside Noah's Ark—a story told by Noah (played by Adrian) and his lively, chaotic interactions with the animals on board. This special play will be presented to the kids in our discipleship program as well as all the children in our community. We can't wait to see how God uses this creative effort to bring joy and truth to their hearts!



Andrea and I had the privilege of visiting a children's home and doing what we love—spending time with the kids, singing, playing games, and trying to give some relief to the house parents. These children are precious, each with a story that left a lasting mark on our hearts. ❤️

It's amazing how God's love expands the heart, making room for others. The week we spent with them reminded us that there is still so much to do. This isn't a time to retreat into selfishness, but to let God use us freely, however He wishes.

Prayerfully, establishing a children's home is something we hope to see become a reality in the near future.

Mission Teams

Gabe Smith - Living Water Church

Gabe is looking for ways to work alongside us, and we can see that his heart is very sensitive to the leading of the Spirit of God in serving the "least of these."

He is putting together a building team and planning to provide a new home for the Tubac family in a rural area of our country. I am truly amazed by the effort he and his church are putting into raising the funds for this project.

Mark your calendars: **March 25th – April 1st, 2026.** This will be the **first home build with ITG**, and we are excited to see God move through this incredible opportunity! 🏠



Ridgecrest Baptist Church

We are so grateful that the year will not end without a special visit from a team of dear friends from RBC in St. Louis, MO! Erica Kerr and Jennifer Smith are organizing a team that will spend the week helping us with English lessons for the kids in our discipleship program. We can't wait to welcome them and see God at work through this time together!

PRAY, COME, GIVE, SHARE!

Partners In Ministry Wanted

"Perhaps we haven't always expressed well enough how important you are to us and how meaningful your partnership is. But this is what we want you to know: we have come this far in ministry because of your generosity and your obedience to God's leading. For that, we are—and always will be—deeply grateful."

"What we are really looking for are people who say, *'Freely I have received, and I want to be part.'* We are looking for partners, not transactions. Help us spread the word about what God is doing here in the neighborhood of La Comunidad in Guatemala City, and let others know there are ways to be part of transforming the lives of children and their families through the love of Christ."

We also wanted to let you know we have a new giving link you can access to. Our friends (Sue & Rich) from New Song Church in Indiana, gave us a spot on their donation platform for every donation to In The Gap.

This is something amazing and will continue holding us accountable about the use of the financial support.

https://mynsc.onlinegiving.org/donate/guest_donate?&fund=In+the+Gap&lf=1

Thank you so much for standing with us! Your partnership is crucial and has been a powerful tool in God's hands to help us get where we are. May God richly bless you.

We love you all.

Elio, Andrea & the kids





2026 - SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Jarol



Marilyn



Vivian

20 Graduate 25

The True Reward

We couldn't be prouder of these young people. They've broken through barriers that, though unseen, once stood in the way of their dreams. Today, we see them smiling, full of hope, and setting new goals for the future.

Yes, we celebrate their achievements and the fact that they are excellent students; but what fills our hearts the most is the wonderful people they are becoming.

And that, too, is your achievement — because you have walked alongside them and helped them get here.

Student Scholarship Opportunity

We are deeply grateful that scholarships were awarded to seven students this year, including three of our high school graduates: Marilyn Sinay, Jarol Mejía, and Vivian Realiques. Each of them is making the most of this incredible opportunity, and their excellent academic performance speaks volumes.

Scholarships are more than just financial support—they are seeds of opportunity, opening doors to a brighter professional and personal future. It fills our hearts with joy to see these young people growing, thriving, and stepping confidently toward the dreams God has placed in their hearts.

Guatemalan school year goes from January to October. This obeys to the need of extra hands on the field at the time of harvest. Kids could come and help their parents after school.

A giving opportunity for those who want to partner with In The Gap is our student scholarship program. We work with several students on a weekly basis offering free English classes and a few of those students come from difficult situations at home, we would like to help them in their regular education. If they are unable to pay, they will not be able to attend school, which puts them further behind.

We have few students who we feel can benefit from the scholarship program for the 2026:



Ivy Paz: Ivy is one of the outstanding students in our program. She recently won a Bible verse memorization contest in our English class. A fast learner and full of enthusiasm, she always brings joy to those around her. The youngest of her siblings, Ivy lives with her mother, who works tirelessly to cover household expenses and provide for her education. Life has not always been easy for them, but Ivy's determination and her mother's dedication are truly inspiring.

