

On Wings of Hope

Project Hope



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CHRISTMAS ALWAYS NEW

One might well ask what anyone, including this writer, could possibly find new to say about Christmas after having written about it year after year. But could that perhaps be one of the wonders and mysteries of Christmas that it is always new while at the same time also always old?

So let's deal with the old part first so that we can focus on how Christmas is always new. Obviously it is old because of its 2,000 year plus history as well as our own personal traditions and memories which we bring to it.

So then why do I call it new? It is new because we are all in a different place than we were a year ago and the invitation to celebrate Christmas is a current and personalized one. And so past invitations as much as we took advantage of them and enjoyed them are just that, past and it is the current one which we must accept and for which we are grateful.

I understand that it is fashionable to appear to be somewhat jaded when it comes to Christmas, to complain about its commercialization, the fact that signs of it appear in stores well before Thanksgiving, sometimes even Halloween. My answer to that is: who cares? Maybe some of us need an early reminder of the ever new invitation that Christmas is coming our way?

And yes there are times when we receive invitations that appear more of a chore than a joy but it is my Christmas wish for you that you are not that tired but rather that you see it as an invitation once again to open yourself to the wonder that is Christmas, to be a little bit more loving, a little bit more giving especially to those for whom there is no room at the inn.

I don't think that any of us will live long enough to completely understand the mystery, the wonder, the invitation that is Christmas again and again. And so I wish all of us that we accept this wondrous all new invitation one more time exploring it fully so that we all may experience the peace, joy and love that is Christmas forever old but also always forever new.

Esther

PROJECT HOPE TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY (phadp)
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MISSION STATEMENT:

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

NATIONAL OFFICE:

P.O. Box 1362 Lanett, AL 36863
Phone: 334 499 0003
Email: beesther@earthlink.net
Web: www.phadp.org.
Email group: phadp-mail-subscribe@yahoo.com, also on Face Book:
Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty in Alabama

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

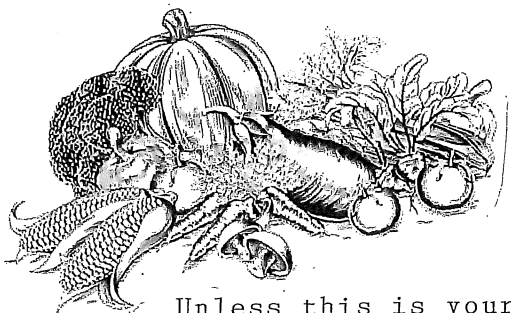


Season Greeting,

2018 has been a very interesting year and we are not forgetting the brothers that we lost at the beginning of the year. 2018 started off pretty rough for us all. We didn't know how things would end up, looking at how it started. But thanks to you all prayers and support we have come through together. We met some new friends and have grow with others. This also marked a year of celebration and farewell to a dear friend and strong advocate, The Hon. Hank Sanders. We are all grateful for his 35 years of service and we know that the future holds many more blessed years ahead. As the election is now over, we now turn our focus back to the fight at hand. So, we thank you all that have stood with us and continued to support all that we do. We also would like to send a great big Season's Greetings to our lawyers at the Federal Defenders and EJI, as well as those from private law firms. We know these difficult appeals are a hard fall. So, we thank you and we wish all the best holiday and new year that the Father can give. So, with that I close.

I Remain
Your Chairman
Anthony Tyson
N-17





HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

Unless this is your first Christmas, you have memories of years past. The smell of wrapping paper and scotch tape, or desserts baking in the kitchen. The sounds of Christmas carols, and bells jingling. Like most of you, we here on Life Row long for those years spent with family and friends. And also like most of you, we are making new traditions with each passing year.

We do it, because we remember the joy that we felt as children throughout the holidays. The crowds and decorations around town, and at home. The music and the movies all added up to a joyous season. And we want to have that every year. We want to share that Christmas spirit with others as well.

I woke up this morning to see one of my neighbors had put up his decorations, just like I would have on the streets. So I put up my tree too (thanks Ted). I hope to rekindle the joy of Chrstimases past this year, and I'm thankful for all of the people who I've shared Christmas with over the years.

