

Yokefellowship  
Prison Ministry

Lehigh Valley  
Council

# The Yoke and the Cross



**MAY 2014**

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**JULY 2014**

The Voice of the Yokefellowship Prison  
Ministry in the Lehigh Valley

Yokefellowship Prison Ministry  
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The Yoke and the Cross brings the latest news and events of the Lehigh Valley Council of Yokefellowship Prison Ministry to the volunteers, friends, inmates, and former inmates involved with Yokefellowship.

**Council Director**  
Charles L. Goodge

**Council Pastoral Advisor**  
Pastor Gary Morrison

**Council Chairperson**  
Lisa M. Perry

**Vice Chairman**  
Rev. Allen Kline

**Treasurer**  
Vacant

**Secretary**  
Vacant

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Spring 2014 Training**

Northampton County  
YPM will be having  
state training on  
Sunday, June 8, 2014  
at Mountainview  
Wesleyan Church  
1001 Deemer Rd  
Bath PA  
Please RSVP

Check your email for  
additional info. If you  
did not receive an email  
call the Yokefellow  
office.

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**The Director's Chair:** Greetings brothers and sisters in Christ and all of you volunteers and supporters of the ministry. It is such a blessed time of year, with the winter over and the birds singing. This is truly my favorite time of the year. I trust and pray that all is well with all of you and with your families.

We just completed our spring training programs which really went well, but as with everything, we are constantly looking at how to improve on it. We are considering coordinating with the Northampton Council, for a one day training session each year, so that if anyone cannot make the one session, they can make the other. Northampton usually does theirs in the spring, so we will probably do ours in the fall.

As you may have noticed, the Timothy Program, which is a Bible study that we have conducted for many years, will now be meeting at 2043 W. Union Street, Allentown, every Tuesday. There was a problem with parking on Lumber street, so we decided to make the change. It is open to all volunteers, potential volunteers, former inmates and interested parties. We run from 7:30 pm until 9:00 pm with our instructor Nick Lovette. Anyone who is interested should just stop by on Tuesdays. We would love to see you.

God has blessed us with new volunteers, and we are so grateful for them. We still do not have a treasurer, but we are managing. Of course, we can always use more volunteers, so anyone interested, please call us or just stop by on Tuesday evening.

We are working on our annual banquet and our annual picnic. The picnic will start around noon on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July also at the Union street address. Where we have had it in the past was seeking a fee this year, so we moved it. As usual it is open to all volunteers, potential volunteers and former inmates. The banquet will once again be held at Asbury United Methodist Church at 1533 Springhouse Road, Allentown on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September. There is no charge for either, but it is important that you rsvp us so that we can have enough food. Last year, I planned on 50 coming to the banquet and we had nearly 80, and I don't want to make that mistake again.

I want to say a special 'thank you' to all of you supporters and volunteers, who have made it possible to reach so many incarcerated people with the Word of God and to present them with Bibles. This past year we have given out more Bibles than ever before, and we thank you all for making it possible.

*Charles L. Goodge*

## **UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.):**

Our annual volunteer appreciation picnic is open for everyone. Come and meet the volunteers and the people who we share the gospel with. Saturday, July 26, 2014 at noon. Bring a covered dish. We will supply the hotdogs, hamburgers and drinks. This year it will be held at our Council Director's home in Allentown, PA. Please RSVP.

***Annual Fundraising Banquet will be held on Saturday, September 27, 2014 at Asbury United Methodist Church, 1533 Springhouse Road, Allentown, PA***

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

We are still looking for a worship group for this year's banquet. If you have any suggestions please contact our office.

## **Volunteer Certification – Why do we need it?**

From the Yokefellowship website - -

Yokefellow requires all volunteers working directly with inmates or ex-offenders to be certified. This assures, not only the quality and the safety of the volunteer, but also the effectiveness of the ministry.

Certification is good for two years. Volunteers may receive their certification at annual trainings offered by their Area Council, neighboring Area Councils, or at the YPM annual conference. Schedules of certification and/or trainings are posted on the website and included in volunteer publications.