7th grade: full scholarship \$750

Includes: registration fee, yearly tuition, uniforms and school supplies.

Samatha Realiques: She is Vivian's youngest sister—a little shy, yet full of big dreams for her future. Coming from a family with very limited income, she faces many challenges, especially without the support of her father. Covering the cost of her studies is often difficult, but her determination remains strong. She, too, dreams of one day attending college.

High School Senior: full scholarship \$850.00

Includes: registration fee, yearly tuition, school supplies, uniforms and graduation ceremony.



Vanessa Bin: She experienced the pain of being abandoned by her mother and was left in the care of an aunt, along with her younger siblings. As the oldest, she took on the responsibility of caring for them and had to put her own education on hold for a year. When we learned about her situation, we were able to find a school that offered weekend classes. This year was a bit different for her because she was able to attend to a different school on a regular basis. Her smile tells you she is doing very well.

High School Senior: full scholarship \$850.00

Includes: registration fee, yearly tuition, school supplies and uniforms.





Helida Bin She is one of the sweetest girls in our program—obedient, loving, and full of grace. As Vanessa's sister, she shares a similar story of hardship. Limited opportunities have set her back in her formal education, yet she faces life with resilience and a confidence that sees no impossibilities.

High School: full scholarship \$750.00

Includes: registration fee, yearly tuition, uniforms and school supplies.

- * Price varies according to grade they enroll and to the school they chose to go to.
- * There are also a few other potential students who could benefit from a full or partial scholarship. They are not listed here, as we are waiting for their final decision on whether they will continue their studies or begin working.

If you feel lead to participate in sponsoring any of these kids with their education and for a brighter future for them, please go to:

https://mynsc.onlinegiving.org/donate/guest_donate?&fund=In+the+Gap&lf=1

and or:

<https://cmnetwork.denarionline.com/Donate/?missionary=ToleElio>

Thank you so much!

Elio and Andrea Toledo
In The Gap Ministries Directors





FIRESIDE CHATS

Lives are *changed* at Camp, where Christ is hope!

Dear friends,

Our 2025 summer camp season has come to a close and we are grateful to share that it was a **huge success!**

For the last several years, the number of campers that we have been able to serve has been on the incline. In our culture, this type of growth is often equated with success.



However, before serving at Camp Beechpoint, I worked alongside best-selling Christian author Pete Scazzero, who helped reshape my understanding of success. Pete defined biblical success this way.

“Success, according to Scripture, is becoming the person (or organization) God calls you to become, and doing what God calls you to do – in his way, and according to His timetable.”

Camp Beechpoint exists for a clear purpose: to serve youth and families in hard places with the hope of Jesus Christ. That’s why the following numbers help me ensure that Camp Beechpoint is successful – faithfully doing what God has called us to do:

- 38% of campers have little to no father figure at home
- 9% of campers have a parent that is incarcerated
- 87 campers gave their lives to Christ
- 40 campers recommitted their lives to Christ

When I reflect on this, I hear God’s word from Matthew 25:23 *“Well done, good and faithful servant.”*

Thank you for being on mission with us in what was truly a successful season of ministry. Lives were changed at camp – because here, Christ is our hope!

Gemmen Ministry Update

Off to school...sort of. This year is a big transition for our family. Josiah goes off to college (Calvin University) and Falande starts high school as a freshman. Sonia moves to 8th grade and Gideon bumps up to 10th. It's a lot to process as a family, but God has been faithful. I say "off to school...sort of" because Josiah was supposed to be on a freshman orientation hiking trip this week. While he was doing some team building he stepped on a tree root and rolled his ankle. It was so bad that the doctor said "no" to any strenuous activity for the next few weeks. Instead of heading out to the wilderness he is back in the house with us. He is very disappointed, but making the best of it.

