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After Care

Support Groups

Pen Pal (letter writing)

Mentoring

Family Ministry

Youth Ministry

Restoration House

## Ministry training seminars are available for local churches.

### Thought for Feb. 7, 2002

When I am tempted I sometimes do not look for your help. Forgive me Lord, as I see around me the lust of the world and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. How weak I am without you, my God, how easy it is to fall when I do not use the power of the Holy Spirit

# Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

## CHANGING LIVES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

May / June, 2014

## Why would I want to get involved in writing inmates?

In the beginning of this ministry over 26 years ago, I began writing inmates that I actually visited in the jails and prisons. As they moved from jail to prison I would continue to write, as I would when inmates I ministered to moved to a prison I was not visiting. This letter-writing ministry quickly grew as men were transferred and new inmates were exposed to my Bible teaching and preaching. I mentioned this growing need at some of the churches I visited from time to time and I got several volunteers that were willing to be a part of letter writing. Up till 2013 I had mostly written inmates from VA prisons and a few men who were federal inmates. This year as several pen pal outreaches stopped writing these much-needed letters, inmates sought new pen pals and wrote ministries seeking someone to write. These ministries sought pen pal outreaches on the Internet

and since Rehoboth Jail & Prison has one we became inundated with requests from inmates all over the U.S. for pen pals.

Since I had never met any of these men it was much different writing them blind. I had at least some understanding of the men I had gotten to know through Bible studies. These new men could tell me anything and I had no idea if they were telling me the truth about their reasons for wanting a pen pal or not.

Some men asked for female pen pals and we had to tell them we do not pair men and women to write to each other. Others asked us to look up case law and we had to explain we did not do that either. Some wanted us to do searches on the Internet to find people who they used to be in touch with or relatives they had lost contact with. God showed me



Jesus saved Peter and He is the Savior of all whom God has called according to His purpose.

that this could be someone that did not want to be found by these men, so we do not do that either. So when I get the request for a pen pal I send out an introductory letter that explains how we will be happy to write and get them pen pals, but there are also things we do not do. This separates those who are looking for something we do not offer from the ones who need Christian fellowship.

## Some things to look out for when writing a pen pal

Many pen pals are actually looking for financial help. In many states the inmates work but don't get any pay. The personal hygiene items are provided by the state; however, they are very slow getting them to the men at times. They are supposed to get free mailing as well, but that also comes at the discretion of whoever is in charge that day, even though the state is supposed to provide these items. In my introductory letter to inmates, I share what the pen pal ministry can and cannot do. We

mention that we cannot provide funds, we do not do research for cases pending in court, we do not go online looking for friends or family members with whom these inmates have lost contact and we do not pair up male inmates with female pen pals or vice versa. So when we send this letter it eliminates those not actually looking for someone just to write to. Many of the first letters I get from inmates are very short. Some are several pages. I am sharing some of the shorter ones. Some of these men

have written so many ministries that used to have a pen pal program, but which no longer have volunteers. A lot of these ministries do not even respond to the men, since the ministry pen pal program no longer exists. There are several well-known ministries which no longer provide a pen pal outreach. One of these better-known ministries is Prison Fellowship, started by Chuck Colson.

Here are some letters requesting pen pals. Several new requests are coming in each week.

Here are some letters requesting a pen pal from inmates who get little or no outside communication. We have left the letters as they were written, unedited.

Dear Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Att. Ron Baker, Chaplain

Hi,

I would like to start off my letter by extending to you the warmest welcome greetings and you do not know me yet, but if you will just bear with

me for a few moments longer but I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. My name is Eldon and I am 53 year old man who is currently serving a 40 sentence. I was wondering if it might be possible for your Christian based organization to help find me a fellow Christian that I can share the Lords Word with through and exchange of letter with each other. I would be very grateful to you for what every help that you can give me in finding a Christian that I can write to.

Respectfully Eldon

This man has not written back even after such an encouraging request for a pen pal. He wanted a Christian to correspond with and we shared a Christian letter with Scriptures and encouragement. This is why I like to receive at least three letters from an inmate before I try to find a pen pal for them. I discern their letters and see how sincere they are about writing. He is in California.

Dear Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry, (Death Row Inmate)

I am here on death row in Raleigh NC. I hardly get any mail and was

hoping you could find me some pen pals. I would really appreciate it.

This man's second letter showed true appreciation for us writing him. He wrote a neat two-page letter back and front and expects to continue communication as long as he can. This man and one other prisoner are the only death row inmates I have ever communicated with. Since this letter refers to his location we did not use his name.

This is one of the most rewarding outreaches with little output.

