

Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty

On Wings of Hope



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January - March 2018



THANKING IS JUSTICE

When Lady Justice stopped by recently she spoke of the many aspects of justice. Most of us have a pretty good idea or believe we have a pretty good idea of what justice is and what it is not. Our understanding of it matured as we matured. As a child we knew what was fair and what was not, especially when it came to situations which affected us directly. As we matured we hopefully included situations not specific to us and did our best to act according to these newer insights.

Standing up for justice often requires courage, hard work and potentially difficult encounters. They are necessary and so it is a wonderful realization that there is one aspect of justice which requires none of these and yet which nevertheless is very important and rewarding.

This aspect is saying thank you for the big things as well as the little things we receive in our lives daily. Some might label doing so politeness but Lady Justice called it justice. It is justice because it is part of an exchange, an acknowledgement of services or kindnesses received, given to us not because the giver stood to gain a reward but because of who he/she is. Therefore saying thank you is not seen as an even exchange, nor does it attempt to be one and could rather be said to fall into the category of "the widow's mite". Its importance derives from the fact that it is our part, our just part.

Lady Justice also called thanking rewarding. It really is and I think it is because we know deep inside of us that it truly is part of justice. Few acts give us a better feeling than saying thank you. It just feels right, just!

In this issue of On Wings of Hope we have attempted to address this aspect of Justice. We are more grateful to all of you who have encouraged us, supported us, and lifted us up over our 29 year history than we could ever tell you. And so whether we call you by name or not: Thank You, Thank You!

Esther

PROJECT HOPE TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY (phadp)
501 (C) (3) non-profit.

MISSION STATEMENT:
Working together with friends, supporters and other advocates to educate the public and bring about the abolition of Capital Punishment in Alabama.

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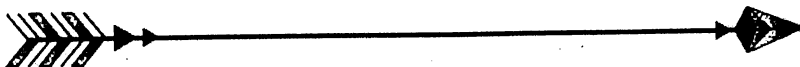
THIS NEWSLETTER WAS WRITTEN, TYPED AND FORMATTED ON DEATH ROW AT HOLMAN PRISON

Greetings Family,

2018 is amongst us...

I have been here at Holman for almost 20 years. I have met a lot of men and women thru different ministries that have come in to share the Love of God with us. I think every man here have heard words spit at them by some prosecutor that they deserve to die, or that they are the worst of the worst... But God... Through the humble hearts of many we have been shown a different light of humanity. The men and women that have come inside these walls have truly brought the Love of God inside with them. They came with no judgements, no expectations, no preconceived notion that they would save everyone. They only came to show us the Love of God and we have decided to dedicate this newsletter to those that have reached out to us over the years and given us a reason to hope and to keep going strong. This newsletter will not mention everyone by name that has been a great helping hand when we needed. But we wanted to share with you all some of the things that a few good men and women do that have actual contact with us. I personally have been awarded to meet some people that I know will be a part of my life forever. These men and women are real genuine men and women of God. They are the true essence of Matthew 25, where Jesus says, when you've done this for the least of these you have done it unto me. So, in all due seasons, despite the madness around us, we would like to say Thank you, and we truly appreciate you. Not all are acquainted with ministry, for some are just helping where help is needed, like our friend Robert Wilson. We wouldn't be able to keep up with news around the country without him. Bro. Don, as you know, we've known you the longest, and you have never not been there for us. These newsletters would not be possible without you. Your hand of support has been consistent for over 30 years. You have been with us through the good and bad years, from the visiting yard, to the court rooms, to the death cell. We have yet to hear you say I can't do it.

City Hope, you haven't been with us long, but you came in and hit the ground running, asking how can you help. You all's fellowship and actions have been a big "cool" plus for us. You guys are really making a difference with your ministry. We thank you for making things a lot



(continued...)

better during our Hot months of worship.

Kairos is known throughout the U.S. as a powerful ministry. They have been quoted as saying, "You guys look for us to bring something to you all, but we leave with so much more." Life row, as he calls us, he's simply known as Chap'... He's my spiritual father. Words cannot begin to explain the joy he brings every time he comes to visit us. And he often brings Sisters with him, that love themselves some "brothers of Life row" Chap has brought a lot of love in here over the years, and he continues to shine amongst us. And this year has just started, but we can only imagine what God has in store for us. But we know with you all on our side... we can only imagine!