The Power of Scripture. Recently I talked with a man who said he hadn't slept in days. He told me that he felt that the devil was attacking him at night. He was afraid. He went on to tell me that he had given his heart to Jesus earlier in the Summer. We read the passage of the Armor of God together from Ephesians 6 and prayed through it. His eyes opened wide as he realized the power that God has over evil and the strength he had through the Holy Spirit. What a powerful way to see this passage come alive! I wonder how many more need to realize the strength they have to "stand against the schemes of the devil"?

Clarification. There's been some questions about our ministry work, allow me to clarify. We are not employed by any organizations downtown. We are missionaries with InnerCHANGE and we raise support for this work. The advantage to this is that we get to partner with several groups (Mel Trotter Ministries, Matthew's House Ministry, churches, etc.) Our calling is to reach the marginalized with the Gospel of Jesus.

Thank you for your love and support!
-Al, Lisa Gemmen and family

"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain," 1 Corinthians 15:58



FROM THE CHAPLAIN



THE MASTER GARDENER'S TOUCH: Transforming Hearts in Allegan County

I'm often struck by the parallels between the natural world and the spiritual journeys

I witness here in Allegan. Just as a gardener tends to their plot, our lives, much like a neglected lawn, are often overrun with weeds before the transformative touch of Jesus Christ.

My lawn is a tangled mess of clover, dandelions, and all sorts of unwelcome growth. As it grows, it doesn't look very good. But then I get out my trusty mower, and for a glorious couple of days, my lawn looks pristine. The edges are sharp, the green is vibrant, and I can almost forget the underlying chaos that was there just hours before. This, in many ways, is a beautiful picture of what happens when Jesus enters a life.

Our hearts, much like that weedy lawn, can become overgrown with the "weeds" of sin. When individuals arrive at the Allegan County Corrections Center, they often come carrying the weight of poor choices, broken relationships, and a deep-seated spiritual disarray. Their lives, to put it simply, don't look very good. They might be imprisoned by the consequences of their actions, but more profoundly, they are often imprisoned by sin itself – by addiction, anger, fear, and a sense of hopelessness.

But here's the profound truth we see at work every day: when a person encounters Jesus, the Holy Spirit begins a miraculous work of transformation. It's not unlike that moment when the mower cuts through the tangled growth. Suddenly, there's a visible change. The rough edges are smoothed, and a new sense of order begins to emerge.

This "mowing" by the Holy Spirit isn't just a superficial fix; it's a deep cleansing. It's the moment when the "weeds" of old habits, destructive thought patterns, and unforgiveness are confronted and, through repentance and faith, are "cut down." We see individuals, once consumed by their past, begin to grasp the incredible freedom that comes from forgiveness and a fresh start.

Here at the Allegan County Corrections Center, we are privileged to witness this spiritual gardening firsthand. We see inmates, initially hardened and defensive, begin to soften as they engage with God's Word and experience the unconditional love of Christ. Through Bible studies, one-on-one conversations, and moments of prayer, seeds of hope are planted. We've seen individuals who once felt utterly lost discover a new purpose, a newfound peace that transcends their current circumstances.

One of the most inspiring aspects of our ministry is seeing individuals take those first tentative steps toward a relationship with Jesus. It's not always an easy path, just as maintaining a pristine lawn requires ongoing effort. There will be new weeds, new challenges, but with Jesus as the Master Gardener, there's always the promise of renewal and growth. The Holy Spirit continues



to prune, to nurture, and to cultivate a harvest of righteousness.

The beauty of this transformation is that it doesn't stop within the walls of the corrections center. When these individuals are released, they carry with them the seeds of faith that were planted and nurtured here. Our prayer is that they will continue to cultivate that relationship with Jesus, allowing Him to keep their spiritual "lawns" healthy and vibrant, reflecting His glory in their lives.

So, as you enjoy the beauty of summer, perhaps take a moment to reflect on your own "lawn" and the Master Gardener who tirelessly works to make us new. Here at the Allegan County Corrections Center, we are blessed to be part of His ongoing work, witnessing daily how Jesus truly is at work, transforming hearts and bringing new life to those who were once lost. It's a testament to His boundless grace and enduring love, a beautiful testament that even in the most unexpected places, His transformative power shines brightest.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BANQUET

Mark your calendars! Our annual Allegan County Fundraising Banquet will be held on September 18th at Camp Beechpoint. It will be a special evening of testimonies, fellowship, and support for the ongoing work in the jail.

