

## Support For Prison Ministries: the Beginning- Part One

By Del Burkholder, Director



Glenn Hoover was one of the original founding members of Support For Prison Ministries. He also was Chairman of the Board for 20 Years. He is an honorary member of the Board of Directors.

As I begin this new leadership position with Support For Prison Ministries I find myself looking back at the history of the ministry. I ask myself: What thought processes were involved in the organizations foundation? How did God move in the hearts of people to begin this ministry? Who were the people who started it? What were the original visions? To answer some of the questions I began reading countless documents and then I sat down with one of the founding members of SFPM, Glenn Hoover, to learn about the beginning years. After speaking with him I have an even greater appreciation for those founders and what they have done for SFPM.

### What was your first involvement with prison ministry?

**Glenn Hoover:** It was about 1980 and Martin Weber(1925-2009), founder of We Care Prison Ministry, came to my home church at Indiantown Mennonite and conducted a week of revivals. It was there that Weber asked for volunteers for his Prison Renewal in Alabama. It was the early years of the Prison Renewal and I felt that if Martin could give one week to come up to be with us I could give him one week down in Alabama in prison work.

### What was your first prison experience like?

**Glenn Hoover:** It was eye opening and life changing. I saw a church body operating in prison and was impressed with their commitment to Christ.

### So how did Support For Prison Ministries come about?

**Glenn Hoover:** We felt a need to help raise money for the We Care ministry and the late Carpenter’s Mennonite pastor, Dave Weaver, was instrumental in being a part of having an auction. Ernie Stauffer, and many others, were key in this auction. The first auction raised \$10,000. One item we sold was a model ark, made by an inmate from Alabama, that sold for \$1,000. That ark is still in good shape and is owned by Paul High.

### So the auction came first, what led to Support For Prison Ministries becoming a non-profit organization?

**Glenn Hoover:** We ran the auction for a few years, supporting We Care but then there was a call for aftercare services and we desired to also help another ministry, Hopeway, and their efforts. However, we had run the auction under We Care’s 501 (c) 3 and when we decided to also help other prison ministry we were not able to be covered under We Care’s non-profit umbrella.

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# Volunteer Spotlight: Reuben Lapp

“Volunteers are special and they make a difference”

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



Reuben Lapp started volunteering through two people at the church he attends that serve as volunteer chaplains at LCP: Pastor Jacob Riehl and worship leader, Kent Martin.

Reuben’s first impression was the hopelessness in the eyes of the inmates that find themselves in prison. He wanted to be able to bring the hope of Jesus Christ to them by sharing with them the Godly morals found in Romans 12: 9-21, plus many other passages found in the Bible.

When he goes in to prison he prays that God will provide divine appointments with individuals that are needing to experience a relationship with Jesus Christ, our redeemer.

Reuben operates Superior Plastic Products, located in New Holland, PA, a business his father founded, and has reached out to hiring ex-inmates in his business. He is a husband and father of nine children. While he loves serving in the prison, he also realizes the importance of being a husband and father to his family and reserves time for this important role.

Reuben reflects the caliber of volunteers that work with lead chaplain, Al Huber, at LCP. Support For Prison Ministries is thankful to have Godly men of integrity sharing with the incarcerated in Lancaster.

**THANK YOU, REUBEN, FOR YOUR MINISTRY BEHIND BARS!!**



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Delicious homemade foods and baked goods available Friday evening and Saturday



Framed pictures  
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Theme Baskets



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wall hangings

Many Valuable Gift  
Certificates from  
area businesses for  
food, lodging,  
professional and  
home services.



Since the SFPM annual auction began in 1984, over \$2 million has been contributed to prison ministries.

Check our website’s Annual Auction Pages for more information at [www.supportforprisonministries.org](http://www.supportforprisonministries.org)  
Or our facebook page for pictures of items for sale.

# Chaplain's Corner



Katie Mininger is Lead Women's Chaplain for SFPM and divides her time between Lancaster County Prison and Youth Intervention Center. Katie lives in Lancaster and attends Mellinger Mennonite Church. Katie has worked for SFPM for 12 years. Here is a peek into Katie's activities behind bars.

You never know what a day in the chaplain's office at the Lancaster County Prison will hold. I loosely organize my day, reading requests from inmates wanting to talk or pray with a chaplain or needing books and Bibles.

Loosely is the key word- as you have to be prepared to deal with whatever crisis occurs. Whether it be notifying an inmate of the hospitalization or death of a family member, or listening to someone who came back from court, having been sentenced to more time than they expected, or praying with someone who received notice that her parental rights were being terminated.

I also spend time on the housing blocks delivering requested items -books, devotionals, Bibles, magazines, and Correspondence Bible Studies. I love seeing God at work and hearing stories of how He is working in many lives. He truly does send his Spirit to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners.

