

# On Wings of Hope

Project Hope



**Execute  
Justice  
Not  
People**

Volume 30 Issue 1  
Jan. - Mar. 2026

## OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE

After deciding on a goal for an organization perhaps the most important next step is to understand one's most valuable resource. I believe the Board of phadp has understood that from the beginning and never lost sight of it now for 37 years.

What is it, you ask? It is the men at Holman who are the members or potential members of our organization. Is that not true of every organization or company? In the so called free world one sees people hired, fired, on strike, in other words replaceable.

Our world is rather different and much more fragile and not one we can control. At best, members leave because they are freed, some get resentenced but much more often they are killed by the State with at most 3 months' notice.

So yes, we look outward and don't forget about our long term goal of the abolition of the death penalty but in order to survive we have to take care of our corner and our most valuable resource. There are many facets to that!

When a new man arrives at Holman we reach out to him and invite him to a one of our meetings once he gets off single walk. We also continue to reach out to those who did not join us earlier on. There is much to learn about who we are and what we do as the men work their way up from general membership to being elected to the Sub-board and eventually the Board. What are the duties that come with each title and how can we help each other? As an outmate it has been incredibly rewarding to watch how individuals came into their own and made a real difference for others and therefore for themselves. Yes, definitely the men are our most valuable resource, the reason we exist and best of all they are family!

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**

Greetinings Friends and Family,

Most of you have endured with us through seasons of intensity and respite. And we are grateful for you. I feel like I have a good idea of who most of our audience is. You don't need to be convinced about our value or the need for abolition. But much of what you find on these pages is very convincing on these two fronts. Yes Friends and Family, we will share with you our plight. From the heart, where it is often raw. Not because we feel like we need to preach to you, but because we know you care. It matters a great deal to us that we have readers who don't run from our pain, frustration, or joy. You, who are willing to see us as "whole persons" empower us to tell our stories.

I also know that there are a large number of people out there who think that because we are on death row, we deserve to be here. That the punishment fits the crime, or worse, that it is too lenient. These are the people who won't read our newsletter, except maybe to use our words against us. But these are who need convincing. These are our neighbors, yours, and yes even mine in hereoften have accepted the notion that men are capable of deciding which lives still have value and which lives deserve to be snuffed out.

My view on this may be somewhat slanted because I have seen, up close



and personal, the actions of men whom the state has deemed unworthy to continue living. Acts that refute any notion that they are no longer valuable to society, to their family, and to each other. I'm encouraged when I see us in here working together, and when I hear of the work being done out there by our supporters and allies to shed light on the humanity that so many try to darken. I am grateful to be a part of this work, and I continue to draw hope from my faith that God has a better plan for this country, and He is more than capable of convincing the stubbornest of men of the errors of their ways.

So I have no fear for this present storm, but I press on, hand in hand, with all of you who will too. Let's get it!

Yours In Christ  
Bart Johnson  
Chairman, PHADP



#### American Justice

Is there truly any justice when those in power are more concerned with sticking to precedent than getting it right? When the justices on the highest court in the land admit that a law is in need of being fixed, then vote not to fix it in fear of the number of convicted felons that could benefit from the changes (which is admitting that their sentences are, in fact, unjust) the justice system is being undermined. That's the judge's mentalities that are in power to protect our constitutional rights. Where is the protection in that?

They are blatantly ignoring the errors that need to be corrected simply because the errors are found in "too many" cases. This is the way American justice is being served to the American people. Justice system? I'm afraid I fail to see the justice in this system, And to make matters worse, the judges fail to see the justice in this system as well. Who will stand up for those being treated unfairly and unjustly if not the ones put in power for that very reason?

Nicholas Smith



"Justice or Just 'Us'"  
Court of Law,  
Has many a flaw,  
Electric chair,  
Killing is unfair,  
Gas chamber,  
Social slumber,  
Lethal injection,  
Unconstitutional protection,



Courts not listening,  
only seeking  
A lie for the Truth.

