

## **A UNIQUE FAMILY/ PRISON MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY**

*J. R. Fisher is a full-time Chaplain at Lancaster County Prison (LCP), working under the direction of Support for Prison Ministries. J. R. has a deep interest in seeing the Gospel*



**LCP Chaplain J.R. Fisher**

*change lives. He has written a booklet about the ministry of inner healing, which has been widely distributed within LCP. J.R. listens to, counsels, and prays with many needy inmates on a daily basis. Here is a unique story of an unusual prison ministry opportunity, that started behind the bars and impacts the life of a local family.*

### **A DAD BEHIND THE BARS**

**BY J. R. FISHER**

Jeff and I met in 2001. He was very open to the idea of inner healing, so we started working through some childhood issues. We talked about the good, the bad, and the ugly and how Jeff was impacted by all of it. We quickly developed a friendship and shared about hopes, dreams, and families.

Eventually Jeff told me about his son, and the pain of not being able to be with him. The only good thing about the whole situation was the fact that his son was in a good foster home. Then Jeff really got my attention when he mentioned the foster parents names, Bill and Saralyn. (As it turns out, Saralyn is a relative of mine.) They began as foster parents and have since adopted Jeff's son. Some people may not consider this to be "prison ministry" but I know that one inmate, Jeff, was impacted by the love that was and is currently being demonstrated to his son.

Jeff is not able to interact with his son at this time, so it is comforting to know that he is growing up in a Christian environment. I hope this story encourages those who do not feel called to minister through "preaching" or "singing" or "visiting those in prison". There are many ways to impact our hurting world.

### **A SON OUTSIDE THE WALLS**

**BY BILL AND SARALYN LAPP**

Several years ago, we applied to Lancaster County Children and Youth Agency (LCCYA) to receive foster children into our home. Anthony came at 8 months old. A few years later, Timothy, his 2 month old half-brother, (Jeff's son from previous story) came into our home for foster care. It is such a blessing to make a difference in the lives of these boys. We are helping them learn about God. We trust they will each find their security in Jesus Christ as they grow.

Joining the 2 foster boys in our family, our son Andrew was born early in 2002. After proper work with the LCCYA and the birth parents, we adopted both Anthony and Timothy in October 2002. About the same time as the adoption, the boy's half-sister Hope was received by us for a time of foster care.

We believe this is a unique opportunity to be involved in prison ministry. We strongly recommend this type of ministry to other couples and families. God has blessed us so much with these children. We also now have opportunities to share Christ with the biological parents, helping nurture seeds that J.R. Fisher has planted. Are there questions or

concerns we have about the future? Sure, the boys may have some "special issues" to deal with because of their background and adoption, but we are trusting the Lord for wisdom and guidance as they grow. We can't think of any hardships that would be different

than when one is raising biological children. We have an expanded family, and are doing it for the sake of Jesus Christ.

*Praise God! He is doing many exciting things today with prison ministries; behind the prison walls, in reentry and aftercare centers, and in ministry to inmates families.*



**The Lapp family: Bill, holding son Andrew; Anthony, Saralyn holding Hope; Timothy**

# BUILDING A BRIDGE TO TROUBLED TEENS

## A report from the new Youth Intervention Center

A newly constructed bridge, linking Lancaster's Broad Street to Sunnyside peninsula is a symbol of another bridge that has opened to work with troubled teens. Just as this new concrete and steel bridge makes it possible to enter the Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center's new \$18



*Standing at the entrance to YIC (l to r) Chaplains Marvin and Lee; Staff Whitney and Troy; and Chaplain assistant Katie.*

million facility, caring chaplains and local youth groups are busy building bridges of hope to the YIC residents.

When the doors of the new Center opened in 2002, Support for Prison Ministries chaplains were there with expanded roles in providing spiritual counsel, Christian teaching, and

religious services. YIC Director Generette said, "The Chaplain's office is an integral part of our center's mission." Currently, over 40 young persons, ages 10 - 17, are detained at YIC while awaiting their court hearings. Another 20 young people are in a separate shelter care area.

