

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

Changing Lives from the inside out

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Happy New Year to you all!

How will we celebrate another year serving the Lord?

We here at Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry and The Bible Readers Outreach Ministry start this new year with praise and thanks to God for beginning this 38 year of service starting in the month of March. We have so much to be thankful for! On page 4 we will have an update of all the lessons, Bibles, and other materials mailed out during 2023, along with the new inmates who signed up for a pen pal and the total of letters written in 2023.

We are also thankful for the many volunteer pen pals we have writing many inmates. Those inmates are now enjoying correspondence with men and women and see a better walk with the Lord.

We are thankful for all of the individuals and churches who pray for and donate financially to the ministries, keeping our budgets where we can provide all of the office materials we need to keep things going month to month. We use lots of paper,

stamps, envelopes, and laser jet ink cartridges. We never have to wait to order ministry items and this is a wonderful blessing to us.

I am personally thankful for my ministry board who blessed the ministry by making us accountable and helping me when needed.

I am personally thankful for those who are helping me with physical work around my home. This makes my life easier. I am also grateful for those in the churches who pray for and help me with my needs. My editors are a very large blessing to the ministry and to you all. Imagine if you had to read what I write with no one editing it! The Lord is blessing me and I am thankful for time each day to do a morning devotional, Bible reading, a long

prayer list that differs each day, and still write the many letters, do some Bible lessons, and some messages to have ready when I get the opportunity to preach from time to time.

Although I am in constant prayer for many health needs, I praise God for the various healing from time to time when I am having severe pain and God grants relief. I praise Him for allowing me to be healthy enough to keep the ministry going and supervise the volunteers going into two prisons now and write all of the daily letters and fix my own meals.

We are always looking for pen pals for inmates.

Over the years of this ministry I have enjoyed thousands of letter coming from, I think, every state including Hawaii in the USA. As I have mentioned in the past we have inmates in Bangkok, Thailand, one of which is also taking the Bible studies. The studies are mailed all over the country as well. I

tell people what a blessing it is to write to people seeking someone with whom they can grow in the Lord. Think about it this way: you do not have to go any where! All you have to do is sit in the comfort of your home and take a few minutes once a week to write someone. That individual may be

someone whom everyone else has given up on. You could help lead them to repentance and to eternal life through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There will be many blessings for those who take time out of their busy day to share God's love with a soul society would rather forget.

Satan and the Department of Corrections are making it harder to correspond with those incarcerated.

I wish the USPS would intervene with the various county jails, and state and federal prisons in regard to the way families and other individuals can write inmates. We used to get a letter and on the inmate's envelope would be the proper return address. However, now we get an address in Oklahoma but the letter has to be sent to a mailing center in Texas where the letter is scanned and sent to the inmate electronically. The reason is because certain people would spray the letter, envelope, or the stamp with a liquid drug and the inmate receiving the letter would burn it and get high. While I understand the concern, I wish the mailing centers would not put yet more rules for sending mail. For example, one place I am writing requires you to only write or type on one side of the paper or they will send it back. How much effort is there in scanning one side and turning it over and scanning the other side? In addition to that, you are only allowed 5 pages. Another example is how several different prisons in Pennsylvania have the letters go to the same mailing center

address as Florida, but since there are so many prisons using the same mailing center you must be sure to add the name of each prison so the mailing center can be sure to scan and send the mail back to the right prison. Otherwise it will just come back. When you are writing hundreds of inmates like I am that becomes a hassle remembering different rules for so many inmates. However, once a volunteer gets the right address from us to mail the letter and is not getting a new name ever day or having to figure the proper address, things are much easier for the volunteer. That is our desire: to make it easy for volunteers to share the Love of God with those seeking a better life through Jesus and to have an enjoyable time corresponding. I share this for prayer. The hard-

er the DOC makes it to write an inmate, the more people get frustrated and individuals and ministries give up writing people in need of the Lord. That is why we try to wait until we receive several letters from the inmate and get the right address for the volunteer; however, when the inmate is transferred to another institution, things could change and there is nothing we can do about that. Federal inmates can be transferred from one state to clear across the country. Sending electronic mail seems to be the way to go if your pen pals are all in one state. It is less expensive for now, but I have noticed the price going up. Since I am writing nearly all of the states, my problem is how each state has their own way to hook up and varying prices, It becomes very hard and inconvenient to have so many accounts. I tried to call JPay, but the messages do not allow someone to ask questions and the website does not either,. They just give you a chance to sign up for a service. So I will just keep writing letters which I do not mind. Please pray fervently things to get easier to correspond with those incarcerated.

As you look for things to change in the New Year, try.

