



Greetings Fellow Branch Members:

September 2018

THANK YOU! To all churches and members that donate regularly and spontaneously to this work. The next news/fruitage letter will contain a summary of income and expenses. We attempt to use each penny wisely.

Beyond our general funds we have a "Literature" fund and a "Lecture" fund if you prefer to specify how your donation is used. We do not accept book donations, but request books as needed from local Reading Rooms. Checks can be sent to
CSCIS in Oregon
PO Box 1233
Wilsonville OR 97070

THANK YOU! To all our volunteers and church representatives for doing the direct volunteer work and the administration decisions needed to keep it all going.

As noted in the last news and fruitage letters, we need a couple people to serve on the Executive Committee (EC). The EC meets about once a month for two hours to handle funding, newsletters, guidelines, any administrative items. There are months when there is not a meeting at all. Most meetings are via Zoom (phone or video) so no one has to travel. Please consider serving this state-wide committee in this way. Contact the Secretary, Barb Weiser, at csiscoregon@gmail.com (watch where the 2nd "c" is in the address) or call 503-320-1915 for details.

A church representative meeting/conference call is scheduled via Zoom Sunday, **September 16 at 3pm**. A separate communication has been sent with the starting agenda and minutes from the June 10 representative meeting. Any interested church member may join us. Our secretary, Barb Weiser is happy to help get you connected.

- from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://zoom.us/j/5569652476>;
- by phone +1 408 638 0986 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 646 558 8665 or +1 669 900 6833;

Meeting ID: 556 965 2476.

Quick Updates:

- A volunteer took training at Oregon State Penitentiary (OSP) to enable her to add Mill Creek Correctional Facility to her badge to visit a specific adult-in-custody (AIC).
- Lectures are being scheduled at Santiam Correctional Institution (SCI) in Salem and Columbia River Correctional Institution (CRCI) in Portland. Two other lectures are expected to be scheduled in the next couple months.

- We now have a volunteer chaplain at Deer Ridge, in Madras.

This quarter's focus is on fruitage from 2017-2018 season lectures and a Christmas story at the end. Next quarter's focus will be overcoming challenges unique to the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) and Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) environment in which our volunteers work. This information is also available on our website: csisoregon.com under "Healing and Progress". As you visit our website, let the secretary know if something seems out of date or out of place: csiscoregon@gmail.com

Abbreviations used:

- AIC - Adult in custody – this term is used rather than "inmate" to reduce the context of "you are forever guilty" given the number of overturned convictions across the country.
- HFG - Home for Good is a volunteer organization sanctioned by the Oregon Department of Corrections to mentor those that are released.
- YIC - Youth in custody
- Amy, Bob – fake names used

The following edited comments are from volunteer reports and include experiences from persons whom the volunteers serve.

Experiences received in letters or related to volunteer chaplains from AICs and YICs:

I saw the Christian Science Sentinel at another facility, so I thought I'd come to see what Christian Science is about.

From Volunteer Chaplains:

Lecture 1: Six people came to a talk/lecture, including one I hadn't seen before. One of them took notes and got all the page numbers down for the references from Mary Baker Eddy's writings. It took us only about 10 minutes to get settled (I thought it would take a half-hour). Two hours of talk and sharing later, all stayed until the last minute, just before "count" when the AICs must be at their bunks. The lecturer said afterwards that he had never had such an attentive audience in that venue. They all expressed such gratitude, too!

Lecture 2: Regarding the upcoming lecture, all is going to schedule. The church representative has forwarded me the submitted forms to the Lecture Dept. of the Mother Church and all looked correct on those forms. The advertising flyers have been given to the chaplains of both institutions and I will be following up to be sure they are posted. I handed out the flyers to the men attending the service for them to show others and encourage others to attend.

The lecturer came and spoke to two institutions. He is a very heartfelt speaker. He made every effort to impart to the men a way to move out from right where they are. He did this through speaking of his own changes in his way of thinking about himself, and that brought about the changes in his life.

He was very attentive to who his audience was and tried to make connections with the men by engaging them in voicing their own ideas and ways of thinking about things. I appreciated that his style as a Christian Science lecturer was novel and I'm glad that he felt the freedom to do that.

