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The Ministry of Hope is a community-funded chaplaincy program, which raises funds to employ on-site chaplains at the Western Correctional Center for Women (WCCW).

Our chaplains conduct religious services in the center's chapel and provide pastoral care and spiritual guidance to the inmates. Their guidance and leadership are crucial to helping these residents, many of whom struggle with addiction, abuse, and grief issues. They are within five years of release or parole. Our chaplains offer them a sense of hope and real-world self-care tools to manage parenting, relationships, and employment with discernment and spiritual maturity.



BECOME A PARTNER IN THE MINISTRY OF HOPE!

Here are some ways YOU can join us in our mission to provide chaplains at WCCW:

- ♥ Sponsor a fundraising event for the benefit of Ministry of Hope
- ♥ Put the Ministry of Hope in your mission budget, either as a church or as a Sunday School Class/Mission Group
- ♥ Make a one-time or regular contribution
- ♥ Request that you be put on the mailing list for our bi-annual newsletter
- ♥ Invite one of our staff to provide a virtual or in-person educational event for your organization

Contact us today to learn more:

P.O. Box 998, Black Mountain NC 28711
Email: admin@ministryofhopewnc.org

WCCW Chaplains' direct number: (828) 259-6055

Online: www.MinistryOfHopeWNC.org

EIN: 56-2119097



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Contact Us

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P.O. Box 998
Black Mountain, NC
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Chaplain Office
(828) 259-6055
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MOH email:
admin@ministryofhopewnc.org

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MINISTRY OF HOPE

HEARTBEAT

A PUBLICATION BY THE MINISTRY OF HOPE, A 501(C)3 NONPROFIT || EIN: 56-2119097

News on the "Pulse of Hope" in WNC

A PERSONAL APPROACH TO WOMEN'S RECOVERY AND EMPOWERMENT

by Cara Jenkins, Board Member (also former WCCW & Pfaff House Resident)

In the landscape of nonprofits and other helping organizations dedicated to assisting women in overcoming challenges, the Ministry of Hope stands out as a beacon of healing, transformation, and personal empowerment. We recognize that true healing encompasses the mind, body, and spirit, therefore, the ministry offers a comprehensive approach to supporting women as they overcome addiction, trauma, mental illness, incarceration, and other barriers that can prevent us from living a healthy and stable life.

Ministry of Hope recognizes that each woman's journey towards healing and recovery is as unique and multifaceted as the individual herself. While there are many common challenges experienced by incarcerated women, a "cookie cutter" approach is not effective for producing the long-term healing and personal growth many of our participants have experienced.

Our focus is on empowering the individual to take ownership in her own healing, recovery, and personal transformation, while supporting her throughout the process with an array of programs and services.

Through our chaplaincy and other programs, we offer guided therapeutic communities that teach and help develop crucial life skills, guided therapeutic teaching modules focused on healing trauma, family integration and acclimation for mothers, educational workshops related to employment, housing, and community resources, as well as volunteer mentoring/role modeling. All of this is in addition to one-on-one services of spiritual guidance, or just compassionate listening with one of our chaplains at the facility.

The Ministry of Hope distinguishes itself as a trailblazer amongst helping agencies by not just embracing the individual and assisting with immediate challenges, but by walking along side her through her incarceration and beyond. Women are encouraged to foster helping relationships with volunteers and volunteer organizations who are committed to seeing them transition back into society in a healthy and sustainable way. They are not just dropped into the community without a support system in place.

By addressing the interconnected needs of the mind, body, and spirit, and emphasizing the transformative power of mentoring, we empower women to not only overcome their past challenges but also thrive and lead abundant lives going forward. Our commitment to comprehensive care and community collaboration ensures that every woman who makes that life changing decision to seek change will receive the support and resources necessary to embark on a new journey of hope and healing. Join us in our mission to inspire change, foster resilience, and build a future where every woman incarcerated at Western Carolina Correctional Center for Women has the opportunity to live her best life.

As a formerly incarcerated woman, I am extremely grateful to be living a life that is more successful and interconnected than I could have ever imagined before receiving services from Ministry of Hope. Through my participation in transition groups and relationships with mentors, I was able to develop the confidence and form the supportive connections I needed to make a safe and transition back into society.

