

Isaiah 61:1-3a:
**LEADING
CAPTIVITY
CAPTIVE**



The LORD Leading Captivity Captive!

Happy New Year to each and every one for a blessed and hope filled 2024! May we all beseech the Lord's favor and His Spirit's power and anointing. Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-3a to *proclaim the good news to the spiritually poor, bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort those who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion.* **Leading Captivity Captive** will be the ministry's theme for 2024. It will be featured each month in the header of the Jail Ministry Newsletter, and at this year's banquet. Our Lord Jesus wants His good news proclaimed so He can take the spiritually blind, brokenhearted, all held captive to their sin, and give them freedom and release from their sins.

When first arriving at the Jail often men and women are in a state of desperation and some are broken. Most simply want out of Jail. Others have hearts that realize their wretched condition. Their lives are empty and thirsty for something that will satisfy. That's the question. What is the something? It's the good news. The answer is not a what, but a Who. He's a Person, not a something or a substitute. Most need to empty

their dump trucks of past hardships and pain. After listening we point them to a relationship with Jesus Christ, explain how Jesus came to take away their sin debt, and set them free. God has been working in their lives drawing and showing them their need. When one recognizes their need they respond in faith and trust Christ. The light goes on and you can see it in their eyes. They say a load has been lifted off of them, and they're released from their sins. I saw a man who was so open to the gospel for life had beaten him up. He knew he needed a rescue from himself and trusted in Christ. Then another man came to me, and he was ready to give his life to the Lord as well. Divine appointments always amaze me. A life full of chaos is exchanged for peace. Jesus takes each person who receives Him **captive** to His love. God continues to touch lives through the Polk County Jail Ministry. We are so blessed to be where He is actively working all around us. We have watched God do some amazing things in 2023! I believe it is due to your prayers. Thank you also for your faithful and generous gifts to the ministry. What a **great God** we serve! **Amen!!**

In His Service,
Chaplain Jerry

Tip of the Month: God treasures simple acts of obedience as well as our praise, prayers, or offerings.

A captive soul rescued!! – Cody Miles

My name is Cody Miles, and I'm a 37 y/o single parent. I grew up in a very violent drug filled, dysfunctional home. I witnessed abuse of my mom up until their divorce when I was 5. During my young life I was swapped from parent to parent, or Grandma to Aunt, and back again. I moved schools many times, was in trouble a lot, and was put on ADD medication at 7. Looking back I was full of hate, and energy as both my parents went to prison, so I lived with my aunt. My mom was released later, got an apartment for a short time, and my brother and I lived with her. She soon lost the apartment and I moved back with my grandma. The news came that my mom was found dead from suicide by hanging. Now I had even more to hate and be mad at the

father and boyfriend, but just like before I ended up in prison. I would cry out to God, get close to Him, feel more peace, hope, and joy than I ever experienced free. I went through an 18 month faith based program in prison where I learned the truth of God's love and purpose in my life. I studied His Word and developed an intimate love relationship with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I experienced change like I could have never imagined. I had so much hope for the future. I was released from prison 01/13 but it didn't last. I used again, sold drugs, carried guns, acted crazy, and followed the enemy in his lies. I tried to get sober for my daughter and girlfriend, but failed. Another tragedy. My daughter's mom committed suicide. My daughter was only 6, and it was the darkest, most painful time in my life. I didn't change my ways, or step up for my baby girl. I failed her. I relied on my brother and family to raise her, and that drove me deeper into despair, regret, and drug addiction. Years passed



world. I was trying drugs, fighting at school and home wherever that was. Soon I was in trouble with the law at age 14 and put on probation. I was sent to Woodward Academy for 90 days of strict discipline boot camp. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior there. At 18 I went to prison and was in and out four times in 9 years. It did something to my spirit, mind and soul each time. My daughter was born in 01/10 and things began to change. Now I was responsible for her and wanted to be a good