So, as I close please help me thank all of those that come in and truly bless us.

Well, I can't overlook the miracle that happened on Thursday, Feb. 22nd. Doyle Hamm faced death up close and lived to talk about it. What he endured was horrible, and we are hopeful that this gets our highest court's attention to look at the constitutionality of the death penalty. The 8th Amendment was violated on Feb. 22nd. And this wasn't the first time and it will not be the last. As long as judgement and punishment is in human hands, there is a great possibility error will happen. But let's continue to push for change.

Your Chairman
I thank you all,

Anthony Tyson Z-641 - N-17



Rather Kill Than Heal

As much as I love the great state of Alabama, it's judicial system never seems to stop amazing me. Doyle Lee Hamm was scheduled for medical treatment pertaining to lesions on his brain, he also had tumors removed. Question is are you paying taxes for one another to be murdered or are you paying for a better place to live?

Alabama's judicial system will continue to murder with your money if you allow them to. Instead of building up schools, they are buying new methods for execution. Whats the use of equal protection when you're not safe in your judicial system anyway? What good is the Constitutional amendments if they are not being used? Fourteenth amendment states: you shall not deprive any person of their life, liberty, or property. Doyle Lee Hamm has been violated in the worst way by taking away his medical treatment and replacing it with a grotesque attempt at death!!

The death penalty is unconstitutional in every way! If you have a heart, conscience, or soul say with Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty: "Alabama, stop murdering in my name!"

Jovon Gaston
Z-802 / F-3

Travesty of Justice

What occurred last Thursday night in the minutes before the witching hour in Alabama can only be described as monstrous, torturous, and a flagrant travesty of justice.

Doyle Lee Hamm was scheduled to be executed by the state of Alabama on February 22, 2018. A man with terminal cancer, and yet Alabama still did every diabolical thing it could to bring about this man's demise before his illness could claim him. Alabama the beautiful, the murderous would not be denied its pound of flesh, and the wheels were set towards Mr. Hamm's night of torture, both mental and physical.

In December 2016, Mr Hamm was scheduled to have surgery to combat his illness, if only for a little while, but instead, the surgery was canceled, an execution date asked for, and an execution date set. No one in their right mind would or should expect the Alabama courts to do the right thing, what's fair and just, but the federal courts are , or at least are supposed to be, a different matter. However, they too have become just pawns in Alabama's murder for votes campaign. The federal courts, for some time now, have been allowing Alabama gratuitous leeway with its unconstitutional death penalty, and all the miscarriages of justice leading up to Thursday nights debacle only highlights the erosion of constitutional protection in order to preserve Alabama's death chamber.

The federal district judge that held the hearing after having Mr. Hamm examined, actually discussed the findings on the phone with the doctor, came to a conclusion, and then proceeded to confer in the court room with Mr. Hamm's attorneys and the AG office representatives. After asking the state's attorneys to stipulate to only trying to find a vein below Mr. Hamm's waist, she then decided to let Mr. Hamm's attorneys know, she would be turning over a copy of the medical report to them. Two things immediately wrong with that. First, Mr. Hamm's attorneys should have had a copy of the medical exam as soon as the exam was concluded. So they could go over it, and have their own expert go over it. How could they bring forth any challenges, had there been any, without seeing the report first hand. Second, in allowing the state to "stipulate" where it would "try" to find veins usable she gave the state of Alabama permission to break the law, and step outside of its set execution protocol.

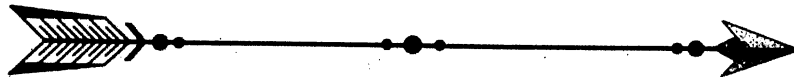
Then, Mr. Hamm's appeal moved to the 11th Circuit court of appeals. They, if worth even a little bit of their weight in salt, should have seen Mr. Hamm's hearing in district court for the farce it was, and stepped in to stop what would eventually happen, but they didn't, and only added to the miscarriage of justice. They put forth some ridiculous "supposed" safeguards that had to be sworn to by some "fall guy" employees of the state. So damn ridiculous that the representatives for the AG's office in its response back to the court wrote "yeah dude, we'll do that." Another clear sign that the federal courts have been Alabama's pawns for so long that they have no respect for them.

