



Christian Science Committee
FOR INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE
IN THE STATE OF OREGON

Bringing light and healing within the setting of Oregon's penal institutions

Greetings Fellow Branch Members:

Irving Tomlinson observed "...Mrs. Eddy's practical piety was manifest in her active interest in the welfare of those confined to prison." (Tomlinson) From Mrs. Hattie Frederick "That there is a great field of work, rich in its yield, open to Christian Science in this direction, is proven beyond a doubt..."(Frederick)

What one inmate said:

TESTIMONY from former inmate who found Christian Science in an Oregon prison and attended services provided by Christian Science volunteer chaplains for the next 13 years at two different facilities.

The Choice Is Yours

by RV

"I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life that you and your descendants may live." (Deut 30:19) Not only must we choose to think that we are going to make it, but we must also decide not to quit. When doubts and fears try to frighten us or discourage us, we must take a stand and say: "I never give up! God is on my side. He loves me, and He is helping me!" You and I have many choices to make throughout our lives. Impossible? No! -- -- Difficult? Yes – if we aren't listening to God and following his direction!

God is working on you and me. At least, He is if you and I have invited Him to have control of our thoughts. Just keep cooperating with Him (God) and don't give up! It will definitely take time, and it won't all be easy, but you're going in the right direction if you choose God's way of thinking. You will spend your time doing something, so it may as well be going forward and not staying in the same mess for the rest of your life.

"Behold, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them." (Deuteronomy 8)

Discouragement destroys hope, so naturally the devil always tries to discourage us. Without hope, we give up, which is what the devil wants us to do. The Bible repeatedly tells us not to be discouraged or dismayed. God knows that we will not come through to victory if we get discouraged, so God always encourages us as we start out on any project by saying to us: "Don't get discouraged."

Remember, you and I become what we think. Change your thinking and be set free! Instead of thinking negatively, think: Father, forgive me, and help me to keep on keeping on. I made a mistake, but at least that is one mistake I won't have to make again. This is a new day. You love me, Lord. Your mercy is new every morning. Father, the Bible says that you don't condemn us. You sent Jesus to teach us the unreality of sin, disease and death, and to love you and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. I'll be fine today and every day. And every day will be a great day! You help me to choose right thoughts today.

Surely you can already feel the victory in this type of cheerful, positive, God-like thinking. Remember, God is delivering you, little by little. So don't be discouraged, and don't feel condemned if you make a mistake. Be patient with yourself. Love yourself! Positive minds produce positive lives. Positive thoughts are always full of faith and hope. "And Jesus said unto the Centurian, Go your way; and as you have believed, so be it done unto you, as you have believed. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour." (Matthew 8:13)

Be Patient with yourself! God loves you! Choose God!

We have people like RV actively seeking the truth and we need Christian Scientists to serve them! Please prayerfully consider, as an individual member and as a congregation, helping these simple seekers who cannot come to our churches and Reading Rooms. Christian Science is the most important idea that enters our institutions, and you are the only ones who can provide this most vital of services.

“Inmates are sent to prison *as* punishment, not *for* punishment,” says Tonya Gushard, public information officer for the Oregon State Correctional Institution (OSCI) in Salem.

What one church Reading Room did:

Dear Members of Salem Church,

What a place is your Reading Room as a refuge and a place of restoration.

An individual who was recently released from Prison found those qualities in abundance at your reading room, not only from the room itself and its resources, but from those who lovingly served there. This individual had about a month and a half to make the necessary adjustments to his new life and become acclimated to a whole new world after serving 15 years in prison where he found and stayed with Christian Science during his term of incarceration and transfers. He was so impressed to find and feel the loving support given him while he tried to find living accommodations, apply for Social Security and its benefits, visit his Probation Officer and be in attendance to required classes, all without transportation. Such things would have overwhelmed many of us, but the staff at the Reading Room supported and prayed with him through each of these steps, and every obstacle that was presented was resolved in the most marvelous way without mortal intervention. I hope your staff will share with you this lovely spiritual journey they had a part in and the many blessing that it brought about. Your Reading Room certainly fulfilled its outreach to the community and fed the hungry and helped to heal a heart. More Reading Rooms and church members need to open up the way yours has. I am sure Mrs. Eddy would be pleased to know that your Reading Room fulfilled its purpose.

Thank you.

