

Spring Prison Conferences

This Spring there were two prison related conferences held. One was our annual Support for Prison Ministries prison conference held at Hinkletown Mennonite Church. The other one was a first-time prison conference put on by Bright Side Baptist Church in Lancaster. Both prison conferences had successful turnouts and highlighted the importance of prison ministry, and especially prison aftercare in areas where they are needed the most.

Support For Prison Ministries Conference



(L-R)
Marvin Knapper,
Men of Purpose,
Steve Nolt, SFPM
Board Member,
Del Burkholder,
SFPM Director

At the Support for Prison Ministries conference the theme was “Being Effective in Prison Ministry” as there is more that goes into ministering to inmates and ex-inmates than just showing up. The goal was to learn how to reach men and women with connections to Christ that will stay with them after their prison years.

Most of the speakers were recognized leaders of prison ministries and prison aftercares, who shared their many years of experience and examples of what worked and also what didn’t work over the years.

Two local leaders of the incarceration system spoke: Warden Cheryl Steberger of Lancaster County Prison and Bryan Hubbard, Program Director at the Youth Intervention Center. The Warden spoke on how religious volunteers can be most effective in helping inmates change their habits. Bryan Hubbard shared what religious volunteers can do to be most helpful and also the cautions with working with impressionable young people that can have an adverse effect.

(continued on page 2)

Bright Side Baptist Prison Conference

Bright Side Baptist, in Lancaster City, held their first prison conference. The church ministers at Lancaster County Prison with church services and visitation and they have a great passion for helping men and women returning to society. They operate Bright Side Opportunities Center. The Center offers a wide variety of health, social services, and educational programs for people of all ages. They have food distribution also at the church.

The conference had many men that gave testimony of what God has done for them while they were in prison, and also what God has done since they have been released. Men of Purpose’s Lewis Lee, of Philadelphia, shared about being incarcerated for 45 years and how he has been used for God’s service since being released in 2020, particularly in helping coach other longtime inmates returning to society.

(continued on page 2)



Bright Side Conference Leaders: (L-R) Pastor John Knight and his wife Tamara, & Freda Ferguson, event organizer

Support For Prison Ministries Conference

(continued from page 1)

Several ex-inmates spoke during the conference about how God turned around their lives in prison and they are now walking with the Lord and also being productive in their community. Former inmate, Marvin Knapper, from Men of Purpose (Philadelphia) spoke of how God is using him as he has founded his own business. He also hires inmates coming out of prison to work for him.

The conference's final speaker was Chaplain Phil Maust. Chaplain Phil recently retired from the State Chaplaincy. He reflected on several decades of being a PA state chaplain leader and sharing some of his more memorable stories.

The event closed with a delicious SFPM Roast Beef Dinner and great fellowship with many prison workers and volunteers from PA and other parts of the country.

Bright Side Baptist Prison Conference

(continued from page 1)

One of the speakers was Freddy Nole, a leader of a group of men that minister to older men coming out of prison in finding jobs and getting acclimated to society. In many instances, men have served the greater part of their lives being incarcerated. In doing this they have missed out on much of life's experiences and do not know how to properly function in society without help. Also, they do not have the privilege of being able to have saved money or even being able to accumulate social security holdings over their lifespan. This is a severe obstacle to many.

Special thank you to Pastor John Knight who leads Brightside Baptist and Freda Ferguson, conference organizer for Bright Side. It was a good time of learning for many, and well organized by the entire group at Bright Side.

We were blessed by all the people who attended both conferences. It is a sign that many people in Lancaster and other communities care about prison ministry and prison aftercare. To God be the glory!

TAKE OUT CHICKEN DINNER



Friday evening, October 25

Available for pick up at the following places:

Mellinger Mennonite Church

1916 Lincoln Hwy E, Lancaster

Ephrata Area

Looking for a location

Good's Store/Shady Maple

1338 Main St, East Earl

For questions or more information:

sfpmdb@gmail.com

717-859-5519

More information will be available on our website: www.supportforprisonministries.com as we get closer to the event. Click on the Fundraising Events Tab for updates.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our three locations! Thank you!!



Thank You From the Young Incarcerated

Going back to the days of Barnes Hall, Support For Prison Ministries has been providing the Chaplaincy services to the Youth Intervention Center (YIC). Jeryl Zimmerman is the Chaplaincy Coordinator and works with chaplains Jason McKinney and Ivonne Ronquillo.

The administration at YIC is led by Drew Fredericks, Director, and Bryan Hubbard, Programs Manager, who both have been steady guiding hands with young people coming to the Youth Intervention Center. SFPM has been blessed to work with these two and other staff at YIC.

Several churches in the area go in during the evenings and do programs such as New Covenant Mennonite Fellowship, Hinkletown Mennonite, Millersville Bible and Dove to name a few. Recently YIC administrators asked their young residents how they feel about the many volunteers that come to YIC to volunteer their time.