Well, after the disrespect was done and this part of the farce was over, Mr. Hamm's appeal moved to the United States Supreme Court. The biggest joke of them all. A bunch of judges who have a sense of justice, but choose to ignore it in order to align with its conservative brotherhood. They granted Mr. Hamm a stay so they could "review" his case. Then, after their so-called review, the stay was lifted, and they moved aside to allow the culmination of Mr. Hamm's farce of justice to end.

That is when Mr. Hamm's mental and physical torture began. For 3 hours, Doyle Lee Hamm was poked and prodded by, not one, but two "supposed" medical professionals, as neither could find a vein. Veins that the doctor who examined him, and gave the report to the district judge said, "were everywhere." Veins that two "supposed" medical professionals couldn't find on 10 or more tries. An ordeal where they eventually tried to find a vein in Mr. Hamm's groin area. Their last resort. Determined to murder Mr. Hamm, the so-called medical professionals shoved the needles into his groin area and moved it around trying to hit a vein. So ridiculous for a so-called medical professional and so very torturous for Doyle Lee Hamm. To the extent that the covering on the murder table had to be changed twice because of the amount of blood spewing from Mr. Hamm. Finally, one of the two inept medical professionals left the room, then came back and stopped Mr. Hamm from being tortured further. Desperation to kill still in the other so-called medical professional, the statement was made... "I can get a vein, just give me one more try."

And, the federal courts allowed all of this to happen, under their watch.

Maximus Strong



I would like to thank the men of Project Hope. When I first got here, I didn't know what it would be like, the first person I talked to was someone from Project Hope. He helped me to understand a lot of things and told me I should come to a meeting so I did.

Since that first meeting, I never stopped going, because the men of Project Hope are great teachers. I have learned so many things from them. I can ask any question no matter if it's big or small and they will answer it. They might laugh at said question, but you will get an answer.

Every week I come to a meeting, sit around these men, and laugh and learn. I just wanted to thank you for that.

Jessie M.D.Y. Phillips

ALABAMA NEWS
First Quarter 2018

* It takes 5 votes for the Supreme Court to issue a stay of execution. On Jan 25th, 6 Justices joined together to save Vernon Madison. Strokes and dementia have left Mr. Madison with less than a full comprehension of his crime, and the court has decided since to at least evaluate this issue.

* Lawyers from EJI represent Mr. Madison, we are grateful for their work on his case, and for the role they play in Alabama criminal justice.

* Doyle Hamm's case fell short of the 5 votes needed for a stay, but after 2 & 1/2 hours of torturous attempts at IV access, Mr. Hamm is still alive. Columbia Law prof. Bernard Harcourt, who leads the defense for Mr. Hamm, predicted just such an outcome. While we can't know how difficult it is to have a client go through that, we certainly commend him and his team for all their hard work.

* Thank you to those who have written, called, or otherwise contacted Gov. Ivey on behalf of Vernon Madison and Doyle Hamm. It is important for her to hear THE OTHER VOICE. Special thanks to Pax Christi, ANSC, SOS, CMN, and the Alabama conference of the NAACP for getting the word out.

* Our tireless Executive Director, Esther Brown, whom we appreciate immensely attended the annual SOS retreat on Jan 21 at the Selma Center for Nonviolence. This event is a great opportunity for organizations and leaders to get together and build relationships.

* Many thanks to death penalty journalist Stephen Cooper for following developing events in Alabama, and calling it like he sees it.

* Nationally, we join abolitionists in hoping SCOTUS will take up the Hidalgo case out of Arizona. This could be the case Justice Breyer has been waiting for to address the constitutionality of the death penalty. Optimistically, leading to abolition.

Scheduled Alabama Executions.

* Michael Wayne Eggers has withdrawn his appeals, and the state has set his execution for March 15, 2018.

