

I Met God in Prison

By Alvin T. Davis

I am a changed man. My heart is full of compassion. My mind has been re-instructed with truth. My soul has been saved by Jesus. This has not always been the truth in my life. From a young age, I was taught discipline from the end of an ironing cord. I learned that fun comes from a bottle. My home was full of chaos, but I learned to stop the pain by numbing my true feelings. I prayed in secrecy, with tears flowing from my eyes, “Please, come save me, Lord. I don’t want to be here no more”.

At that time, I thought my savior would come in the form of my father. He had promised me that I could live with him when I got older. Unfortunately, he died in an accident while driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. From that day forward, my life was out of control. I used drugs and alcohol. I joined a gang and got involved in violence. After years of fighting, being shot at, always having to watch my back, and betrayal within the gang, I left that lifestyle because it had nothing to do with friendship.



I figured that having my own family would make my life complete. But I knew nothing about relationships. I was physically abusive with my girlfriends, especially when I was drinking. Everything I started ended in disaster. Jobs, clothing, females, jewelry, cars . . . nothing could fill my emptiness.

When my oldest child, Sade, died at six months old of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, I stopped caring about life. I drank more and smoked crack cocaine. Two poor relationships and three kids later, I was lost in a whirlwind of insanity. This way of living landed me in Lancaster County Prison (LCP) for 10 months.

I was happy to be in jail, because anything was better than the way I was living. The first week behind bars, I began reading the Bible for the first time in my life. I was saved while in LCP. I attended Bible studies regularly and was eager to learn more about God. Thanks to Chaplain Michael Booth who helped me see I needed to break the ungodly cycle of my life. I discovered the answer to life was not from me or Chaplain Booth. It was in God only.

Today I have a healthy relationship with God and others. I am growing with a spirit of peace and joy. I graduated from Water Street Mission recovery program and am studying to be a plumbing technician at Thaddeus Stevens College. I am involved at Faith Tabernacle Church in Lancaster. I know for a fact that if it wasn’t for the chaplain program at LCP, I would be back on drugs, or in jail, or probably would be dead. GOD IS WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE!

FAYE STAUFFER

HONORED AT RETIREMENT LUNCH

It is easy to see that Chaplain Faye has influenced and touched many lives inside Lancaster County Prison (LCP). On a recent Tuesday, about 40 co-workers (including chaplain staff and volunteers, correctional officers, and administrative persons) planned a retirement party in Faye's honor. Persons enthusiastically told of Faye's friendship, support and counsel over many years. Well wishes, stories, cards and mementos were shared. In addition, Faye has received written notes and oral expressions of thanks from current female inmates.

Warden Vincent Guarini recounted several events that happened during Faye's 26 years of involvement. He presented Faye with an engraved photo album and announced she has been selected as LCP's VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2010. This award is given annually to "that individual who best exemplifies an exceptional degree of dedication and sincere personal commitment to the inmate population of the Lancaster County Prison." Even though Faye has been a paid staff chaplain with Support for Prison Ministries (SFPM), she has gone the extra mile in helping women inmates.



Warden Vincent Guarini with Faye Stauffer

Faye started going into LCP in 1984, as a volunteer to play volleyball and do crafts with the women. In 1988, she enrolled in a CPE (Certified Pastoral Education) class. She was then hired as a chaplain by previous SFPM chaplain David Myer in 1990. Faye has seen the prison population grow, the building change, the security systems and regulations updated, but human needs stay the same. Over the years, she did a lot of listening to, sharing with, and praying for many persons. God's love has brought hope and healing to inmates, some with which Faye keeps in touch on the outside.

Nelson Martin, SFPM Director, also presented Faye with a wooden plaque on behalf of the board of directors. Nelson shared these reflections from some notes he made 10 years ago when reviewing Faye's work; "*Faye expressed her goal to find balance between serving and helping others, as well as taking time with God, to develop more stillness before Him and be filled with the love of Christ Jesus.*" Faye has certainly modeled that lifestyle, both in prison and outside.



Steve & Faye Stauffer

Faye and her husband Steve have many things to look forward to. Steve is pastor of Kauffman Mennonite Church near Manheim. They have 3 adult children and 5 grandchildren, ages 5 and younger. She looks forward to having more time with family. She also plans to train for some long distance bike riding challenges. She is enthusiastic about continuing to serve God and be a help to others.

After 26 years of being around LCP on a regular basis, Faye will be missed. Current chaplains Katie Mininger and Karin White will pick up Faye's responsibilities, assisted by several volunteer chaplains.