Families grieving,  
Never forgiving,  
Times aren't changing,  
Prison rate only banking.

Law and order,  
State slaughter,

Alabama Court Justice,  
Falling away of Equal Protection,  
or Just 'Us'

Correction,  
No real Justice,  
Only imperfection,

In the court room,  
The only decision is doom.

You tell me, is it true?

Justice or Just 'Us'

Failing for what is right

Let real Justice fight.



Chris Hyde



"Stop The Executions of Americans"

That's what the headlines read before the news story actually came on World News Now. It was a quote from President Trump. I got excited and as it aired he was speaking on the executions of Americans in Iran, the protestors, which is more than the holy thing to do. At that point I was proud to be an American, but as I thought further, it brought up the question of "why can't America treat her children like a caring mother all around the nation, as she does the world. It's okay to execute Americans inside of America's house, but outside she's very protective of her children. I agree with Mr. President. Stop the executions of Americans.

Stop the executions of Americans, figuratively and literally, mentally and physically. How is it even possible when this land was founded by the forefathers by executing Americans? Mentally, then physically, her ideology was capitalism. It's what she taught her children, and with her favoritism for those of her fathers reflection, there came socialism. The more opportunity to indulge in the general joys of being her child. The more you are exposed to the pain of loss, and the mental execution of having or never having felt those joys felt like at all to be the child of America.

To keep order and servive in the house of the brave, the natural laws of man must be ignored and the laws of A MAN is introduced for economical and capitalist gains.

Home of the brave to invade, conquer and impose religion and curriculum on a land capitalism is kin to socialism. So, to create a system there must be a set of men that were taught a different education than others. One class of people were always meant to be the burden bearers for this land and that will always mean executing the minds, bodies and souls of Americans, for that's how the fathers to America's children intended it to be from the start of the industrial industry.

Ohhwee



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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. Donations may also be made on line by going to our website and clicking on "donate" on the right hand top corner of the front page.*

Vice Versa

America the Beautiful  
 Where everybody is equal in the eyes of the law  
 Amerikkka the Beautifully Broken  
 Where for the majority the social contract has been broken  
 Amerikkka the Beautiful  
 Where behind closed doors you have no civil rights or liberties  
 America the Beautifully Broken  
 Where your civil rights and liberties are always protected  
 America the Beautiful  
 Where the courts fight to uphold your constitutional rights  
 Amerikkka the Beautifully Broken  
 Where the courts say your constitutional rights can be violated  
 if you had a fair trial  
 Amerikkka the Beautiful  
 Where lady justice can see  
 and if you don't look right, you're guilty  
 America the Beautifully Broken  
 Where justice is administered equally amongst its citizens  
 America the Beautiful  
 Where equality is just a word  
 Amerikkkkka the Beautifully Broken  
 Where equality is what this broken country is all about  
 Amerikkka the Beautiful Beautifully Broken  
 From sea to shining sea

I love my country, it has freedoms that people in other countries don't get to enjoy. Is it broken, yes, but it could be fixed, if the people running it stop spending millions on things like the death penalty and start investing millions in our children and the country. Do we as a nation not care how tax dollars are spent? Or is it that we as a nation care more about killing than we do about our countries future?

Think on this, the Olympics were just on, I think we had the most gold medals. So we run around screaming about how America is better at sports than every other country on Earth. But if you replace those athletes with our children so they can show the world just how great the American education system is, how many gold medals do you think we would have had?

We have the audacity to say we have a great country when our children are getting a subpar education. It's third world countries that have better education systems than we do. But you go right ahead and let them keep spending million, "dare I say billions when it's all added up" on the death penalty. In 25 years we'll all be speaking Chinese.