* Alabama has also set an execution date for 83 year old Walter Leroy Moody. We will keep you updated as his April 19th execution date draws near. We hope that you'll continue to call, write, speak up for human life.

How Long Is Too Long

Time is revolutionary and evolutionary. Time constantly changes things and evolution never stays the same. I say all that to say "how long is too long?" Too long is how long? The justice system is supposed to enact justice, but when? It's become politricks with these judges today, wanting "likes" and "praises" from their constituents instead of upholding their forefather's law/constitution. That brings about another weakness with "man made" laws. It's crazy how they make laws, then make another to counteract that one, that's a cycle of conservatism, no change, but they make it seem that we are evolving, hahaha (that was a joke, did anyone laugh?) I didn't How long will this unjust system continue its foolishness? It's been too long with the same back and forth but no change. Too long we've been marching and praying for change from the people we deem will do right by the people. How long will we continue to wait for the police, government to police or govern themselves? Tired...who will speak out loud enough for them to hear that the people mean business...but who are people...just pawns in this chess game they call politricks.

Checkmate they say when you're trapped with no way out. That's how they feel when men make laws to govern others. We make laws to keep down crime/chaos, but DUH...it's still crime and chaos in this so called "free world" (United States) Stop the madness ----How long is too long----

Two things in life that's constant
Time & Change

We're monsters they say...
We don't deserve to live they say...
Let he who is without sin cast the first stone!!!

N.O.

uuuuhhh

Trying to provide,
for my family,
while evading
the grasp of insanity,
but the boy,
is at war,
with the man in me,
In the midst,
is my spirit,
a casualty,
On a mission to avoid,
catastrophe,
inflamed by emotional
apocracy
turn, scorned,
was I born to be,
not my own, but the world's
ideology
about who me,
is??

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EXECUTION ALERTS

MICHAEL WAYNE EGGERS 3.15.18

WALTER LEROY MOODY 4.19.18

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Greetings friends and family,

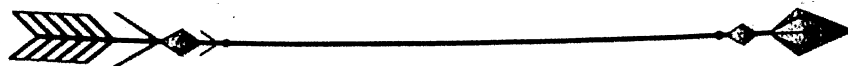
To give you an overall feel of how things are here on Life row, I'll share this from Bro. Tom, who is a grad student focusing on prison ministry. The first thing he said to me today was "Is it just me, or is there a lightness about the place today?" He was not wrong. Surely he and I were not the only two feeling that way.

Tom is one of the "free world" guys who ministers here on Life row. I couldn't even begin to scratch the surface of the impact that these men have had on me in just a few paragraphs, but I do want to share some highlights with you. I'll start with Bill and Ted's excellent adventure. Bill and Ted are both from City Hope church in the Mobile area. I've never seen them together, and only recently did they meet each other. Bro. Bill was a big part of getting a Fusion group started here on Life row. I have gotten so much out of the Bible study and fellowship that we enjoy when they come. And they come diligently. Bro. Bill has been called back to Colorado, and I wish him all the best. The spiritual growth of myself and others here that he fostered has truly been a blessing.

The other half of that duo, Bro. Ted, is similarly relatable, and just as much fun. They both feel like family, and inspire me to let God's light shine through me.

Another beacon of His light is Bro. Hank. He has picked up the Fusion group, and continued to bring in the sermons for us to watch on Sunday. These are just three of the dozens of volunteers that come from City Hope to share God's love on Life row. I can't thank them enough for making us a part of their ministry.

With Gratitude,
Bart Johnson
Vice Chairman



Through the Eyes of Others

When asked to write an article about one of the Project Hope supporters that comes inside this prison, it was a no brainer for me (smile)!

I chose Don Blocker, who is our spiritual advisor, even before he was given this title by the board members of Project Hope.

What can I say about Bro. Don, without using the words compassionate, kind, and generous. I have known Bro. Don for nearly thirty years.

For the last twenty-nine years Bro. Don and a few other Christian volunteers have been coming to death row faithfully on Monday nights from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm when allowed by the administration, sharing the word as well as the love of God with us.

