



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!

February 2021

My apologies. I didn't realize we didn't send a report last quarter. Again, not for lack of action.

- Adults-in-custody (AICs) who have requested Bible Lessons continue to receive weekly 30-page packets (15 sheets fit in a 6x9 envelope, ¼" thick, 85 cents per package) that include printed Bible Lesson, Bible Lens, articles and testimonies from Sentinel and Journal. The articles and testimonies are chosen by a rotating group of six volunteers, mostly Journal-listed practitioners. The packets are printed and stuffed one week by a volunteer and the next week by our secretary and our student intern. Currently there are 18 AICs in eight facilities receiving this information.
- Two Reading Rooms are each sending unsold Sentinels to one designated AIC with less than a year left to serve.
- Lecture DVD was shown at OSP, MCCF and EOIC. Two other facilities have the DVD but have been unable to show it for various reasons. Another is being sent out this month and likely to be shown in March when men are able to gather in the facility.
- Passing of a cherished inmate: Russell (Rusty) Lee

In meetings of volunteers and the Executive Committee, we often talked about Russell Lee. He found Christian Science with Karen at TRCI in Umatilla. When he moved to DRCI in Madras, our committee worked to get a volunteer there and Jacquie got to know him. With Jacquie's help and others in her branch church, Russell became a member of The Mother Church. When he was within three years of release he moved to MCCF in Salem where Barb visited. Incidentally, he was moved days before a lecture was to be presented at DRCI. He was moved several times to OSP for what the prison system felt was necessary medical items, then back to MCCF. In each place the men coming to Bible study grew because Russell was evangelical with his Christian Science.

Half of the men receiving the Christian Science Bible Lesson at this time were brought to a service by Russell. Only one of the five returning community members we are currently serving did not know Russell, but came because of a man Russell introduced to Christian Science.

Russell lived Christian Science thought to the best of his ability. He never understood why others didn't "get it" like he did :-).

In December he was moved from Mill Creek to Oregon State Penitentiary just before the DVD lecture was shown at Mill Creek. He never did see a Christian Science lecture. By Christmas he had COVID but was doing fine. We thought all was set up that if he was in a medical emergency his Christian Science practitioner would be called. She was on his emergency list. That didn't happen. Mid-January his practitioner learned from his daughter, with whom he had reconciled over the last two years, that he was in the hospital on a respirator and about a week later his daughter let us know he had passed.

Russell's participation in our Bible Study, his messages, phone calls and wonderful spirit are missed. Our committee is sending the remaining subscription time for the Monitor and Sentinel to his daughter so she has an opportunity to glean what her dad saw.

- Returning Community Members (RCM)
 - o One of our volunteers worked with a non-profit in Yamhill County to help a returning community member who was in the volunteer's Bible Study group prior to lockdown due to the pandemic. She drove him from a quarantine house to a transition house, provided transportation once a week for a month, then helped assure his parole officer that a permanent housing opportunity and job were real and ready. The man is studying Christian Science and the volunteer stays in contact via phone a couple times a week and plans to continue until the person is off probation and parole.
 - o This month two volunteers are helping a man who became a member of The Mother Church while incarcerated. At least one volunteer will stay in touch for up to a year or the end of probation and parole. We expect him to join the local Christian Science community in that time. He is attending an online Christian Science church service.

- Volunteers in this committee plan to help with one or more other releases planned into the Portland area in the next six months.
- The Principle Foundation (TPF) helps with those released with immediate money and a cell phone. Those given help in Oregon are those known and vouched for by our committee and a Christian Science practitioner. The member of The Mother Church mentioned above received this help.
- Embraced Fully is a new national organization of “Angels”, Christian Scientists helping returning community members. This organization is meeting the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month via Zoom. It started with the same group as LightInPrison.org in California and plans to become a part of The Principle Foundation.

Executive Committee (EC) members - HELP NEEDED!

Ken Bennet has resigned as of February 4 as he has moved to California. Fortunately, Joyce Merritt, a former EC member agreed to rejoin us at this time. THANK YOU JOYCE!

