

Mighty to Save ministries

Offering hope and new beginnings to young adults who want to be free from addictions by providing mentoring, discipling and transition assistance.

In This Issue...

Issue No. 21 - Winter 2016

Pen Pals
Page 1



With That Moon Language
Page 1 & 2

Participant's Note
Page 2

Inmate Art Exhibit
Page 3



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Pen Pals

About six months ago one of our inmates, Michael, asked about finding a pen-pal. I put his request on the MtSM weekly prayer mail; and to my surprise, got a response. Susan was interested. I connected the two of them, and really didn't think too much more about it until I got an email from Susan asking for some advice on boundaries. I encouraged her to be honest and open; and she did just that. Once those obstacles were removed, it allowed Susan and Michael to really connect.

I emailed Susan a month or so later to see how things were going; and again, to my surprise, she announced that she, her mother and her daughter were heading to Washington Correctional Center for the annual Christmas Celebration. What? Really? Wow! This was obviously turning into something more than just pen-pals.

I stand in awe of the One who had purposed so much more than just writing back and forth for these two. Now, it is bigger than just the two of them. The rest of Susan's family has now gotten involved. Michael is no longer just a name on a piece of paper. Michael is Part of a family.

Thank you, Susan and family, for reaching out and being willing to take a chance on a stranger. Thank you for looking at Michael as a child of God, and not as a criminal. Thank you for opening your hearts to love one that some would consider "the least of these". (Matthew 25:40)

Thank you Michael for being willing to be vulnerable. Thank you for trusting a complete stranger. Thank you for being willing to open your heart to receive and to give love.

I am honored to call you both friends.
~ Christina

With That Moon Language

"Admit something: Everyone you see, you say to them, "Love me". Of course you do not do this out loud, otherwise someone would call the cops. Still though, think about this, this great pull in us to connect.

Why not become the one who lives a full moon in each eye that is always saying, with that sweet moon language, what every other eye in this world is dying to hear."

~ Hafez

I lost my job 2 years ago, and it devastated me. I had been searching for something to do, asking God for direction. I grew flowers; but that wasn't enough. So when Christina wrote that an inmate was looking for a pen pal, I thought that would be manageable.

Michael and I exchanged letters; and I was able to visit after 4 weeks. Then, he had many requests--finding a place to sell his art, a dating site to find a nice girl, a package of food. Honestly, I was a bit overwhelmed because I am not a computer geek, and had trouble setting up sites, etc... So I wrote that I was a little overwhelmed. He wrote back and said that I was a good friend and didn't need to do anything I wasn't comfortable doing. I was relieved!

My Mom and daughter accompanied me to the Thanksgiving celebration dinner with Michael. We all were a little nervous, but it went ok. They also came to the Christmas dinner with me, and we all felt more relaxed. Presents were raffled--mostly for the children. My Mom won the decorated paintbrush that Michael made.

See "Moon Language" on page 2

“Moon Language” - from page 1

That night, he called; and we had only one minute left on the phone plan. He told me that he enjoyed the day so much and hoped we had too. He said to tell everyone that he loved them and was glad we had come.

I was so touched. I had started saying "I love you" at the end of our conversations a few weeks before, and there was silence. So, it warmed my heart for him to say it first, like he had been saying it his whole life.

I don't know what it is like to have no parents, no siblings, only friends who aren't good for you. I don't know what it is like to be homeless. But I do know what it feels like to be loved, and how important it is to reach out to others that so desperately need to see Jesus in the world.

I am praying that in this New Year, that God will show me the people I need to love and the places I need to go.

In His Love,
Susan Paulsen

Participant's Note

Before I started writing Susan, I was not really a people person. I didn't trust people; and well, I figured that nobody wanted to waste their time writing an inmate who was sentenced to 15 years for a violent crime.

Not only did I not trust people, but I also didn't have a lot of trust in God. But since meeting Susan and her wonderful family, they helped me restore my faith not only in people, myself, but also in God.

We have been writing each other for about 7-8 months. We have had 3 visits; and we still continue to grow in our relationship. Even now, it is still hard to grasp the thought that a wonderful person would take me in and treat me as she would her own son. I don't think that I can ever express how grateful I am to her and her family for taking a chance on me.

I believe that is what a lot of people like myself need to be a success in life, is just that chance, and someone to believe

in them. I hope people who read here will get the urge and the confidence to help change another person's life. I can tell you that I love getting mail from them; and as far as I know, they enjoy writing me, and I love to have people I can send my drawings and paintings to.

Well, I appreciate the chance to tell my story, and I hope it helps people change their thought process about inmates.

Respectfully,
Michael



Michael, Susan and Family



Inmate
**ART
EXHIBIT**

Oak Harbor Library & Regency on Whidbey



MTSM IS EXCITED FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE
WITH OUR OAK HARBOR COMMUNITY
THE GIFTS AND TALENTS OF SOME OF OUR INMATES

January 18-31st @ 1000 SE Regatta Dr.
February 1-14th @ 1040 Kimball Dr.

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Mighty to Save Ministries

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