Keep an eye on your mailbox for invitations that will be arriving soon. Be sure to RSVP to secure your spot. We look forward to seeing you there and celebrating God's changing work!

"STORIES FROM OUR COUNTY JAILS" FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR



Rev. Dr. Rick Eschenburg

For the past three years, it's been my privilege to gather our Chaplains each month on the second Tuesday for our *All Chaplain* meeting. We use this time to share updates, upcoming training dates, and ministry needs.

We always open God's Word and pray together. Often, a Chaplain will share a story or request, and the group effortlessly moves into prayer. One constant part of our gathering is "stories from your county jails," where Chaplains share stories from their ministry. Stories not only filled with laughter and tears, but with joy.

Our Executive Director Nate DeWard commented once, *"There is no way to capture the utter joy and delight that is found when a person repents from their sin and follows Jesus. The power of the resurrection is real and we have seen it with our own eyes as spiritually dead people are brought to new life in Christ."*

Restoration is real and can begin right here in our county jails! Hope is discovered in places of despair. Light disperses darkness. These stories are often told again, and often show up here in our newsletters. We want you to hear them because **you are a part of these stories.** You go into those spaces with our Chaplains as volunteers and faithful friends through your prayers and financial support.

We believe in the power of God to change lives, and we're grateful that you do too. For more stories of impact: jailministry.org/impact

Ways to Give:

Phone:

616.784.4620

Online:

jailministry.org

Mail:

1480 Buchanan Ave SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

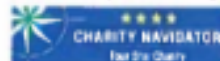


RTF counties in Michigan

Reach the Forgotten Jail Ministry is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dependent solely on your generosity



GUIDESTAR



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jailministry.org



@reachtheforgotten

THANK YOU for your prayers & financial support! Our ministry would not be possible without you.

Real Life Update

Hi from Big Rapids,

Can you believe Labor Day has come and gone. Things are in full swing here on the Campus for the staff and volunteers of Real Life. I wanted to use this letter to help you better understand Bernandette's involvement with Real Life and her ministry of mentoring women missionaries on the field with Thrive.

I have found that many people are uncertain about what Berny is doing for ministry these days. My main focus for ministry continues to be on reaching Muslim men in N. Africa and the Middle East. I spend my days texting and video calling these men whom I'm building friendships with. Berny on the other hand has a completely different focus.

Berny's focus

Focus 1, my wife has an incredible heart for ministry!! Every day she is texting, calling, and meeting with students and missionary women to check in with them. Yesterday she was on appointments all day with students and missionary ladies. The student ministry is something she loves. She loves helping college women go deeper with Jesus. Not only is she helping them grow their spiritual lives, but she loves on them personally, caring for them as they figure out the details of their life. As you can imagine this is a very challenging and rewarding job. She usually has 6-8 students she disciples during the year and many more she meets to share Jesus with. This year she is also helping lead a different Community Group than last year. Real Life lost 2 full time staff last year that were in a different group. There have been 4 Community Groups and Berny offered to switch groups to be the main woman helping lead that group. The Community Groups have been around 40+ students, men and women. Just yesterday she was telling me about a student woman who she just met who was uncertain of her eternity, another who needed prayer for some tragic event in her life. There are countless student women Berny has impacted over the years. Some are now missionaries and some now moms, doctors, actuaries, nurses, and much more. This she does with one heart and mind, to impact women to go deep with Christ so that they will impact others for Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Focus 2, Not only does she love on students, but she loves on and encourages missionary women. This has been a growing passion of hers for the past 4 years. Nearly every year she helps staff a retreat with missionary women who serve around the world with a group called Thrive. At those retreats she meets women who long for a mentor of someone who has life experience that can relate. One woman that comes to my mind is Carrie. Berny has become a friend and mentor to Carrie. Carrie works in Nepal and is not on a team. She meets with Berny every few weeks for encouragement and prayer. I don't know if you know this but my wife has a huge gift of nurturing and encouragement, and that is what she does with the missionary women who are on the field reaching others for Christ.

So she does both of these focuses incredibly well, using her gifts to serve others. She's meeting with student women from Real Life during the day and missionary ladies late in the evening or early morning, depending on the time difference.

