

Being the hero

by Chris Losh

“You either die a hero, or you live long enough to see yourself become the villain.”

– Harvey Dent (Two-Face) in *The Dark Knight*

In times past, I have been seen as a hero in the eyes of my family and friends. Well, maybe none of them would have called me their hero, but they certainly would have thought of me as the good guy. Someone dependable and trustworthy. Someone completely opposite of the villain.

That all changed the day I was arrested. No longer could I be counted on to be the trusted friend, the doting father, the loving husband, or the beloved son. Now I was the villain. I had become the dirty secret. I was the black sheep, the stain on the family tree. I brought fear into the hearts of those who thought they knew me. Or shame. Or both.

There’s so much more to this story, though. I never wanted to be the villain! And even before my arrest, I had started down a road to freedom. I had submitted fully to God’s will and seen changes beginning in my life. When the cuffs were put on and the questions started flying, I felt my life was over and confusion set in.

I had the choice to give up. I could have easily fallen back into my pit of despair. It would have been so easy to let myself be consumed by guilt. I could have accepted my role as villain.

But I chose to continue pursuing the path of freedom. I chose to let God guide me down a road I had never traveled. He showed me how to change my thoughts and be a better version of me. It’s work, but it’s good work, and the fruit of the labor is delicious!

I know I shouldn’t live my life for others. I should live my life for God, and I do. For a moment, though, let me say it is my hope to be redeemed in the eyes of my family and peers as well. I live every day with the hope of showing them I *am* a different man.

If a hero can live long enough to become the villain, can a villain live long enough to become the hero? I want it to be true. I want to be the hero.



Travel in May

by Rose Admiraal

Pastor Rick and I drove to Michigan in early May to see our son graduate from Central Michigan University with his doctoral degree in physical therapy.

We are very proud of him and look forward to seeing where God leads him.

Since we are all vaccinated, we were also able to spend time with my parents and a variety of friends. During our second week in Michigan, we helped our youngest, Annaliese, move out of her dorm at Calvin University. Her first year of college is in the books. Then Rick and I and our two grown children drove to upstate New York to visit Rick’s parents. It had been nearly two years since we had seen them! What a blessing to go on a short trip with our family unit.

On Sunday, we had the opportunity to speak at his parents’ church, East Palmyra Christian Reformed Church, about New Life. This is the church Rick grew up in, and they have been taking offerings for us.

On our third weekend, we attended our nephew’s wedding in Traverse City, Michigan. We had a great time with family and friends, but we are glad to be back home and into some sort of routine again.

“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:13–14, NIV)



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Contributions may be sent to: **New Life Prison Church, 408 Maple St., Pella, IA 50219**

You can also make an online gift: <http://www.newlife-prison.org/donate>



Pedal for Prisoners XI

by Pastor Rick

Pedal for Prisoners is now in its eleventh year!

This fundraiser has been a tremendous way to raise financial support over the years. God has inspired you to bless those behind bars!

In 2021, two of our riders are heading west for their big bike ride. I and my daughter, Annaliese, plan to ride the Copper Triangle, a 79-mile event near Vail, Colorado. Last year, the formal event was canceled, but this year riders will return to the Rocky Mountains!

We hope you will encourage all our riders by giving a donation. The reason we ride is to help New Life Prison Church thrive. This is our number-one fundraiser. Will you sponsor us?



Pastor Rick and his daughter, Annaliese, in New York after biking to Lake Ontario.

Please support Pedal for Prisoners XI.

(See donation information on page 1.)

The dawning of a new day

by Pastor Rick

After the pandemic's dark night, a new day is dawning.

The numbers have improved significantly! The Newton Correctional Facility currently has zero individuals positive for COVID-19. In fact, there are only seven inmates and three staff members within the entire Iowa Department of Corrections who are positive for COVID-19 (as of June 19, 2021).

It appears the worst is behind us. It's been 15 months since New Life volunteers and mentors were "locked out" of the prison. However, 59% of the inmates in Iowa prisons are now fully vaccinated, and vaccinated inmates will be able to have in-person visitors starting in July. This change will allow our mentors to resume their one-on-one ministry. Meanwhile, volunteers continue to wait for the vaccination process to be finalized. Please pray for the prison staff who will decide when to reopen. Pray for the in-person ministry of New Life Prison Church to return soon.

"Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear."
(Isaiah 58:8a, NIV)



Prayers & praises

by Rose Admiraal

We give thanks and praise for:

- Connections we have been able to make with the returning citizens in our New Life Prison Church family!

We ask for prayer for:

- The men at Newton, that they will continue to get their COVID-19 vaccines. Pray the men will desire to get the vaccine, so things can return to some kind of normal.
- The Iowa Department of Corrections and Newton Correctional Facility to discern when volunteers may come back to the institution.
- Returning citizens, as they adjust to work, family, and church. Simple things can be more difficult for those returning to life outside prison.

New Life Prison Church Outside Council

Dave Gritters
(Governing Elder)

Keith Van Gent
(Governing Elder)

Jim Williams
(Administrative Deacon)

Tricia De Haan
(Administrative Deacon)

Pastor Rick Admiraal
(New Life)

Duane Bruxvoort
(Federated Fellowship)

Tim Franje
(Peoria CRC, represents the Classis Missions Committee)

April Nieuwsma
(Treasurer)

We thank retiring council members **Marv Goodyk** and **Don Rouwenhorst** for their faithful service. We welcome newly elected council members **Tricia De Haan** and **Keith Van Gent**.