**Did you know???** In addition to cash contributions, Support For Prison Ministries can also receive gifts in other ways such as: donations of stock, real estate, life income plans, bequests, and charitable designations from wills. Professional counsel is available through Everence Financial Advisors.

## **The Beginning — Part One, continued from page 1**

### **How did the actual name, Support For Prison Ministries, begin?**

**Glenn Hoover:** The original board met and we decided to call it Support For Prison Ministries so that we could support various prison ministries.

### **Who were the original creators of the Incorporation toward the non-profit?**

**Glenn Hoover:** I am not actually sure I can recall all of them. There was so many names associated who played key roles with the early ministry. Ministry records show the directors attached to the initial incorporation were Glenn Hoover, Ken Burkholder, Elvin Weaver, and returning to Pennsylvania, We Care Chaplain, Marvin Reed.

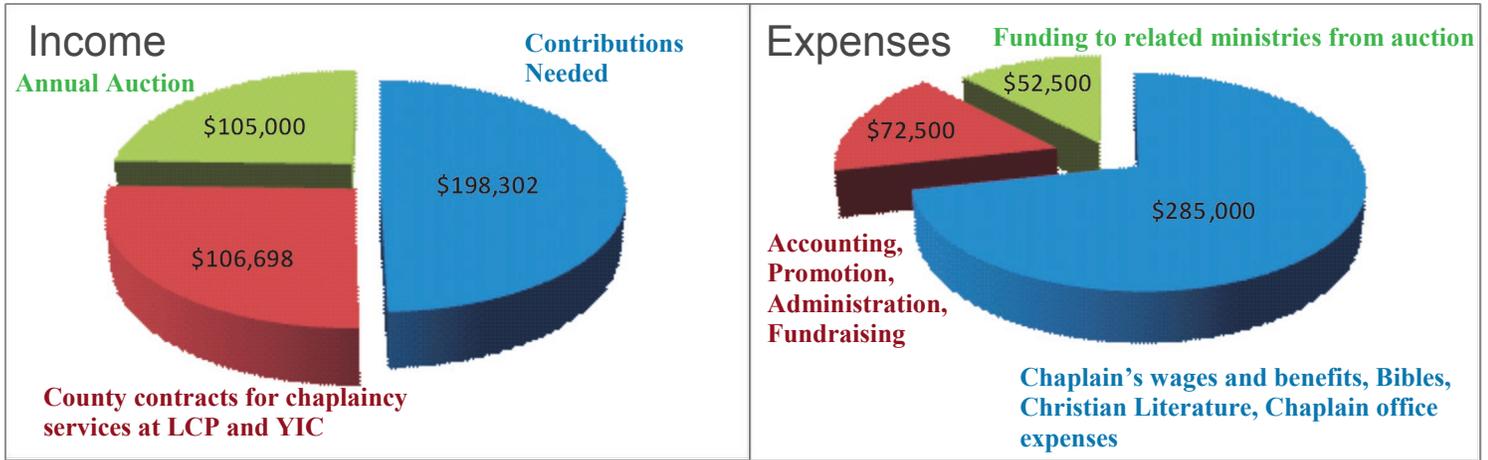
### **The 501(c) 3 non-profit was an interesting story wasn't it? How smooth did that go?**

**Glenn Hoover:** It was very difficult when we were applying for the non-profit status. The Jim Baker/PTL scandal was happening and the government had all but halted any new applications. Nothing was moving. Our Attorney suggested that the only way to get anywhere was to show up at their door. So unannounced, not knowing what to expect, I was led to drive to the IRS in Baltimore. Nobody was at the desk and I waited until someone showed up. They asked me who I was and what I wanted. Finally I got to talk to someone and they pushed it through. And that is how Support For Prison Ministries came about.

**In our next issue we will look at the roots of the Lancaster Prison Chaplaincy and the calling of the first ministry director, Nelson Martin. Stay tuned!**

# Focus On Finances

**2015 Budget: \$410,000**



**A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your gift to partner with SFPM. THANK YOU !!**

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**Support for Prison Ministries**

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** By Del Burkholder, SFPM Director

Often times I get asked the question, "Are you doing any good? Aren't they just going to come back?" There is a saying: When a preacher repeats a story too many times, that it has been around the block. One of the stories that has been around the block is the story of the man on the beach where hundreds of starfish had washed up. In vain, he is throwing them back one at a time, another man said to him, "You know you're not making a difference, you can't save them all?" The man picked up another one, threw it back in the ocean, and retorted, "But it sure made a difference for that one, didn't it!"



That is often the way I find prison ministry and aftercare ministry. It is a tough job, but the rewards of the single one that gets a second chance in the sea of life, far outweighs the frustration of those that we could not help. Please remember us at Support For Prison Ministries, our team of chaplains, and also those in aftercare that are making a difference.