Thank you for your prayer and support that helps Bernandette continue to reach college women for Christ and encourage and mento women missionaries on the field. We know she wouldn't be able to continue her work without your prayer and support!

Mark & Bernandette

Please pray for:

- Berny - Daily supernatural strength as she continues to impact students and missionaries for Jesus. Holy Spirit led conversations with student women that Berny disciples.
- Mark - Holy Spirit to stir the hearts and minds of the men I meet with in the Middle East
- Both Mark & Berny - daily mighty filling of the Holy Spirit in our lives (Ephesians 5:18)

GRACIE IMMINK MINISTRY UPDATE

Summer Reflections & Exciting Next Steps!



Summer Camps In South Korea

In my last update, camps in South Korea were just about to begin. I'm so happy to report that they all finished well, and everything went smoothly without major issues! Here's a quick snapshot of what God did this summer through Word of Life Korea:



Camp staff, volunteers, and campers from one of the mainland camps!

There were 9 camps held in 6 different locations (across 4 cities)
-463 campers attended
-190 salvation decisions
-168 dedications



Foosball is a hit at every camp!



We have daily meetings to discuss and disciple campers at all our camps.

I believe there were even more moments of life-change and dedication than these numbers reflect – God knows each student's true heart. I'm so grateful for the faithful teams and volunteers, the students who came, and the opportunity to witness His love through these camps. Praise God! I've included several pictures from one of the mainland camps in this update – please take a look! Hopefully they give you a glimpse of one of the many things I love about serving the youth there. :)



When we have messages in Korean, we try to provide a translator so that all can listen and grow.



Nightly worship includes both Korean & English songs, complete with dance team!



We not only want to give campers opportunities to learn English & God's Word, but to also have fun!



sunset views

GREETINGS FROM HOLLAND, MICHIGAN!

This summer flew by so quickly! It was full of many, many things – but it was also deeply impactful and refreshing for me. I hope your summer has been equally full of God's blessings and encouragement for you!

MICHIGAN SUMMER!

This summer was also a gift of rest for me. Many of you may know how I said I was excited to be home in Michigan over the summer, as I haven't experienced a "Michigan" summer in over 4 years! Michigan definitely delivered haha. I enjoyed time up north at a family friend's cottage, spent some relaxing days at the beach, made special memories with my nephew, and had many meaningful conversations with my friends and supporters like you. I'm so thankful for these moments of refreshment and the beauty of God's creation.

SUPPORT RAISING JOURNEY

As I've shared before, one of my goals in each update is to keep you informed about where I am in my support-raising journey. Originally, my plan was to be back in South Korea this fall, but in God's perfect timing, that door hasn't opened quite yet. Here's an update on where I'm at right now:

8 partners have already committed to giving monthly—praise God!

- To reach 100% of my monthly goal (\$4,100), here's what it could look like:
- 41 people giving \$100/month
- 82 people giving \$50/month
- 164 people giving \$25/month

(These are just examples of how that goal could be reached. If you're curious about what this could look like for you or have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out!)

Would you prayerfully consider how God might be leading you to partner—through prayer, giving, or both? If you'd like to learn more, I'd love to connect with you personally.



night time "family walks"
while on vacation



my nephew cheesin'

LOOKING AHEAD

In October, I'm excited to travel to Oklahoma with a few friends to visit a fellow intern I served with in South Korea. She's home visiting family before heading back for another year of ministry with the WOLKO team. We're looking forward to catching up, enjoying time together, and even seeing a musical!

I'm also in the early stages of planning an "open house" at my church, where I'll be able to share more details about my ministry journey, support needs, and answer questions. I'll send more information your way once details are finalized!

PRAYER REQUESTS

- For the South Korea mainland team as they lead a 3-week English program at a local school—teaching English, sharing God's Word, and discipling students. Pray that those who don't yet know Christ would take steps toward Him.
- For the Jeju Island team as they welcome this year's Bible Institute students (many are international!) Pray that this year strengthens their faith and prepares them to follow God's calling.
- For continued progress in my monthly support raising—that God would provide the right partners to join this mission.

THANK YOU!

I'm deeply grateful for each of you – for your prayers, encouragement, and generosity. Thank you for walking with me in this journey of ministry.



I made ultimate ramen to share
during vacation