Jaleel

*If you see me  
 You saw it done  
 Right!!*

*DO UNTO OTHERS THEN SPLIT.... JUST KIDDING.  
 DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE DONE  
 TO YOU.... THEN DO A LITTLE MORE.*

*MAKE THE  
 WHEELS.  
 SQUEAK*

"The U.S. Supreme Court Is Ripe"

Richard Glossip is alive today because of the U.S.S.C. He has been issued 8 execution dates. Thomas Arthur, remember him? He received 8 stays before he was killed by the state of Alabama. And, there are countless others that have been on deathrows around this country for multiple decades. But, none like the state of Alabama. It's time to visit the U.S.S.C. once more about the death penalty.

In 1972, the U.S.S.C. ended the practice because of the broken schemes of the death penalty. But, now, it's time to address the constitutional violations of the 5th, 8th and the 14th Amendments. The 5th Amendment clearly states that no one should be punished twice for the same crime. The 8th Amendment prohibits violations of cruel and unusual punishment (punishments that are torturous, degrading, inhumane, or otherwise shocking to the senses of the community).

20 years in prison for murder; not unusual. 30 years in prison for murder; not unusual. 45 years in prison; that's a stretch, but not unusual. But, how about either one of those time frames PLUS an execution? We will house you in a box for 20, 30, or 40 years then, one day, we will punish you.

MAYDAY - MAYDAY, any and all lawyers reading this: the U.S.S.C. is ripe.... They addressed the scheme to fix the Furman and Gregg v. Georgia rulings. Alabama's experiment has failed. Capital punishment does not deter crime or murder. To ease the unchallenged 8th Amendment violations in Alabama, they no longer keep their inmates in single cells all day. I wonder why? It's cruel to house a human being in a box for 25 to 30 years then say: here's your punishment on execution day. Then what was the last 25 years? I think, when I last checked, we are still humans. So, why are we being toyed with for 3 decades then punished?

Am I asking for quicker executions? Of course not. The "Fair Justice Act" is seeking that avenue. Charles Burton is old and frail. Life in a box has beaten him harmless for over over 30 years. But, the state now plans to execute him soon. It is this inconsistency with the fundamental premise of the 8th Amendment, that even the vilest criminals remain human beings possessed of common human dignity. And, this would explain the fact that there are hundreds more of convicted murderers in general populations across this great land.

We, here on death row, are not the worst of the worst. If we were, why are we now having "TV time" and corporate gatherings? And, we have the most populated women guards than any death row in the world. The women rarely wear sticks, stun guns, or protective vests. And, some are not even old enough to run for president. But, we are increasingly growing.

For every execution we have had in the past 5 years, we have received a new inmate. That doesn't sound like a deterrent? The time for dispassionate, impartial comparisons of the enormous costs that death penalty litigation imposes on society, with the benefits that it produces, has surely arrived.

*God is Love*

It is virtually self-evident to me, now, that no combination of procedural or substantive regulations can EVER save this practice from its inherent constitutional deficiencies. The Supreme Court has stated, addressing procedural safeguards in the death penalty context are legion. The 5th, 8th, and 14th Amendments, which draw much of their meanings from the evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society. We should not still be lynching in 2026. But inmates are face timing on tablets, emailing, and receiving digital mail.

The reforms made after Furman didn't touch on Double Jeopardy. Lawyers, the U.S. Supreme Court is ripe for this argument. Men that are mentally ill are in these boxes. Men that barely reached their 18th birthdays are in these boxes. Men who had who had non-unanimous juries for death are in these boxes. Men that their juries voted for life but were overridden to death are in these boxes. Men that had co-defendants who did the killing and are no longer here are in these boxes. INNOCENT men are in these boxes just waiting, and waiting, and waiting. Doing time. Something they were not sentenced to, waiting to be punished again. I believe the U.S.S.C. is ripe.

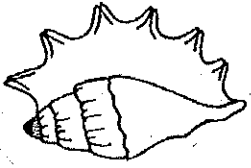
I remain,  
Anthony Tyson  
resides since 1998.

#### A Rose Can Still Grow In Concrete

This is a new year, with new hope and opportunities, to grow in a place that has so many cracks, limited living water and very few nutrients to help me grow. Our word for the year is "resilience," which means to recover readily from adversity. The rose that grows in concrete, even though it is not in the right environment or even getting cared for, but with God's rain and sun, it still grows out of the cracks of the concrete.

