

HELPING WOMEN FIND HOPE AND PEACE

The women's population at Lancaster County Prison (LCP) continues to increase. Historically, about 10% of LCP inmates have been women. Within the past year, the increase in women's incarceration rates have been double that of the increase of men. Currently, about 130 women and 1,070 men are imprisoned. This pattern parallels what is happening in our nation. A recent news survey shows there are now almost 2.2 million inmates in America's prisons, with the number of women behind bars growing at twice the rate of men. Support for Prison Ministries has 3 women chaplains at LCP; Faye Stauffer, Karin White and Janice Hess. SFPM Director Nelson Martin recently interviewed them.

Nelson: How do you minister behind bars? What do you do when you go into LCP?

All: We respond to many requests from the women inmates. We provide various services, such as group Bible studies and church services throughout the week, one-on-one counseling, and distribution of Bibles and Christian books. Probably the most important thing we do is listen to the inmate's hearts and pray with and for them. Most inmates come from very dysfunctional backgrounds. Many have not had persons who have listened to their needs and problems. We believe that the drug problem in our communities is fueling the rise in arrests for theft and prostitution.

Nelson: I affirm the gifts I see in the three of you and know that your work has made a difference in many lives. You do have differing personalities and interests. What specific tasks do you do?

Faye: I am the chaplain coordinator for women's programs. I also schedule church services and work with inner healing and in-depth counseling.

Karin: I have much interest in after-care, so I do interviews and planning with women who are getting ready for release. I line up programs and help with the many details relating to their release.

Janice: I enjoy Bible teaching. Currently I am working with the women's ALPHA program which has been

very exciting. Over 40 women have attended weekly. We've had powerful times of prayer and praise as the women have opened themselves to the power of the

Holy Spirit. What excites me also is that the classes begin at 8:30 A.M., a time which seems hard to get the women out and motivated for other activities in prison, but they are ready and eager to go to ALPHA.



Karin White, Janice Hess, Faye Stauffer

Nelson: I know the other chaplains call you, Janice, the "week-end warrior", since you often do your prison chaplain work on the week-ends in addition to your day job at Landis Homes. What keeps you motivated? Why do you all keep going back into prison?

Janice: I find it a wonderful way to minister and to connect with the inmates. I have made some good friends because of those involvements.

Karin: It gives me a good way to keep connected with women when they get out. I want Jesus to make a difference in their lives as they return to their communities. I also write to persons who have been transferred to other prisons. Some have even been deported (illegal aliens) back to their home country and I keep in touch with them.

Faye: I've discovered over the years that inmates are receptive and open to the Gospel. For me, it is a practical way to share my faith. I find people on the outside are often not as receptive as those who are incarcerated.

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Bud Roda - Our latest volunteer chaplain at LCP



When Bud Roda speaks in area churches, he often gets attention by saying, "Sooner or later someone from your church will go to jail. Then you will need me to help make connections. So why not get involved in prisoner's lives right now?"

Bud has a heart for seeing congregations "step up to the plate" to help those who are in prison, as well as the many who are being released and need mentoring and special care. For years, Bud has visited men in prison. He keeps connections with ex-inmates when they are released. He helps regularly as a counselor and accountability partner on the staff of "The Potter's House", a men's aftercare residential program located in Leola.

Bud's congregation, New Song Fellowship in Lancaster city, also has been instrumental in reaching many for the Lord. He credits Pastor Jamie Mitchell with giving leadership to discipling men from Keswick, NJ, as well as local persons who have been in prison and/or are needy. "A caring church family is the key to a successful reentry ministry. And know there will be much work involved," Bud says from his years of experience.

He also credits his early prison visiting involvements to Elinor Forrest, from Lancaster's First United Methodist Church, whose worship team ministered inside LCP. In sharing with inmates, Bud uses a simple two-step concept based on Romans 12: 1 & 2. (1) Surrender your life to God - give it ALL up to Him (2) THEN God will transform you from the inside out. Bud also places high value on prayer, Bible learning and fellowship with other Christians.

Bud and his wife Karen live near Willow Street. They have 5 children and 7 grandchildren. Bud is a self-employed hairdresser. As a badged volunteer, Bud serves on a regular schedule along with the Support for Prison Ministries chaplains as they reach out with hope and healing to the many inmates inside LCP.



Support for Prison Ministries ANNUAL BENEFIT AUCTION

October 27 & 28, 2006 at Farmersville Auction Grounds

Friday Evening:

4-7 P.M. Chicken Barbeque (Eat in or take out)

5:00 P.M. Auction of quality merchandise, hardware, flowers, gift certificates, Winross trucks and collectible toys, and a big selection of meats and groceries.

Saturday:

6 A.M. Delicious Pancake and Sausage Breakfast

8:30 A.M. Auction begins with quality merchandise for home, farm, and business.

Our auction goal is to clear \$70,000 after expenses, to be shared with LANCASTER COUNTY PRISON and YOUTH CENTER CHAPLAINCY PROGRAMS, EXIT (Ex-Offenders in Transition), FREEDOM GATE, TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY and WE CARE PROGRAMS.



MANY VALUABLE GIFT CERTIFICATES
From area businesses for food, lodging, professional and home services.

