



SOMEONE CARES PRISON MINISTRY NEWSLETTER



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Quietly Changing Lives

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IT IS REALLY TRUE
GOD LOVES YOU.

BECAUSE OF YOU,
SOMEONE CARES.

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Someone Cares Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 11245
Fort Wayne IN 46856
Phone: 260-387-7423
Email: sdapm@someonecares.org
UPS : 3431 Cedar Run
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46818

Don & Yvonne McClure
Co-Founders

Someone Cares is a faith ministry, supported by God's love and your gifts. It is a non-profit corporation; all donations are tax-deductible.

LEAD THE PRISONERS FROM PRISON



I woke up this morning like every morning for a life time. The difference is that I am now 79 years old. I do not feel older and am still able to do all the things I have done for years. As a youth I had a motto of "live fast, die young, and have a good looking corpse." My life until Jesus was fast and furious. Then I accepted the peace that passes all understanding, and thanks to God I was born again. HE added Yvonne to my life and placed HIS word in my hand and in my heart. My rebirth led to the start of Someone Cares, leading the prisoners from prison into a relationship with the Lord.

A friend called and asked, "How long are you going to keep this Ministry going?" I answered, "Don't ask me, ask HIM!" We ask God every day to show us the way and give us the knowledge and wisdom to move

this Ministry forward.

When we started this Ministry we would put together programs and speak at Churches about three to four times each month. That is where we met most of you, and also where most of our funding came from. I could drive 600 miles in a day, but not now. Years and years of reading mail has affected my eye sight.

Today things have changed so much as we prepare Jake, now 18, to take over the Ministry (with our help). We find ourselves worrying a little about funding, and would also like Jake to be able to finish college. We need funds to get us on the radio at least once a week or twice a month, and articles in several Christian magazines would definitely help. If anyone has any ideas, please let us know.

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BLIND EYES SEE

Jesus gave sight to the blind. It seems that the eye sight of the world needs opening. We, like you, have no use for crime, but we know that to be free in Jesus is to be free indeed. Some convicts sign up for this program trying to get anything they can out of it. Those who stick with it find Jesus, and the rest drop out when they find out this Ministry can't be used. If you think your inmate is trying to work the system, please return the inmate's information for us to handle, and we will match you with whoever is next on top of the pile.

Never in our wildest dreams did we think this Ministry would get so large. Due to politics and lack of funding, many prisons have shut down programs and have taken away things, such as stamps. Some have inmates jammed tight together in cells – a dog in the pound has more free space than an inmate. Prisons have typically been rated on a scale of 1 to 6, with the worst being the higher number. However, because of over crowding, these groups are now being housed together. One of the sad results is that gangs devour the young inmates.

Your letters do not change their environment, but they do make it bearable.

MAY WE JOIN YOU?

Steve from Texas writes: *We have chatted over the years and gotten much advice from your Ministry. Here we keep running into road blocks. The last three times we arrived to hold a service something happened and we could not go in. We still, after trying everything, cannot one to one with the inmates that show up for our Bible study. The Chaplain seems more interested in being a cop than a Minister. We would like 60 inmates to write to. We will take as many as you can from this area and we will finally push to get other churches to help. God Bless.*

SOMEONE CARES OF THE FUTURE

The plan is to have several people working to process and read letters from inmates and send them applications. We receive 20 to 50 applications every day (today we got 65). Inmates must write to request an application, then return their completed application along with an introduction letter. We are often asked to send applications to inmates by a relative or friend, but of all the requests received, all do not qualify. Experience has shown that short term inmates do not fit this program; they must have at least 18 months left to serve.

Once the inmate's application is returned to us, matching inmates with pen friends will continue in the same old way. The inmate's introduction letter is placed at the bottom of pile number one. When a free person requests an inmate to write to, their request is placed at the bottom of pile two. Then, we match the top of each pile together. This system is simple, but it works.



Yvonne's Corner

Through the strength that God gives you, His love can be passed on to your Pen Friend through your letters and brighten an inmate's life. We need Christians who are willing to write and share that joy. If not now, if not you, then who? Just sitting down and writing that letter brings so much happiness, even a post card, and they also like pictures. I urge you to get involved. We so badly need more letter writers, especially those who are willing to write one or two inmates; once that happens, God will care for the rest.

Times look bad in this world – don't let sharing Jesus pass you by. Ask your friends, your pastor, your church ... in Jesus' name.

PEN FRIEND TIPS & REMINDERS

Pen Name Policy. The biggest problem we continue to have is the use of “pen names” (a made-up name to keep your identity anonymous). Some have been using pen names, but forgetting to tell us about it, so we are unable to match the pen name with the real name. As you can imagine, this creates much confusion, and many letters sit here in a pile because we don’t know the real name of the person they belong to. In order to avoid this in the future, our Pen Name Policy is that, if you wish to use a pen name you must contact us via phone or email and Yvonne or I will assign you with your Pen Name. If you are already using a pen name, be sure you provide it to us, along with your real name. Thank you!

Reading Mail. Unless you request otherwise, all mail from inmates will be read by us. Many of you use us as a “clearing house” for the safety’s sake, and we don’t read those letters. If we read an inmate’s letter that makes us uncomfortable, we will contact you and the inmate to address our concerns. We do not read the letters you write.