Marilyn Winn, Christian Science Volunteer Chaplain, Oregon Institutional Committee

What one volunteer chaplain does:

One man [at Columbia River Correctional Institution--CRCI] was missing from our class for 2 Fridays this past month. Upon inquiry, the chaplain let me know that he had had some “disciplinary trouble” but was back in the general population. It turned out that when he went for supper one evening, a little plate on his tray that should have had a piece of cake on it was empty. He reported it to an officer who said he was lying. That was what he got into trouble for. He is a soft-spoken young man but he stood his ground because he didn’t want to lie just to placate the officer. After he got out of “the hole,” he conferred with several other officers who seemed to think the whole thing was just a big joke, but he was told that he would **no longer be given meds (medication) for his mental health issues** as there apparently was no longer a problem in that regard. That was something to rejoice over!

He told me he had been very fearful of “getting into trouble” and was trying very hard to do everything exactly as he should. Sometimes they give inmates extra incarceration time for disciplinary issues. But he said that while he was in the hole, he had a lot of quiet time. He asked for a *Bible* and was given one. And he didn’t get any extra time added to the months he has yet to serve. He was **strengthened and blessed** by this experience!

A Prose Works and a complete Concordance to the works of MBE were requested by an inmate, and free used copies were found to fill the request. The inmate has also read *A Century of Christian Science Healing* and *Spiritual Healing in a Scientific Age* and has asked for some biographies of Mrs. Eddy.

What YOU can do:

Columbia River Correctional Institution (CRCI), located in Portland, needs a volunteer to transition into regular visits with this wealth of residents. This group loves to sing, read the lesson, and discuss possible applications for the truths of the Bible Lesson. The current volunteer then meets with residents one-on-one as needed or requested. Working with the current volunteer chaplain is the easiest way to get started in this work...seeing how someone else does it and making it your own. It is a ministry and a calling that is appreciated by the inmates receiving services, and it blesses those providing services. Visit the website csisoregon.com and contact the secretary for more information, including the volunteer application.

The following is a **public recognition** of and expression of appreciation for our CRCI chaplain:

From <http://www.emoregon.org/cosa.php> Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)

Circle Volunteers Change the World

Stronger Community - with No More Victims

This week [April 2016], I was able to recognize the dedicated work of one of our volunteers at a Multnomah County ceremony. Merry got involved with CoSA from the first months we launched, two years ago, and has been our first volunteer to serve on two circles (so far!). She came to CoSA as a continuation of her volunteer work inside Columbia River Correctional Institute and with the Home for Good in Oregon (HGO) program.

As those of you who've served alongside her know, Merry brings warmth, humility, and vitality to each encounter, showing love and grace, but never shy to state her mind if she disagrees with a core member or other volunteers. This is how one client described Merry: "The most altruistic human being I've had the pleasure of knowing. She lives her path. I've never witnessed her wavering."

It's not just Merry who makes CoSA possible, but the community as a whole. Eighteen of your fellow community members have served in circles so far. And every one of these amazing volunteers is someone I am honored to know. These teams serve together, as they change the world one person at a time. These dedicated citizens show up and show love in tough and chaotic moments as well as exciting, inspiring ones. Each one of them is a gift to their core members, to me, and to our community.

To all of you who support CoSA and are helping work for a world with *No More Victims*, I say, **THANK YOU!**

In peace and gratitude,
Rev. Audrey deCoursey, CoSA Program Manager, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Congratulations [Merry] on being recognized by Multnomah County Commissioner Judy Shiprack for your work with COSA. Well deserved. I forward[ed] the story to our Superintendent and Religious Services manager reminding them that you also teach a class every Friday evening at CRCI and attend our monthly HGO meetings. Your amazing work does not go unnoticed. They pass along their thanks to you as well.

Phil,
Chaplain Phil Holbrook, Columbia River Correctional Institution

What WILL you do?

A letter arrives at the church from an inmate/resident at an institution. Now what? Would you be willing to answer it? Here are some ideas from recent letter writing:

- **Write back!** Tell how happy you are to hear from them. Ask how they found Christian Science or how long they have studied. Address specific issues they address in their letter. Send some pertinent citations or a copy of the Bible Lesson, and see how they respond.
- Do not use your whole name: “Miss Barbara” or “Mr David” or “Sister Barbara” or “Brother David” work very well. Last names can lead to identification. Do not use your personal address or personal letterhead. Get permission to use your church’s address as your return address, or let the IS secretary know you would like to use the IS PO Box address.
- Notify this committee (csiscoregon@gmail.com), and find out if we have a volunteer chaplain currently visiting the facility they are in. So far, the residents writing are from institutions where we do not yet have volunteers.

