

Pathway to Freedom, Inc.

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Expanding Hope and Transforming Lives in Arkansas

By Scott McLean, Founder/CEO

Arkansas is facing a significant reentry crisis. Approximately one in two individuals released from Arkansas prisons return to incarceration within three years. A key driver of this cycle is the limited availability of structured, evidence-based reentry programming that equips individuals with the skills and support needed to successfully reintegrate into society.

For more than 14 years, PTF has been addressing this challenge by delivering highly structured, evidence-based programming practices that educates, empowers, and transforms the lives of justice-impacted individuals.

Our proven approach helps reduce recidivism, strengthens families and communities, and generates long-term savings for taxpayers by breaking the costly cycle of incarceration.

Because of PTF's demonstrated impact, leadership within the Arkansas Department of Corrections (DOC) has continued to seek opportunities to expand our reach. More than a year ago, Secretary of Corrections Lindsay Wallace and Division of Corrections Director Dexter Payne met with me to request that PTF establish programming at the East Arkansas Regional Unit (EARU) in Brickeys, Arkansas. EARU is one of the DOC's most challenging facilities and has historically had limited access to structured, evidence-based programming.

I am pleased to share that, on June 15, PTF launched its Satellite Virtual Program at EARU. This innovative initiative extends PTF's life-changing programming to individuals who otherwise would not qualify for our 18-month residential program at the Hawkins Unit in Wrightsville. Designed to serve up to 50 participants each quarter, the program creates a new pathway for transformation by preparing participants for future placement in the PTF residential program, provided they meet eligibility requirements, including sufficient time remaining on their sentence.

The PTF Satellite Virtual Program is a voluntary, 100-day, Christ-centered, educational, and values-based initiative that delivers evidence-based curriculum through a secure online platform. Participants develop practical life skills that foster personal responsibility, emotional regulation, sound decision-making, and lasting behavioral change.

Through facilitated instruction, participants gain a deeper understanding of the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that have shaped their lives. They learn to overcome destructive patterns, build healthy relationships, strengthen their character, and prepare for successful reintegration into their families, workplaces, and communities.

This expansion represents far more than the launch of a new program. It reflects the Arkansas Department of Corrections' confidence in PTF's proven model and our shared commitment to reducing recidivism through meaningful transformation. Most importantly, it creates new opportunities for men to change the trajectory of their lives, restore their families, and return to their communities equipped to succeed.

Your partnership makes this work possible. Every investment in PTF expands access to proven programming, transforms lives, and helps create safer communities across Arkansas. Together, we are offering hope where it is needed most and building a future where more individuals leave prison prepared not just to reenter society, but to thrive.



Scott McLean prays with members of the inaugural class

A Calm Place in the Storm

By Mathew McKenzie, PTF Graduate

I would not be where I am today without Pathway to Freedom. I grew up in a stable home, but looking back, I can see how my upbringing affected the way I viewed rules, authority, and consequences. As an adult, I wasn't going to church or learning the Bible and over time, my morals and ethics relaxed, and my choices separated me from my wife and young son for almost six years.

Shortly before I went to prison, I realized that real change would require God, community, and a different way of thinking and living. Being involved in Pathway to Freedom's intensive 18-month Christ-centered therapeutic program, showed me that the Lord is actively working in people's lives. Over time, I came to think of PTF as a spiritual hospital.

One of the greatest influences on me within PTF's programming was Authentic Manhood. It helped me better understand what it means to lead my family and the responsibility that comes with being a husband and father. Through PTF's Every Man's Battle course, I also learned more about my struggles and developed healthier ways of dealing with them in a safe environment.

PTF also helped me begin looking toward my future. The Lord gave me an idea which He then allowed me to get patented. It's an aluminum guitar part and through His grace, this idea eventually led to a new company. As I prepared for life after prison, PTF Reentry Specialist James Dalton connected me with a mentor who pushed me to see what I was capable of accomplishing. That relationship directly led to the two of us starting this business together.

Today, my family and I pray together, support one another, and are closer than we were before my incarceration. That growth has strengthened the way I show up for my wife and son, and it has brought us closer together as a family. I am becoming a better father, husband, brother, and son because of what God has done in my life through Pathway to Freedom, including teaching me about leadership, responsibility, and faith, along with so much more.

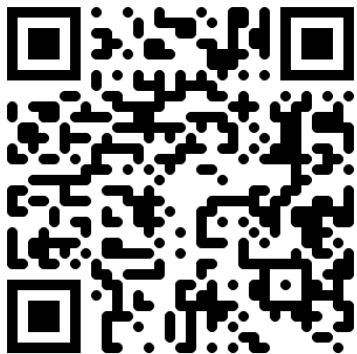
That is why I believe organizations like Pathway to Freedom are needed across the state of Arkansas. When a man's life begins to change, that change can reach his family as well as the community he returns to. Programs like PTF give men the structure, faith, and support they need in a safe, calm environment to make that kind of change possible and permanent.

For me, PTF became a place where Mr. Scott McLean and his staff work to strengthen and build up the men around them. Witnessing that Christ-centered support deepened my faith and reminded me that the Lord loves me, protects me, and is actively working in my life. During my incarceration, Pathway to Freedom became a calm place in my storm. I could read the Bible without fear of harassment, and PTF staff showed me practical ways to live as a Christian.



Mathew McKenzie with his wife and Coach Gene Chizik

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Your gift helps restore lives, families, and communities through Christ-centered transformation.



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