Certification is not intended to be a burden, but a bi-annual stepping stone to continued growth and effectiveness in ministry. These events are structured to help volunteers develop ministry knowledge, skills, and awareness. During the training, basic ministry information and topics relevant to all areas of prison ministry, as well as ministry trends, will be presented. Volunteers also have the opportunity to meet and "fellowship" with other volunteers and share their experiences. Though only required bi-annually, volunteers are encouraged to attend as often as possible for continued ministry and spiritual growth.

Prison ministry is a dynamic ministry – always changing. Only the Word of God remains unchanged. Just as we come to a deeper understanding of scripture with each new meditation, we come to a deeper understanding of the ministry God has called us to when we are diligent to attend periodic training events.

## **Forgetting God**

*by Jack Jones Editor of The Christian Network and Street Chaplain 03/31/12*

"The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord; they forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs" (Judges 3:7).

The book of Judges reads like the 'whose who' of God's chosen. From the assassin Ehud to Gideon, Samson, or Deborah; we hear of the courageous exploits those called by God achieved. And yet, often we miss the bigger picture of why they were called.

This verse gives us the answer. The people had forgotten God. Everyone did whatever they pleased. A fallible group of humans doing what was 'right' in their own eyes. The problem here is that without God we are indeed completely fallible and misled. Forgetting God seems to be a root cause in many a nation's plight.

Russian Communism resulted in the deaths of literally tens of millions of their own people. Internal genocide sought to eradicate all religion from communism's landscape. Ultimately communism systematically destroyed its own. Alexander Solzhenitsyn was quoted stating

"Over half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia " 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all of this has happened'.

In Judges, Israel falls further and further from God's covenant as it prostitutes itself to other gods, other means of blessing and inter-whines itself with the myriad of beliefs surrounding it. The result is a continual cycle of disobedience, punishment, repentance, salvation. A vicious cycle where nobody seems any wiser. Even after hundreds of years - nothing has changed.

In our own lives seeking God remains the wisest route. A narrow path yes, often the path of the greatest resistance (Israel had to face iron chariots) yet attempting to find the easy way out, In Israel's case accepting the beliefs around them, ultimately led to them forgetting God and replacing Him with false gods. Disaster always followed.

The message today is more relevant than ever. Surrounded by a plethora of professed truths, multiple religions, atheism, agnosticism and capitalism, how easily we forget God and turn to the 'Baals' for security. And thus find ourselves alone, frightened or confused.

The Lord Jesus Christ states "Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt 6:33). A timeless message, that history often forgets as it forgets God. Article source: Faithwriters.com

# I Never Knew You

Recently, I was reading in Matthew the following scripture, which for many is difficult to understand. It says; "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name, drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" Matthew 7:21-23.

I guess the first question would be, who was Jesus talking about? How could anyone prophesy in Jesus' name, cast out demons in Jesus' name and do many miracles in Jesus' name and yet Jesus could say to him, "I never knew you?" I don't believe I have ever done any of those things, so will Jesus say to me that He never knew me? That is a frightening thought. My first inkling would be that they were probably religious people, or religious leaders, people of faith who were involved in ministry of some sort. If that were so, what is the problem? I have had people say that I was religious, but I know that I don't want to be considered religious. Too many 'religious people' are often people who put on a 'show' and act 'Godly', but lack the love of Jesus in their lives. They are striving for 'worldly' gain or recognition under the pretense of Christianity.

So, what would I have to do so that Jesus would know me, and welcome me into the kingdom of heaven? It all comes back to our acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior. When we accept Christ, do we do it in total honesty, with the humble heart of a servant? Our attitude should be the attitude of one dedicated to serving God, rather than looking for what we can gain from serving God. Many marriages have fallen apart because one, or both, went into the marriage looking for what they would get from the marriage. When anyone goes into a marriage, or any kind of relationship, with the thought of what they were going to get out of it, there is one thing that is sure to occur. They are going to be disappointed. If we go into a relationship with Jesus for the purpose of getting something for ourselves, we will be disappointed. Just as He came to serve, we are called to serve. We don't give because we expect to get, we give because we want to; getting is just a by-product of giving.