Our three Executive Committee members are Judith Hillend (Gresham), Joyce Merritt (Salem) and Barb Weiser (Lake Oswego). According to our By-Laws, Barb will complete her time on the Executive Committee 6/18/2021 - six years after she joined the committee.

We would prefer to five members and need to find at least one of these by June to have the required three members. If this work interests you, please consider helping with the oversight of the work by being a part of the Executive Committee.

Volunteer letter writer - HELP NEEDED!

There is an AIC that would like to have a Christian Science pen pal. We have guidelines, but the basics are “welcome to Christian Science, what questions do you have?” Please contact Barb Weiser if you are interested in participating in this way. There is no formal training needed and other volunteers can help with what is known about the individual and to talk out how to ferret out what is really being asked in letters :-).

Financial Summary – details sent in same email and available upon request for FY 2019 (Oct 2019 - Sep 2020) and the quarter just past. A financial review by an

independent person was conducted. There were a few procedural items that needed correcting, but no issues of a material nature.

As of December 31, 2020

Balance in checking = \$8,755.81

Balance in Money Market and CDs = \$108,022

Income for FY 2019 (Oct 2019 – Sept 2020) = \$84,180.80 (includes \$75,000 special donation)

Expenses for FY 2019 (Oct 2019 – Sept 2020) = \$21,500.31

A budget for FY 2020 and FY 2021 are in the same email and available upon request. It may be a bit cryptic, so please ask questions via email/phone or at the 21 Feb Zoom meeting.

Church memberships, please consider increasing your contributions to this committee. By request we have estimated the per capita for these two circumstances:

- 1) \$3.30 IF we expected our churches to provide all the funds needed during this time of unusual expense (this year's budget FY 2020: Oct 2020 – Sep 2021)
- 2) \$2.50 under more normal circumstances (FY 2021: Oct 2021 – Sep 2022)

\$1 is the current "standard" and several churches give more which is deeply appreciated.

"Inside" Volunteers

Currently volunteers are not allowed "inside" facilities. Based on emails from facility chaplain, volunteers may need to be vaccinated before entering the facility or wait longer to be admitted again. This needs prayerful thought collectively and individually. No one will be asked by this committee to be vaccinated.

"Outside" Volunteers - help needed

Community members are encouraged by the Department of Corrections to only work with inmates aka "inside" OR returning community members aka "outside", but not both. Three of our "inside" volunteers have taken a training module that allows them to also work with returning community members (RCMs).

In general, there is no formal training necessary to work with RCMs. Please contact our secretary, Barb Weiser, if you are interested in mentoring or working with a returning community member in some capacity. Right now phone calls are the best contact with RCMs.

Informational video/phone calls via Zoom aka volunteer/rep meeting

Any interested individual can join us on the volunteer and representative calls via Zoom. If you want to add a topic to the agenda, let us know at the beginning of the call. Please ask questions any time during the call or contact us later. The next Zoom call is **February 21, 2:15-4:15**. Link is usually live at 2pm.

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: [Zoom meeting link](#)

OR call in +1 646 558 8656 OR 253 215 8782 (there are more if needed)

Meeting ID: 556 965 2476; password 123

A separate communication to churches, volunteers, and known representatives will be sent with the agenda about February 15. Contact Barb at 503-320-1915 or csiscoregon@gmail.com with questions, concerns, or items you would like to hear about.

Help needed

- Executive Committee members
- letter writers
- help on the outside with returning community members - transportation for release and at least two weeks following release (not all one volunteer); metaphysical mentors for up to a year

Individual donations requested

This committee is a church activity and we receive regular donations from branch churches and societies all over the state of Oregon and one in Idaho. We encourage those that can give a little more to do so. THANK YOU for your metaphysical and financial support for this important work! Contributions should be sent to: Christian Science Committee for Institutional Service, PO Box 1233, Wilsonville, OR 97070

Abbreviation legend:

AIC = Adult-in-custody – does not imply guilt or innocence

CSCIS in OR = Christian Science Committee for Institutional Service in the State of Oregon

CSPS = Christian Science Publishing Society

DOC = Oregon Department of Corrections

OYA = Oregon Youth Authority

RCM = Returning Community Member