The brothers in Project Hope are roses that have grown out of the cracks of poverty, cracks in the school system, cracks in not only the prison we are housed in, this prison that has been condemned, but cracks in the judicial system as well. Through all these cracks our resilience has helped others voices be heard that have been shut down for years, and for the agenda of the state to murder brotehrs in the name of victim's family, to shame and tarnish their family legacy. For battle, your opinion does matter, it just doesn't line up with the state of Alabama's agenda to kill and create another family loss.

You are not just a rose, you are resilient to overcome the adversity of loving your Father and becom living water to so many other people's voices that the state told that their opinion doesn't matter.



Alabama News  
First Quarter 2026

\* Thank you, thank you, thank you. To all who joined the movement for clemency for Sonny, showing up, spreading the word, sharing the petitions, writing letters and in all ways raising awareness for one of our brothers, but especially to Gov. Kay Ivey for once again stepping up to do the right thing. I long for a time when it is not necessary, but until then, I hope mercy and justice become the norm and not the exception to it.

\* This session, the Alabama legislature is considering bills that would expand capital punishment as well as one that would allow voters to decide whether it's time to abolish the practice. It was a little disheartening how quickly the former passed, but there is still time to get that amendment on the ballot in 2028! Let the voters decide.

\* Spiritual advisor and friend, the Rev. Dr. Jeff Hood has published "Suffocate By Design," the story of America's newest execution method. We appreciate the toll that being present for these horrific executions takes on a man of God and hope that this book helps end the practice. A special thanks to David Dodge for ensuring that the relevant policy makers were provided a copy, may they read it and comprehend that nitrogen gas suffocation violates the 8th amendment ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

\* Tacenda magazine, founder and publisher Professor Robert Johnson and editor-in-chief Professor Katie Owens-Murphy were gracious enough to allow us a special edition of their publication to showcase our experiences dealing with the "Impact of an Execution." Many thanks to the editors who worked against some pretty daunting hurdles to help us put this together, and help ensure we spoke with a clear voice.

\* Our newest Advisory Board member, Ronald Wyers, presented a death penalty abolition perspective to Auburn students learning about capital punishment. We appreciate his speaking on this incredibly complex issue and hope that the students are enlightened by the class. We look forward to working with Ron for a long time.

Execute  
Justice  
Not  
People

# A Christian Perspective

Produced By  
Project Hope to Abolish the Death Penalty



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\*\*\*\*\*

Forgive me; this is my first  
Christian Perspective. I'm used to  
writing poetry and free-verse. With  
this task, I have to learn what to  
say so as not to offend.

This is a new year, new administ-  
ration, new days which call for a ne  
new man, new thoughts, and new ways  
to approach life. We all must put on  
the new.

Moving forward from the devastat-  
ing losses of 2025, we must start  
anew. Being a new man or person means  
putting away the old man or person.  
Knowing that you are walking with  
your head held high because God has  
given you a name that no one can  
take. Your, our new names are Chosen,  
Worthy, Love, Strong, Peace, Graceful,  
and the list could go on and on. The  
point is: now is the time to pick up  
this new mantle with clarity and  
determination. Let faith in God lead  
us forward. Keep Hope Alive and God  
bless you.

Marcus Williams  
Vice-Chairman, PHADP





## Let It Go - Let It Go!

I have come to realize that holding on to our pasts will keep us from moving forward. Especially looking back on our past failures, regrets, guilt, broken relationships and achievements.

It's not that the past doesn't matter, but we shouldn't allow it to define who we are and our future endeavors. Moving forward in life will require letting go of what was so that we can embrace what our Creator is doing now.

The Creator of us all desires that we let past hurts and disappointments go so that He can do something special, something new in our lives. But it will require using that measure of faith that has been imparted to us all.

I'm reminded of the inspired words that were given to the prophet Isaiah by the Spirit of God to all the people (Isaiah 43:18-19) "Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it?"

