



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 is a faith
ministry, supported by God's love
and your gifts. It is a non-profit
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tax-deductible.

PRISON IS A PLACE



Prison is a place where first you must exchange the dignity of your name for the degradation of a number. It is a place where you live from visit to visit, if you're lucky enough to have one. It is a place where you spend your time counting years, months, days and even minutes. It is a place where you pray not to die. It is a place where you pray you don't have to kill some fool. You can not go to the canteen where prices are too high. Prison is a place where your ingenuity, your creativity and your inventiveness rise to the surface if your eyes are open. Prison is a place where you can become mentally crippled because responsibility is stolen from you. Prison is a place where family and friends say, "I told you so," if they are still around. Don't come to prison - it is the gateway to hell.

Editor's Note: The young man who wrote this died in prison.

THOUGHTS OF A CONVICT

Some day these gates will open, and once more I shall be free, a fact that makes me wonder, what will become of me. Have I a future waiting me such as the past I've known? Will I be accepted by my loved ones or forever walk alone? What of the friends I once knew but haven't seen in years? Will they accept my friendship again without any doubts or fears? What about employment for such a man as me, or will I have to strike again in order to get by? Yes, someday these gates will open and once more I will be free, a fact that makes me wonder what will become of me.

Rubin Fuentes, Bunker Hill Prison.

WE NEED YOU AND YOURS!

We have years of poems and testimonies that we plan to publish in a book. The General Conference of our church using videos and our past experiences on their international website. AMEN! The success of Paper Sunshine is going to get even bigger than it is. We do and we will need help from you and yours. We will see this - God willing - for a long time.

This fall, we are seeing billions of dollars being wasted during the election season. For what? We are praying for a couple of large donations to come our way. The Widows Mite will keep us growing!



WHAT ARE THE CHANCES?

Forty years ago Christ came into my life. He led me to Yvonne and then He led us into prison ministry. Because of my background I knew we had to do more than preach or teach. From the start we have developed programs to help men and women when they are released. Christ is always first in everything we do. We coordinate “dress outs” to supply long term inmates with clothes when released. We help with remedial reading programs to help inmates get a GED. Our Match Two program provides contact with a person or people to help prepare for an inmate for release. Paper Sunshine is our ministry which I can say has gotten a whole lot of men and women in prison to see Jesus “on the main line.” Many gang members joined the God Squad. Our main time was spent reaching the unreachable - those in segregation and those who never came to chapel. Our main time in Soledad, San Quentin, Avenal, Eddyville in Kentucky, Jackson in Michigan was spent working with the Chaplains as Chaplains. In Michigan we accepted a real challenge and became chaplain of the Coldwater men’s prison. Yvonne became chaplain of the women’s prison. We have had massive training both in prison and preaching and teaching in the “free world” churches. All our funding has come from this and our Faith Partners. Never have we drawn a cent from state government or the prisons. We have never had a year in the red. Since we were dealing with all areas and custody levels in the prisons, we attended the police academy in three states.

WE HAVE FRIENDS SAYING “HOW MUCH LONGER?”

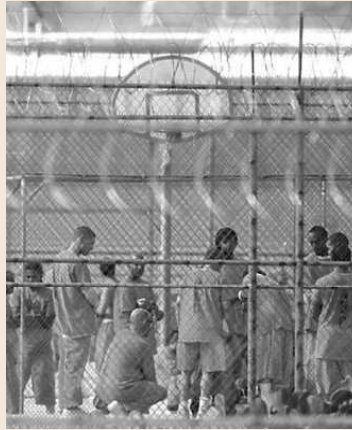
My Doctor is some what amazed at Yvonne’s and my health. In both the Bible and our own research we have found that a total change of diet can do wonders. My blood sugar went to 1423 and I did not go into a coma. At 83 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. We are going to make a big pot of vegetables and keep it going all winter. My eyes are not as good as they used to be, so driving is very restricted.

God will find a driver. We have had many friends who as they get older quit working and quit doing. The mind and body must be kept busy! We do ask for all your prayers. We want everyone to know if anything happens to either or both of us we have made provisions to keep Someone Cares growing. A day is coming when all of us will meet in heaven. What a blessing that will be! Our best friends are folks we have never met.