Because of the Ministry of Hope, I and so many other women are now thriving, rather than just surviving.



Cara Jenkins,
MOH Board Member

LEAVING WELL

by Carol Dalton, former WCCW Chaplain

Friends ask if retirement seems real yet. **The answer is a resounding, “No!”** I think about seventeen years and wonder why that felt like such a long time. After all, I loved my work. Prison is hard work, but I’ve known people who worked in the system 30 years or more. Maybe it’s because I poured my heart and soul into it, trying to balance loving everyone with a healthy dose of reality and good boundaries. Perhaps that’s a little like using a paddle board in the ocean for seventeen years, not that I’ve ever tried it. I’ve read about it and watched people do it, and I can imagine what it would be like as I balance on dry ground, one leg at a time for thirty seconds each!

As I was preparing for retirement, I gave a lot of thought to the similarities and differences between leaving as a staff member and leaving as a “returning citizen.” Both are examples of transition, and both contain elements of the unknown. I knew the home I was going to, but most women who have done fifteen or more years are starting over from scratch. I did have some tasks like signing up for Medicare, meeting with my financial advisor, cleaning out the stuff I had collected, etc. I did not depend on others to transport me to these meetings, but I did seek advice from people who had retired before me. In prison transition, we call this peer support. Oh, and people asked me how much time I had left! I didn’t count down as much as most incarcerated individuals I have known, but I was definitely counting down the months. One long-termers who “got out” a few weeks before me would come by the office to check on me. We would compare notes and encourage one another.

My one desire was to leave well. Part of that was encouraging the Ministry of Hope to get an early start on having a new chaplain in place before my last day. They were ready in March, but the state came up with some new rules, and things did not go according to our plans. Hopefully, by the time this article is read, she will be working away.*

Sometimes leaving well means saying some things. I did that, and I tried to do no harm in the process. I had some honest conversations with leadership in Raleigh, and I preached one rather fiery sermon in the chapel which didn’t feel good, but maybe it planted a seed in a heart. It was basically about loving each other enough to tell the truth instead of turning a blind eye.

My final day was beautiful and long and full of celebrations. We had a covered dish lunch with prison staff and a letting-go service in the chapel. Then the Ministry of Hope threw a party at First Christian Church of Black Mountain. I was so happy to see how many women came who are living their best lives as free citizens. The presence of current and former board members and volunteers was especially meaningful. Please know that I am making good use of all of my gifts!

The following week, I took a road trip with my daughter and a friend. Now I’m home and trying to figure this retirement thing out. What I know with certainty is that my heart is filled with gratitude. I had the opportunity to make a difference. I was able to do that because of you, our supporters, and the call God placed on my life when I was just a teenager. That call did not retire. I am waiting to see what new direction it takes. I am pretty sure it involves the Ministry of Hope and returning citizens. We really thought it would involve transitional housing, but the way has not yet been made clear. So I will practice being retired, hanging out with friends, exercising at the YMCA, and whittling away at the list of things I’ve put off for too long. Mostly, I’m resting, listening to silly whodunnits, and just being.

Peace be with you all,
Carol

**Susan Verbrugge was approved by NCDAC in late June, and she started her first day as our new full-time chaplain at WCCW on July 1, 2024. Shannon Spencer also continues to serve as our part-time chaplain.*



Carol Dalton,
former WCCW Chaplain

ATTENTION: SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR WCCW

We’re trying to get ready for the upcoming season and resupply our inventories on **greeting cards - HOLIDAY/CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAY, THINKING OF YOU, BLANK**

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, we hand out over 1200 cards quarterly so EVERY single resident is able to have this vital supply for maintaining outside connections!

We also need boxes of facial tissues.

Email admin@ministryofhopewnc.org to arrange drop off of greeting cards or tissue.

The best way is to order online and have delivered to: Chaplains’ Office, 55 Lake Eden Road, Black Mountain, NC 28711

Do you have an idea for a craft, project, class, workshop or education opportunity for the residents of WCCW? Email us at admin@ministryofhopewnc.org to discuss!

THANK YOU!

The generosity of these contributors has made an immediate difference in the lives of the incarcerated women of WCCW.

