



Freedom Focus

A Newsletter with information for your partnering with us in

“Proclaiming Freedom for Prisoners”

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MEET OUR FIRST CHAPLAIN

Marvin Reed, who just celebrated his 84th birthday, was one of the first chaplains working with Support For Prison Ministries. Recently, SFPM sat down with Marvin as he reminisced on his chaplaincy career and prison work.

Marvin was born and lived in Terre Hill, PA. Marvin & his wife, Grace, were farmers. In the late 1970’s Marvin went to Alabama for a week to participate in a prison crusade with We Care. He enjoyed it so much that he went year after year. Marvin appreciated how his wife would take care of the dairy farm while he would be gone. Grace has always stood by Marvin in his prison ministry career and in 1983 she would accompany him as he left the farm to move to Atmore, Alabama where he served for a year as a chaplain for We Care.



Marvin recalled some of his Alabama memories while serving as a chaplain there. He remembers meeting Charles Campbell, who had been incarcerated for 32 years when Marvin met him. After being released, Charles was involved in a bank robbery and ended up in Federal Prison. Marvin remembered flying to Lompoc, California with Martin Weber, Ken Burkholder, and Aaron Martin to visit him. Campbell became a Christian in prison and spent most of his last years at Lewisburg Federal in PA. Campbell, as a Christian inmate, had impacted many of the

Chaplains. When Campbell passed away, his body was released to Marvin and Campbell is buried at Lichty’s Mennonite Church.

In 1983, at Holman Correctional in Alabama, one of Marvin’s first assignments was to have a Bible study on death row where Johnny Evans would be executed that year in Alabama’s first execution after the death penalty was resumed in 1976. One of the first questions asked to the new We Care chaplain from Death Row inmates was, “Do you think there should be capital punishment?” Marvin responded, “God gives the government the authority and not me.” But Marvin also added, “I would not be the one to pull the switch.” The Death Row inmates received his answer and he gained their trust.

He came back from Alabama and did some sales jobs but shortly after he realized his call was to prison ministry and he joined Dave Myers at Lancaster County Prison (LCP) in the mid 1980’s. He also spent time at the Youth Intervention Center (YIC), then called Barnes Hall. Later Chaplain Reed worked with Al Huber at LCP and eventually current Chaplaincy Coordinator, Katie Harnish, at YIC and LCP. Katie had this to say about Chaplain Reed as one of her prison mentors: “Marvin Reed, known as “Chap” to many, has been an example to me of dedication and never-ending energy to minister to inmates. Having worked at both YIC and LCP with Chap, he has encouraged many, both juveniles and adults, to learn scripture and the importance of memorizing it.”

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Volunteer Spotlight: Jake Riehl

“Volunteers are special and they make a difference”



Chaplain volunteers give about 75 hours per week, collectively. This spotlight features one of these committed persons who shares so much inside the prison walls.

As 2017 was coming to an end and 2018 was approaching, I felt I needed to spend time in prayer to seek the Lord and prepare myself for the New Year. Recently, I had a few men ask for help to overcome their addictions, and I asked if seeking the face of God was sufficient. As believers, it's easy to say; you need more of Jesus, or to tell them Jesus is the only answer. As I sought the Lord for answers, He led me to Psalms 105:4, “*Seek the Lord and His strength. Seek His face forevermore.*”

I was tremendously challenged in my personal life, and to my ministry to others, to live a life totally dependent on the Lord. I must not depend on my own strength, intellect, will-power, or self-discipline. Instead I need to live fully in his power, surrendered to doing His purposes and plans according to His will. To be completely out of my own will, fully into His, in any way He chooses. I need to say, “Yes, Lord, it's all about you!” I will go in the strength of the Lord! Isaiah 10:27 says, “*The yoke is destroyed because of the anointing.*” I also want to thank those who support and pray for us as we minister in the prison. THE LORD JESUS BLESS YOU!

“The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.”
Psalm 146:7-8 (ESV)

Meet our First Chaplain

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Some of Marvin's memories over the years were at the old Barnes Hall when a young man with a crutch tried to escape by punching a hole in the roof with his crutch and climbing up in the rafters. Staff eventually brought him down. He also remembered there was a room where they put problem children who kept disobeying staff and he would sit on the outside of the open door and talk and counsel the angry youth and feel gratification when he could help de-escalated the situation. Marvin also would rejoice when he would hear from young men years later letting him know they were married and attending church regularly.

At LCP, Marvin told of his chaplaincy work in the mental health unit where he ministered every Wednesday. He remembered a time when he had to let an inmate know of the tragic death of his wife through suicide and the emotion that was involved in that situation. He also recalled his work with Kirby Keller who accepted Christ during his time at LCP. Kirby is well known as an inmate believer in the PA DOC (Department of Corrections) and he has been a key part of inmate aid to many Christian mission groups over the years. Marvin was also a chaplain to the prison staff and, at times, conducted funerals of their loved ones.

When asked, “What would your advice be to someone getting into prison ministry?” Marvin's answer was simple: “Listen! It is not what you say, but hearing what they have to say. Taking time to listen to them will get you a lot further as prison worker.”