May your holiday season be full of joy, hope, and great new holiday traditions.

Bart Johnson
Vice Chairman
F-18



WISH

I wished one day, that my life wouldn't go astray.

I ducked and dodged, the rollercoaster of life, only to run into hate, anger, and strife.

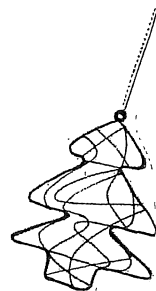
I wished for better, as things got worse, holding onto a future in this present universe.

I wished and wished and nothing ever changed, I woke up from the dream and wished for better again!

"Genuine hope is not wishful thinking, but a firm assurance about things that are unseen and still in the future." Rom 8:24-25
Heb 11:1,7

N.O.





MEMORIES

As the holidays approach, memories of those small moments come flooding back...

The little me, surrounded by family and great food. Spending the day at different relatives houses as the years passed. Everyone bringing different dishes to create an abundance of food (the eating will go on all day). Watching football on TV until we've had enough and decided it was time to become football stars ourselves. My cousins, brothers, and myself participating in a pick-up game of football, masquerading as our favorite professional or college players. Laughing and playing until exhaustion, or until more food was calling (smile). We would go inside, clean ourselves up a little bit, and wait impatiently for the main course...turkey and dressing, cranberry sauce, string beans, potato salad, pecan pies, custard pies, and assorted cakes. We're family, we're together, we're blessed, and we're thankful... touchdown Tony Dorsett!! We'll all trickle out as the night gets late, going home and back to our normal routines, but we'll take with us new memories of another Thanksgiving spent together. I hope and pray all of you are up to creating your own. I wish everyone a Very Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving.

Coming up, I learned many traditions from my family, but out of all of them, the one I grew into the most was the Christmas Eve night putting out of the super secret presents, and the putting together of the bigger gifts...(that they always seemed to add extra screws that you didn't really need (wink-wink-haha)) I've always liked this the most because I got to experience what I know it had to be like when the gifts were put together for me as a child. I could hardly wait to see the looks on my kids faces as their sleepy eyes came to full brightness, and they locked those eyes on the gifts. Those looks, I've treasured from day one, and I hold those memories tight. It's little things like that, that makes the holidays what they're truly intended to be.

So, I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, a Happy New Year, and I extend wishes for you to find these small memories too!

Happy Holidays,
Be Blessed,
Maximus Strong





ALABAMA NEWS
Fourth Quarter 2018

- * The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments from Bryan Stevenson in Vernon Madison's case in October. There is no indication as to when a ruling can be expected.
- * Washington became the 20th state to outlaw the death penalty. The Washington Supreme Court ruled in State V. Gregory that the death penalty violates the constitution because it is arbitrary and discriminatory, especially with regards to race.
- * Lam Luong, who was sentenced to death, has had his sentence reduced to life without parole.
- * Our Executive Director, Esther Brown, will be interviewed by Pax Christi in a video to be shown at Catholic churches to enlighten them about the death penalty in Alabama.
- * The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Montgomery chose us as their "share the plate" organization for October. We appreciate all who gave and a special thanks to Rev. Lynn Hopkins for making it happen.
- * The Alabama Supreme Court has set an execution date for Dominique Ray on February 7, 2019. More information as well as talking points will be posted on our website.
- * Alabama Senator Hank Sanders was honored at Wallace Community College for his 35 years of service. We are thankful for his advocacy over the years, and are excited that his seat will be filled by Senator-elect Malika Sanders Fortier.





SING YOUR SONG

Happy Holidays! Happy Holidays! to you all, I pray that you all had a safe and heartfelt thanksgiving feast. With your extended families and friends(smile!)

I have been here on Liferow for the last thirty-two thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

I used to think that I was missing out on these holidays, but I have come to realise that the people that I interact with every day, of every week, of every month, of every year, have become my family members and friends. And I have so much to be thankful for, especially as we are entering the season where we celebrate the birth of the Savior to the world.

When we become thankful to God and filled with His Spirit, we will be able to sing our song.