POPULATION OF US PRISONS

The total population of prisons in the United States is two million, four hundred thousand (2,400,000). Of that total 67.8% will return to prison in less than five years. They will have no jobs, no school, no pre release training. The total cost to tax payers is over thirty-nine billion (\$39,000,000,000) dollars. The racial break down in American prisons is Asian - 1.5%, black - 37.7%, Native American - 2%, white - 58.8%. Here is one reason. An inmate is arrested in a town five hundred miles away from home. He spends ten years in prison and may receive \$100 when released. He also must be paroled to the county where the crime was committed, not where he may have family. This is why if churches would get together and provide clothing for inmates released, it would make it a bit easier for them. If those of you writing - when you get connected to the thinking of your Pen Friend - should, with our help, start them preparing for release. Yvonne and I with the help of several California churches have provided over one hundred thousand (100,000) inmates with clothes upon their release. As Christians we may try to become a go between the inmate and often bitter family members. It really takes very little to change people and it sure makes a difference when someone cares.



AS A FAVOR

If you are a Pen Friend please send us your phone number or e-mail address. I spent two wonderful days going through our list of names. I found many who we sent a name to who never got an answer. All but one asked for another name or names. If there is a problem with the Pen Friend Program, it is that inmates have the wrong idea about us, even when our rules are clear. They get a letter and it is not what they were looking for. If this has happened or does happen please contact us. One of our writers got thirteen of her friends to write. A nurse at a senior citizens home got six of her patients to write with her as a monitor. We have several groups that meet for bible study who have made writing inmates a part of their ministry. AMEN! Also if you get artwork, poems, or stories we can use them.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

We just got a call from a man we helped through this ministry. He is also appears in one of our videos which will be available soon. His name is Al Dossman. He is out of prison and has a street ministry in California. His brother is a minister in our church. He preformed Al's marriage service at Soledad. Al is a part of super-wonderful bunch that grew up in or near the church, made a mistake and is now doing God's work since his release. We plan to share many great stories about the people we have had the pleasure to work with over these past years .

Thank You!

A VERY PRAYFULL THANKS: A car that was donated a few years ago broke down. Again the wonder of prayer! One of our supporters called and donated a car. God is So good. Remember when you are in need, ask in HIS NAME. This person had donated another car years ago.

TO ANOTHER FRIEND AND SUPPORTER: We received a special gift for a special cause. Several things caused a delay and we used a part elsewhere. This was harder to do and we used the money for other parts of this ministry. The purpose for which the gift was given will soon be finished.

JAKE'S FATHER

Jake's father, who is known by many of you, is getting out of prison. He should be released by the time you receive this newsletter. He has been down many years. Satan will be waiting at the gate. We ask for prayer for him and also for Jake. Ronna is our shopper, driver and worker. She helps keep the mail going. She has gone through many health problems and faces another surgery. We ask all to hold her up. May God Bless you and yours. Also our printer who makes this all work.

I PREACH AND TEACH BUT ALSO LISTEN

Reprinted from our September, 2007 newsletter.

When God made a preacher out of me with no formal experience or education I was blessed.

I was able to take real experiences and turn them into Bible lessons. I am not proud of the past, but am glad I am able to relate to men and women who are where they are, and I can show them I came from there also and God has the answers. The true joy was God also forgave me for the past that leads to my future, Thank You Jesus!

PRISON MINISTRY VERSES MINISTRY IN PRISON

Both have the intention of sharing Jesus. A bible study will bring out some inmates. A sermon or church service will bring more. We all need to reach out to those who are looking for help. One to one contact is vital. Sharing the grief they have or the grief they may have caused is very important. Having an "All-Faiths" service will bring out many more. Learning to deal with and turn them over to Jesus will save many inmates.

Our prison system is in vital need of change. Serving dead time is a cause of inmates not making it. Yvonne and I were and are able to walk the yards and cell blocks of this countries worst prisons. We took into cell blocks reading material, paper, pencils (sometimes), and Bibles that were not hardbacks. We were allowed to hold a Christmas party on Death Row at Eddyville. Prison Ministry is CRIME Prevention. The saying is "We don't want those kind of people in our church," but you have them now.

HELPING THEM GO HOME

Reprinted from our September, 2006 newsletter.

In prison, there are very few positive programs. With massive budget cuts, even the few good programs are being cut. Over-crowding means that getting into some programs requires a long wait, and many are discouraged.

That's why the Pen Friend Program really works. There's someone to talk to, someone to share with, someone to teach, someone just to listen, without judging.

Many are scared to even try this. When an inmate is locked up inside this madness, what do they find to write about? A day in the life of an average inmate is not much to write about. Many are locked down for 23 of 24 hours a day, seven days a week, twelve months a year with no newspaper, radio or TV. Most are willing to do Bible studies, but where do they get a Bible?

They finally decide, because of others telling them how neat it is to write and ask for a Pen Friend. Often they sell a meal to buy a stamp to write us. Sometimes they can't get a stamp to answer your letter. Many prisons allowed a limited number of free stamps each month, but now that is being done away with. Often we have the assistance of Chaplains and can bend some rules. We spend hours trying to make all our programs better and workable.