

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

July / Aug
2017

Changing Lives from the Inside out

Celebrate the 4th in a new way!

How did the Fourth of July become a national holiday?



For the first 15 or 20 years after the Declaration was written, people didn't celebrate it much on any date. It was too new and too much else was happening in the young nation. By the 1790s, a time of bitter partisan conflicts, the Declaration had become controversial. One party, the Democratic-Republicans, admired Jefferson and the Declaration. But the other party, the Federalists, thought the Declaration was too French and too anti-British, which went against their current policies.

By 1817, John Adams complained in a letter that America seemed uninterested in its past. But that would soon change.

After the War of 1812, the Federalist party began to come apart and the new parties of the 1820s and 1830s all considered themselves inheritors of Jefferson and the Democratic-

Republicans. Printed copies of the Declaration began to circulate again, all with the date July 4, 1776, listed at the top. The deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on July 4, 1826, may even have helped to promote the idea of July 4 as an important date to be celebrated.

Celebrations of the Fourth of July became more common as the years went on and in 1870, almost a hundred years after the Declaration was written, Congress first declared July 4 to be a national holiday as part of a bill to officially recognize several holidays, including Christmas. Further legislation about national holidays, including July 4, was passed in 1939 and 1941.

All of this is interesting being free in a scene of freedom for a foreign nation, but what about man's spiritual freedom? Remember the reason the pilgrims came to America in the first place. It was for religious freedom.



Over the many years, from the early pilgrims to the celebration for our freedom from British rule, our country has had many spiritual ups and downs. One of the recent up times was the devastation caused by terrorists on 9-11. The turning from the desires of the flesh to God was short lived. After a very brief time things were back to the way they were before the attack.

Jesus is coming soon. There have been sufficient warnings for those who have ears to hear. So while you are celebrating the fourth with fireworks and cookouts let's think about our Christian heritage and our individual spiritual freedom. This freedom is not to do as we want. It is freedom from the power, presence, and penalty of sin. Our freedom does not give us freedom for everyone to do what is right in his own eyes. (Judge 17:6) The result of that life was God's chastisement of the nations and destruction of many. Rom 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Let's celebrate this freedom. Oh Lord draw us closer to you day by day!

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Ministry Out-
reaches Available:
In-Prison Ministry

After Care

Support Groups

Pen Pal-

(letter writing)

Mentoring

Family Ministry

Youth Ministry

Restoration House

Ministry training
seminars are

available for local
churches.

Why is the art of letter writing dying?

I am thankful for my ability to write letters even in this fast paced world around me. I came by it honestly and never thought it would come in so handy. It started when I was drafter. When I went to basic training at Fort Gordon GA, I missed my family and hated the military. Oh, did I mention I was drafted? I use to tell people there were still claw marks from my fingernails on the porch where they dragged me off. Anyway I started writing home every time I had a break. If any of you readers were in basic in

any of the branches of the military you know, basic hardly gives you time to eat, sleep, and use the bathroom. However, I found time to write a few pages each day and would mail them home when I completed one. Some of the letters were 21 or 22 pages, hand written, back and front. Inmates sometimes write to me and say a few words and then say there is not much to write about here. Men in the military would ask me, "Where do you find so much to write about?" Well, I would start

with my morning and not leave any details out that might be of interest to my family who were also missing me. So, when I got sentenced to prison I restarted the letter writing. I did improve one thing. Where I complained a lot about the Army when I wrote, I did not feel the right to complain as much about prison for two reasons. One, I put myself there and, two, was I did not want to cause my family any more concern than they would naturally have watching movies about the things that happen in

prison. I only wrote about the positive things and since God was working in my life there were many positive things happening. Having a family and other pen pals to correspond with while incarcerated was a great blessing. There were men who could not write or read, so I wrote their families for them and read their mail back to them. Through my own joy and the joy I saw in these men's eyes getting a letter; I was reassured of the importance of having PEN PALS. **Want to be one?**

2016 Day of Jubilee at LWCF

Let me give you all a heads up for Sept 30th.



This ministry had been established in March for 30 years. We had our first celebration of this ministry after the first year. At first it was on the first Saturday of October and later on the last Saturday in September. So on September 30 this year we will have our 30th Day of Jubilee at Living Word Christian Fellowship, 5150 Lowesville Rd., Arrington, VA, 22922. Anyone interested in any aspect of prison ministry, such as in the right hand column of the first page, is welcome. If you have a friend or family member incarcerated come and join us. If you have been incarcerated, or know someone who has been, they might enjoy fellowship without negative judgment. Please come and enjoy testimonies, singing praises to God for His work on various prison ministries, wonderful fellowship with like minded Christians and more

food than you could ever eat in one sitting.

This event started out as a reunion of volunteers past and present and inmates who had gotten out of prison. They wanted to catch up with some of the people who sacrificed their evenings to minister to these men while they were incarcerated. In just a couple of years it was transformed into a reunion and a time of praise, worship, and thanksgiving to God for the lives He changed using ordinary people who He loved first and transformed their lives by the renewing of their minds to minister to the hurting, lost, and forgotten. I have not lost the feeling I had at the very first Jubilee celebration. It was a feeling of elation for how God moved a wretch like me to go back into the prisons after wanting to get out so badly, and minister to them as others had ministered to

me. It took a while for me to get back into a state prison, but the jail was a ready field to harvest. During this time I trained through Prison Fellowship by Chuck Colson, the head of the ministry. There were numerous courses. They trained volunteers and now Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry offers similar courses. We train groups on how to start a ministry to go into the prisons. We have brochures as to how to do after care for inmates released from prison, family ministry for the inmate's family while he is incarcerated and after he gets out. We can assist starting support groups for people with friends or family incarcerated. If children have a parent incarcerated they could use help with our mentoring or troubled youth information. Come and learn what you want to about ministry to those incarcerated or their family.