Inmates in prison are searching for a way to change their lives, reaching out for something good. Let’s be sure we are ready to give “a cup of cold water in Christ’s name.”

What others are doing - March-July, 2016:

A Lecture at Oak Creek Juvenile Facility, sponsored by Beaverton Branch, given by Laura Lapointe, C.S., was well received. We had 10 young women attend—not as big a turnout as hoped, but still about 1/5th of the number of girls at Oak Creek, and half those were new to us, so completely new to Christian Science.

Laura’s message was heartfelt and right to the issues these young women deal with. She sang a few times and all joined in with Amazing Grace. Those that attended were very attentive and asked some good questions. One young woman who joins us just for the singing was particularly attentive and asked good questions, so we thought this a nice surprise and bit of fruitage. Two young women from Corvallis Church attended, an idea that Laura Lapointe initiated. One shared an idea on handling fear that she found very helpful. They were very comfortable and natural interacting with the Oak Creek group, and afterwards they gave out bookmarks and handouts provided by Laura Lapointe, and the cards and notes made by Beaverton Sunday School. There was good peer-to-peer interaction of youth at this lecture, and I know our two Corvallis Church young women really benefited from the experience as well.

In both units we had some tension between [residents] to deal with, when a well-meaning, but slightly unsympathetic, comment was made. In Unit C, the offended party was lovingly persuaded not to leave, and rejoined the group. In Unit A, we expressed appreciation for the good intentions and loving offer to help when some unwelcome advice was given, but affirmed together that we always respect the right of each person to follow their own best light. The offended [resident] kept her poise with some effort and did not to react. Living our Christianity is sometimes hard work, but they did it!

In Unit C each of the [residents] wanted to **pray for family members** with big health issues, so we shared our conviction that God is a very present help in trouble and never sends disease to anyone, and then we all prayed silently together before praying aloud the Lord’s Prayer.

In Unit A, J was quite teary and emotional. She’s crushed to be back, said she got in with the wrong crowd again, and has been dealing with unkind gossip from several [residents] that come from her neighborhood. She’s working hard to practice forgiveness and not reacting, but also keeping to herself. We talked about Jesus’ forgiveness on the cross and that we can go forward in God’s strength when dealing with persecution. A has not joined us in a while and had probing questions about death, resurrection, and evolution. G is very familiar with the Bible, prays sincerely every day.

Read Luke 13:10-17 from our Lesson, the account of the woman who had an infirmity 18 years and the synagogue rulers objected to Jesus healing on the Sabbath. It led to a discussion of Phariseeism vs learning to love and

caring about the needs of others. We mentioned Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, and F found it in Luke and read it to herself. Then she said, "that's a great story!" So we pointed out another great one, the prodigal son in Luke 15, and suggested she read the Gospel of Luke followed by the book of Acts, because both are written by the same author, and Acts is the sequel to Luke.

M had questions about heaven and hell and wanted to know if suicide meant one would go to hell. G wondered if someone coerced into suicide would go to hell. We all agreed that motive is generally a better gauge of right and wrong than action and explained that our understanding of Jesus teaching is that **a God who is Love would never condemn any of His children to eternal damnation.**

As we were leaving, D mentioned to us privately that she is uneasy about leaving [the institution] and making good choices. We talked about preparing her thought now, practicing her ability to know and follow what's right each moment. We also said she can find her way step by step, that **"God gives you spiritual ideas and they give you daily supplies."** She isn't going out there alone, but with God. We focused our prayer and Bible study time on preparation for the GED. We read together Psalm 103 and talked about the qualities each girl already has from God that pertain to the GED test: intelligence, poise, peace, inspiration, joy, dominion, etc. It was fun to model **an approach to school that begins with God as both holy and practical!**

There had been some incident and X wasn't sure she wanted to be with J for Bible Study or GED study, but decided it was the right thing to do and put aside her anger to be friendly and forgiving. She was also very grateful for the extra help, and wrote a dear note to the volunteers. We can tell these are beautiful new ideas and these girls are hungry for them.

J wanted to read a lot from the Bible, so we read Matt 6, **talked about forgiveness**, what being a hypocrite is, etc. She said she wanted to forgive herself for being so mean to her mom. We talked about saying sorry to her mom, then showing she means it by changing her behavior.

During our Bible Study time, J began crying. We had read Matthew 5: love your enemies. It was her nephew's second birthday and she had been in jail when he was born and on his first birthday too. It seemed like she was doomed to repeat this same pattern her whole life, plus she'd been bullied by some of the other girls. They made fun of her being religious, and she was pretty miserable. But she was determined not to be mean back or ever be mean to other girls there. We praised her for this and talked about the persecution that Jesus said is part of the Christian walk. Later, she was joyful, with a spring in her step, and couldn't thank us enough for coming, and for the extra tutoring help.