While we choose not to pair up male and female pen pals, that does not mean when an inmate asks for a female pen pal that there is not a legitimate loneliness and earnest desire to find a mate. I know of several prison ministries which were started by couples married after being pen pals in prison. Brother Ed Martin, who founded Hope Aglow Ministry, is just one.

Chaplain Baker,  
God Bless  
I'm looking for a Christian who is looking for fellowship. I am 37 years old. I've been in prison 18 years. I parole 2019. I would love to be a part of your pen pal fellowship program. Thank you.  
God bless  
Because of His blood, Christian I received this letter 5/10/13 and wrote him a letter the same day. I haven't gotten second letter yet. He is in California.  
My name is Ray and I am very

interested in finding out more information about your pen pal program. I would also like to know what Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry does. Thank you for sending me this information and thank you for being there for those of us that are incarcerated. My prayer is that your ministry is blessed as it blesses others.  
Thank you.  
I received his request for a pen pal on 5/22/13 and responded on 5/30/13. I have not heard back yet. His letter is from Oregon.

I cannot explain the joy and sorrow I have felt writing inmates and hearing how God is working in their lives. Remembering how much I enjoyed having my name called at mail call several times, I also remember the faces of men who rarely if ever had their names called. Some would ask me to read my letters out loud so they could enjoy the parts that were not personal. Some men did not even go up to mail call, since they know no one is going to write.

Writing letters seems to be a dying art except to incarcerated men and women

I am thankful I learned to enjoy writing when I was in the Army and then continued in prison. It has made it easy and enjoyable to do this overwhelming ministry to hundreds of men each month. Right now I have 58 names from inmates outside of Virginia on the pen pal list, 23 in the state, and then 6 men who are out of prison and still in touch.

Attention: Ron Baker, Chaplain  
Dear Sir  
My name is Jerome I am from Galax VA and my family is still there, but we do not write because of my life I use to live. Now I live for the Lord and He has forgiven me and I have forgiven them too. I would like to ask you to put my name on your pen pal list so I can keep on learning more about this lovely life I have just found out about how lovely it is

and that I can share with others and with my family too. I never knew life could be so lovely and enjoying. I know I may be locked up, but I'm not locked up with the state, I'm locked up with God and will share His Word. So may your church and rest be blessed all your life.

Jerome

This fellow has been writing since January. I wrote my first letter on 1/14/13 and he's written so often I've stopped counting his letters.  
While I do not write every inmate each day or week, there are some who actually write twice a week. Some I have not heard from in a while so I did not add their numbers to this list. In June alone we gained 18 new inmates.

## How long does it take with a computer and spell check to write a letter?

Greetings in Christ

I saw your name in a prison resource guide that you offer a prison pen pal program. If this is so, could you please let me know what the procedure or requirements are for me to be put on a list for correspondence. Thank you for your time and effort.

Michael

I received his request on 4/18/13 and I responded 4/22/13 but my letter came back. Some of his writing was hard to read and I made a mistake in the inmate's address or institu-

tional number. So I went online, found this man and got the proper information and re-mailed his letter with another one on 5/14/13. He has not responded yet. He resides in Florida.

To whom it may concern, I'm currently incarcerated & writing with hope that you are still taking applications for your pen pal program. I am also interested in any other religious material or services you have to offer. With that said have a wonderful day and may God bless you all.

Marlon

I got this request on 4/1/13 and responded on 4/2/13. I have not received a second letter. Chino, California

Dear Sir or Madam, I am writing to you about your letter writing ministry to connect me with a pen pal, any age gender or occupation. Thank you for your assistance. Sincerely Stefan

I got his letter on 2/7/13 and responded on 2/12/13. I am receiving lots of letters from this fellow who is doing life in Illinois.

Good Day Dear Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry, Good morning! I am writing to request a pen pal, a Christian. I want a person to talk to me about God and be a friend with me. Please send me an order form or add me to your Christian pen pal list. Thanks Calvin

I got Calvin's letter 1/17/13 and responded but I am not sure of the date. I have not heard back. So I wrote him again in case he did not get the letter. Sometimes I have a hard time reading their writing so the address might have been wrong.

## If you think the inmate is the only who gets a blessing you should read all their letters.

Dear Friend, I really hope I can find someone to write and learn from. I have 5 to 8 years in prison to do. After a few years all but my little girl and her great granny 73 has forgotten me. It hurts and I cut myself off from people for fear of being let down and left I guess. I am 35 Indian. I am saved and believe but feel lost at times. Pride is my down fall. I am very upfront and honest. It is hard doing this time with no one to lean on or trust. A friend to write would be a

world of help. I don't know what else to say so I hope this finds you in high spirits. Smile today.

