

Living Stone Prison Church

Fall 2020

Christmas Fudge-

Unfortunately we are unable to bring in fudge to the men at Mike Durfee this year due to Covid. So for Christmas, we are going to be purchasing pre-wrapped goodies for them.

Thanks to everyone who helped with this in the past!

Help Wanted-

We are providing a meal following our services at Freedom's Gate. If you would like to help with that, please contact Ruth at 605.366.3624 and get on the schedule to make a meal and serve it after a service on a Sunday evening

"An Out of Season Transition"

Crisis has a way of revealing the condition of a person's faith. The difficulties of 2020 have affected us all. As it pertains to the ministry, we had a plan for 2020 concerning Living Stone and it was a good one. I (Jason) would work with Pastor Dan Ebbens on taking over inside the prison this summer, and then slowly fade out of the day to day ministry within the fence of the Mike Durfee State Prison. At that time, Ruth and I would begin the launch of the church on the streets of Sioux Falls for former inmates, that we've been calling "Freedom's Gate". We made our plans known to those who attended our March banquet, but the following day I was held out of entering the prison because of COVID concerns and did not enter the gates again until July. For 4 months I was unable to see the men of Living Stone!

Let me be vulnerable here, I had my "dark night of the soul" moment when the reality of how the virus was messing with progress hit. I started to feel hopeless and helpless as if the pandemic would swallow the vision that God had set before us. Thankfully, I took some time to walk in a wooded area near my home, and let God talk me down off the ledge I seemed to be teetering on. It was in that season, that I heard God say in the stillness of my own heart, you are a preacher, preach! I got the message, it was time for me to look at what I could do instead of

"An Out of Season Transition" continued...

continuing to grieve the plans we'd made, that were not going to work the way we'd hoped.

I've been reminded in all of this of something the Apostle Paul wrote to his friend, the young pastor Timothy. He said; "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching." (2 Timothy 4:1-2 ESV) In other words, we might feel like we are out of season, but God's Word and the Gospel message within it, are always in season.

With that that thought in mind, we have pressed forward into the vision for Living Stone's future with an altered timeline. Starting in the middle of October, Pastor Dan has begun as lead pastor of Living Stone and we have started working with former inmates in Sioux Falls. COVID didn't swallow the vision, it just made us focus all the more on the One who cast the vision in the first place. You see, crisis doesn't kill God's work in this world, it enforces the need for it. We've felt the discouragement that the events of 2020 have brought about, but to quote a song by the group Selah, "in Jesus name we press on" because preaching the Word is always in season.

Stay tuned for more news out of Sioux Falls and Mike Durfee in the coming months. Thanks for all your prayers and support!

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Jason and Ruth, Pastor Dan and Natalie and the Living Stone crew

Meet Pastor Dan

I want to take a moment and introduce myself to all those who faithfully support the ministry of Living Stone Prison Church. My name is Dan Ebbens and I am in the process of stepping into the role of pastor at Living Stone Prison Church. Before accepting the call to Living Stone Church I was the pastor of Aurora Reformed Church in Stickney, SD. After 12 years of ministry there, God took my family and I on a journey of discernment leading to Mike Durfee. This past year has presented itself with many opportunities to see what God is doing through this dynamic ministry and I am excited to be a part of it. I have met some of you along the road in this journey already and I have been deeply encouraged by your friendship and support. For those I haven't met yet, I am looking forward to meeting you and partnering with you in this ministry. Please be in prayer with us for an open door for the Gospel to be preached, as well as for the church inside during this difficult season.