You are not who you used to be; neither am I. It's by the grace of the Creator that we are becoming more and more the people He has called us to be from day to day. One of the most powerful truths in life is that we don't have to stay the same (spiritually, mentally, emotionally, or even physically). Know this: that we are not a product of our environment, but a product of the choices and decisions we make each day.

Lastly, we need to let go of fear because it is a great obstacle to you embracing your new future. Fear can hold us back from stepping into the new chapter of our lives. Fear will often times whisper in our ear or thoughts, saying to us, "you don't deserve a second chance at life," that we are unqualified, incapable, or unworthy of the changes that God wants to make in us.

We are told from the Holy Scriptures that God has not given the spirit of fear, but the Spirit of power, love, and self control. So as we start a new chapter, in a new year, 2026, in this new season (being in a position or place for the first time), let's do it with a heart willing to let it go - let it go, and let God. To quote one of my brothers in Christ, he said don't let the enemy put more fear in front of you than you put faith in God.

May the blessings of the Lord rise upon you all, and I bless you in His name!

"Resilience"  
Earl J. McGahee Sr.  
Z-466

-Seen-

I see you,  
isn't that what they say,  
yet here you stand a mother of Earth,  
gazed at as if you're some star,  
far away.

They come no closer,  
than what their eyes can see,  
no intimacy,  
awed by the free,  
never to intertwine,  
with the roots that run so deeply.

Cut down,  
to drag a part of you around,  
seperating you from what helps you grow,  
only living for right now,  
watering with money,  
no growth is found,  
leaves turning brown.

Oh how you wither,  
I shiver to think,  
how much of you dies,  
every time I blink.

I see you,  
isn't that what they say,  
yet here you stand a mother of Earth,  
gazed at as if you're some star,  
far away.

Was it the deception,  
that led to this,  
is the serpent the reason why,  
things are so amiss,  
is the serpent truly the blame,  
for our lack of bliss.

Led astray by another,  
redeemed through a brother,  
affection we smother,  
but you are the mother,  
man is the foundation,  
you are our cover,  
the tree is Love,  
eating the fruit is the Lover,  
it seems the serpent's deception,  
continues to hover,  
over our head,  
we chase the appetizer,  
when we can get full off the bread,  
which is the Word of God,



we choose the fruit instead,  
which is a portion of scripture,  
instead of the full thread,  
dying for moments,  
wondering why the relationship is dead,  
forgetting why we were bred,  
God's first,  
that thought we shred,  
a fall is only a fail,  
when we give up!

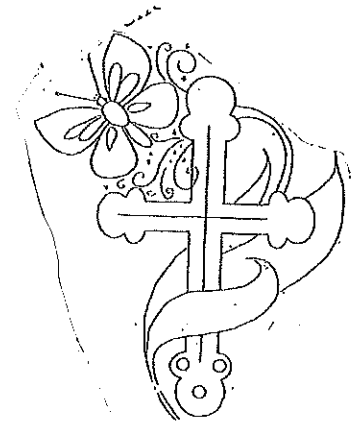
Love is the skeleton key!  
I see you...

Tony Barksdale



#### Share My World

Boxed in yet not here,  
able to get away with no fear,  
fighting the noise, within,  
deaf to all else to get the win.  
Humans are against what's right,  
makes no sense, then to neither does fright.  
Caged in steel and concrete,  
hidden away slowly and discrete,  
have to pay in all ways to reach out,  
mentally, physically, spiritually tested clout,  
families in the dark,  
the feeling of history repeating this very part.  
No butterflies from caterpillars,  
not understanding can be thriller,  
crossed over into unknown territory,  
lights on, no darkness, every hour inventory,  
once in the life had there was privacy,  
no thoughts are your own, no more moments of clarity,  
dreams interrupted, misinterpreted,  
representation untrained and always referred,  
last among the others, undeclared a life deferred.  
Come on, you are welcomed to share my world.  
Ok, take a glimpse, then too it's something you can't afford....



Marcus Williams