

*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**  
2016 Edition

A small illustration of a daisy flower with a green stem and leaves is positioned to the right of the text.

**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](http://www.yokefellowpa.org)  
e-mail: [yokefellowpa@yahoo.com](mailto:yokefellowpa@yahoo.com)

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**  
*Lisa M. Perry*

**Spiritual Advisor**  
*Rev. Gary Morrison*

**Chairman**  
*Rev. Allen Kline*

**Vice Chairman**  
*Jesus Ramirez*

**Treasurer**  
*Ilda Perna*

**Secretary/Editor**  
*Norris Lovette*

***Someone Needs You!***



**"...I was in prison  
and you visited me"**

**To look into being a Volunteer  
Contact Lisa M. Perry at**

[Yokefellowpa@Yahoo.com](mailto:Yokefellowpa@Yahoo.com)

**610-820-8469**

## A Word From Our Chairman

One certainty of life is that life changes. Yokefellowship Prison Ministry has seen many changes over the years. Wayne Benjamin, the founder of the Lehigh Valley Area Council got to the point he wanted to retire. Charles "Chuck" Goodge became Director and in December felt it necessary to resign. We thank Chuck for his years of service to LVAC and ministry in the prison, and wish him well in future service to God. Chuck still goes into the prison as a volunteer and spiritual advisor.

We are living in a world that seems to be more and more hostile to the Gospel Message that we as Yokefellows seek to bring into our prisons. Some have even wondered if we should be doing it. Others say it is almost impossible to affect any change in the lives of men and women who have committed crimes against our society and against God.

Frederic Tudor in 1807, a young Bostonian of little renown, had an idea of loading a sailing ship with ice and taking it to the West Indies. People laughed at him saying the ice would melt and fill the ships hold with water before he got there. However, he successfully delivered the ice to the tropical island of Martinique, a trip of 2,000 miles. By the year 1856 about 146,000 tons of ice were shipped from Boston to fifty three ports around the world, some as far away as Australia and China. Tudor did what was deemed impossible by many.

***We have a Lord and Savior who can and does the seemingly impossible!***

I do not know what is in store for Yokefellowship Prison Ministry in the Lehigh Valley. However, I do know Someone who does know and has promised good things to those who love and serve Him. One thing I do know, we have a Lord and Savior who can and does the seemingly impossible as we are faithful to follow Him. We are in transition and Lisa M. Perry was voted in as the new Council Director at the Board meeting in May. I challenge you to be praying for Yokefellowship Lehigh Valley Council expecting what God is going to do in the days and months ahead. Also, I encourage each of you to be available to do what He calls you to do, as a volunteer, a supporter, or a prayer warrior **or all three!**

*May the God of Peace bless and keep you!*

*Rev. Allen L. Kline,  
LVAC Chairman of the Board of Directors*

## Dear Volunteers, Fellow Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Friends of YPM:

Hello from the membership desk!! Since our Board meeting in December, individuals have volunteered for different committees including the Membership Committee. We now have 3 Board members on the Membership Committee - myself (Jess Hong), Nick Lovette and Anthony Vega.

We hope through help from Our Lord to bring this Committee and YPM to the next level of serving the incarcerated, you and the community. The vision for our Membership Committee is that we will strive to work towards inclusivity and involvement of the members, in another words "Engagement". With this being said, I want to let you know that we are open to communications, discussions, be your prayer support group to problems encountered during your serving in the prison ministry and whatever life may call. We hope to be a listening ear and send referrals when we can. In the next few months, we will communicate more, so please stay tuned.

The membership list database has recently been updated and we have tried our best to have the latest contact information of all our members, volunteers and friends. We will move members to active or inactive list as and when we are notified. So, if there is any contact information or serving status that you want us to update, please contact me at [jess@yokefellowship.org](mailto:jess@yokefellowship.org) or Lisa, the Council Director can be reach at [yokefellowpa@yahoo.com](mailto:yokefellowpa@yahoo.com).

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## Whats Happening from the new Council Director

As we work on transitioning we have a lot of information to share. On May 14<sup>th</sup> we had speakers that were very informative on what is available to returning citizen and those presently incarcerated. Jim Byrnes, CEO, Allentown Rescue Mission spoke about the programs they offer. Please see their website for further information and how you can help. [www.AllentownRescueMission.org](http://www.AllentownRescueMission.org). We will be working with them referring qualified interested inmates to their programs.