Email Addresses. Save time and postage costs by emailing us your letters to the inmate. We will cut off your email information and “snail mail” it to the inmate. When we receive the inmate’s letter to you, we will scan and email it to you. Everyone, please send us your email address so we can update our records, and then you can begin using this service.

Inmate’s Requests. Inmates may ask you to do something, and we might miss it. Unless you are 100% comfortable with their request, the best policy is to say no. If you are ever unsure or uneasy about anything in your inmate’s letter, let us know immediately.

Writing to the Inmate. The first letter you write is simple – you write it and mail it, and if you receive no answer chances are they were looking for something else. If all these folks were Christians this would be an easy job, but most are not so you need to go slow and build a friendship. If they are not interested in the Bible or Jesus, do you just quit? We try to show Jesus in almost everything we do, whether ministering in or out of prison. Most inmates, whether male or female, have been abused, or are abusers, and it may take several letters for that to come out. Be patient and sensitive.

If you have any questions about ANYTHING, please don’t hesitate to ask us.

HE WALKS WITH US

We wish we knew the amount of miles we have spent walking the cell blocks of oh-so-many prisons. Each step we took Jesus was with us. Now, climbing the metal stairs from tier to tier is not as easy as it was. Yvonne’s recent fall has taken her out of that part of this Ministry. But she will still be at the piano or organ in many a Chapel service. We will also have Jake and his guitar.

I remember a guy at San Quentin, every trip through his cell block I stopped and chatted about almost anything. He finally asked me what a Christian is, I mean really is. I reminded him that I had stopped at least two dozen times to say hi,

and that is part of what a Christian should be. Then I asked if I could enroll him in a simple Bible study, and he agreed. The seed was planted in really poor soil, but today that man is on the mainline somewhere and he knows what a Christian is, as he is now one.

Remember Paul and Silas, while in prison, what they told the jailer who asked what he must do to be saved, “ *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*” *Acts 16:31* (In other words, not just you, but your family, too!)

HE TALKS THROUGH US

When I became a Christian, from Genesis to the "Amen" at the end of Revelation, we shared Jesus. The joy we share as we tarry there is from HIS word. He tells us we are HIS own and we share this. To belong is what changes those in prison. There are thousands of lost sheep, and look what Jesus did for just one. All have sinned, and no matter what all can be saved. It takes reaching out, or better yet reaching in. Your letters go into the pits of hell, into the fear-filled cells of prisons all over the world.

Tony, an inmate, wrote, *"I was listening to a man in a cell across from me, a very hard core convict. I have known hundreds of people in my sordid life. When I came here they all disappeared - friends, family. I hooked up with this organization and now three years later two strangers are my best friends. Someone Cares is an understatement. I hope to meet those who run it some day, maybe in Heaven. I'll never get out of here, but they have given me a peace only given by a relationship with Jesus. The junk they serve us to eat here turns to manna. If only I had met Jesus before I got a double life sentence. Other inmates accused me of using Jesus. For what!? I'll die in here, but when I do, no hell for this Child of the King, but a pup tent in Glory."*

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Both Yvonne and I receive Social Security income, and with the condition of our nation and fears that many face due to an unstable future, we have had to dip into that resource now and then. We listen to other ministries asking for money (it seems that's all some of the do). The average donation we receive is less than ten dollars, but we have a few great friends who have really carried this Ministry with larger donations over the years. We are thankful for it all.

Our prayer is that those who can afford it (praying for at least 50 people), or have friends who can, will pledge a one time donation of one thousand dollars (it's all tax deductible). Or, spreading it into payments over a year's time would be okay. A bunch of one dollar donations would also be welcome! That adds up to a lot of money, and as you all know we are and will continue to be good stewards of God's money.

JAKE'S SPOT

Every time I begin to write in this newsletter, I want to ask how all of you are doing. I know I'm speaking to you, but don't feel like we (my grandparents and I) are close enough to all of you. I want this Ministry to get as personal as it possibly can! I was talking to my grandfather about ideas of how our Ministry can become more than what we are, if that makes sense.

I plan to make this THE most personally involved Ministry anyone has ever seen. But in order for that to happen we need to be advertised, to get our name out there. This Ministry has become an amazing work of God due to word of mouth; all the loving people involved speaking with their friends, who then joined us. That is exactly what I am asking for now. All we need is for everyone who gets this newsletter to share it with at least one other person. Take it to your church and tell the people in your congregation about us.

The Lord is great and He is all the help we need to get through this life we live. The distractions of this worldly place, such as drugs and gangs, were created by the devil to take our attention away from the Lord; those things can turn the most beautiful person ugly inside and out. I began my life going down the wrong road for the wrong reasons at a very young age, and thank God I was one that He saved. He pulled me back and showed me what was happening and what I was doing to myself with every action I made. With every fight I got into and every drug I sold it was making the devil's ego grow bigger and bigger, and that evil smile get more and more torturous, and I was hurting God as I was helping the devil win this fight for our lives in eternity. All for what? A couple bucks and affiliation with people who weren't even real friends.

If you're a youngster who thinks it's cool to be a gangster or who wants to fit in, think about the bigger picture - do you want to be in a gang selling drugs, getting tossed in jail every other month like a sack of dirt? Or do you want to live free and be happy in the Lord? God Bless!

