

A newsletter with information for your partnering with us in

“Proclaiming Freedom for Prisoners”

Spring 2026

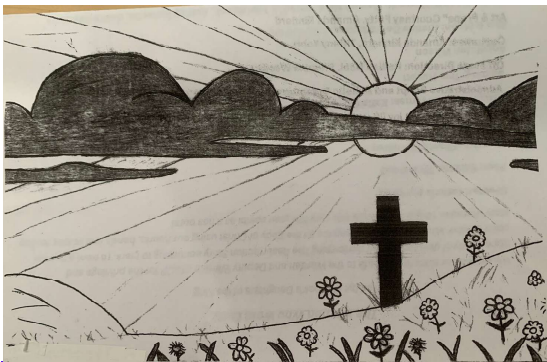
“The Women Who Went Early”

30 people gathered in the 2nd floor gym, on the Friday after Easter, to watch a 15-minute Easter play titled “The Women Who Went Early.” It was performed by 10 of the female inmates. It started with one woman reading a poem that she wrote called, “A Wretched Girl Like Me.” Part of it said, “Oh Holy God, that you might know, a wretched girl like me who walked alone through sand and stone from sea to shining sea. I ask you God to touch our hearts the way you only do... You gave your son to die so in our sins we won’t forget the how, the what, the why.”



Then the Narrator invited us to watch the Resurrection story through the eyes of three women: Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, and Salome. The three women traveled together towards the tomb. As they were walking and talking, they admitted they were frightened to go near the tomb, but love could not keep them away. They encouraged each other and reminded each other of many things that Jesus said to them while he was still alive. Mary Magdalene said, “I can’t go backwards. He changed my life.” And Mary mother of James said, “We will not believe that Love ended at the cross.” Salome responded, “I want to be confident, but my heart is broken into so many pieces.” They continued talking and as they approached the tomb, they noticed the stone was rolled away.

A messenger appeared and told them Jesus is alive! The women began to sing, “Alive, Alive, Alive



The bulletin
designed by one of the ladies

Forevermore.” Then they ran off the stage yelling for the disciples to come and see. The play ended with the ladies singing, “Because He Lives, I Can Face Tomorrow.”

People from the audience shared that the story line brought them to tears and that it was a perfect way to end a busy week. The ladies said it was scary to do a performance and talk in front of the Warden, Deputy Wardens, and treatment staff but they also felt so supported by the people who came to watch them. The ladies performed with passion and conviction and did an excellent job!

The conference in pictures



Mark your Calendar

**Our Annual Take Out Chicken Dinner
will be served on
Friday, October 23**

More information closer to the time.



Spring SFPM Prison Conference

By Del Burkholder

In March, SFPM held its annual Prison Conference. Speakers included SFPM chaplain leaders Katie Harnish and Jeryl Zimmerman who talked about what was happening in Lancaster County Prison and Lancaster Youth Intervention Center. SFPM Chaplain Janice Hess was recognized during this time for 30 years of volunteer chaplain service at Lancaster County Prison.



Janice Hess

The theme of the conference was "Witnessing Results in Prison Ministry." Testimonies were shared about working with inmates in prison that then carried over to a successful post prison lifestyle. After release they were walking with Christ and being a positive impact on society in general.

The audience heard from Jubilee Ministries' Executive Director, Ryan Newswanger, on how prison aftercare work produces success. We Care Program's Kevin Kennell & Eddie Miller, who was a former inmate but now is a chaplain, spoke on their work in Alabama and Florida. Former PA Department of Corrections Chaplain, Phil Maust, spoke on post prison success of inmates at Somerset SCI. Before a break in the Conference there was a tribute given to the late Jim Newsom who had helped start the prison conference.

The feature presentation was by two former chaplains of Mahanoy SCI. Nelson Zeiset and Guy Giordano shared on the extraordinary success they have had with many of their ex-inmates coming from the prison church of Mahanoy transitioning to very successful post prison lives. They highlighted the contrast between Nelson, being a Mennonite Pastor, and Guy, being a Pentecostal Pastor, and how those opposite styles worked well in forming a strong prison church and a groundwork for an inmate's future life. Nelson quoted often from his book, "Behind Fences: A Prison Chaplain's Story." Guy shared in his talk of the Good Sinner, Bad Sinner approach to his chaplaincy. The group also heard from former inmates Lewis Lee and John Cooke during Nelson and Guy's presentation.

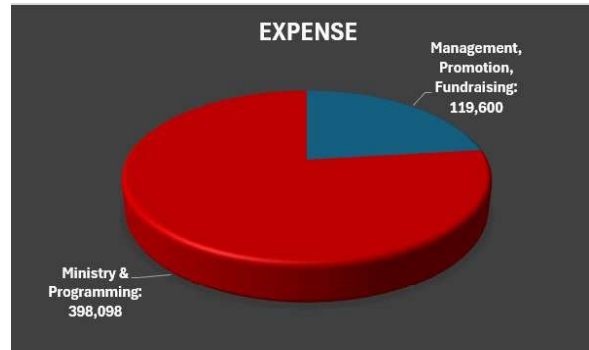
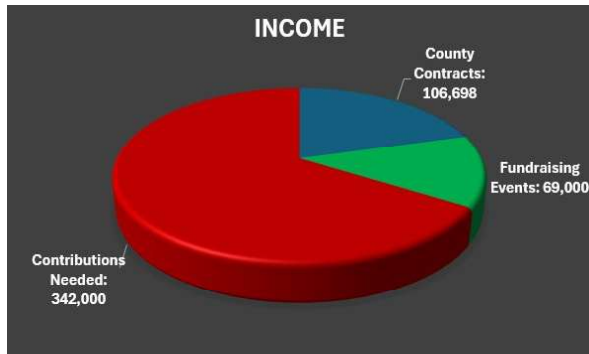


Afterwards the participants of the conference shared together in a Roast Beef fellowship meal. It was an enjoyable time for those that attended. One person commented, "The conference was WONDERFUL! I like the 8-12 format, wonderful speakers and hearing from former inmates. Very encouraging hearing what our great God is doing in this messed up world of ours. I loved the talk on 'good' sinners and 'bad' sinners and during lunch heard the story/calling of one of the LCP chaplains and his wife which was wonderful."

As the conference was happening, we were also having a drive-thru roast beef dinner fundraiser. We are grateful for each person who came and bought a meal. Thank you!

Focus on Finances

2026 Budget: \$517,698



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