There are lonely people everywhere. Of course I am particularly concerned with those in prison who, because of the own mistakes, no longer have a family concerned about them. However, how about people who live alone, some couples, who also might not have family in contact with them? What about a single man or woman who could use a friendly visit, someone to give them a call once in a while, take them a meal, or invite them to church? Perhaps they have needs with which the church could help. Then there are nursing homes, and, even with the activities they have, it could become lonely. Someone could establish a personal relationship with an individual in a nursing home per-

haps to take them out for the day, ask if they could come to church on Sunday, or take them to a park to watch children play.

I often hear the same response to the question of if someone is willing to do any of these things: "I just cannot find time!" I feel many churches are doing a lot of wonderful things such as visiting the neighborhood or going to other countries to work for the Lord. While this is something some of the congregation is involved in, how about the lonely people who need a friend, even the ornery one that might take some time to get to know? I remember at the church I was pastor of, we used to visit two nursing homes around Christmas. I remember the faces of the

elderly people and those large smiles when we would sing gospel songs to them. We would break up and speak to some of the residents, and I remember one lady who use to be a teacher when I was in grade school shared with me that she had family, but they did not come to visit or call even during holidays like Mother's Day. That was a very sad thing to me since my mother died while I was in prison. We were close. I would have hated to see her in a place like that with no visits. There are lots of things a church could do locally to curb the loneliness of elderly people who, like the inmates I intercede for, so often are more or less much forgotten by family.

I have a wonderful church

family and my own family as well. I feel good when someone visits and I am not in the category of the one's I am speaking about, so "I Can Only Imagine" how the elderly people, either in nursing home or living in their own home, would feel about someone showing them the LOVE of God through a visit and loving conversation.

I wish I could get some of these lonely people to communicate with the lonely men and women in prison. They could both be greatly blessed from the Lord our God!

“Free” Tablets are Costing Prison Inmates a Fortune

There was an inmate who was 18 years old when he was sentenced to prison for murdering a girl four years his junior. It was 1995 and beepers were the height of personal technology, and the most sophisticated video game he had played was “Leisure Suit Larry,” a 2D, adult-themed computer game that followed the sexual exploits of the sleazy main character. During the 23 years he has been locked up in Ohio’s Marion Correctional Institute, this man has been on the outside edge of technology’s rapid evolution.

While he was able to maintain some of his computer skills through a work program with a nonprofit, where he now teaches other inmates basic tech skills such as composing emails and using a word processor, this inmate’s access to communication was limited. But in the early 2000s, inmates at Marion got their first taste of email—though a far different version than the one most users know. Inmates received printouts of messages, and write their responses on lined paper that would be scanned and sent back for roughly 40 cents each way.

That system was their only option for email until 2014, when prisoners learned Ohio had signed a contract with JPay, a private prison technology service company, for personal tablets. For \$140, prisoners would be able to purchase a clear, 7-inch Android device from JPay. The tablets wouldn’t be connected to the

internet, but for a fee, this fellow and his fellow inmates at Marion can access emails, games, and music from their prison cells.

“In an industry that uses chains and bars, anything they can do to look kind of cool and modern, they experiment with—but they don’t have a good sense of the costs.”

The access comes with a hefty price tag. At Marion, each email this inmate sends costs 30 cents, and video visits cost nearly \$10 for 30 minutes—services that are free for non-incarcerated internet users through services like Google and Skype. In some facilities, a simple game like solitaire that would be free on a phone costs up to \$7.99, and movie rentals and purchases range from \$2 to \$25. These rates are on the cheaper end of the market; in other states, such as Indiana, JPay’s main competitor, GTL, charges 38 cents for an email, up to \$7.99 for 48-hour movie rentals, and \$24.99 for a monthly music subscription. Even premium versions of streaming services Spotify and Apple Music only cost \$9.99 a month for those on the outside, and those plans grant access to millions more songs than what GTL offers.

Ownership of this media can be tenuous. Just this summer, Florida inmates lost about \$11.3 million in music downloads after the corrections department switched from JPay to a new contractor. Other inmates report media downloads disappearing from their devices for no explained reason.

Prisons have always been divided by the assistance of families—who can afford commissary food, or who can purchase non-state-issued clothing and necessities. Now, that divide has gone digital, and it’s private contractors and state governments that have benefited from this arrangement. In Ohio, for example, the state makes \$1.3 million annually in commissions from JPay services, according to its budget.

The Prison Policy Initiative, a criminal justice and public policy think tank, estimates that each year, families of incarcerated individuals spend upward of \$3 billion on goods provided by private companies to prisoners, including technology services. PPI also estimates that up to 72 percent of the prison technology services market, which includes tablets and video visitation, is dominated by just two companies: GTL and Securus, the company that owns JPay.

Both Securus, founded in 1986, and GTL (formerly Global Tel Link), founded in 1989, started off by offering call services in prisons at exorbitant rates. But with the advent of personal technology, the companies have expanded their offerings to personal tablets and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) calls. GTL released its first tablet in 2013. In 2015, its rival, Securus, acquired JPay, a company that had been selling tablets since 2012.