Here are just a few of their comments of appreciation to those that give of their time that come to YIC.

- ◆ Thank you for taking the time to come teach us about God.
- ◆ Thank you for coming in and dealing with us.
- ◆ Thank you for always coming through for the residents and staff.
- ◆ We love you and all you do! Don't stop!
- ◆ We had fun with you, please come again soon.
- ◆ Thank you for being people we can talk to about our problems.
- ◆ Thank you for spending time with us when you could be doing other things, like spending time with your family.
- ◆ You are awesome!
- ◆ Thank you for teaching us about the message of the Bible. You have taught me a great deal. God bless you and your family!
- ◆ Thank you for coming here. It really helps us get our minds off the situations we are dealing with. We appreciate everything you do for us.
- ◆ You have shown that you care for us, sometimes more than we have cared for ourselves. Thank you!
- ◆ We've had bad days, but then we would come to your program and would feel so much happier!



SFPM Chaplain, Jeryl Zimmerman, commented how much the chaplains appreciate the church groups and the pastors that visit the young incarcerated and what a difference it makes. From all of us at SFPM a big THANK YOU to those of you bringing hope to young people's lives in Jesus Christ.

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he shall not depart. Proverbs 22:16

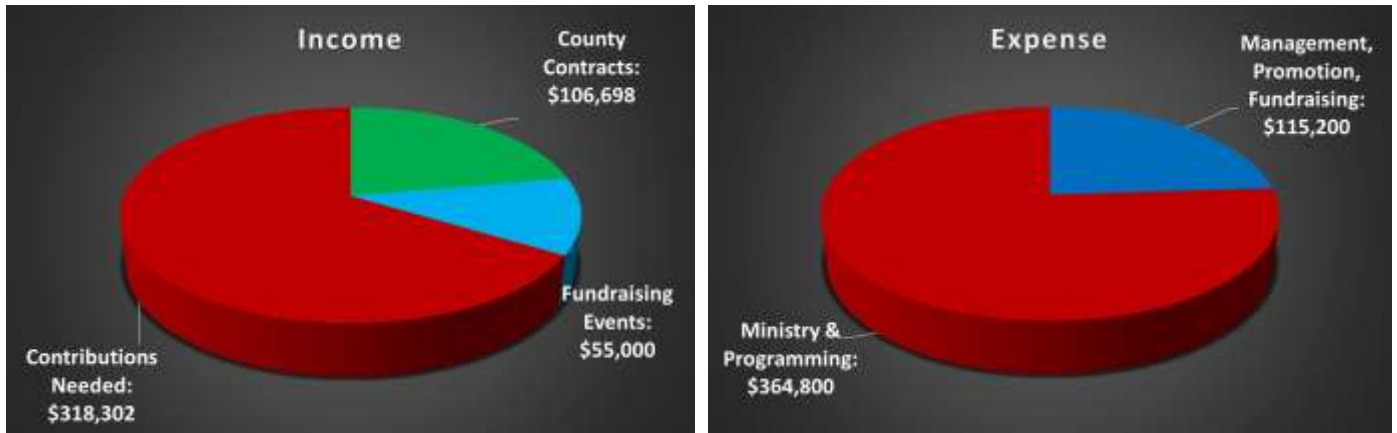
HELP US RESTOCK OUR BOOK AND BIBLE SHELVES

We give out hundreds of Christian books and around 1,500 Bibles per year inside Lancaster County Prison and the Youth Intervention Center.

_____ Bibles x \$8.00 = \$ _____

_____ Books x \$10.00 = \$ _____

**Clip coupon and mail to: SFPM PO Box 727, Brownstown PA 17508-0727
Or go to www.supportforprisonministries.com and click on Donate**



A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your gift to partner with SFPM. You can also make a donation on-line through our website. THANK YOU !!

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Support for Prison Ministries

Director's Report

By Del Burkholder

I have spent many years ministering in PA State Correctional Prisons. One time I met an ex-inmate who expressed his appreciation for our ministries work in the prison. He commented to me, "I know I am not living the life that I should be in Christ, but I'm still trying to do my best and haven't forgotten what you guys taught me in prison." Obviously, this individual has become a productive member of society, but not following Christ the way he should.

I went away thinking that sometimes in prison ministry this is as good as gets in some individuals. What we have found most effective is one on one ministry, like our chaplains do in Lancaster County Prison. Some of those they minister to become great prison stories of transformation, but often many will still struggle from time to time in society.

Ezekiel 3:17-19 tells us to share the message but how that person accepts that message is up to the individual and in God's hands. We realize that prison work is not always perfect and doesn't always turn out the way we hope it will. But every fruit begins with a small seed. So we do your part, whether it is planting, fertilizing, trimming, or watering and watch the fruit grow.