

NEWS

Iowa Church Helps Inmates Send Their Love to Family and Friends

Prison inmates can communicate their love and concern from prison to their families and friends, thanks to a greeting card ministry by New Life Prison Community Church in Newton, Iowa, dedicated to the men who are incarcerated in the Newton Correctional Facility.

New Life, which already holds Bible studies and prayer groups with Newton inmates, took seriously a suggestion from the prison chaplain to expand their ministry. Upwards of 200 inmates show up once a month in the prison chapel to select up to four greeting cards, which they can then send out to their families and friends.

Pastor Rick Admiraal purchases Day-spring cards for all occasions from American Rehabilitation Ministries at minimal cost. He distributes them with help from the prison chaplain's assistant and a few select inmates. The cards are available to inmates who are not in solitary confinement and who have money in their accounts to pay for postage.

One prisoner recently selected three Mother's Day cards—for his wife, his sister, and his daughter. He explained that this is a beautiful ministry because "by sending a card, you let people know that you're in here thinking about them. It shows that you really do love them."

Admiraal says the prison officials are quite supportive of the card ministry and recently approached him to expand it to the minimum security prison as well.

New Life is an emerging congregation that meets in the prison. It is supported by various churches, individuals, and Classis Central Plains (the regional group of churches). Admiraal is called to the ministry by Calvary Christian Reformed Church in Pella, Iowa.

—Anita Ensing Beem

Wisconsin Church Digs Deep for Clean Water

People are familiar with the idea of raising funds for clean water, but what about a well drilling machine? It may seem unusual, but this God-sized challenge to raise \$75,000 for a well-digger was embraced by the members of Brookfield (Wis.) Christian Reformed Church.

It started as part of a Generous Church effort and grew because of the congregation's ambition and relationships with strategic partners. After learning about the lack of clean water in Mozambique and the cost to drill wells, Brookfield CRC set their sights on raising enough money for a small drill, similar to one used by many nonprofits throughout Africa. But they had just three months to collect the \$75,000 needed.

"People rallied," said Rev. Peter Verhulst. "Children set up lemonade stands and collected aluminum cans. Small groups held garage sales. Individuals donated their tips and lunch *per diems* for three months. Yard signs were created and displayed throughout

the area. The church also held a 'water-walk' after church one Sunday."

At the end of the three months, the church had raised about \$100,000. And while God had indeed blessed their efforts, there were unforeseen challenges ahead.

First, soil tests revealed that the drill they had been looking to purchase would be inadequate. An answer to prayer came, however, when Sam's Well Drilling, owned by the Vander Galien family, agreed to donate the difference in cost for the larger drill and provide the extra parts needed to keep the drill going.

The team encountered a second challenge when they learned that left-hand drive vehicles are no longer allowed in Mozambique. This time an answer to prayer came through church member Dan Jongetjes and his family's company, Johns Disposal. Their plan to unbolt the drill from the existing truck and put it onto a right-side truck was a success.

Noteworthy



Kurt Dykstra



Sylvia Daining

Geneva Campus Ministry at the University of Iowa appointed **Thomas Wolthuis** as chaplain. He succeeds Edward Laarman.

Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Ill., has appointed **Kurt D. Dykstra** as president. Dykstra is currently the mayor of Holland, Mich.

A song composed by **Dordt College professor Benjamin Cornelis** was selected as a winner by the Iowa Composers Forum/Iowa Choral Directors Association.

Christian Schools International appointed **Joel Westa** as its new CEO. He succeeds Dave Koetje, who is retiring.

The American Red Cross, West Michigan Region, named **Sylvia Daining** as the recipient of the Dr. Charles Drew Health Advocate Award, recognizing her as "an individual who has dedicated their life to a cause that directly impacts the health and wellbeing of others." Daining attends Madison Square Church in Grand Rapids, Mich.

The **Disability Concerns** ministry of the Christian Reformed Church **won several awards** for its publications at the Associated Church Press convention.

Anthony Langeland, 18, won the Skills U.S.A. **Gold Medal in Diesel Technology** for the state of Michigan. Langeland is a member of Lamont (Mich.) Christian Reformed Church.

—Banner correspondents