

March/April
2017

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Restoration House

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seminars are

available for local

churches.

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

Changing Lives from the Inside Out

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Banquet March 4th 2017

On March 4, Mt. View Mennonite Church will be holding what is now our annual banquet, with last year being the first of what we pray will be many. Last year one of the main objectives of the banquet was to raise funds for the restoration of Restoration House. Thanks to the wonderful member of Mt. View and some of the other churches that support this ministry! We were blessed with some wonderful donations. Brother Joe Arbaugh and many other members of Mt. View, and also some other churches, also got busy and volunteered to do much of the labor allowing us to use the donations for the materials



Brother Joe Arbaugh shared the work on Restoration House at Mt. View Mennonite Church during the banquet in March 2016

needed to remodel the house. We paid for the new roof since this was a major undertaking, and we also paid to have the siding installed. We saved a great deal of money with Brother Joe and Robert Cason installing all of the new windows in the house.

We sent out pictures of before and after the house was mostly repaired.

Brother Joe has retired from the board, our loss, but he did not do so until he had accomplished the majority of the work done on Restoration House along with lots of other faithful Christian brothers and sisters.

We always need funds to run this ministry, so the banquet will still be a fund raiser, but we will also give updates on the successes in the ministry last year and areas we have not been able to accomplish some of our goals, like receiving a director for the house. We desperately need a director for the house! If this does not happen soon, we will rent it out until we can find someone.

More on the Banquet

Yum, Yum! Here are just a few of the dishes



that will be

served at the banquet. Along with testimonies, from people blessed by the ministry who were once incarcerated, music from "Cousins for Christ," and updates on



the workings of the ministry, we will have some of the best food you ever sank your teeth into

served by the people making this banquet possible. There will be a box for a love offering, otherwise everything is free for you to enjoy.



Remember the prisoners



I am not sure if you will recognize this younger man or not. He was at the Day of Jubilee at my house in 2010.



Lets remember the pen pal outreach!

John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.” Heb 13:3

When Paul wrote this verse, he was referring to believers imprisoned as martyrs. In it we see clearly God's desire that believers care for other believers who are persecuted (suffering in various ways) for their faith. Consider the possibility of a more subtle wisdom from the principle in this verse however. Generally speaking, we know that the inmate in prison is suffering too—justly so—for his selfish and evil deeds. Although here in Hebrews, God is expressing His desire that believers remember the pain of fellow Christians that are suffering unjustly, throughout Scripture we read of God's merciful nature toward mankind. There are many commands that we be like Him in this way.

In Galatians 6:10, Paul also tells Christians to demonstrate a more favorable approach towards the believing when he writes: “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to **all**, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” But notice the mention of doing good to “all.” One way we can learn to do good to those around us is to remember our condition before Christ saved us and thus grow in humility. Though we still struggle with many sins, some of which we certainly do not even recognize yet, we can see that we aren't walking alone in the choices in our lives. There is evidence of growth in our attitudes and others are eating the fruit of our obedience to God.

As we remind ourselves of how hopeless and lost we were, we can empathize with those who are still lost in the endless struggle and pain of a life lived in rebellion against God. We know in our hearts the truth about Jesus the same as Peter did when he said: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and **know** that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” in John 6:68-69. We have experienced the pain of consequences for sin and know the temptation to self-pity that punishment brings. Loneliness and confusion are a part of our former story. Regrets and isolation color our past as we too experience the difficulty of encountering people who cannot--or will not--forgive us for the selfish choices we have made. While God promises to forgive us, mankind is not so dependable. Our errors revealed, we alternate between pride and shame. We can relate to the struggle to control emotions and thoughts that spring from the justification of our sin, a lack of repentance, and stubbornness.

Sin--whether for the believer or the unbeliever--is much like a prison. The Bible likens it to slavery. God's heart towards his people during Moses' day was to rescue them from Egypt, the picture of sin. It is His merciful nature that causes Him to desire deliverance for His children. He also brought His people back to Israel from Babylon after judging them in slavery and captivity. It wasn't just to punish however; He wanted His children to learn some important lessons. Ultimately, it has always been God's de-

sire that mankind be **free** to serve and love Him. Whereas sin makes this impossible, Jesus' death has made it possible. That is the blessing of a relationship with God Almighty.

Jesus wants His followers to share in the sufferings of others because we are equipped by our own suffering to empathize as well as to bring fellowship, wisdom, and comfort. Often it is the most difficult of circumstances in which the Lord finally has the attention of the one He is calling to Himself. Being redeemed ourselves, we can act as “little Christs” who bring mercy, friendship, and hope to the lives of prisoners who still live in dark places. If we comprehend how blessed we are to be outside of those prison bars when we deserve to be inside of them, it should move us to share the secret of God's forgiveness with others who are still behind the bars.

“Remember the prisoners...” This can mean praying for them or visiting them regularly. Let them know you care about them by investing in their life in tangible ways. Become a pen pal which can open the door to sharing the gospel with them. Maintain a connection with them in order to help disciple them. Find creative ways to attempt to ease their loneliness. We can be salt and light to these people, many of whom are in a position of humility much like the prodigal son. They need encouragement in their pursuit of God--even if they are believers--as they face the difficulty of a long sentence and an ungodly environment.

Submitted by:
Mrs. Kelly Locklear

May you each have a blessed Resurrection Sunday

As I look forward to celebrating another Easter I want to earnestly search my heart, to dig deep inside, and think hard of all that my Lord Jesus has done and continues to do for me. We were all lost at one time, even though I feel my lost state was much worse than many others. Yet God had reason in Himself to save me. I am no more or less deserving than any other. God could have not chosen to save me, but He didn't. Some of you reading this will disagree in my understanding of the sovereign choice of God to call some while not calling others. My point at this time is not to argue man's freedom in reference to God's sovereign choice. I just want to be sure I remember day in and day out to be thankful for the salvation I have.

