

*The Voice of the
Yokefellowship*

*Prison Ministry
Lehigh Valley Council*

The Yoke and The Cross



*"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and
humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls."*

Spring
2015 Edition

Our Mission

*To help at-risk youths, inmates and ex-
offenders yoke themselves to Christ
for salvation and changed lives.*

Yokefellowship Prison Ministry

PO Box 3114 - Wescosville, PA 18106
610-820-8469 - www.yokefellowpa.org
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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

Spiritual Advisor
Rev. Gary Morrison

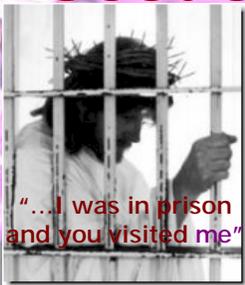
Chairman
Rev. Allen Kline

Vice Chairman
Vacant

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**serve
Jesus!**



*Think about it! It will be a
blessing to you and to others
also.*

Contact Chuck Goodge at
Yokefellowpa@Yahoo.com

610-820-8469

VOLUNTEER!

The Director's Chair

Greetings to all! I love Spring because Winter is a long ways off and new life is starting. It reminds me of the men and women at Lehigh County Jail who are moving on; some are going home, some to other facilities and some are joining classes at LCJ. It's wonderful that many are hungry for the Lord Jesus, asking for Bibles and coming to Yokefellowship. Some say they have "jailhouse religion", but often they have truly decided that the only real answer to their dilemma is Jesus Christ.

Each week I have another list of inmates requesting English or Spanish Bibles. They simply love receiving "Our Daily Bread", we use about 200 each issue. Our brochure, "Something to Think About", in English and Spanish, is gratefully received. We give them lesson sheets from Chuck Colson's ministry (Prison Fellowship), so they can continue to learn while spending those long hours in their cells.

Pastor Gary Morrison, our spiritual advisor, passes out prayer request cards, which his church prays over, bringing hope to the incarcerated. At LCJ the average stay is about 77 days, so we have new people all the time. We minister to 10 to 15 or more inmates at Yokefellowship meetings (20 is the max. allowed) and attendance is voluntarily. At the Work Release facility in Bethlehem we minister to those about to be released. We have volunteers who write to the inmates, act as mentors, and do Yokefellowship meetings both in prison and after release.

Jesus said, **"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few"** (Matt 9:37) and especially at prison facilities like LCJ. Many inmates are hungry to hear 'The Word', but we need Godly volunteers with the desire to serve the Lord in a prison setting. Although we go into many different pods, there are still some that don't have volunteers to go into, especially men, and that is very hard to deal with. We are very grateful for all the Lord has done for us, and for those who serve both in and out of the jail, but so much more can be accomplished if we just had more people to do it.

If you would like to serve the Lord with Yokefellowship, please contact me for a trial visit at a jail meeting, so you can decide if this is where God is calling you. I was leery about serving at LCJ, but when I finally went in I knew that was where God was calling me. That was ten (10) years ago, and I am still there. Pray and think about where God wants you, and if you think prison might be an option, call me anytime.

Thank you all, and may the Lord richly bless and keep you.

Charles L. Goodge



VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Date: May 2, 2015

Time: 9:00 A.M. till 3:00 P.M.

Location: Trinity Baptist Church
689 South Hillview Road Allentown,
PA 18103

Lunch will be provided

- Come meet Lehigh County Jail Warden Ms. Janine Donate and associates
- Meet our Yokefellowship Regional Director, Alma-colon Maldonado and our State Director David Bowen.
- Learn what is happening in the Yokefellowship Prison Ministry at the state and local levels
- Meet and hear from other Yokefellowship volunteers
- Learn about ministry opportunities and sharpen your ministry skills

All Yokefellowship volunteers must attend a training event at least every two years.



Give a Bible to an Inmate

Bibles are \$6.00 and we are able to put the Word of God into the hands of prisoners who seek to change.

You can give to the Bible Fund By sending a check to the

Bible Fund

Payable to:

Yokefellowship Prison Ministry
PO Box 3114 - Wescosville, PA
18106

What is wrong with this world today?