What are your priorities? Make a list from the most important to the least.

When I ask many people, both those incarcerated and on the street, about their daily devotional time with the Lord, I often hear: "I just do not have time for a devotional." Of course that was my reason before I set priorities in order. When someone says they do not have time for something what that means is it is not a priority for them. They are saying they have many things they are doing in their day, but that one does not make the list. I am not picking on you, or elevating myself because I have changed my priorities. God always needs to come first! However, because people have to earn a living, children have to go to school, people have to do many things in order to be ready for the next day, God either takes the back seat or He does not even get a seat. Each person has the same amount of hours in a day. You might say, "I work 14 hours a day. I have activities I need to take the children

to, or I need time to rest for the next day." We can come up with as many excuses as there are excuses. God sees where He is on our list of importance and I am sure He is not pleased even being second in our list. **Deut. 4:29** "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find [him], if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." If you are seeking God with all your heart He will be in first place in your priorities. **Matt. 6:32-34** 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day [is] the evil thereof. Many of my readers will read this, give it some

thought, and some might even try to make a devotional time a priority for a while. I did that so many times, and then I would allow the cares of the world to draw the devotional time to another slot in my priority list, until it was off the list. Some might just say, "Oh he just does not know how busy I am." My prayer is that many readers who do not have a devotional time will be convicted, not by my words but the Word of God. **Rom. 10:17** "So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This is why studying the Word is so important that is how we develop faith. **2 Chr. 7:14** "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Can we humble our lives and acknowledge time with God as our number one priority?"

How can I provide time for a devotional with my busy schedule?

Since I work from the house I set my devotional time as soon as I fully wake up. For many years I have been reading through the Bible each year following the Daily Breeds format. However I felt it was not enough. So several years ago I started reading the commentary of the Scriptures on the Daily Bread. It

still was not enough as I knew my prayer time was failing. So I made a prayer list to follow so I would not forget the prayer requests given to me. While praying I would forget so many prayers and remember them later. So I would pray for them as they came up. I needed a way to not forget any. So the list was massive

when it was finished. So I have 7 days in a week and I divided the list into days and they are still very large and continue to grow, but when people ask me to pray, I know I have a much better chance of not forgetting. So in order for anyone to really have a successful devotional time they have to chose the best time not

Some thoughts shared by one of my pen pals:

So when is this, Old enough to know better supposed to kick in.

Aging seems to be the only way to live a longer life.

I have reached the age where my train of thought often leaves the station without me. (Does that sound familiar?)

Seven question for deep thought and meditation that govern the universe. by an inmate pen pal:

1. Do you think you would pay more attention if God spoke to you from heaven?
2. Have you any doubts about the Bible?
3. Has anyone ever tried to get you to disbelieve the Bible?
4. How do you feel about an inerrant (incapable of making a mistake) author teaching you something?
5. How is God able to claim authority over all people saved or unsaved?
6. In your own words define providence, then check it with the dictionary.
7. How is man still responsibility even when God has predestined things and is control of everything?

to be interrupted and then not allow Satan to cause distractions. If you are any thing like I was, this will take time to develop into a habit. When it does you will get more out of your day allowing God to direct your every step.

JULY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 <small>Independence Day</small>	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

AUGUST 2017

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

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."

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

Some of the needs of the ministry if you are interested.

Always a need for pen pals to write male inmates

1. The board is looking for several additional board member. We meet once every other month. Once in a while we might have a special meeting, but that is rare. The meetings generally do not last more than 3 hours, but some of the time together is general fellowship since some of us only see each other at these meetings. The meetings are held at various places, but are usually here in Schuyler. The basic duties for these new members will be working with a director and with Ron with the duties of the Restoration House. We would prefer male board members for these duties. However if a lady wants to join the board we can always use help with other aspects of this ministry.

In one week I received 3 requests for a pen pal one day and the next day a request for two more. I continue to write every inmate, except female inmates, until I can find them a pen pal. As much as I enjoy writing these men some of them are looking for other pen pals. They write me for a while but continue to ask when they might get their own pen pal. Sometimes the reason for this is the first letter I send out giving the guidelines for the pen pal outreach. One guideline is we do not send money. Another is I do not provide female pen pals for male inmates or vice versa. Some of these men might want to get a pen pal who might waver from the guidelines. This is why I insist each pen pal read the Pen Pal Brochure before starting

this outreach. This is also why I try to respond to at least three letters and pass on the men I see as actually wanting a good Christian pen pal to correspond with and nothing else. I know with texting, e-mail, and other ways to communicate on the phone other than speaking, people have gotten lazy when it comes to sitting down and actually typing or writing an entire letter and spelling complete words, not texting shorthand. (smile) For those who would e-mail if they could, the DOC has made it possible through J-pay to e-mail with inmates who have the proper device. It costs less than a stamp, but both people pay. It costs the inmate \$.39 to send an e-mail. JPay's correctional email service is faster than regular mail, with in-

mates usually receiving emails within 48 hours. Each email requires a "stamp," often available at more affordable rates than traditional postage, and can be purchased online and at JPay kiosks in the correctional facility. For more information about this service go on line to J-pay.com. I choose not to use this since, if the cost is \$.39 for each attachment, picture, or additions to the e-mail, I can mail attachments for letters or pictures in one envelope. Plus I see this as another rip-off. If you send money through J-pay it costs anywhere from \$2.98 to \$1 to \$20 and so on.