When asked for a favorite verse that has carried him through life, Marvin mentioned Isaiah 43:25 “*I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.*”

Looking back on his chaplaincy career, Marvin said he would not change anything; he would be a chaplain all over again and there is joy which has come with it in his call to prison ministry.

We, at SFPM, thank Marvin Reed for the many years of serving the inmates at LCP and YIC.



Chaplain's Corner

Kenny Bowman



I have been working as a Chaplain at the Lancaster County Prison for a year and a half now and during that time I can say that I have grown spiritually. The daily challenges of ministering to people through some of the most difficult, and vulnerable times of their lives have required me to stretch beyond my comfort zone. The uncertainty and unpredictability of each moment helps me to continually seek God throughout each day. Ephesians 4:7 tells us that, "Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." It is that gift of grace that empowers me to be obedient to God's will and to see the fruit being produced within me. It is amazing how the Lord will pour blessing into us if we are willing vessels, empty of our own will and desires. It has been a blessing to not only serve the inmates through so many of our different Chaplaincy services, but I've been equally blessed by being able to serve the staff as well.

It is my daily prayer that God will continue to give me wisdom and strength to serve His people. I once read a quote that said, "We never own the work of God, we are simply stewards of it." This is how I want to approach my ministry, inside and outside of the prison. Regardless of what God puts in front of me, I want to do my best to take good care of it the way that Jesus would. It is truly an honor to be chosen by God and I am grateful to be positioned in such a way that I am not only able to make a positive impact on my family, friends, and community but most importantly on the entire Kingdom of God.

MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER



Support For Prison Ministries is pleased to announce the addition of Adam Hurst to the Board of Directors. Adam lives in Myerstown, PA and owns Creekside Landscaping and Lawn Care. Adam had previously been on the Streams of Life Board, which recently became a subsidiary of SFPM.

In addition, he volunteers as a Bible Study teacher for Streams of Life in state prisons. He is a member of Indiantown Mennonite Church and has been active in Youth With A Mission projects.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can now make on-line donations to Support for Prison Ministries.
www.supportforprisonministries.org
 Click on the Donate tab

While on our website, meet our staff, read our mission statement, pray through our prayer list, learn about aftercare programs, see pictures from our auctions and much more!

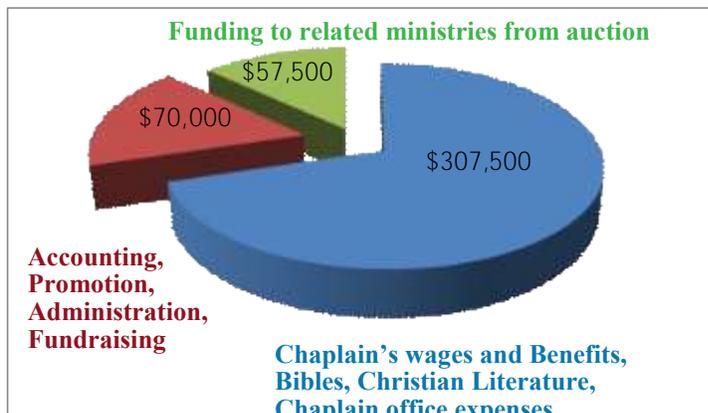
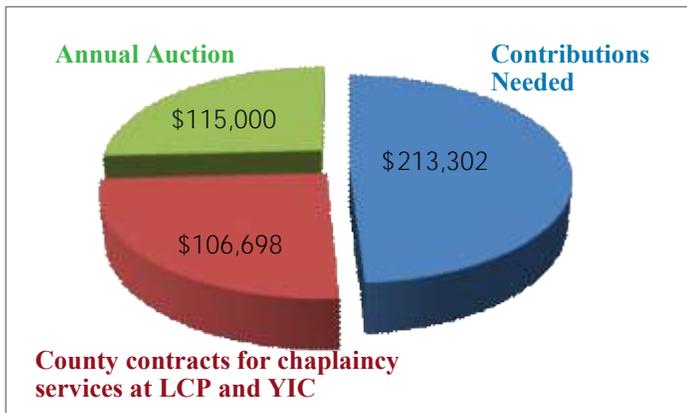


.....For all the ways you support us!

Focus On Finances

Income

2018 Budget: \$435,000 Expenses



In addition to cash contributions, Support for Prison Ministries can receive gifts from foundations, wills, trusts, donations of stocks or real estate, life income plans and bequests. Professional counsel is available through SFPM staff and Everence Financial Advisors.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT By Del Burkholder, SFPM Director

The other day I met for a cup of coffee with a good man that works in prison aftercare and one thing that we agreed on quickly that hinders all our work was that there is a spirit in this world of unforgiveness and it makes all of our prison work difficult.

Over the years I have personally listened to many inmates relate their hopes and dreams to me when they get out. It is with a saddened heart that inside me I know often what the acceptance of society is to those that have transgressed and need a second chance, or in some cases a third or fourth chance.

I am so thankful for the sharp men and women that we have as part of our chaplain ministry that don't look on the transgressions of the inmates, but look upon the soul within them that is in need of Jesus Christ.

We know with our prison work that while we can't change the minds of all society toward incarcerated, we can keep working at changing hearts of men and women not to be incarcerated again. *And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.* I Corinthians 6:11