"THE FIFTH CUP"

This question was asked in a Good Friday message by WFMZ-TV evening news anchor, Rob Vaughn. My mind raced to a host of answers but my thoughts were cut short by his answer—"YOU ARE!!!" Oh, not one of my answers matched that and he went on to say he was the problem and in fact we all are the problem with our world. It began in a beautiful garden where humans had it perfect. They did not know work, they had all the food they wanted they played with monkeys, and lions, and elephants and dogs and cats.

However, like the mind of man today they became susceptible to the temptation of being the "top dog" in the world. The most important thing is "ME". Their minds worked overtime and finally succumbed to the taunts of Satan who promised them better things. Adam and Eve became smarter, but the smarts they now had was trouble, work and sin. Isn't it interesting that God allowed this to happen. He could have stopped Adam and Eve or He could have destroyed Satan, but instead He already had a plan in place to rescue man.

Who is worthy to drink the Fifth Cup?

We have just celebrated Easter along with Good Friday. Despite all that happened between noon and three o'clock that day, it was a Good Friday for you and me. I had the opportunity to share insights from the Passover with a congregation on Good Friday evening. The main body of the Passover, being celebrated by Jews as I write, is four cups. They are based on the "I wills" of Exodus 7:6-7.

CUP 1: "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." 6a

CUP 2: "I will rescue you from their bondage." 6b

CUP 3: "I will redeem you with outstretched arms and with great judgments. 6c {With this cup Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper which we celebrate today as Christians.}

CUP 4: "I will take you as my people and I will be your God." 7a

There is a sermon in each cup, but for space I will go to my point. For as I read the Bible there is a Fifth Cup! We find it in Luke 22:42; "Father, if you are willing take this cup from me, yet not my will but yours be done." Jesus had already shared four cups with the disciples in the Upper Room. The fifth cup, was not and is not part of the Passover, because it was never intended for mankind. The only person worthy to drink the cup of God's wrath was His Only Begotten SON! Why? **Because we are the problem with this world** and the one that needed fixing. We severed our relationship with God by sin, but Jesus drank the cup of wrath, being the SPOTLESS LAMB OF GOD and restored that relationship if we acknowledge Him as our Lord and Savior.

The message we have as we go into prison and talk to people is that God did this to His Only Son because **I (you) were worth it!!! Because Christ lives, I can face tomorrow...!** May Our God richly bless you as you minister in the Lehigh County prison system through the Yokefellowship Prison Ministry, and in His Name!

Oh, how much Jesus Loves you and me!

AMEN!!! By Rev. Allen Kline, Chairman

Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name!

Psalms 142:7a

One of the ministries I am involved in is visiting some local prisons and assisting with Bible Study lessons to those who are interested. As much as I really enjoy this ministry, there is something inherently unpleasant about prisons. I am no bleeding heart liberal, I believe those who say; "if you do the crime you must do the time!"

It is entirely possible to find the freedom God gives in any situation, even from within a prison.

There are so many locked doors in prison, many correctional officers, rules and regulations, it is impossible to do virtually anything without permission. There is no freedom inside prison, no freedom but that the Grace of God affords the believer.

There are also more believers in prisons than I had expected to find, some were believers before imprisonment and some have found Christ since their incarceration. It is glorious to sing some great hymns and other spiritual songs out aloud within the walls of the prisons, and to have fellowship with other believers, and it is also a great privilege to share Christ with unbelievers. Its a great honor to pray with them, and see them share something of their testimonies, so it is entirely possible to find the freedom God gives in any situation, even from within a prison.

It is a great honor to pray with them and to hear their testimonies.

The truth is, our sinfulness is in itself a prison we cannot escape from, unless God frees us by His Grace. The relief I feel when I leave the prison behind me, is nothing compared to the relief from the immense

weight of guilt we have that Jesus took upon Himself on the Cross, he took it upon himself to take all our sin away from us, once and forever, praise His name.

It is glorious to sing great hymns and other spiritual songs aloud within the walls of the prisons!



May the Lord bring us out of every prison we find ourselves in, only he can do it!

Gary Morrison, Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Allentown, PA.

