



Freedom Focus

A Newsletter with information for your partnering with us in

“Proclaiming Freedom for Prisoners”

Volume 9
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HOPE IS EXPANDING AND NEW

By Nelson W. Martin, Director Support for Prison Ministries

The prophet Isaiah wrote many years ago “Look, God will do a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not see it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland” Isaiah 43:19. That promise seemed to come true in the past year in our prison ministries. Our chaplains and support staff had a very busy year. With Lancaster County Prison (LCP) over populated, recidivism rates very high and major crimes on the increase, many persons, including SFPM, are concerned about the rise of persons in trouble. But the SFPM staff also see this as an opportunity to share the hope of the gospel with many persons.

During 2007, our 8 paid chaplains and 13 chaplain volunteers spent about 14,000 hours inside LCP (equal to 7 full-time persons). They assist with Bible studies and church services, do lots of one-on-one counseling, distribute Bibles and Christian literature and share with and respond to requests from inmates. About 1,500 Bibles and many books were given free of charge. Almost 3,000 Bible correspondence courses were completed by inmates. In addition, hundreds of area pastors and other interested persons made visits to help and encourage those incarcerated. And the LCP chaplains had some significant interactions with various correctional officers and administrative staff.

At the Youth Intervention Center (YIC), 3 SFPM chaplains average about 50 hours per week. There they share with juveniles, ages 10 – 17 who are waiting court hearings. They also minister in the YIC Shelter Care area, a unit for juveniles who are non-criminal or minor offenders, but temporarily need a place to live. Since chaplains have adjusted their hours to be working more afternoons and evenings and Saturdays, their opportunities for quality sharing have increased.

WE PRAISE GOD FOR THE NEW THING HE IS DOING IN PRISON MINISTRY TODAY. I WANT TO ALSO HIGHLIGHT THE VALUABLE WORK DONE BY REENTRY AND AFTERCARE MINISTRIES. In Lancaster County, SFPM currently provides some funding for these 3 ministries that are so important in the on-going prison ministry cycle. I asked each ministry to provide a testimonial story of how God is at work.

EXIT (Ex-Offenders in Transition) Providing various forms of assistance as ex-inmates return to the community

Mike (not his real name) is an incest survivor and has endured everything from being locked in the basement without food and water to being buried alive as his perpetrators informed him that he is worthless. When Mike joined EXIT five years ago, his view of a loving Father was obviously distorted. EXIT provides
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THE POTTER’S HOUSE An aftercare house for men located in Leola

Andrew Watkins, one of the present residents of our nine month residential program, is trying to make the most of his opportunities while with us. Andrew says "The Potter's House has been a life changing experience for me as I learn to do God's will while attending Dr David Hain’s class,
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TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY Discipleship training/reentry ministry, with an aftercare house in Lancaster city

Thomas was released from Lancaster County Prison two years ago with no place to go, completely homeless. He became a resident in the TTC transitional housing program. He went to the required weekly meetings and attended services at a local church and soon began to apply the spiritual teachings to his life.
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EXIT (Ex-Offenders in Transition)

Providing various forms of assistance as ex-inmates return to the community

a community where people like Mike can be transparent and open to share their hurts and true feelings. We are privileged to be one of the Christian communities involved in Mike's healing journey. Philippians 2:12: "Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling." This passage speaks truth to the many at EXIT who have suffered from past abuse.



Al and Mary Ann Hocke
Volunteers of the Year

LCP chaplain) and his family provided singing. Volunteer of the year recognition went to Al and Mary Ann Hocke, who have been active in prison ministry for many years. Currently, they give about 40 hours of volunteer time per month in Lancaster County Prison. A gift certificate and framed recognition award was presented to them by Nelson Martin, SFPM Director.

THE POTTER'S HOUSE

An aftercare house for men located in Leola

ex-offender prayer meetings, and other scheduled Bible studies. It is astounding to see God put my family back together as I surrender to his will." The Potter's House has ministered to nearly 100 men over the past 5 years as a response to the overwhelming needs of ex-inmates for training and coaching as they face the real world again. God is faithful to his promises and the growing confidence at The Potter's House is that as we surrender our lives to God as clay in the Potter's hand there is definite reason for hope and a future.

TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY

Discipleship training/reentry ministry, with an aftercare house in Lancaster city

Thomas found a good job which allowed him to work on getting his finances in order. Working with his case manager at Tabor he established a budget and developed a plan to pay off his debts. After some time he was able to start putting some money away into savings and later moved from transitional housing to his own apartment. Today Thomas is faithfully serving the Lord and is an example of a person who successfully reentered back into the community.

ANNUAL PRISON MINISTRY PICNIC

Over 70 persons spent a delightful August Sunday evening at the Middle Creek Church of Brethren picnic grove. This annual event is planned and hosted by the Board of Directors of Support for Prison Ministries as a way to say THANKS to the SFPM Chaplains, regular volunteers and their families.

SFPM "chefs" grilled burgers and roasted corn on the cob. J.R. Fisher (a previous



WILL YOU BE A PARTNER IN 2008?

Exciting and growing opportunities are all around us to be involved in prison ministries.

Here are some ways you can help:

- **PRAY** for chaplains and the inmates that they minister to.
- **ENCOURAGE** with your notes and verbal expressions to persons working hard in prison ministries
- **GIVE.** Gifts of cash, gifts of stock or real estate, life income and bequests from estates and charitable giving accounts.