Lisa Cope from the Allentown District Office, PA State Parole spoke about what happens when someone is on parole and the different programs they have instituted to help the returning citizen to succeed. There is an upcoming job fair for people with criminal records scheduled for October 5, 2016 and prior to that there will be an ID clinic so these individuals will have all the proper identification to apply for jobs. Please contact me (484-226-7358) for more information and how you could volunteer to help.

Sara Jarose, Treatment Supervisor, Work Release, was the next speaker. Sara talked about all the different programs offered now at the facility to build the foundation for returning citizen to succeed upon their re-entry into society and how someone could volunteer.

On May 25<sup>th</sup> Jim Byrnes CEO, Wendy Benedict, Development Manager, Randy Schoenacher, Clinical Supervisor of the Allentown Rescue Mission, and I toured the PEAK ("Personal Enrichment and Knowledge") Program, a faith based program at Northampton County Prison. They have life skills groups and are always looking for volunteers. Please contact David B. Lothian, Volunteer Services Coordinator, 610-923-4449 or [Dlothian@northamptoncounty.org](mailto:Dlothian@northamptoncounty.org) for more information.

The Citizens Advisory Committee for the Community Corrections Center had a well-attended meeting on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Our Spiritual Advisor Gary Morrison and I attended along with approximately 20 other individuals from different agencies who are interested in helping returning citizen succeed upon their re-entry into society. Lisa Cope, PA State Parole, discussed the programs she runs and the upcoming job fair and ID clinic. Various churches and agencies including Edith Jones, Senior Staffing Consultant,, Express Employment Professionals, 795 Roble Road Suite C, Allentown, PA 18109, 610-264-4080 was speaking about what the agency offers. Express Employment Professionals has an upcoming event called "Brand it Blue" to help fight hunger. Contact Edith for more information on how you can volunteer and I will see you there.

Finally on June 2 the Citizens Advisory Committee for the PA State Parole will be meeting. This committee is another way for agencies and the public to meet to discuss up and coming changes and current events that help returning citizens build a strong foundation for re-entry. If you are interested in attending please contact me for more information.

Always check our website for further information since there is never enough space to discuss how God can change lives.

Working for Him Always . . .  
Lisa M. Perry, Council Director  
484-226-7358 (c)

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Lastly, let me take this opportunity to wish everyone a wonderful summer and enjoy these warm days the Lord has made.

Your fellow servant,  
Jess Hong, Chairman  
Membership Committee

*In Whatever you do, work at it with your whole being, for the Lord and not for men (Colossians 3:23, NIV)*

## Prison Bible Study Schedule

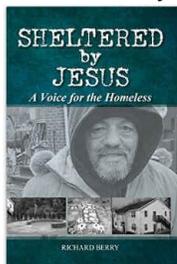
As a trained Yokefellowship volunteer you can join a team to visit the Lehigh County Jail and minister to the men and women in Jesus Name. If you feel the Lord is calling you to join a prison visitation team, attend the Timothy meeting any Tuesday 7pm to 8:30pm at Trinity Baptist Church, 689 S. Hill View Rd. Allentown, PA. You will meet other Yokefellowship volunteers and returning citizens at this meeting. After you have been approved you will be able to join a visitation team as a guest to see if it is something you would like to do. See our website at [www.yokefellowpa.org](http://www.yokefellowpa.org) for more information.

## Jesus Has a Heart for the Homeless!!

By Richard Berry

*What can the church do to about the problem of homelessness?*

*A story of the journey to being the hands and feet of Jesus to the those he came to save. A book worth reading for anyone in this ministry.*



## Loving One Another in Christ

Love requires an earnestness, a steadfastness, Love requires perseverance, love demand self-sacrifice, love requires obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, Love is not some warm fuzzy feeling of emotionalism.

Our love must overlook the sins of others, I don't mean we stop calling sin what it is, but we don't allow other people's sins to affect the way we treat them. We don't demonize or dehumanize people because of their sins or go about bad-mouthing people because we have detected some sin in their lives. We bring them to the Lord in prayer and continue loving them. We turn the other cheek if need be, and there will be much cause to turn the cheek in every Christians life!