WE THANK GOD FOR FAYE'S COMMITMENT FOR THESE MANY YEARS, AND PRAY GOD'S CONTINUED HEALTH AND BLESSINGS ON HER AND STEVE AND THEIR FAMILY.

PRISONERS ARE BOUND, THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT BOUND.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

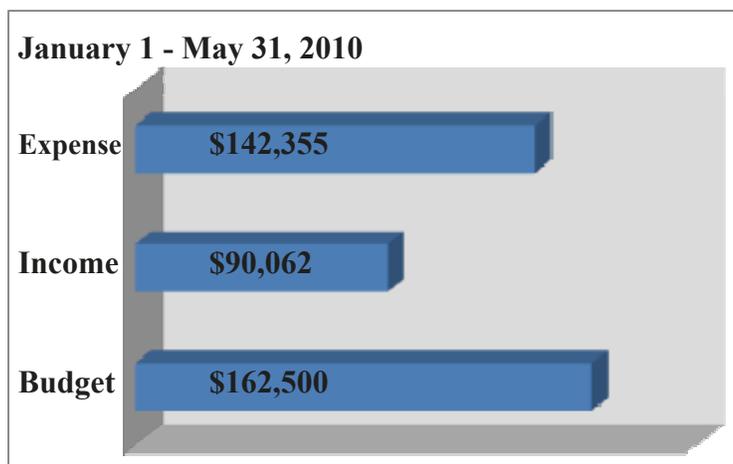
By Nelson W. Martin



Recently I heard about a book that described the author's life after a major stroke. Completely paralyzed except for blinking an eyelid, he developed a way to communicate with others by way of a coded alphabet. He calls the condition of his imprisoned body the "Locked-In Syndrome".

Apostle Paul experienced a different kind of "locked-in syndrome". Under house arrest and with guards watching, he continued to write and communicate with all who would listen. Paul wrote "I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the Word of God is not chained."

THAT IS A WONDERFUL PROMISE. WE SEE THAT HAPPENING INSIDE PRISONS TODAY. MANY ARE INCARCERATED WITH DEEP NEEDS AND HURTS. BUT GOD'S WORD, THAT CHAPLAINS AND STAFF CAN SHARE FREELY, IS NOT BOUND. IT WILL DO IT'S PURPOSE OF OFFERING HEALING AND HOPE TO INMATES.



Focus On Finances

SFPM's budget for 2010 year is \$390,000. About ½ of this budget (\$200,000) is needed from contributions that come from churches, businesses and many interested persons.

As you can see from the financial graphs, expenses stay fairly constant in our annual budget (chaplain salaries and ministry costs) while some regular contributions have been smaller so far this year.

**AN ENVELOPE IS ENCLOSED FOR YOU TO PARTNER WITH US.
WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS SO THAT WE CAN
CONTINUE TO SHARE HOPE AND HEALING TO MANY INMATES.**

OVERHEARD IN PRISON

"There is a buzz and excitement within the small makeshift chapel that is alongside a noisy indoor basketball court within the confines of Lancaster County Prison (LCP). Within this chapel, a clear call goes out to twenty-five to thirty men to acknowledge genuine repentance, deny foolish ways, surrender completely to Jesus and lay hold of the power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy and fruitful life. God takes great pleasure in laying hold of those that everyone else has written off, transforming them and holding them up as a trophy of His grace and love. I love to watch those changes."

**Pastor Michael Wolfe, Weekly Bible teacher at LCP
working with inmates as they prepare to leave prison.**

"I truly thank God and your chaplaincy services for the prompt response to my request for a Bible. The chaplain understood me and that brought a wonderful smile to my face. Hopefully, you will receive further requests from me for Bible studies, daily devotionals, church services, and group studies. God shall always bless you. Our God is an awesome God!!!"

Middle-aged male inmate at LCP

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



Support for Prison Ministries ANNUAL BENEFIT AUCTION

October 22 & 23, 2010 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:

Start your day with a Delicious Pancake and Sausage Breakfast

8:30 A.M. Auction begins with quality merchandise for home, farm, and business, including framed pictures, quilts, hand-crafted items, pedal tractors, and theme baskets.



HOME MADE FOODS AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT SALE

Donations of quality merchandise, theme baskets, and gift certificates are needed. Volunteers needed to help prepare for and work on Auction Day. For more information, call: Nelson Martin (717) 625-0232, Glenn Hoover (717) 569-2475 or Cliff Martin (717) 336-6411.



Our auction goal is to clear \$90,000 after expenses, to be shared with LANCASTER COUNTY PRISON and YOUTH CENTER CHAPLAINCY PROGRAMS, WE CARE PROGRAMS, and several local reentry programs.

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