Friends (continued)

Marjorie Marsh & J. Earl Thompson
Betty Jo & Rick Mills
Suzanne Money
David Moore
Kristi Neal
Esther Pardue
Susan Pierce
Linda Poss
Marcia & George Salansky
Gayle Shelton
Bonnie Shoemaker
Ginny & Terrance Soll
Mary Sorrells
Kathleen Stigmon & Beaver Wyatt
Betsy & Dwight Stobbs
John & Barbara Swart
Duncan Tam
John & Gay Van Osdall
Jeffrey Williams
Dawn Wilson & Jasper Beckert

The Ministry of Hope has a great story.

...And there are new chapters that have yet to be written!

In this newsletter, you read more than once about the importance of community for a successful transition. We’re working on some great ideas regarding this - **and bringing them to life is only possible with the ongoing support of folks like you.**

Some of you have been “with us” since the beginning, and we have new folks joining our ministry family every day. If you know of a friend, neighbor, business owner, community leader, or ANYONE that would be a valuable resource to our programs and services, please do not hesitate to reach out!

You can email us at admin@ministryofhopewnc.org

Partner with us in writing these new chapters...

SPECIAL LEVELS OF ANNUAL GIVING:

Benefactor: \$2,500 or more

Partner: \$1,000 - \$2,499

Sponsor: \$500 - \$999

Sustainer: \$250 - \$499

Patron: \$100 - \$249

Friend: \$1 - \$99

(See mail-in donation slip on page 5 for making a donation)

The following churches, nonprofits and businesses have made a contribution over the past year:

A New Self Image (Tina Reese)
B. B. Barns
Black Mountain Presbyterian Church
Black Mountain United Methodist Church
Circle of Mercy
ECW St. Andrews Episcopal Church
Episcopal Church Women of WNC
Fairfield Mountains Chapel
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First Christian Church of Black Mountain
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Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Grace Lutheran Church
Green Line Media (Mountain Xpress Give!Local)
Grove Park Inn / Omni Resort

House of Mercy Asheville
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Land of the Sky UCC
Long Creek Presbyterian Church
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New Bridge Baptist Church
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St. Luke’s Episcopal Church
Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting
The Church of the Good Shepherd
Trinity Presbyterian Church of Hendersonville
Trinity Presbyterian Women
Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church and College Chapel
WNC Foundation



THANK YOU!

The generosity of these contributors has made an immediate difference in the lives of the incarcerated women of WCCW.

The following individuals have made a contribution over the past year:	
<i>NOTE: These contributors represent donations that have been received as of July 1, 2024 (and do not represent monies received for our upcoming September Luncheon, but thank you to those that have donated and will be attending!)</i>	John & Pat Box
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Alison Langley	
James Layman	
Kenneth & Sheryl Lee	

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

by Haley, WCCW Resident

I wanted to write something that comes from all of us on this compound, not just from my experience - because the impact the Chaplains make here is for all of us. When I got here I thought this was going to be like Raleigh where only 10 people from each pod could attend worship. It's not like that here and I'm grateful every day for it.

When you're on this side of the fence, you start expecting the worst before being able to hope for the best. Having a place to experience, praise, and worship God is a blessing for all of us here at Western Correctional. As Chaplain Spencer always reminds us at the end of worship, "We are each beautiful and beloved children of God and nothing can ever change that," and we need that reminder being in a place that only knows us by our mistakes. The Ministry of Hope provides the chaplains that make these reminders and safe places for conversations possible for us. As we continue on this journey, we're able to share God's love with others and our faith and confidence that things can be different - it grows stronger every day we are here.

PAYING IT FORWARD

by Jessie Thomas, former WCCW & Pfaff Resident

After speaking at last year's luncheon, I was able to go back into WCCW on my one year anniversary date and tell my story to the ladies at a NA Meeting. It was an amazing experience, and gave me such an empowering feeling. I've now been with Sunrise* doing peer support work for over a year, including being part of the harm reduction team. Doing these services in our community include providing Narcan training (helping educate folks about how to save someone with Narcan medication in a possible overdose event), spending time at drug rehabilitation centers trying to assist them with their needs, and in January I was certified to do rapid Hep-C & HIV testing as well.