For the last two decades Bro. Don has been very hands on in some of the men's lives here. To the point that when an individual would receive an execution date, they would ask Bro. Don to be their spiritual advisor.

Whether they were a believer in God or not, it didn't matter with him, he would be there for that particular individual and their family as much as needed.

I will end this article with my personal experience of Bro. Don's love. In 1995 I was granted a new resentencing hearing, and yep! you can just imagine who it was that volunteered to drive 169 miles one way to the courthouse to speak on my behalf to the judge and jury. He testified how he had observed me grow as an individual over the years, and maturing as a man of God. And how proud he was to have me for a friend and brother in the Lord.

Needless to say, his words brought me to tears, because at that moment, I knew that Bro. Don wasn't seeing me for who I used to be, but the person I am now. Just calling it the way I see it! May God's grace, love, and truth reach us all.

Earl "Pete" McGahee Sr.
Z-466 / H-18

Hello my brothers and sisters of Project Hope. What an honor it is to share this gift of my brother James Slack, that came into my life from the group Kairos. Sometimes God creates God's moments and sometimes Destiny moments. James came into my life after years of anger, bitterness, brokenness and not of distrust in people, but the love of God in James healed me to a point we both went from fear and unknown, to friends, and now we are brothers in Christ, advancing His Kingdom together. Here is a great lesson James' brotherhood have taught me, there is treasure in everyone, if we can get pass ourselves and see it.

Jimmy Davis Jr.

Remembering What We Forget

Sadness mixed with frustration.

This is my reaction to pretty much any story in the news. Something bad happens, that most certainly shouldn't have, and that's what's on repeat every time the news comes on.

One could forget that we live in a world filled with wonderful individuals, doing things every minute of every day to bring joy to their family and friends. Even reading that last sentence, maybe you felt cynical. Because you've seen the opposite too many times.

And why is that? Is it Capitalism? Supply and demand? Who is demanding to see tragedy? Who is supplying it?

The real question is, where is the truth? It's lost among the tragedy that sells and distracts so well. It's up to us. We have to look inward to find ways to do good, to uplift, to help. In whatever situation...to leave someone feeling Joy mixed with motivation.



David Wiggins

A soldier on the battlefield for the Lord.
A soldier in a war that has been waged for the Glory of God and the Victory of God's people.

A brother who has come to visit the forsaken. A brother who has come to feed the hungry. A brother who has come to care for the needy.

A brother who has loved the forgotten. A brother who has and is loved by the forgotten.

David Wiggins,

A man who has sat down to listen to the despised. A man who has spoken for the voiceless. A man who has willingly chosen to sacrifice his time for the benefit of others. A man who has willingly chosen to allow God's light to shine through him so that the blind will see God in him.

A man who holds back nothing that God has blessed him with to give to others.

A man who has become a walking prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A man who is a brother and friend to the Church of life now.

We thank you for all you have done and continue to allow for God to do through you.

Sincerely,
Randy Lewis

It would appear that we've dodged the bullet(s) so far this year. With the courts intervening in Vernon Madison's case, and if you believe the ADOC commissioner, the clock intervening in Mr. Hamm's execution.

The truth is, we aren't out of the woods yet in either of these cases. The truth is, that as long as Alabama is allowed to keep capital punishment as an option, Alabama will continue to pursue it regardless of factors that make it not only unconstitutional, but unconscionable as well.

There is a long track record here. Attempting to execute men who are actually innocent, men who are mentally disabled, men who are too sick to kill, men who were juveniles when they were sentenced to death. Nothing prevents Alabama from having it's way except federal oversight.

I don't know about you, but I feel like the state shouldn't be allowed to continue a practice that it has proven it can't be trusted with.

When a human life hangs in the balance, it can't be left to the higher courts, who are obligated to defer to the lower court rulings. But it is.

We can do better. For the 99% of cases that aren't tried as capital, justice is served with a sentence less than death. Arbitrary factors like race and geographic location determine what punishment is on the table, and that's not how it should be. But it is.

Transparency breeds trust. An open process from start to finish would alleviate the mistrust in the judicial system. Exculpatory evidence shouldn't be withheld from defendants, and the execution protocol certainly shouldn't be kept secret. But it is.