This article was from 2018

Please remember these prayer request!

Thank you for the prayers and financial support for the ministry. We are blessed with a good budget to continually purchase all of the supplies needed to run the ministry.

Pray for the board members who sacrifice their time to help the ministry run smoothly and keep us accountable, which is a very important task.

Pray for the volunteers that drive to the prisons in all kinds of weather, also sacrificing their time to share the love of the Lord with those lost and seeking a

better life in the Lord. Coming out of such an environment myself, I know how important it is to have a positive influence in such an evil, negative surrounding.

Pray for the inmates. Even with their crimes, they and their families are being taken advantage of through the prices in the commissary, the use of the tablets, not being allowed proper programs and worship. Prisons and jails continue to use covid as an excuse to lock

down the prison when ever they feel like it.

Pray for the DOC that instead of making it harder to go to church and Bible studies they will go back to allowing good Christen services as many nights as possible. One prison where I pulled time, had a Christian service every evening and two services on Sunday—one in the morning and one in the evening.

Pray for more places to help the men and women when

they are released to get jobs and places to live.

This is something churches could be involved in.

Pray for the counselors in the prisons. It seems none of them get involved in helping an inmate with no family to create a solid home plan to assist in being granted parole.

This is the update for Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry & Bible Readers Outreach Ministry for the months of Non/Dec 2024

Bible Readers Outreach Ministries:

In Oct. 2023 we mailed out 212 Bible lessons, enrolled 37 new students, mailed 7 Bibles at \$164.30 , 4 Bible dictionaries/concordances at \$59.64. Old T J. Vernon McGee commentary 2 @ 52.85 Mis. office materials (paper, envelopes, ink, cardstock) \$264.51, Stamps \$107.18 for a total of \$ 775.61

In Nov. 2023 we mailed out 219 Bible lessons enrolled 31 new students, mailed 11 Bibles cost of \$213.08, 1 Bible dictionaries/Concordances at \$17.10 Old T J. Vernon McGee commentary 0 @ \$ 0 and Mis. office materials (paper, envelopes, ink, cardstock) \$484.22 Stamps \$839.30 for a total of \$ 1554.70

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Pen Pal Outreach:

In Oct. 2023 I wrote 56 letter and received 15 new request during that month for volunteer pen pal . New volunteers to write inmates. None

In Nov. 2023 I wrote 44 letter and received 12 new request during that month for volunteer pen pal . New volunteers to write inmates. None

I also received 2 letter written in Spanish which I could not read. I have no Hispanic volunteers to respond to these request. I had a friend write a generic response stating we have no Hispanic volunteer. Are you interested?

Please keep both divisions of this ministry in your prayers. Since I send the letter to be edited and give the editors time to edit I go back a few months so we can get an accurate count and not have to wait until the last day to add the month before the newsletter goes out.

Fiscal year Dec 2022 to Nov 2023 Letters written totaled 720 and new request for a pen pal was 163 This went down from last year. Fiscal year Dec 2022 through Nov 2023 for Bible Readers Outreach

Lessons mailed out 3127 new people enrolling 348 Bibles 114 @ \$3036.23 Concordances, dictionaries, & study other books 69 @ \$1327.96 Old Testament J Vernon McGee commentaries 108 @ \$758.48 Materials, ink, cardstock \$3030.87 Stamps \$4761.61 for a total spent \$12915.15

One day, a King visited a prison and talked to each of the inmates! Most of them claimed that they were innocent. They had been rail roaded! They told him that nobody understood them, and they had been exploited. Finally, the King said to a convict, "I suppose you are an innocent victim too!"

"No, sir. I am not. I am guilty, and I deserve the punishment," replied the man. Turning to the warden.

The King said, "Here, release this rascal before he corrupts all these fine innocent people in here!"

When he was ten years old, a boy went on a cross country trip with his family. They had seen the Grand Canyon and the world's largest ball of string and today they were going to see the man with the best memory in the world. The man was a Native American, and he entertained visitors at his home in Arizona. The boy was very intrigued but struggled with how to test the man's memory. When he met the man, all the boy could think to ask was, "What did you have for breakfast on my birthday, April 2, 1950?" The man quickly answered – Eggs. The boy walked away disappointed in himself at not ask-

ing a better question, but it was time to go. The boy vowed to return, and he did, 10 years later. In the meantime, the boy became fascinated with Native American culture, even learning a little of the language. So upon meeting the man for the second time the boy greeted the man with a traditional greeting in his language, "How."

"Scrambled," said the man.

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." They can be sent to the address below and will be used to further the Jail

& Prison Ministry. Checks made out to "Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry"

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Web site www.jailandprisonministries.org (434) 831-2593

For gifts for "The Bible Reading Outreach Ministry"

Checks made out to "The Bible Reading Outreach Ministries" address Barbara Holmes 3152 Glenn

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