Thank you Timothy

I got this request on 3/6/13 and responded on 3/12/13 but never heard back. He is in Tennessee.

I am writing about the pen-pal system you offer to inmates. Can you add my name to the list please? Do you have Bible studies for inmates? If so please would you send one to me?

Jerry

I received Jerry's letter on

2/5/13 and responded with a list of Bible studies on 2/12. He is in Texas. I have not heard back.

Dear Chaplain Ronald Baker Greetings and blessings to you and you ministry,

Thank you very much for returning my letter. I do not know how it came to you I sent it to Ohio. Chaplain Ron we have Christ very much in common. However I do not know much about the Mennonites. However I do like to learn about different faiths. I would though to have a pen pal

very much. Thanks for taking time to write and for the scriptures. I am from Alex. But do not know Schuyler, is it by Richmond? God bless you very much & thank you. Anthony This man actually wrote another ministry and they forward me his letter, neither of us knows why. So I wrote and he has been writing almost a year now. I have so many letters from him that I cannot even count them all. He is from Florida.

Dear RJPM.

Please forward me information a list of names and addresses or an application in how I am to apply for or receive pen pal correspondence. Thanks for your time and efforts and please pray for me.

Sheile

She requested a list of names and we do not send out a list of names for obvious reasons. I responded to her and have not heard back. This is one of the reasons for the introduction letter. She is from Oklahoma.

Death Row Inmate

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to request pen pal. I am on death row in CA. I have been here since 1987, when I was 23 years old. (Executions are seldom carried out in this state.) I became a born again Christian shortly after I was arrested, and I've been trying to please God with my life since then. I consider myself a committed Christian. Over the years I've written several Christian books, including a harmony of the four gospels, and a number of articles.

(My books have not been published but some of my articles have been.) I hope to write more in the future.

God willing, a Christian pen pal will be found for me, and we'll become long-term friends. Your help would be appreciated.

I hope to hear back from you with some good news. May God's perfect will be done in your life.

Soli Deo Gloria

I received his request on

5/20/13 and responded on 5/21/13 I have heard back again with a nice two page letter back and front.

We have formulated a list of Bible correspondence courses for inmates and ministries who mail them. We also have some ministries who supply Bibles and other resource material for men and women who are incarcerated. We are adding to the list as we receive more information. He stopped writing as of Dec. 2013.

# MAY 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 DCC/ RJPM	8	9	10
11 DCC/ RJPM	12 BCC/ RJPM	13	14 DCC/ RJPM	15 Food Bank	16	17
18	19	20	21 DCC/ RJPM	22	23	24
25	26 BCC/ RJPM	27	28 DCC/ RJPM	29	30	31

## Prayer Corner

Pray for the elderly who do not have air conditioning during these very hot months. Many inmates also live in very small rooms and if they do not have a fan the heat can be unbearable.

Pray for the economy and fuel prices.

Pray for one-parent families in which one person is doing the work of two trying to support the children and raise them up in the way they should go.

Pray for the chaplains and administration who work in the jails and prisons, that God might influence their decisions.

Praise God for the churches who welcome men and women with troubled pasts into the congregation, sharing God's love in everyday living.

Pray for various prison ministries and the men and women who serve the Lord in those ministries, who some people see as a waste of good resources. Many times they serve God with little encouragement from the world.

Notice I go into the prison under RJPM each time now even though PF leads the odd-week services at DCC. The initials BCC stands for Buckingham Correctional Center; services are held between 6:30 & 7:45 PM. DCC stands for Dillwyn Correctional Center; all services are held between 6:00 and 7:30 PM. RJPM stands for Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry. Sunday Service and the 5th Monday are worship services; the other services are generally a Bible study. Food Bank—pass out food to needy in Schuyler, VA, every third Thursday between 4:30 & 6:00 PM.

### Offerings & Donations

are tax deductible since Rehoboth is a non-profit organization. They can be sent to the address below and will be used to further the Jail & Prison Ministry.

Ministry Address:

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry  
 Ronald R. Baker, Chaplain  
 6166 Helens Way Schuyler, VA 22969-9607  
 E-mail: rrbak@juno.com  
 Phone: (434) 831-2593

Web site: [www.jailandprisonministries.org](http://www.jailandprisonministries.org)

### 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.

# JUNE 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Preach at Holiness Church	2	3	4 DCC/ RJPM	5	6	7
8 DCC/ RJPM	9 BCC/ RJPM	10	11 DCC/ RJPM	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 DCC/ RJPM	19 Food Bank	20	21
22	23 BCC/ RJPM	24	25 DCC/ RJPM	26	27	28
29	30 BCC/ RJPM					