Chaplain Marvin Reed, who worked in the crowded Barnes Hall facility for years, now has a comfortable

chaplain's office, small chapel, counseling area and a library, with Christian books and videos. Assisting Chaplain Reed with Bible study, counseling and group sharing are part-time staff Lee Stauffer and Katie Mininger.

In addition to the personal interaction by chaplains, a number of churches and youth groups have regular worship services and recreational nights at the Center. Taking time to build relationships with these young lives is so important. Seeds of hope, sometimes ever so small, are being planted. Forgiveness and reconciliation are happening. God is touching persons who come from dysfunctional families with many hurting and abusive experiences of life.



*Director Generette speaking in the chapel*

Support for Prison Ministries contracts with the county of Lancaster to provide chaplains and spiritual teaching and programming at both the Lancaster County Prison and the Youth Intervention Center. SFPM is very thankful for strong support by the county administration and the correctional facility directors and staff. Bridges, both physical and spiritual, are so important for accomplishing a task.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*by Nelson W. Martin, SFPM Director*

Isn't it exciting to be part of that "great cloud of witnesses" that Hebrews 12: 1 tells us about? Recently, while preparing for a relative's public auction, I found several old copies of the "Missionary Messenger", a publication of a local Mennonite mission agency. Several of these papers focused on the growing opportunities for local prison ministry.



● October 1975 - "first Sunday evening church service held at Lancaster County Prison, close to 50 attended. Very good interest and attention, report Lester Hoover and Nathan Showalter".

● February 1977 "Pastor Earl Wissler, a volunteer chaplain at LCP, is calling for the church to get involved in inmates lives when they leave prison". (That is a special memory because Earl was my pastor as I was growing up).

● July 1979 "Nine retirees now living at Landis Homes Retirement Community are grading Bible correspondence courses completed by prison inmates."

● May 1987 "Pat Tutella, who assists Chaplain David Myer at LCP, writes 'The local church or faith community has the greatest potential to challenge and help restore broken lives.'"

Today, Support for Prison Ministries continues to be part of this great cloud of witnesses that went before. From very small beginnings, SFPM now has 10 paid staff (full time equivalent of 6 ) and 12 regular volunteers who provide chaplain services at Lancaster County Prison and the Youth Intervention Center. SFPM also supports and networks with several aftercare and reentry programs. Thanks to you, our many faithful friends, businesses and congregations, who are witnesses with us by your prayers, counsel and financial support. The Church of Jesus Christ is moving on, both inside and outside the walls.

# Prison Ministry Happenings ... Here and There

✓ **SFPM and We Care Programs are joining together to sponsor a PRISON MINISTERS CERTIFICATION SEMINAR** to be held Monday and Tuesday, November 10 and 11, 2003 in the Lancaster area (at Hinkletown Mennonite Church). This 2 day seminar will provide helpful information to those interested in getting started, furnish training to those already involved, and offer encouragement and vision to those experienced in long-term prison ministry. More details will soon be available. Contact SFPM office if interested. (717) 626-6301 email: nelsonmartin1@juno.com

✓ It is amazing how God is touching hearts of inmates in a new way, calling them to minister to others behind the walls. I've been a chaplain for 22 years and have never seen anything like what God is currently doing"  
**Quoted from a PA State Prison Chaplain**

✓ **IN A NOTE RECEIVED FROM AN INMATE AT LCP**  
"I thank God for my stay in prison. Because of the chaplains I have a new outlook on life. I have hope again, something that I had lost. I pray everyday for God's presence to be in my life."



**Warden Vincent Guarini welcomes Lead Chaplain Al Huber and SFPM staff to Lancaster County Prison. (l to r) Guarini, Huber, Faye Stauffer, Marvin Reed, Diane Fulmer, J R Fisher, Katie Mininger and Isaias Maldonado.**

✓ **UNDER CONSTRUCTION \*\* COMING SOON \*\***  
**A NEW INFORMATIVE WEBSITE IS BEING DEVELOPED** [www.supportforprisonministries.org](http://www.supportforprisonministries.org)

✓ **QUILTS NEEDED FOR THE AUCTION**  
If your church, sewing circle, or business can donate any quilts or wallhangings, call Judy Hoover at 717-733-7301. See more auction details on back page.