D announced that she may be leaving for a foster home soon. We talked about **valuing her worth** as she moves forward. We gave her a special hug as we left, because we may not see her again, and she said "I appreciate you." We are grateful, and she will be in our prayers.

From EOCI and TRCI:

In February, I printed up notices for Christian Science service resuming, including date, time and quotations by Jesus and Mary Baker Eddy, and mailed these notices to the ...chaplains asking them to post them according to their practices. When I attended the March services, the fellows at both institutions said the notices and newsletter notice were posted, and they suggested I do that often, because that is a common way of "advertising" that services are available. There were new attendees at both institutions.

A new attendee said he decided to attend the Christian Science service because he had gone to one of the chaplains and asked about the different religions and their services offered, and upon hearing what the Chaplain had to say, decided to visit the Christian Science service.

As we studied our way through the Bible lesson, a new attendee was pointing out why one had to mix God with material means. The long term attendees explained, by various examples, **why you can't serve God and mammon.**

Another of the new attendees had been transferred there from a facility where services had stopped for lack of a volunteer. He said **he was glad to be able to resume attending a Christian Science service.**

A man who came for the first time in April, returned. This was special because when he participated in April, it was obvious he [had an evangelical fundamentalist background] and was there to challenge Christian Science. This time he said next to nothing and was just listening intently and very polite. Earlier I had been praying about the attraction of Christian Science to the evangelical/fundamentalist thought specifically.

Another man, who has attended a number of times, finally put together what we've been teaching with applying it. He mentioned something about the drug he takes for a physical problem, and I replied that this was a situation where he could use the Christian Science method of healing. After the service he came up and asked me how to use it. I gave him some simple ways of directing his thinking to change how he views himself, God, and the situation. What impressed me the most was his earnestness.

One of the new men was over the top with enthusiasm for what he was hearing from the Bible lesson and what Mrs. Eddy had written. It became apparent he had had **an epiphany that clarified the Truth**, and when he saw that Mrs. Eddy's writings underscored his awakening experience, he was overjoyed. Conversely, another of the first time visitors said Christian Science had it wrong, and he challenged points, but he was polite and quiet for the most part. Some of the other new men definitely wanted to take a Bible Lesson Quarterly with them to try to get a better understanding about what this religion taught.

We discussed **praying for correction** of what appears as an imposition, and seeing it as animal magnetism coming in whatever form captures our attention. We worked through part of the lesson and discussed lesson citations with the same group of men that were new last month. They are an enthusiastic group, but steeped in old theology, so the concepts introduced by Christian Science are bewildering. There's difficulty in grasping the idea that changing thought will change the appearance. And even more difficulty in grasping that we change thought to bring to light our God-endowed nature, not just to make matter better.

What else you can do:

We have only three executive committee members and would like two more. We meet via phone conference and in person. Visit the website csisoregon.com and contact the secretary for more information, including the application.

We are continuing to work on our guidelines and procedures. As they are completed, they are posted on our website. Do you have questions regarding this committee or its work? Ask by sending an email to the secretary csisoregon@gmail.com or a letter to PO Box 1233, Wilsonville OR 97070. If you prefer to talk on the phone, email the secretary, and she'll schedule a phone call.

There are **challenges** (mostly related to time/perseverance) to becoming a facility volunteer, yet each facility needs a Christian Science volunteer chaplain. There is a need! Are you ready to serve in this way? Some inmates have expressed gratitude for being transferred to an institution with a Christian Science volunteer chaplain. Our past workers have done great work to spread the good of Christian Science. Our current workers could use some help! ***"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."* – John 4:35**

What we're doing next:

Save the date. Our next CSIS executive committee meeting will be **Tuesday, August 23, at 10:00 a.m. in the Bend church Sunday School**. Barb will be driving over with Joyce, and we have room in the car for two more from the Portland or Salem area. Please join us for this branch church activity.

Citations from page 1:

(Tomlinson) "Mrs. Eddy's Interest in Welfare of Prisoners" attached to his secretary's June 23, 1932 letter to the Chairman, Christian Science Prison Welfare Committee of the City of New York, Archives, pp1,2

(Frederick) "Prison Work in Detroit, Mich." By Mrs. Hattie M. Frederick, From the [July 12, 1900 issue](#) of the *Christian Science Sentinel*