

NEW LIFE NEWS

“FOR WITH GOD NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE.” LUKE 1:37



CELEBRATING CHANGING LIVES

The 2023 Spring Banquet was one for the books! With Huntington County Circuit Court Judge Davin Smith as the emcee for the night, we were able to hear stories about how the ministries have changed lives and learn more about the need for what New Life Ministries is doing in Huntington County and Indiana.

The night began with Judge Davin Smith interviewing Jimi Staton, the Executive Director of New Life Ministries and Pastor of New Life Fellowship Church. Through the interview, Jimi shared a glimpse of each ministry that makes up New Life Ministries. He shared how our Men's Life House is still a young ministry but has continued to serve men for just over one year and four months. Jimi shared how the Women's Life House is celebrating ten years of serving over 300 women in need. And he shared the excitement of the Meal Ministry continuing to serve free dinners since 2007 and the addition of weekday lunches just this year. With each ministry shared, there was also the story of how God made each a possibility, and there is no denying that God was at the center of each ministry coming into existence.

During the interview between Judge Davin and Jimi, they also recognized the directors and staff that help each ministry room smoothly. To wrap up the interview, Jimi introduced the couple who will become, as Judge Davin called them, the "house parents" of the Children's Life House. It was exciting to get to celebrate and encourage this couple who will be taking a leap of faith in helping and caring for the children who enter this home.

Following the interview, Judge Davin introduced Dessie Proyer, a graduate of the Women's Life House. Dessie came on stage to give her testimony. She began by opening up about the rough pieces of her past from the loss of custody of her daughter, to her addiction, and even her time in prison. "I was seeing my daughter grow up through photos and phone calls," Dessie said as she reflected on her two years in prison.

Continued on back.

This moment was a turning point for Dessie, and she knew she needed to make a change. She had already come and gone from the Women’s Life House multiple times before, but she called Carla Staton, the Women’s Life House Director, one more time. “Carla saw something in me that I couldn’t see,” Dessie explained as she shared that Carla had been willing to give her one more chance in the program which helped change her life.

This third time in the Women’s Life House led Dessie to graduating. Since then, she has gotten married, reunited with her oldest daughter, and has two more daughters as well. Dessie also works for Express Employment. “In the past, people didn’t and couldn’t trust me, but now I’m trusted to manage two offices. I love going to work every day and helping people find jobs that could change their lives.”



Dessie Proyer sharing her testimony alongside Judge Davin Smith.

Dessie ended her time on stage by sharing some words of encouragement with the current residents in the Life House programs. “It is hard, the rules are tough, the curfew might seem unfair, and you might not want to go to church, but it works! I still use many of things I learned from the program in my everyday life. It is worth it!”

Following Dessie’s testimony, we welcomed our keynote speaker Kerri King. Kerri is the Local Office Director for the Huntington Department of Child Services, and she spoke on the importance and need of the Children’s Life House in Huntington. She began by sharing how she came to be in Huntington. After previously being in Whitley County, she moved to the Huntington office and became connected with Judge Davin Smith. Davin told her that she needed to meet Jimi, and Kerri explained how her and Jimi hit it off quickly. Since the first time meeting Jimi, they had always been talking about the need for a place for children, and Kerri expressed her excitement for the Children's Life House.



Kerri King emphasizes the need for the Children's Life House.

Kerri also shared the value and importance of relationships for everyone, including children, and how the Children's Life House is going to be important in helping with the relationships of the kids being served. "Kids in DCS find themselves in a position of no control, where they often lose their relationships," Kerri explained as she went on to share that placements in Huntington are often limited because of homes already being full. "When kids from Huntington have to be placed outside of Huntington, they are not only losing their parents, but they're losing their friends, their school, and their community. The Children's Life House is going to provide kids with a safe home while also helping them keep their community." By the time Kerri was done, it was clear the Children's Life House is needed, and we are eager to start helping kids soon alongside Kerri King.

As the night wrapped up, you could feel the encouragement and joy in the air. The evening helped highlight that everything New Life Ministries does points back to God and God is present in every story, every ministry, and ever life that has been changed. We are thankful for everyone who took the time to attend, sponsor, and support this event and New Life Ministries.