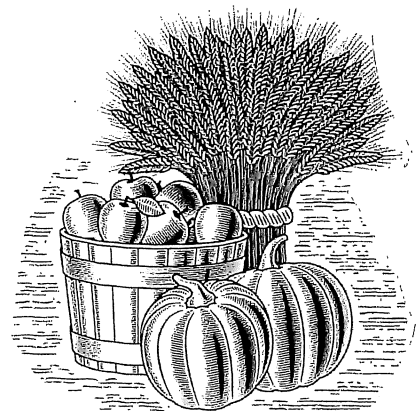
My soul declares the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior, for He has regarded the lovely state of His servant. And from now on, all people will call me blessed.

For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and Holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lovely. He has filled the hungry with good things and the rich He has sent away spiritually bankrupt.

With many blessings and thanks for you all

Earl "Pete" McGahee
Z-466 H-18



SURVIVING THE SEASON

Another year have swiftly moved by and we find ourselves in the holiday season. This time of the year for most can be joyous filled with happiness. A time for families to get together to enjoy each others company, sharing stories from the past while enjoying a good meal. This is the season for all to enjoy.

I think back to my childhood during this time of the year. I can remember waking up on Christmas morning and trying to beat my brothers and sisters to the presents. My parents use to hide our gifts in the closet so I already knew what gift was mine. All the family used to meet up at my Grandparents, while the grown-ups spent time inside, us kids used to play football outside. Some of those football games was always competitive and often physical, but so much fun. Those times have come and gone. After my grandparents passed away, that tradition passed with them and now the family just do their own thing.

This time of year can be a lonely one if you're used to spending it with family. When I first got locked up, I felt extremely alone and had to survive the season. It can be harsh on a person. Yet over time the inmates became brothers which turned into family. When times get tough we have each other to lean on and look to for encouragement.

It's not good for man to be alone. The family I have here at Holman is just as normal and dysfunctional as any real family we may argue and disagree. We rarely fight back here on Life Row. We survive the season by being the family that we have grown into over the years. Have a Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year!

Jeffery Lee
Sec/Treasurer



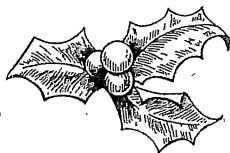
UNTITLED

As holiday traditions go, I think one of the worst ones is the flurry of court rulings that always seem to come down right before the holidays.

I've heard these viewed different ways over the years. Someone said they were trying to "fly under the radar" and avoid attention while the world isn't watching. While the world isn't scrutinizing court decisions. But speaking as someone who has been on the receiving end of an unfavorable ruling in a capital appeal during the holidays, there isn't anything under the radar about it.

For us, it's a direct hit, when we are struggling to get through another Thanksgiving and Christmas away from our families, and our lives.

Not a fan of this tradition.



BELLS WILL BE RINGING

Coming to the close of another year at Holman Prison... I reflect on the time spent. There is honestly no place like home. But, being in the environment of "Life Row," actually doesn't make it all that bad. We all endure the same struggles so ultimately, we also pull together and made the best out of our current disposition. Among us here, we are our family. So, to the friends and loved ones out there, no tears are needed to be shed. Though we do miss you and of course, that good holiday cooking...We still got hope. We got life and life more abundantly! Might not be eating them turkey legs and good home cooked chicken dressing, but we gone bust open a pack of these ramen noodles and still be thankful for what we have. Continue to keep all of the correctional institutions in prayer. For I know that trouble won't last always! I'm a living witness.. Because just as I was on the edge and had threw in the towel; God threw it back at me and said "My Child, You're Almost There."

I pray that you all have a blessed holiday season...

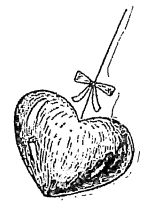
"A Traveling Man" Just Passing Through
Justice Knight
Z-806 N-13



Happy Holidays!