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PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Pray 2024 will be one of the greatest years as the Holy Spirit is poured out drawing the incarcerated, and the staff of the Sheriff's office to set the captives free and to open blind eyes.
- Prayer that the Lord's anointing would fall afresh on each volunteer and they would be used by the Holy Spirit to bring God's eternal Word to their Bible classes, one on one's, and book cart ministries.
- Prayer for David Hamlin, a former Board member, and his wife Edna as they continue their battle with cancer.
- My continued trust in God's unfailing love and plans in the face of opposition.
- Prayer for Sheriff Kevin Schneider and his administrative staff with the daily pressures and demands of decision making.
- God would bring hungry people to be disciplined at the DOC who want to grow spiritually.
- Prayer for an assistant Chaplain to come alongside me and learn the ministry. God would reveal this man and who He's been preparing for this assignment.
- Pray for the Jail staff as the overtime is demanding, exhausting, and hard on family life.
- Open up the south end of the Jail's four housing units that do not receive Bible studies now.
- Allow the ministry to have access into the housing units to conduct Bible studies rather than in the current class rooms. Then there would be no limit to the numbers of inmates who could participate.
- I would be used to bring a godly presence to the Sheriff's office staff as Chaplain.
- God's hedge of protection for our public servants, the Detention Officers in the Jail, and those Deputies out on patrol.
- Officers would help promote Sunday services at 10:00 AM and a greater number of inmates would awaken to watch.
- Many opportunities to speak and promote the ministry around the Polk County area in local churches, businesses, and small groups in 2024.
- Churches will embrace discipleship of those recently released to help them grow.
- Brokenness would occur with those arrested and brought to the Jail, and they'll see their need for a love relationship with Jesus Christ.
- An insatiable appetite for the Scriptures in the ones who have given their hearts to the LORD.
- God's people will be fervent, strategic, committed, and deliberate

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and finally 03/23 God took me out of my toxic downward spiral, and put me in the Polk County Jail. I was facing 150 years with a 24 year mandatory for habitual offenders times eight. My only offer was 45 years with a 9 year mandatory, but I never got discouraged. I pressed deeper into God's Word and became a leader in my pod. I was all in for prayer, encouragement, and good conversation while in Polk County 03/23-12/23. I started a Bible study every day at 5:00 pm on the Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren. At first only 3, then 5,10, and then 20 inmates gathered to read, pray, and receive God's hope and mercy. One of my favorites was chapter 25 Transformed By Trouble. It fit my life perfectly. God drew me back into a love relationship with Him, and I broke down. I faced the consequences of my choices and the times I was haunted by memories of my past. I decided to put my life in God's hands and asked for another chance at life. My soon 14 y/o Annalia was devastated at the thought of losing dad, her only living parent for the next 9 years. My 4 y/o son Chance wouldn't have a father, and there were times I was overwhelmed by it all. The County Attorney wouldn't consider any other options. About the time we were to go to trial we asked for a bigger sentence with the opportunity to plea in front of a

with their prayers for the Jail ministry this new year. Prayer moves God's heart and hands.

- Those who find Christ while incarcerated will leave the Jail single minded, and focused on pursuing Him with all their hearts and minds. They'll be determined to resist temptation to go back to their old lifestyles and friendships.
- Inmates will learn disciplines of the faith; to pray, read God's Word daily, get connected to a Bible centered local church, have a mentor, and find gainful employment.

ANSWERS:

- How can we begin to say thanks for all He has done? All glory, honor, praise and thanksgiving to God for His huge blessings on this ministry in 2023! Spiritual seeds of God's Truth were sown into countless lives. Thank God He is rescuing lives not arresting them! He brings people from all over the world to hear and respond to the gospel, the good news! We thank the Lord for the continued open door in partnering with the Sheriff's office.

MOST WANTED:

- Clothing closet needs: men shoes and winter coats, men's jeans 30-34.
- Paperback books: Rescued Not Arrested, Kids Left Behind Series, Tony Evans books and teaching series.

Ministry Monthly Report: January 2024

	Monthly:	Ytd:
Inmate Request:	759	759
One-on-One inmate counseling:	672	672
Religious reading materials given:	581	581
Bible Study groups:	37	37
Inmates involved with studies:	222	222
View Worship Service:	107	107
Volunteer Hours:	140	140
Number of Volunteers:	23	23
Bibles given:	297	297
Number of New Believers:	12	12

judge. They agreed, and I was ordered to do a Pre-Sentence Investigation or PSI for their recommendation of either prison or Community programming. They said prison. I was crushed, and scared but prayed harder, had bigger faith and left it to God. Our court date came and I had my closest family and friends with me. They prayed behind me as Court proceeded. Here we were with the County Attorney, the PSI and my probation officer asking for prison. We had a fill-in Judge that day who heard my case and said, "I'm going to give you a chance at Bridges of Iowa with 5 years probation". God had the final say, and He answered our prayers! I thought this was the darkest time of my life, but it was during this time of testing that I came out purified and whole. Please don't waste your pain. Trust God with all your heart. Seek first the kingdom of God. Allow God to draw you to Himself, and be open to His transformation in your life. Through your darkest hours lean on Christ.

Here is another rescued life made possible by faithful partners like you!

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The
Polk County Jail
Ministry

(THANK YOU for your financial support! Please make checks out to the Polk Co. Jail Ministries Inc. and use the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.)