Jesus gave us everything that He had to give, and He didn't do it because He expected a return. If that were the case, I am sure He would be greatly disappointed.

He did it because He loved us, all of us. He did it with a love that I am not sure that we can ever understand, because it is so unconditional and so very deep. It is also so undeserved on our part. And even though we could never repay Him, we need to do all we can to show our appreciation for what He has done for us. We are called to serve Him and to love Him, and to thank Him in everything that we do. He is our Lord, our Savior and our God. And when we treat Him as such, He will never say to us, "I never knew you".

## Little Known Facts

It costs nearly \$35,000 a year to house 1 inmate.

In America, 350,000 kids go to prison for the first time every year.

There are more people in prison for non-violent, drug related charges than were in the entire prison system, thirty years ago.

Twenty-five percent of inmates really should be in state hospitals, instead of prison, but the state hospitals were closed.

## Buy an Inmate a Bible

If you are interested in sharing the Word of God with those incarcerated, we can order Bibles directly from the publisher and mail them to the inmates. Current prices for Bibles are: \$6.00. Please forward a check to the office and mark it for the Bible Fund. Thank you to all those who have contributed in the past.

So far this year we have been able to purchase over 60 Bibles and put the Word of God in the hands of those in prison who are seeking to change. Make a difference in someone's life and donate to our Bible Fund.

## **Two Kingdoms - by Henry Miranda**

11/15/2013

### **God's kingdom**

The church is just part of the Kingdom of God. God's Kingdom is everywhere God rules and reigns. God's domain spreads from the hearts of men to the heights of heaven. God's empire embraces spiritual beings that have no physical bodies as we know them, to frail men and women with earthly bodies.

### **Satan's kingdom**

The devil otherwise known as Satan has his own kingdom and he is the head of it. Satan is presently called the "god of this world" in II Corinthians 4:4. Jesus referred to Satan's kingdom in Matthew 12:26 when He said, "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"

John 12:31 "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. (NKJV).

II Corinthians 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. (NKJV).

This world is under the domain of Satan. When Jesus Christ was tempted by Satan, "...the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, 'All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou wilt worship me all shalt be thine.' (Luke 4:5-7)." Was this a bona fide offer? Could Satan offer all this world's kingdoms to Jesus Christ? The answer is yes!

Satan's primary objective is to prevent people from understanding the gospel message so that they might be saved. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them (I Corinthians 4:4)." Satan often blinds the lost by giving them a heavenly way to go to hell. In other words religion is Satan's substitute for the gospel.

Satan's major objective is to prevent people from becoming saved. One objection given by the lost more than any other to the true gospel is that "It is too simple!" Satan uses that very objection to cause people to not believe the gospel. Notice II Corinthians 11:3,

"But I fear, lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The message of salvation is not based on human works or merit but on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, least any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8,9)." Therefore, the true message is simple. God has done the hard part. Our part is simply to receive Jesus Christ by faith!

Satan counterfeits the gospel by offering people religion instead of salvation. All religions are based on man's works for salvation, whereas God's salvation is based solely on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The word "religion" comes from two Latin words "re" and "ligio" which mean to do something of self to bind back to God. Religion is therefore man's efforts to bind himself back to God. God says in the Bible that it is impossible for man of his own efforts to bind himself to God.

Satan delights himself in blinding man into thinking that he could earn eternal life through his works. God's plan of salvation is the exact opposite of religion. Notice Romans 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him (Jesus Christ) that justifieth the ungodly (human race), his faith is counted for righteousness."

The person who wholly trusts Jesus Christ as his only hope for heaven will be saved. All others will perish. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16)."

Satan's kingdom truly is this world and Jesus Christ came to save (rescue) us from it.

### **LCP to Undergo a Name Change**

Lehigh County Prison will soon undergo a name change, to properly identify its role in the community. It will be known as Lehigh County Jail, because that is what it is. A jail is where inmates are held pending a hearing, trial or sentencing. A prison is where you go to serve the sentence. At LCP, anyone receiving a sentence of two years or more will be sent to a state or federal correctional facility to serve that sentence. Sentences of two years minus one day, or less, can still be served at Lehigh.