The holidays are upon us. Another year of highs and lows. Yet we are grateful for the things we have. What this time of year means to me is kind of depressing, so I won't go through that with you the reader. I will share this with you, look around at your friends, family, children, tell them you love them. There is not enough love being shared these days. Christmas is a time to share, give, show love in some form. Be thankful for what you have and not that which you don't. The spirit of the Holiday is that of gift giving, so give a gift to the less fortunate, words, food, clothing, whatever, give it with love and a smile. It will go a long way. No matter what religion, or how you celebrate the birth of Christ, Happy Holidays to you all.

Thank You,
Marcus Williams



CELEBRATION

Something about Christmas makes memories stand out. I probably have a better recollection of the holidays than any other time of the year. The smells from the kitchen permeate a lot of those memories, one in particular that I want to share with you (the memory, not the smell).

There was this comic strip in the newspaper that my brother and I were reading one Christmas morning while the grown-ups prepared the meal. It was just 2 panels, and you had to spot the differences. Some were obvious and easy to find, but there were always some that you really had to search for. Despite those differences, you could still recognize that the drawings were the same.

Like that puzzle, none of us are exactly alike, but there is more that we share than we realize when we are only looking for the differences.

And yes, Christmas does look different on Life Row, but even though we may have to celebrate a little differently, what we celebrate, the coming of our Savior, remains the same.

Merry Christmas from Holman!

Bart Johnson
Vice Chairman
F-18



UNTITLED

In 274 AD, Emperor Aurelian chose December 25 as the birthday of Sole Invictus, the Roman sun god. The Christmas we know comes from the pagans and the period of the winter solstice. This is also known as Saturnalia, a week-long Roman festival honoring Saturn, in which immorality and debauchery were encouraged.

In fact, the early church never celebrated anything of significance on December 25, nor was it connected to Jesus until the rule of Constantine.

Over time, the Roman Empire Christianized with Constantine's conversion, and customs associated with Saturnalia were cleaned up and incorporated into the celebration known as Christmas. Constantine chose to adopt this pagan custom as a celebration of the "Messiah" to further blend paganism and Christianity together to ensure his empire lasted.

Jessie MDY Phillips
G-18

Chaos

No peace... In our world today oh most ruthless one, you rule the day! You've turned bright humanity's helping ideas into selfish and ruthless ideals, which has the world on war's edge, all because we can't seem to take our eyes off "being right" when despite all we know and believe shows us different opinions or ideals or beliefs should ever weigh in on the basic respect and love and understanding and sharing of one's self!

Most, if not all, of the world's hero figures fought and died trying to open our hearts to peace. Our treatment of people shouldn't be based on skin color or station! And guess what?

We all make mistakes! Whether it's by choice or force, the bottom line is, we all make mistakes, yet we want everyone and everything to be perfect but making exceptions for our own mistakes.

We can't fix what we won't face, so I pray you all, we all enter the New Year forgiving, and begin your new journey healing in the New Year and stop seeing other's as your demons and prayerfully face your own!

Have a happy and peaceful holidays and keep the planet in your prayers...

May the Heart of God be seen in Live and Living Color.

Prayerfully,
ORACLE

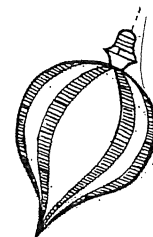
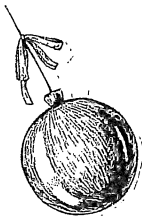


Merry Christmas and Season's Greetings to all! It seems that the older I get the quicker time is passing, but thankfully not passing me by. As we celebrate both Thanksgiving and Christmas, I have plenty of reasons to be both thankful and joyful. I've spent many holidays here, too many to try and remember, but with each I've remained in the holiday spirit.

This holiday season of course, I have more reason to know how blessed I am. I became a grandfather twice in the past four months! Yes, two newborn grandbabies! Along with their arrivals, I've also been blessed with more grey hair! I don't feel old though and I definitely don't look it!:) Just spreading a bit of humor.

I wish everyone a blessed holiday season. Be cheerful and joyful no matter what. May your New Year bring prosperity. Happy Holidays!