HOME MADE FOODS AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT SALE

Donations of quality merchandise and gift certificates are needed.

Volunteers needed to help prepare for and work on Auction Day.

Attention Quilters: We have tops to be quilted if you can help.

*For more information, call: Nelson Martin (717) 625-0232,
Glenn Hoover (717) 733-7301 or Cliff Martin (717) 336-6411.*



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Nelson: Tell me how you each got involved in prison ministry?

Faye: I began coming to LCP years ago to help women with crafts and to play volleyball. When my youngest went to school in 1990, I had more time open and started regular chaplaincy work.

Karin: I was a case worker in a community based program and realized how many mothers were in prison. These women were caught in the revolving door (in and out and in again) of the prison system. God challenged me to get involved in lives of inmates and those returning to society.

Janice: A woman from my church talked about her involvement in prison visiting and I was interested. I began to teach once a month in the early 1990's. Since 1995, I have been involved as an associate chaplain.

Nelson: So what excites you, what makes for a good day in prison?

All: To observe how God is moving among women who have hard, protective walls around them. It is exciting to see them apply Bible truth and see their sad faces light up as they learn a new principle. It is really the power of God's Word being applied to lives.

Faye: Recently I asked several inmates "What would you miss most if the chaplains were not here?" Their responses: "The compassion of you chaplains. . . the chaplains are real, dependable. . . good listeners who don't look down on us." Comments like that make my day!

Nelson: What makes for a bad day or experience in prison for you?

All: Our worst experiences are when we have to deliver death notices or emergency messages to inmates. These are often related to a death of family members or a family crisis, such as a serious accident or emergency. When these events happen, the inmates feel so trapped. They are locked up and cannot be with their families and loved ones. They are allowed to make one phone call, but often need time to talk, to question, to cry. . . and again, we try to be there to listen.

Nelson: Any closing stories or observations you want to share?

Faye: I want to highlight the connections that chaplains have with the prison staff and correctional officers. I have had the privilege of leading several c.o.'s to the Lord and my husband Steve and I have been walking with them in their faith journey.

Janice: I want to acknowledge the important prayer ministry that a number of Landis Homes residents have. Each Monday evening, a group gathers to pray for prison ministries, inmates, and chaplains.

Karin: And prayer is real. I remember working with an inmate who had much pain and was sad all the time. I prayed especially that she would know joy in her heart and life. Her cellmate told her that she heard her laughing while she was sleeping. God was doing some healing, even when she was asleep.

Nelson: Thanks for all you do. I wish God's blessings on your ongoing ministries. And thanks also to our many prison ministry supporters on the outside. Your gifts and prayers help this important ministry to women inmates happen.

FOCUS ON FINANCES

SFPM annual 2006 budget is \$325,000. Of this amount, about \$165,000 will be needed from contributions. As you can see in the financial graph, expenses stay fairly constant for chaplain salaries and programs throughout the year, while contributions tend to be smaller until stronger year-end giving.

January 1- May 31, 2006



Steve Martin,
Treasurer and
Nelson Martin,
Director
reviewing monthly
financial
statements.

We are thankful for generous giving received from:

Churches

(offerings and/or annual budgeted amounts)

Businesses

(regular donations and items for benefit auction)

Individual Persons

(with a heart for those incarcerated)

An envelope is enclosed for you to be a partner with us. Receipts are sent for all contributions.

Support For Prison Ministries
P.O. Box 134
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Email: sfpm@4safe.com

Nonprofit Org.
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17604

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

Director's Report

THE WORD....READ AND SPOKEN

I recently read an interesting quote in the Lancaster Newspaper History Section dated May 2, 1906, "Lancaster Mayor, J. P. McCaskey, drafted a plan for dealing with juvenile offenders whose crimes were deemed minor. Instead of paying a fine, the juveniles were to read a chapter from the Bible and then listen to a good, honest talk."

Many things have changed in the past hundred years, but chaplains and other interested persons who regularly connect with adults and juveniles that are incarcerated, still count on the written and spoken Word of God to change persons lives. It's a Biblical principle, "My (God's) Word that goes out will not return to me empty, it will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purposes for which I sent it" Isaiah 55:11.

Thanks so much for your prayers, counsel, and gifts as we continue the important work of bringing the Bible (both printed and spoken) to those behind bars.

Nelson W. Martin



NEWS FOR YOU

EXIT (Ex-Offenders In Transition) have moved to a new location. You are welcome to join them for fellowship and worship every Thursday from 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the Lord's House of Prayer, 133 East Vine Street, Lancaster.

THANKS AND BEST WISHES

J. R. Fisher, who served as a chaplain in L.C.P. the past 7 years. J. R. began as a volunteer chaplain in 1999 and went to full-time Associate chaplain in 2001. His gentle spirit and genuine love for inmates made a difference in many lives. J.R. is now involved in full-time inner healing and prayer ministry in the area.



Female inmate note to chaplain: "Thanks for responding to me so quickly. Since reading my Bible, I know I am never alone. I now understand God's love for me."

OVERHEARD AT LCP

During testimony time in an ALPHA class, a young man said, "The Lord has been at work in my life. I've been a 'secret' believer; afraid for my buddies to know I was a Christian. But yesterday I knelt down and gave my all to Jesus".