I see many who seem to be on that broad road. Matt. 7: 13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it." They listen to false teachers who preach to make people feel good,

not to make them fall under conviction and seek repentance. I could have easily fallen into that. I remember studying with false teachers, who, on the outside, seemed to have all of the right answers, but their answers were not to the right questions. The question being, "What must I do to be saved?" Rom. 10:9 "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

So how does one come to the point of believing and confessing? 1Cor. 2:14-16 14 "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ."

How do we receive the mind of Christ so that we can discern the spiritual things? Eph. 2:1 And you

He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins," So I was living in sin, I could not, on my own, understand I was lost, much less know what to do to get help. This is the same for every lost soul. God seeks lost sinners, not the other way around. God allows His Holy Spirit to draw us to Him, as the Holy Spirit allows us to realize we are lost, in need of a Savior. We need to repent from the old life. Jesus died for my sin and the Holy Spirit gave me the gift of saving faith to begin this life-long journey with Jesus as our Lord and Savior, not just Savior. So looking at just my own life, know fully how undeserving of salvation I was, knowing it was nothing I did or would ever do to receive this wonderful gift, my question is not, "Why doesn't God save everyone?" or taking credit for my salvation because of a decision I made through my free will. All I can do is praise God because I have been called by the sovereign will of God and since God saved me, I can never lose my salvation. Praise be to God!



Here is Ron preaching at one of the prisons a few years ago.

A thought I had on March 19, 2002
 Make me a better servant, a better friend, a better leader, a better follower, and therefore a better, more obedient child of God.



Here is an inmate reading one of the earlier newsletters and writing the ministry a letter.

Another Little Known Prophecy Submitted by Artis Mules

Matthew 27:52-53: "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

We usually think of Easter as a time of spring with bunnies, eggs and even lambs - Passover lambs or

otherwise. We don't think of this time of the year as spooky or strange. Perhaps for that reason, in the preaching of our Lord's resurrection message this difficult to explain verse is often overlooked. Yet, even this unusual and unexpected event was foretold in prophecy, slightly more than 500 years before it's

fulfillment.

Isaiah 26:19: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

The great earthquake which broke the lintel in the temple and tore the curtain, and damaged so many animal sheds, also broke open many places in the graveyard. But three days later, while urgent repairs were still going on in the city itself, many people saw those whom they recognized. It's no wonder that so many were willing to listen to Peter's sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41) and believe!

MARCH 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Daylight savings	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Spring begins	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Palm Sunday	10	11	12	13	14 Good Friday	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Red numbers on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sunday are evenings I minister at Dillwyn and Buckingham prisons.
The blue numbers are the days I preach at a local church.
The green numbers are the days we have the (MOM) Monthly Outreach Meal at Living Word Christian Fellowship.

Mission Statement

To establish and strengthen the Christian life of inmates and their families by providing opportunities for worship, instruction, nurturing of children, fellowship, service, mutual aid, brotherly counsel, and to establish and strengthen the Christian life of evangelism. To bring the Gospel to the unsaved and to lead them to faith in Christ followed by membership in the body of Christ.

"All donations of any kind are tax deductible under United States Code Section 170(c)(2). All giving constitutes your express agreement to relinquish control in accordance with IRS regulation."

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Resurrection: My Redeemer Lives

As Resurrection Sunday approaches, our thoughts tend to focus on the amazing morning when Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" (Mt 28:1) went to the tomb only to find the Roman guards trembling, the stone rolled away, and an angel explaining that Jesus is not there. These historical accounts in the Bible bear the ring of truth to all believers but many critics disturb us with doubts of its possibility and they are correct! Without Christ being God to take up His life after death (John 10:17-18), no one will ever experience resurrection, and we are "to be pitied more than all men" (I Cor. 15:19) because we will not be raised either, our faith is futile, and we are still in our sins (I Cor. 15:15-18).

We will all face death once

(Heb 9:27). We see people die, but we only accept by faith that we will go to heaven. Yet no one alive knows experientially what happens exactly. Fortunately, Christ, our Brother, has gone before us to demonstrate that there is life after death (I Cor. 15:6, 8). Those eyewitness testimonies are important for us because "we know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus" (II Cor. 4:14). We depend on empirical evidence in order to believe in this generation of doubting Thomases (John 20:24-29).

We suffer so much in this life (more as we age) and as our time gets closer to depart this life, we can consider Job, who suffered much as a righteous man of faith. Even though Job lived long before

He is Faithful!!

(Inmate Corner)

Christ, he had faith in the coming Messiah to fulfill His ministry of redemption. Job knew that his hope of salvation rested in the fact that there was life after death (Job 19:25-27).

I know that my Redeemer lives!
Submitted by an inmate at Dillwyn CC

He is Faithful!!

God is faithful to hear your pleas
Whether standing or on your knees.
Nothing can separate Him from the heart
Prayer being the very place to start.
Do not be afraid of a single thing,
Only a broken spirit surely

bring.

Faith will as well make itself a way
Bringing light into a darkened day.
Submitted by an inmate from CA

If you are reading this newsletter, whether someone who is incarcerated or who was incarcerated or one who attends one of the many churches which also get this newsletter, we welcome poems, short stories, short Bible lessons, and other topics to be approved by the staff here before printing. We do not use names with the articles especially for inmates to avoid difficulties in the prison system.