

Jan/Feb 2019

Changing Lives From the Inside Out

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

May you be blessed and prosperous in the New Year!

In March we will be starting the 32 year of this wonderful experience of which God has allowed us to be a part. In these years I have had the pleasure of ministering in Augusta CC, Staunton CC, Dillwyn CC, Buckingham CC, Deep Meadows CC, James River CC, Powhatan CC, Culpeper CC, plus many jails in the central Virginia area; however, in the last few years, I spend the majority of time serving the Lord in Dillwyn and Buckingham Correctional Centers. I have been blessed to share this ministry in many churches and many of these churches have come alongside of us and are welcoming ex-offenders and their families into their congregations. All of the

outreaches to the right of this page are only possible through, and in partnership with, local churches. We would like to invite more churches who get this newsletter to join us in some of these outreaches.

We want everyone to know we greatly appreciate all of the churches, businesses, and individuals who have financially supported us over all of these years. However, joining with us in serving families of inmates through mentoring outreach to families, support groups, and working with troubled youth is also greatly needed. Allowing the support groups to use the church buildings to gather and share with others who have family or

friends incarcerated and helping with spiritual guidance is a great blessing.

Try to get people in your church who want to serve the Lord stirred up to contact us to see how we can work together to serve families and inmates about whom some of society would rather not talk. As you see to the right, we will be happy to come and share about any of the outreaches you might be interested in and we even have a training seminar to speak about in-prison ministry and all of the outreaches. Just contact us and we will set up a time to meet interested parties. And since the pen pal ministry is growing we can still use many volunteers to write men.

A few things to pray for during the upcoming year.

Here are some of our prayer requests for 2018-2019:

- We need several men or families who want to write male inmates. We do have some female inmates but we can usually cover them pretty quickly.
- We need board members or helpers who

might have time on their hands to help between the board meetings.

- We need someone interested in being director of the Restoration House. Although the house is being rented out presently to help with the expenses of the ministry, we still want it to

be a valuable part of this ministry when we have people in place to assist in this area. It will take more than one or two people to do all that is needed.

- We need prayer for the many obstacles we face from the DOC and the changing instructions to Christian ministries. It is getting

Board Chairman:

Tim Miller

Board

Secretary/Treasurer:

Lisa Miller

Other Board Members

Jon Freivald

Rhonda Via

Steve Via

Ronald R. Baker

Founder/Chaplain

Executive Director

Non- Board

Members Editors:

Sherry Wilkerson

Lindsey Wydner

Phoebe King

Mary Kiser

Ministry Outreaches

Available:

In-Prison Ministry

After Care

Support Groups

Pen Pal

(Letter Writing)

Mentoring

Family Ministry

Youth Ministry

Bible courses

Ministry training seminars are available for local churches.

very hard to actually provide help for inmates getting out of prison. Sometimes inmates have a hard time putting together a home plan for the parole board, and if they do not have an approved plan it could be harder to get approval from the parole board. Some institutions no longer want ministries to assist in this area, so **please pray for this.**

What is one good reason the pen pal ministry is so important ?

A thought I had Jan. 3, 2003: I look back at my past and ask how could I have existed in a state without God as the number one priority in my life? How can anyone go through the death of a mother or father or sister or brother or a child or even a very close friend without the assistance of God's love flowing through the person? How I pity those who do not yet know God's love and compassion.

I write many letters each day and I receive letters from men and women who have lost all communication with family, sometimes because their crime was against a family member. Sometimes a man or woman has been in and out of prison so many times and promised the family it would not happen again, only to have them return to crime after release. This lands them back into prison while the family is left to fend for themselves again. Eventually the frustration of the families will not allow them to continue to trust the inmate, so rather than be hurt over and over they just stop all communications.

However this incarceration might actually be the one that really causes the man or woman to truly repent, seek God, and to seek forgiveness from family. Since the family has heard this or similar stories from these family members in the past, their words fall on deaf ears. Sometimes the inmate will seek someone who will listen and write them back. Usually the inmate

will not tell all of the story as to why their family is not writing, but that should not be the concern of one of our pen pals. It is our duty to take the word of the one writing that he or she is truly seeking God and follow through with Christian fellowship and encouragement. This situation regarding why family is no longer communicating is one reason our pen pals do not get involved with trying to heal past wrongs between family: we only hear one side. However it is our duty to pray for this man or woman to truly seek God and for the right reasons, not just to get out of prison or jail. We pray for him or her to be able to prove to his family he has really changed. Sometimes I tell them it might not be until they have gotten out of prison and stayed clean for a period of time before family will ever trust them. If the family is

not really aware of any change, or they no longer care, they may never reunite, but that is no reason for the inmate to give up on God. We need to explain there are consequences to sin, and the more hurtful the sin the greater the consequences may be. Some consequences never end, and then we have to live with that and keep the faith.

Men and women in prison need to use the Christian pen pals as a clean slate. Basically we do not need to know about the details of their past. They are sinners, lost in sin just as we were before Jesus came into our lives. Just like us they needed forgiveness and someone to care, Jesus commands us to care for the lost and share the gospel to the ends of the earth. For many, prison is just that: the end of the earth. Luke 19:10 "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Be a pen pal and spread the gospel without leaving home.

Here are a few pictures of the Day of Jubilee, 2014! (more on the back page)



Two of our pen pals who visited us for the Day of Jubilee in the past

Here are some pictures of the Day of Jubilee for 2014. We had one of the best turnouts and the



weather was like a special gift from God. Above is one of the men I ministered to at DCC, who attends each year. Please remember as you enjoy these pictures that you would enjoy being there

in person with us that much more. Some of you should recognize these people singing at the Day of Jubilee. These lovely sisters and brother in the Lord go into prisons sometimes with me.



