

GIFTS FROM THE HEART

Fall Gathering 2023

Voice of Hope Behind the Wall Ministry NID has evolved in the past three years reports Deaconess Lori Wilbert. After 34 years of working behind the wall at Stateville Prison and with Northern Illinois District for 38 years, Deaconess Wilbert has transitioned into working with those being released from prison in the Illinois Dept. of Corrections.

The teaching ministry at Stateville continued even during the Covid shut down. Prison staff deliver class lessons and assignments to the cell houses each week, pick them up, and send them back to Deaconess Wilbert.

As a result of the new teaching model, there is time to assist those coming home from prison, ***something NOT allowed previously in Illinois***. The blessing and gift of ministry with those being released has become a part of the transitional journey on which these men are about to embark. Some of these individuals were part of the teaching ministry in the past. Things have come full circle!☺

Deaconess Wilbert will provide spiritual counseling along with practical advice on making choices, finding employment, repairing family relationships and the challenges of leaving an environment of negativity, confinement and isolation. To have freedom after 20 to 30 years of being locked up can be an arduous journey in and of itself. The church can be there for these men coming home. The church has a message of hope, grace and forgiveness.

Upon their release, former prisoners need items that help an individual set up an apartment. These Gifts from the Heart will enable each person to have a solid start as he re-integrates into his community.

Note: All items must be new and package sizes appropriate for an individual

Household Items:

Toilet paper, Paper towels/Kleenex
Laundry detergent
Dish soap
Lysol toilet cleaner
Cleaning cloths
Kitchen towels/Dish cloths
Bath towels/Washcloths
Queen or Full Sheet sets
Set of basic pots/pans
Set of plates/coffee mugs/glasses
Silverware

Personal Needs:

Bars of soap/Body wash
Shampoo/Conditioner
Toothpaste/Toothbrush
Hair brush/Comb
Disposable Shavers
Shaving Cream
Deodorant
Lotion
Gift cards for Walmart, Walgreens, or
Jewel-Osco