In Love and Peace,
Nicholas Acklin
Z-648/N-7



REASON FOR MY EXISTENCE

Life is precious. Love is not promised. Life should be lived to the fullest and never taken for granted. Life and love go hand in hand, like space and time; you cannot have one without the other. If, at any given time, you cease to love, you cease to live. But even then, there's hope...there's hope that you will once again be able to love, so that you may be able to live again.

If I can leave you but one thing, I leave you my knowledge, for in it contains my very essence. All that I am, my life, my love, my pain and joys. Take what you will, use it, use me. And in so doing, you give my life purpose, a reason for my existence.

Nicholas Smith

F-7



Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty

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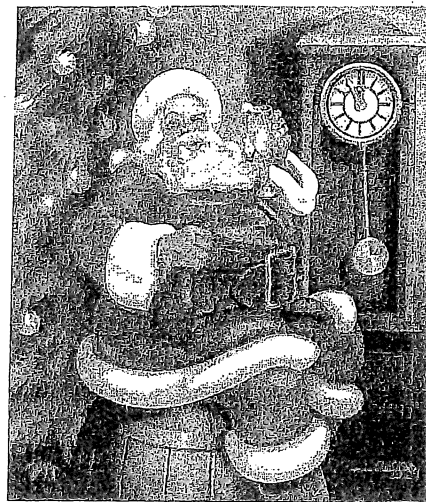
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beesther@earthlink.net • www.phadp.org

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.

STILL HERE

Another year-
has come and gone-
in this life of ping-pong-
where did something so right-
go so wrong-
and someone tell me-
when did night become so long?-
Made weak by what was meant-
to make us strong-
Another year-
has come and gone!



Emerge, spring forth and look at the world around you..
With all the destruction, terror and sadness that we all
have faced throughout this year, it's time to look at yourself
and say I'm still here!

To live another year to fight another day and to take all
I've learned from my many battles and be strong for another...

To all the symbols of Hope I, we, say thank you and Happy
Holidays...

Thoughtfully,
Tony Barksdale
Z-611 F-24



REFLECTIONS

reflecting on what I have.....my health, family, friends
and the ability to dream. Many of us coast through life not
knowing what we have. The saying "don't know what you got until
it's gone" has become a huge reality to me. I believe this is
why I've gained a new perspective on life and a great
appreciation for the things I do have.

On a lighter note: Auburn Football- speaking of not knowing
what one has until it's gone..... Tommy Tuberville, where art
thou?? This season really makes me appreciate Auburn's 2010
National title. With that said, the holidays are creeping up.
Hope everyone has a blessed Thanksgiving and Christmas. Take
a moment to appreciate what you have, hold on to the things
in life that are irreplaceable and be thankful no-matter the
circumstances.

Tim Boyle

THANKZ...

Every day I wake up I thank God for anotha day. I thank him for every possible thing I can think of bcuz I kno that it's bcuz of him I'm grateful.

I thank God for the older guys who sit down and talk to me so I won't have to go thru the things they went thru and wait'd so long to do it. Even tho I already kno the things they talk to me about, I still give thanks bcuz I look at it as reminders. If somebody will talk to you about the things you already kno are good, that person obviously care and don't wanna see you take the wrong path.

I got a friend who would join a conversation about money, cars, clothes and females and 5 minutes into it, he'll walk off without saying anything and start a different conversation with a different person bcuz he kno that ain't important no more. A lot of people might not see it and respect it, but I do and I thank God for workin thru him that it will have an effect on me. And it's not just him that do things that answer my questions to big things, it's a lot of the death row guys. So with that said, I wanna thank y'all too bcuz y'all help me at times and y'all don't even be knowin it. "Never stop setting examples bcuz believe me, somebody's watchin."

T. Townes



UNTITLED

take me for who i am not what i am,
for the way i am is not who you say i am,
for if i am then you may say not,

because life is a trip to the ones that's not,

im not a fool just got foolish ways,
judge me for the good and not my wicked ways
only because you wanna say to me its ok
but if not take me forwho i am and have a nice day.!

The Realist

Project Hope

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P.O. Box 1362 Lanett, AL 36863

Tel: (334) 499-0003

beesther@earthlink.net

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A Season's
Greetings