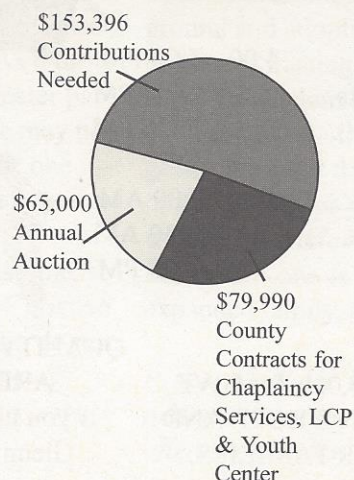
## Focus On Finances

### TWO CHALLENGES FROM OUR TREASURER

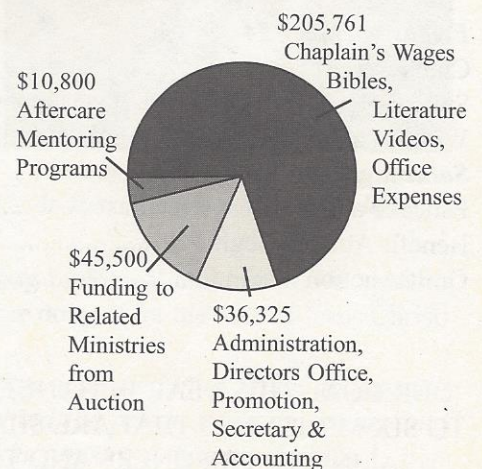
- We were thankful for very strong giving in 2002, so we increased some chaplains staff time and gave additional help to several needy after-care ministries during 2003. So far this year, our contributions have been about \$10,000 less than the same time last year. This results in a very tight cash flow. Please use the enclosed envelope to share a gift with SFPM. A tax-deductible receipt will be sent for each contribution received.
- Remember SFPM in your estate planning, will distribution and long term giving plans. We have professional counsel available to help you with financial planning and asset distribution.

### 2003 Annual Budget - \$298,386

#### Income



#### Expenses

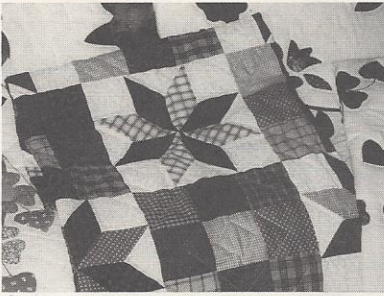


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## COME TO THE AUCTION

Friday, October 24 &  
Saturday, October 25, 2003



### Specialty Items to be Sold

- \*Hand-carved 3-D Picture  
- beautiful Autumn Farm Scene
- \*Pedal Tractors
- \*Framed Paintings & Hand-crafted Items  
(some done by inmates)
- \*Beautiful Quilts and Wall Hangings
- \*Teddy Bears, childrens toys and games
- \*Valuable Gift Certificates from area businesses
- \*Tools, hardware, farm and home items
- \*Food items, groceries, produce, fruit and meat
- \*Beautiful gift and theme baskets

**Food, fun, and fellowship while providing funds to be shared with ministries that are dedicated to prisoners, Aftercare programs, and prisoners families.**

*Located at the Farmersville Auction Grounds, Farmersville (Northwest of New Holland, Lancaster County) PA*

### Schedule of Activities

#### Friday, October 24

Chicken Barbeque .....4:00 - 7:00 PM  
Sale of Hardware, groceries, meats and crafts .....5:30 - 9:00 PM  
Winross and Collectible Toy Sale .....7:30 - 8:30 PM

#### Saturday, October 25

Pancake and Sausage Breakfast .....6:00 AM  
Benefit Auction begins .....8:30 AM  
Quilt Auction .....1:00 PM



OUR GOAL THIS YEAR IS TO NET \$65,000 TO GIVE TO SIX MINISTRIES THAT ARE SHARING HOPE AND HEALING TO PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

QUALITY MERCHANDISE AND GIFT CERTIFICATES ARE STILL NEEDED FOR THIS AUCTION.

If you have donations, call Nelson Martin 626-6301 or Glenn Hoover 733-7301 or Cliff Martin 336-6411.