This summer Sunrise provided Narcan training at a book club meeting at Pack Library with a "Q & A" regarding the book, *Dopesick*. I shared my story and assisted our agency at that event. I also attended the Cherokee Recovery Rally in July, and got to meet Dr. Finnix (from the book, *Dopesick*) and we actually took a "selfie" and sent it to the author!

On the family front, I continue to build a strong relationship with each of my three children, helping them where I can as they have become young adults over the last several years. I've reconnected with "lost" family, built connections with new "family of choice," and even worked on necessary boundaries with those that are still in active addiction, knowing how important that is for me to stay healthy, safe, and moving forward.

Although my job title is "harm reduction," I have an extreme passion for reentry, and the opportunities to help share with those I serve what I've learned from my own transition into this community. Any chance I get - on or off the clock - I'm making calls, sending emails and texts, accepting someone's call - always trying to make a connection that helps them with what they may need. I understand first-hand the difference it can make for a person to have folks that pull together and advocate for them. I feel truly blessed that I had a whole team of people to stand behind me during my transition and reentry. Thank you, Ministry of Hope and their community supporters - I'm "paying it forward!"

*read more about Sunrise Community at: www.SunriseInAsheville.org



Jessie Thomas with her daughter, Madi, at 2024 Prom

Detatch, include with donation, and mail to: Ministry of Hope, PO Box 998, Black Mountain NC 28711

GUEST NAME(S):

PHONE:

EMAIL:

☐ I / WE WILL ATTEND, Would appreciate: ☐ vegetarian options ☐ gluten-free options

☐ I WILL SPONSOR LUNCH FOR WCCW POST-RELEASE GUEST (AT AN ADDITIONAL \$15 EACH)

☐ I AM UNABLE TO ATTEND, BUT ENCLOSING A DONATION.



or PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE at: www.MinistryOfHopeWNC.org

Acceptances by September 10th 2024, please.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: CHAPLAIN CAROL DALTON'S RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

As you've already heard, Chaplain Carol Dalton retired after serving our WCCW community for 17 years. If you would like to see our community's retirement celebration that was held on May 31, 2024, then view on YouTube by scanning QR code at right with your smart phone (then clicking on pop-up link) - or go online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27taowOSbSE>



WE'RE GROWING: AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Any group that works in service to the women at WCCW (or any correctional center) will tell you that the ultimate goal we all have is to REDUCE RECIDIVISM - the likelihood that an individual will return to prison within three years. The North Carolina state recidivism rate is pretty scary - over 50%. Yes, that means that one out of every two individuals released from incarceration right now will return within three years. Needless to say, we feel it's our duty - now more than ever - to help break that cycle. Women who have participated in one or several of our transitional, reentry, or post-release residential programs drop the recidivism rate to less than 10%. IT WORKS, plain and simple. The extension of services into any new programs will not take away our efforts, energy or focus from our primary goal of serving the residents at WCCW, but recidivism is not only impacted by what goes on "inside" the prison, but also what happens "outside the gates" once a woman is released.

Finding where and how to grow can feel like trying to hit a moving target - that is because every aspect of a prison ministry's services and programs are connected, even overlapping, with each other. However, right now, we have identified two main areas of growth we're exploring:

- 1) additional transition services (pre- and post-release reentry education, support, programming)
- 2) providing support and resources to incarcerated women serving shorter sentences (Who currently are unable to participate in our long-term mentoring programs, or are serving their time in county detention centers.)

Availability of resources needed for day-to-day life, a reliable support network (of peers, mentors, and community), and safe housing options TRULY make a big impact on one's ability to maintain the "transition within" that happened before their release and have a truly successful transition.



Lauronda Morrow Teeple, Executive Director

THIS IS WHERE WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW...

Detatch, include with donation, and mail to: Ministry of Hope, PO Box 998, Black Mountain NC 28711

We are seeking supporters that can assist us in this growth by providing annual gifts of \$2,500 or more

The funds raised will directly impact our ability to hire the additional staff, administrative support and resources we need to increase our programs that are provided weekly and monthly to women inside WCCW (for pre-release reentry programs) and "outside the gate" transitional programs (for those that have released into our community and need support services).

Donations can also be made securely online:



☐ YES, I would like to become a Ministry of Hope Benefactor by donating \$2,500 or more: See my enclosed donation of \$

☐ Every dollar counts! See my enclosed donation of \$