Pastor Morrison is a member of the Board of Directors of The Yokefellowship Prison Ministry Lehigh Valley Area Council. Gary serves as our Spiritual Advisor to the ministry and is also involved with Yokefellowship group meetings in Lehigh County Jail.

A former Inmate remembers Yokefellowship

"As a former inmate of LCP, I reflect back and have found that Yokefellowship was instrumental in my successful recovery back into society. The people were just so helpful and guiding that I wanted to be productive. Despite all the disabilities and hurdles, Yokefellowship always had my best interests at heart. Without them, I don't think I would be here...a Christian, clean and sober for 8 years." April 2015

Veteran Handyman



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Est. Feb 2014 by Carlos Cubero, an ex-offender with a vision to make a difference. A U.S. veteran, he seeks to help ex-offenders and veterans get established by employing them whenever possible. Carlos teaches basic handyman skills while doing jobs from minor home repairs to total kitchen and bath remodels. Lisa Perry, LVAC volunteer and former Chairperson, assists Carlos as office manager.

***Second Chance
Training Center, Inc.***

This Christian based, non-profit corporation was formed in February 2015 to offer transitional housing, education and job training to ex-offenders. Lisa Perry has been paying the legal fees to establish this mission out of her own funds and she is planning a fundraising event to pay the balance owed to submit the tax-exemption application to the IRS.

Second Chance Fundraising Event

Date: May 30th, 2015.

Time: 4:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

Location: Trinity Baptist Church
689 South Hillview Road
Allentown, PA 18103

To R.S.V.P. or to learn more about
Second Chance Training Center, Inc.

Call Lisa at 484-226-7358

***You can make a difference in an
ex-offenders life***

The Yokefellow Meeting

Yokefellow meetings are not just academic “Bible Studies” or “Worship Services”. A Yokefellow meeting must go deeper than that. We must minister on a personal level where the inmates express their real feelings and talk honestly about themselves in light of scripture. They must be given time to think and respond. It takes prayer, skill and patience to get on the personal level. Here are some guidelines by John N. Mostoller, from the Yokefellowship Prison Ministry Manual, revised 1996, that may help:

William James said, “There is no impression without expression”. The person who shares convictions in a small group has intensified their belief and clarified their own thinking. Sharing must be a natural part of the group, while no effort is made to secure confessions.

Some Group Guidelines:

- Groups die from two main causes: failure to maintain discipline and refusal to become personal. We hide behind generalizations.
- Everyone participates and no one dominates. There are always those who do not participate and those who will dominate the discussion. The leader must encourage members to share in the discussion .
- Those who have led meetings, have been a teacher, or have preached must not teach all the time. The leader simply asks questions and encourages others to do likewise.
- Don't establish yourself as a final authority by having an “answer” for every question or problem. Do not be afraid to trust the wisdom of the group. They can show an awareness and an insight greater than one individual.
- We all can speak lofty thoughts for hours, but it is only as we share our feelings, our deepest concerns, our failures and aspirations that we grow. It has been said that, “Opinions tell what we think, while feelings express what we truly are”. A skilled leader will motivate the group to open up and share their feelings from the heart. It is in the process of expressing feelings that we learn to handle them in the best ways.
- Make it personal by asking the group to illustrate from their own experience. Ask questions and encourage answers from personal experience. Don't avoid sharing your own personal feelings and needs at times. The group can become antagonized by asking questions without any personal participation in the discussion.
- The most common tendency for group leaders is to talk the group to death, to dominate it, to explain and answer most of the questions. Immature members will continually wait for the “Right” answers from the leader. Remember, only by expressing the idea in their own words will they grow spiritually and emotionally. If just “telling them” the truth will work then there is no need for a Yokefellow group.
- The group can be alienated by a feeling that the leader is superior spiritually when they always have the “Right” answer. A period of silence can be extremely beneficial in encouraging the group to participate and demonstrating the respect the leader has for the groups' comments and insight. This is very hard to do when a leader is nervous or feeling insecure. Depend on your assistant leader to steer you away from this tendency by asking what the group thinks. Learn to ask well prepared questions and allow silence for the group to think and respond.