

March 26, 2019

To my Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

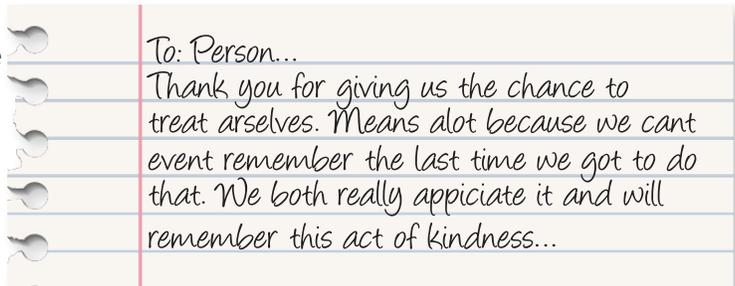
From blizzards to the school calendar, it has been truly a challenge to try to stay consistent with our weekly programming at Red River Alternative Learning Center and West Central Regional Juvenile Center. Despite the storms, we are starting to see fruit in these kids' lives as they are starting to reach out to us. Danielle and I have tried so hard to reach out to these kids and tell them we want to help them when they get out but we have not had much success. In recent weeks, this has started to change.



*Serving Christmas Dinner at RRALC  
(Left to Right) Danielle, Patty, Mike, & Gene*

We talk a lot about how our two ministry sites cross over into each other. A particular example of this is one young man and one young lady who are pretty close friends and have both been in and out of RRALC and WCRJC. Last year while doing our program at RRALC, we busted them smoking at the Church. We used this as an opportunity for discussion and extended grace. Several weeks ago, I was talking to the kids at the detention center about grace. I had asked them if they "...knew anybody who had helped them by extending grace or giving them a do over?" The young man from RRALC was there that week and with a smirk said that we did. (He was referring to the previous year we had caught him smoking.) I thank God that He gives us the opportunities to extend grace and love on these kids. So many of these teens just need someone to love them, take them by the hand, and do life with them.

This school year we have seen a couple sisters who have both been in shelter care (the non-secured part of the detention center) and at RRALC. These two young ladies have really touched our hearts. We have gotten to know their story very well, and God laid on our hearts to try to do something special for them for Christmas.



We were able to give each of the girls \$200 to go shopping. This was for them to use how they would like, on clothes, gifts for their family, etc. It was such a blessing to be able to give where there was a need.

*Thank you note that we received from the sisters*

When I talk about starting to see fruit, an amazing young lady comes to mind. We built a relationship with her at both RRALC and WCRJC. She recently moved into a new foster home and started school at RRALC. Initially, we made contact with her caseworker and told

her that we wanted to be a part of her team moving forward. This young lady really wants our help and that is a beautiful thing. About two weeks ago, I received a message from her on Saturday asking if I would take her to Church on Sunday. I said ABSOLUTELY we would take her to church. That following day Patty, Jarod, and I picked her up and attended church in Moorhead. The following Sunday, we planned to pick her up again. However, with no surprise, another blizzard hit. My faithful partner in ministry, Danielle, picked her up and took her to Church. This young lady is the first person EVER to contact us on their own after leaving detention. This was a huge step, as we have been at West Central for 2 Years and 3+ months. Every week we tell the kids that we know are leaving, to contact us when they get out. We also put our contact information in the Bibles that we give them. Due to legalities of working with minors, they have to make the initial contact after detention. I have probably heard from over 30+ kids that they would contact us when they got out, but this young lady was the first. PRAISE GOD!



We have been so blessed by God for bring these kids into our lives. We desire to continue our relationships with these kids, take them by the hand, and walk through life with them. We continue to point these kids to Jesus 24/7. Aftercare can be a very life-changing part of this ministry, but it is extremely difficult to stay in contact with the kids once they get out. This struggle to remain in contact is one of the tougher parts about Juvenile Justice Ministry as a whole. However, God is opening up so many doors for us at West Central to minister to the kids at the facility. Moving forward, we ask for prayer that God would send us workers to fill these positions in ministry that He is opening for us.

We ask for your continued prayers and financial support as we try to build our teams, and as we mentor and help teach life skills to these kids. We are truly a team, the church with hands and feet, as we reflect and share Christ with these kids. Thank you for your love for Christ and your love for us.

We love & miss you all!

Mike, Patty, & Family