Even with all of the fun we have, praising, thanking, and worshipping, God is our number 1 priority. Many people, from many areas,

attend from a variety of denominations, all praising the one and only God, Jehovah, and His Son, Jesus the Christ. As we just celebrated Jesus' birth last month, let's continue to celebrate His life and gift of salvation every day.

Why do I find myself in prison?

People have all kinds of excuses for getting locked up. However there are, believe it or not, people in prison who *are* actually innocent, even as rarely as that may occur. The fact is some broke the law, and, unlike others who have not yet been to prison, these individuals got caught. Let us not throw stones at those incarcerated for something we feel we could never do. We have also fallen short of the glory of God, born in sin and lost in sin until God made His calling and election sure to us. What thought have you had that if someone heard it you would shudder in shame? Unconfused and pondered on thoughts are considered sin. Of course you cannot be locked up for thought, no matter how vile it may be. Unless it becomes an action and only then if you get caught, thoughts are not illegal.

Praise God, those in prison have gotten caught in their sin. Perhaps a thought pondered on too long became an act and God allowed them to get caught, unless that thinking or actions become a habit, which continue to hurt the lives of others. Now the one incarcerated has a chance to feel the convection of God. As a result of God getting their attention, perhaps the Holy Spirit will bring on Godly sorrow which leads to true repentance. 2 Cor. 7:9&10 "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salva-

tion not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." This is a great thing even though the consequences seem severe! In the end it is worth it because of the promise of eternity in the presence of God, NO MATTER how vile their sin was. Do you have unconfused sin in your life? If you do, and you have never received Jesus as Lord and Savior of your life, this vile inmate born again is better off than you, even if you have never done anything that you consider as terrible as what many inmates have been convicted. If God wanted man to evaluate sin on a scale He would have given us a scale to use.

I am in no way saying we should not be careful when trusting someone who has been incarcerated, but we meet new people in church all of the time and we accept them even though we do not know anything about them. What I am saying is: be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. (Matt 10:16) While this verse is speaking of false teachers coming in among the flock, perhaps it could also refer to someone we need to be careful around until the Spirit of God is truly revealed in that person. Of course this same process should be used for any new acquaintance not just an ex-offender.

The Bible commands us to love God first and foremost. God commands us to love our neighbors. He does not say just the ones

we trust. He even commands us to love our enemies. Luke 6:27&28 "But I say unto you which hear, 'Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which spitefully use you.'" So I feel God would want a TRUE born again child of God in any church to give anyone another chance, being careful not to be taken advantage of. The sad thing I see is when men seem to be doing so well in prison, doing all of the right things for the wrong reasons, just to get out. Then when they are released, and a church gives them another chance they take advantage of the body of believers. That leaves a very bad feeling toward inmates, and it shows when the people say, "We were burned that time. Let's not trust any more inmates." Those men come back to prison wanting another chance, while others want the chance he got, and people will not trust this one because of the acts of these other ones. I see it all of the time. One person ruins it for others because he was not truly sorry for his sin. He was just willing to lie to get out and used Christians to get help. Then he wonders why no one wants to trust him the next time he asks for help.

So this is speaking to the inmate who got help and blew it, and to the body of believers not to give up on the lost. Remember Jesus only gives up on those who continually and finally refuse His salvation, reject Jesus, and who the Bible says He is and what salvation He offers.

Pray for discernment any time someone has a need and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. God will usually show their heart if we listen and be patient.

A thought I had on Feb. 7, 2003: Many who say they are seeking the Lord do not know what to do when He finds them. They seek a false god a genie who they feel should grant their every wish, with no consequence to them. They look for pleasure instead of joy and they look for materials instead of fullness in God's will.

JANUARY 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 ^{New Years}	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		

FEBRUARY 2019

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		

Red numbers on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sunday are days I minister at Dillwyn and Buckingham prisons. Blue numbers are the Sundays I preach at the Local Holiness church.

I do preach other places when asked to, but it is usually on a short notice and I cannot get it on the calendar.

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 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

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

One of the Past Jubilees, #29, before We Moved to LWCF



Here we see some of the men Rehoboth Jail and Prison Ministry has benefited over the years. They all attended this past year's Day of Jubilee, two for the first time since

they were only released in 2014, and one at the right who has blessed us many times with his presence. After a sentence of GOD years under the old law, God granted him parole. He has been out for a while now and continues to do well.

Below, left: With his back to us, we see Alvin, who brought his father to the celebration, who is 94 years old, and still praising the Lord. He has a wonderful story of his walk with Jesus.



Food is something we always have plenty of along with good Christian fellowship among some who see each other regularly and others who only see each other at this event. Trying to speak to everyone and making them feel welcome, I am so thankful I have my board to share that responsibility with me. I always appreciate the various people from all over the country who are able to be in this area at the time of the Jubilee and are able to attend and get a taste of hospitality, Southern style.



Praising God does not take a back seat when it comes to this annual event. We

praise God in song as well as with testimonies of how great our God is. So we invite you to come and see for yourself. The next Day of Jubilee celebration will be on Sept. 28, 2019. You have our information in this newsletter to get directions, if you want to come and bring someone interested in any aspect of prison ministry. Go to our website provided in this newsletter for further information of ways we might be able to assist you.



God Bless!