The death penalty shouldn't be on the table. But it is.

America shouldn't be listed among the worst human rights violators. But it is.

Killing an inmate shouldn't be in anyone's job description. But it is.

Taking a life to show that taking a life is wrong shouldn't be a function of government. But it is.

And as long as it is all these things, it is our purpose to stop it.

Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty

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Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty is an Interfaith 501 C 3 organization whose mission is to educate and mobilize communities to act to abolish the death penalty in Alabama. PHADP relies on YOU for support. Suggested donations: \$25/individual, \$40/household, and \$100/congregation, or whatever amount is affordable. Checks should be made out to "PHADP" and sent to the above address.



Execute
Justice
Not
People

Nothing but the Names

Some know me by,
the things I do,
My Mentalistic mind,
at times
On an effortless pursuit,
for truth,
My Name is??
Some know me by,
the things I say,
I speak in tongues,
to protect the young,
so their innocence doesn't go
Astray,
My Name is??
Some know me by,
the battles I've fought,
hoping to get taught,
what can't be bought,
reborn free of cost,
My Name is??

Kairos

In February two thousand and three, a decision that I made altered my spiritual life forever. The Chaplain decided to allow deathrow to participate in a program that was designed for general population. Kairos, which is an organization made up of men and women that goes into prisons around the country to share the love of God. The word Kairos literally means God's special time. My friend and I decided to accept the Chaplain's invitation to attend Kairos because of the menu that they had. We was told that there would be a plethora of food, from cookies, burgers, and pizza. So I decided to attend.

I attended Kairos on April 3rd-5th two thousand and three. My intention was to only attend to have access to all of the food. I was surprised to find so much more. A lot of guys will run from religion if it's forced upon you. With Kairos religion isn't the main focus, the guys in color of Kairos which is the guys coming from the street is sincere in their mission to show us the Love of God. The Journey that I started fifteen years ago with Kairos especially with the guys some of the relationships I started is still going strong.

The impact Kairos has had here at Holman Life Row is huge, they participate in a variety of different religious activities. They have provided an opportunity for us to do more than just have a free meal. They have also offered you the choice to experience the Love of God in a way that's voluntary, they don't force you to have a relationship with God. I'm thankful for the experience that I received fifteen years ago, the decision I made maybe was made with the wrong motive was actually a good decision on my part because not only did it make a positive impact in my life, but in the lives and culture of everyone here at Holman and for that I'm forever thankful.

Jeffery Lee
The Caring Christian

Codes and Laws

In the spirit of thanking people who have come through the doors here at Holman to share their love and support, I want to say thanks to someone here inside Holman on a regular basis with me. However, we have to take a little trip to get to that point. So please bear with me and stay tuned.

I titled this article as I did, because some of us come from backgrounds where those are instilled in us. Codes and Laws. Both instilled in us, guide us, and on some levels define us. Those of us who are true to them. Codes and Laws can even shape friendships. Friendships, we were foolish enough to tell the other, "I'd die for you." Now, that may seem like some dedicated and loyal friendship, and if each truly would hold up such a pact, it is. However, throughout the years, I've come to realize that it takes a special kind of person to hold such codes and laws. Then, over the years, I came to realize that there's been a part of the "I'd die for you" declaration missing, which is, "don't die for me, live for me!"

Which brings me to this guy, this man of whom I will be so bold as to call, MY FRIEND. I didn't know him when I was out learning my codes and laws. This man doesn't owe me anything. However, he still pushes me to "live for him." To live for my family. To Live! He's never asked me, would I die for him, and I've never told him I'd do so. We are friends, without the codes and laws. We are friends, through God's best intentions. We are friends, because we choose to be, and that friendship is defined by mutual respect, and caring.

My friend has not only passed the asking of would I die for him, but he's never asked me to live for him or anyone else either. He's just stayed determined and steadfast in trying to help me live.

So, I would like to say, thank you to my friend. Thank you, for all you've done and continue to do. Please, know that you and all you do is greatly appreciated. You know! (smile)

Respect,
Maximus Strong

