Freedom Life Ministries

By Jim Smith
McDowell County

Good Day! Many of you may have heard of Freedom Life, and many of you might be hearing about it for the first time. Saturday, April 15th, Freedom Life Staff and clients were honored to share hope through songs and testimonies in the Avery County Jail. Several clients shared their stories of how Freedom Life has assisted them to get back on their feet, and a couple that shared had been incarcerated right there in the Avery Jail.

Seventeen inmates shared they wanted to follow Christ and many more filled out applications to have our reentry services.

Freedom Life is a non-profit organization in McDowell, Avery, and soon-to-be Yancy County - right here in North Carolina that provides reentry services to people who have been incarcerated. The organization's mission is to "reflect Christ's love as we seek to make a difference in the lives of those who have faced incarceration." Freedom Life offers a variety of services to help people reintegrate into society, including:

• Case management: Freedom Life case managers provide one-on-one support to help clients with a variety of needs, such as finding housing, getting a job, and accessing healthcare.
• Education and job training: Freedom Life offers a variety of educational and job training programs to help clients develop the skills they need to succeed in the workforce.
• Substance abuse treatment: Freedom Life offers substance abuse treatment to help clients overcome addiction and live sober lives.
• Mental health counseling: Freedom Life offers mental health counseling to help clients address the emotional and psychological challenges of incarceration.
• Spiritual support: Freedom Life offers spiritual support to help clients find meaning and purpose in their lives.
• Family support: Freedom Life offers family support services to help families of incarcerated individuals cope with the challenges of incarceration and reintegration.

Freedom Life's reentry programs are effective in reducing recidivism. A study by the Vera Institute of Justice found that clients were 30% less likely to be rearrested within three years of release than a comparison group of individuals who did not receive Freedom Life services.

Freedom Life is a valuable resource for people who are reentering society after incarceration. The organization's comprehensive services can help clients overcome the challenges of reintegration and build a successful future.

Reentry work is a term used to describe the process of helping people who have been incarcerated successfully reintegrate into society. This can include providing them with housing, employment, education, and other resources to help them get back on their feet.

Reentry work is important because it can help to reduce recidivism, or the rate at which people who have been incarcerated are rearrested. When people can find stable housing, employment, and education, they are less likely to return to crime. Many different organizations provide reentry work, including government agencies, nonprofits, and faith-based groups. These organizations offer a variety of services, such as job training, housing assistance, and counseling.

Reentry work is a complex and challenging issue, but it is essential to helping people who have been incarcerated rebuild their lives. By providing them with the resources and support they need, we can help them to become productive members of society.

Here are some of the benefits of reentry work:

• It can help to reduce recidivism (returning to jail).
• It can help people to find stable housing, employment, and education.
• It can help people to reconnect with their families and communities.
• It can help people to become productive members of society.

If you are interested in partnering with us to accomplish our reentry work, there are many ways to connect: volunteering, helping with transportation, prayer, office volunteer, special event volunteer, financial support, and peer support.

Community Partners have enhanced what we do here at Freedom Life through reentry work. Our partners assist in the process of helping people who have been incarcerated to become productive members of their communities. This can be done through a variety of programs and services, such as:

• Job training: Helping people to develop the skills and experience they need to find and keep a job.
• Housing assistance: Helping people to find and afford safe and stable housing.
• Education: Helping people to get their GED or high school diploma, or to pursue further education.
• Mental health and substance abuse treatment: Helping people to address the mental health and substance abuse issues that may have contributed to their incarceration.
• Reentry counseling: Providing support and guidance to help people adjust to life after incarceration.
• Christian Connections: churches and ministries can help provide inspirational worship opportunities, small group family events, Celebrate Recovery, and many other family and individual components.

Here are some examples of how community enhancement through reentry work can benefit communities:

• Reduced crime: Studies have shown that people who receive reentry services are less likely to re-offend than those who do not receive services. This can lead to a reduction in crime rates, which benefits everyone in the community.
• Increased economic activity: When people who have been incarcerated can find jobs and become productive members of society, it can boost the local economy. This can create jobs, increase tax revenue, and improve the quality of life for everyone in the community.
• More just and equitable society: When we help people who have been incarcerated to rebuild their lives, we are creating a more just and equitable society. Everyone deserves the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their past.

Community enhancement through reentry work is an important part of creating a more just and equitable society. By providing people with the resources and support they need to succeed, we can help them to become productive members of their communities and to live fulfilling lives.

Contact us for more information. www.FreedomLifeMinistries.org. 828.559.2224

Jim Smith is an area Worship Arts Director, He is the Development Director at Freedom Life Ministries, and run a production company wjscreativegroup.com

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