YOU ARE INVITED:

We Care Program

Prison Ministry Banquet

Friday, March 7, 2008, 6:15 P.M

Yoder's Restaurant, Route 23, New Holland, PA

No charge, but reservations required Call:

Lester Leid (610) 777-1337

Caleb Minnich (717) 626-4996

Jeff Pfautz (717) 733-3935

An offering will be received for We Care Program.

I need your prayers and help. I need God to forgive me. . . I need to get home to care for my mother who is very ill. I am reading the Bible you gave . . . it helps to ease the pain." -from a female inmate

AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

Hundreds of persons came to Farmersville, PA on Friday and Saturday, October 26 & 27 to enthusiastically support our 24th annual benefit auction. This annual event was a great time for food, fun and fellowship, while supporting and hearing what God is doing in prison ministries today. When the sale was finished, we had over 500 registered bidders, auction merchandise and gift certificates totaled \$79,179, and food stands



Bryan Hubbard, Program Director at Youth Intervention Center, brings greetings to the Friday evening auction attendees. Bryan was introduced by Nelson Martin, SFPM Director.

received \$14,765. This year, all expenses of the auction were paid by designated gifts from businesses and sponsors, allowing a total of \$94,608 to be distributed to the following six prison chaplain and aftercare ministries: Chaplain programs at Lancaster County Prison, Youth Intervention Center, EXIT (Ex-Offenders in Transition), Freedom Gate, TTC (Transition to Community) and We Care Programs. SFPM Board is so grateful for and appreciates everyone's involvement to make this a record year. Since this annual Benefit Auction began in 1984, over \$1.4 million has been given to numerous prison ministries.



Here are some highlights from this year's auction:

- 3-D Hand Carved Wooden Picture –Martindale area farm, an original work made by Lorraine Reiff \$8,000
- Kirby Keller wooden hand-made pen and pencil \$425.
- “Friends Forever” painting of Amish School girls, by Elsie Beiler \$350
- Oliver Scale Model Tractor \$160
- “Dresden Plate” Quilt, donated by Martindale Mennonite Sewing Circle \$700
- Cappuccino Lovers Theme Basket \$160
- Wooden model of 1932 Ford Model B Truck \$325



** PLANNING AHEAD ** MARK YOUR CALENDARS **

In 2008, the benefit auction is planned for October 24 & 25. SFPM Board wants some new volunteers/ coordinators to be involved in planning and working in various ways with the 2008 auction. If you have any interest or want more information, contact Nelson Martin (717) 625-0232 or email: info@supportforprisonministries.org



Meet our Board of Directors
(back row l-r) Ken Martin, Leon Roy Martin (Chairman), Cliff Martin, Dennis Sensenig, Anthony Martin.
(front row l-r) Steve Martin (Treasurer), Glenn Hoover (Vice-Chairman), Caleb Minnich, Warren Hackman (Secretary)
Missing from photo: Larry Fox



P.O. Box 134, Lititz, PA 17543
 (717) 625-0232
 Email: info@supportforprisonministries.org

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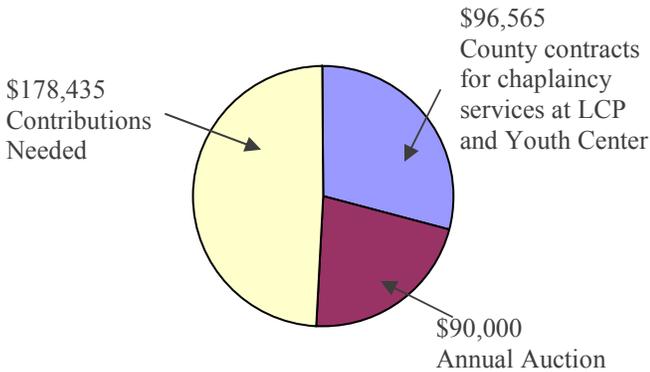
PAID
 Permit #1746
 Lancaster, PA
 17604

Check out our website for updated photos and information: www.supportforprisonministries.org

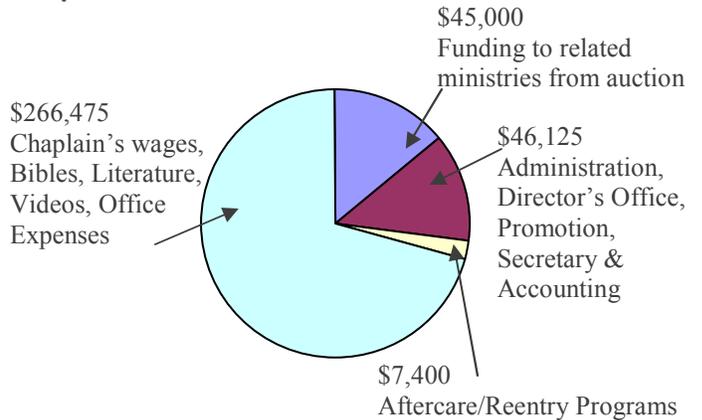
Focus On Finances

2008 Budget: \$365,000

Income



Expenses



A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your gift to partner with SFPM.

HELP TO BUY BIBLES AND CHRISTIAN BOOKS FOR PRISON INMATES

AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR FAMILIES, INDIVIDUALS, CHURCHES,
 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES OR SMALL GROUPS!

Support for Prison Ministries Chaplains give out more than 1,500 Bibles/year (125-150/month)
 We can buy Bibles & Christian books in quantities for about \$5.00/copy.



HELP US RESTOCK!

_____ Bibles/books x \$5.00 = \$ _____

A receipt will be sent for all donations.

Clip this coupon and mail to:

SFPM
P.O. Box 134
Lititz, PA 17543

Donor Name: _____

Address: _____