Lecture 3: I did not visit 21 December since I was at the coast, but visited today, dropped off flyers for the lecture to be given at SCI on Jan 19, talked to the staff about the detailed protocol, dropped of "Christ and Christmas" as requested by an AIC, read the lesson on "Christ Jesus" since the AIC had not read the Christmas story yet. The chaplain will have to escort us to the room for the lecture.

Something to pray on is that the announcement was made "Seventh Day Adventist" rather than "Christian Science". I will need to be alert next time as I heard from the AIC that this was not the first time that has happened. It may be why no one else came today.

I picked the lecturer up at her hotel and arrived with time check phone messages before going in to the facility. Security didn't have the appropriate paperwork, but the chaplain arrived just as we were going to have him paged. He retrieved a new copy of the paperwork and off we went in plenty of time to start as scheduled.

I had the chaplain do the announcement since we were in a different room than advertised and he does a great job of announcing. We arranged a circle of chairs and in entered 10 men. I'd only ever seen four of them! Only two of them have been coming regularly and one I expected to come didn't. It was great!

The AICs were impressed that the lecturer came all the way from Connecticut and she connected with one man that way (he grew up in the same area). I explained that the Portland churches asked to sponsor lectures and here we are. They were impressed that I come to SCI every Friday from Portland. They matter, and they need to know that.

We did have one walk out, but no one was distressed about it and I had asked him to keep time and he simply said "It's 9:30" and walked out :-). I found a clock on a phone that I hadn't noticed in my first walk through of the room, so I could be sure we got out on time.

All attending seemed to actively listen, and some verbally participated adding comments or asking questions. As we ended I reminded them how they could get a *Bible* or a *Science and Health* (request of me with their name and SID number, I give the book and info to the Chaplain and he gives the book to the AIC. One man asked, "Can I get a copy today?" so I asked the Chaplain if I could go get a *Science and Health* from our normal room. "Let's do it" he said LOL. I found I only had one giveaway copy left so I have put more in my bag to take in next week! (At least two in the room have *Science and Health* and one had clearly read it extensively.)

I look forward to the discussion next week about what they learned and see if more join us on a regular basis.

Thank you! Portland Christian Science Lecture Series (PCSL) for sponsoring so many lectures at institutions this year! I'd never done one in an institution before and it worked wonderfully!

A Christmas gift to all of us: This year when we asked the Volunteer Director what we could contribute for Christmas, the answer was yarn and several Wii games. For a few years now, the girls have been allowed to crochet under supervision at various times and last fall and winter it was typical to find many girls crocheting afghans, baby items, and hats for the homeless when we were there on Sunday afternoons. Clearly a lot of yarn is needed if 65 girls want to crochet afghans! So, with a budget amount from the church, I watched for sales on yarn at local craft stores.

At 6 am one morning around Thanksgiving, with a shopping cart piled high with beautiful one-pound skeins, a voice next to me said, "Excuse me, but what are you going to do with all that yarn?" When I

explained it was for the girls at Oak Creek this soft-spoken woman with a look of peace and gratitude in her eyes said, "I am a 'graduate' of OYA, spent of lot of my teens locked up, but now I'm 20 years clean." She's married, has a 13-year-old son, and a night job that suits her well. She had stopped on the way home from work to buy yarn to make a gift for a friend. We talked for half an hour about her experiences, how important our faith in God is to stay off drugs, how important volunteers and all the staff are to help those in our institutions.

Before we said goodbye, I asked her two questions: 1) You have a deep look of joy about you, do you wake up happy every day now? "No, not at all," she said, "but I know what I have and I'm grateful for it." 2) To stay clean, did you have to stay in the moment, the now? "Yes," she said, "because that's where God is. The past has shame and regret, the future has fear and anxiety, but right here is God."

Two weeks later we were in a classroom at Oak Creek with 6 girls that were our regulars until they all were released shortly before and after Christmas. Several were crocheting with their feet up on the tables. We read together and discussed Matt 4:1-11, Jesus' temptations in the wilderness, and discussed cultivating spiritual strength and patience. The dynamic and receptivity of that particular group was a very special thing. One girl was reading *Science and Health* on her own and asked questions about it. I suddenly remembered my encounter with the woman at the yarn store and shared what she had said. They were all riveted, inspired, encouraged, celebratory. It was a pleasure to give some yarn from the church, but that encounter was the real gift to us all.