We look past their sin and look to our own sin and see our sin nailed to the cross of Christ. If we look to Christ for mercy for ourselves, then we look to the same cross for mercy for others.

*"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins."  
1 Peter 4:8*

If we have experienced our sins being covered by the blood of Christ we will show mercy to others regarding their sin. We would rather the love of Christ in us deal with the sins of others, than we ourselves becoming judge and jury. This will lead to the Lord handing us over to people for judgment, and we will not find mercy at the hands of those who are our enemies.

Being judgmental is a feeble attempt at usurping the Sovereignty of our loving Savior. Best we ask ourselves first, "where is my love, where is my loving attitude, where is my grace, where is the mercy of God in me" before we start judging other people.

The love of Christ in us is such hard work and so demanding, but it is also so life changing and liberating. Try it and see!

Pastor Gary Morrison  
LVAC Spiritual Advisor

## A New Office for the Lehigh Valley Council

Yokefellowship Lehigh Valley Council now has a new office location at Trinity Baptist Church, 689 South Hill View Rd, Allentown, PA. We are currently organizing this space to provide easier access for all members. We also have our Timothy Returning Citizen Meetings at this location, next to the office. Stop in Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm for the Timothy meeting and to visit our new office.



## **Put Truth in the hands of an those in prison!**

Yokefellowship sends English and Spanish Bibles to inmates every week. Any inmate who asks is given a Bible and taught how to use it.

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

## **Celebrate Recovery Help for Returning Citizens**

Celebrate Recovery is a Christ Centered 12-step addiction recovery program that has helped many find Christian help and freindship in the local community.

Attend a Celebrate Recovery Program at one of these locations:

- Faith Church, 6528 Hamilton Blvd.  
Allentown, PA  
Every Thursday, 7:00 – 9:00pm  
Dinner before the meeting last Monday of the month, 6:00-7:00pm  
See: [www.faithefc.com/events](http://www.faithefc.com/events).
- Bethany Church, 1208 Brookside Road,  
Wescosville, PA  
Every Thursday, 7 – 9pm, 6 – 7pm  
friendship & snacks  
See: [www.bethanyumchurch.com](http://www.bethanyumchurch.com)
- Bridge Church, 3561 Old Rt. 22,  
Hamburg, PA  
Every Monday, 7 – 9pm,  
See: [www.hamburgbridge.com](http://www.hamburgbridge.com)
- Morning Star Fellowship, 429 S. 9<sup>th</sup> st.,  
Quakertown, PA  
every Wednesday, 7 – 9pm, Dinner 1<sup>st</sup>  
Wednesday of the month, 6 – 6:45pm  
See: [www.mstarqtown.org](http://www.mstarqtown.org)

Please call the office or email us if you are interested in YPM coming to speak at your church or organization about how individuals can get involved with Yokefellowship to share the Word

## **Stations of Hope**

Harold Trulear, Ph.D. National Director of "Healing Communities USA" spoke at the 2015 Yokefellowship Annual Conference about "Stations of Hope". He pointed out the need for Churches to become Stations of Hope for Returning Citizens. He noted that most churches have people who are struggling to return to normal after incarceration. They need our help, but we don't know who they are because their shame keeps them hidden. We must learn to help them identify with the church to find the love and support they need.

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and support they need.*

When someone is sick the pastor goes to the hospital to see them, visits them, members provide meals, send cards of encouragement. But when someone goes to jail it is kept a secret. The church is unaware. Nobody visits, nobody calls, nobody sends cards. They get no pastoral visits or encouragement, and yet we want them to come to church to meet Jesus. It is a fact that the most effective way to keep inmates from going back to jail is a pastoral visit, contact from their church! We must visit them IN JAIL right after they are arrested to give them hope and help them begin to heal immediately. We just be there for them, listen to them, love them, send them notes of encouragement. When they get out of jail, guess where they will go...to *their church*, where their friends are, where they can find hope and help.

We have heard the main thing the returning citizen needs is a job and a place to live. But, experience has shown that this is not their biggest need. The biggest need is a change in their thinking and in their attitude. They can have a job and a house, but without a change in attitude they will lose both! And the best way we know to change someone's thinking and attitude is through healthy relationships. We as the Body of Christ have the best chance of helping them do this. When they first get locked up and are scared and confused, we can visit them and listen to them, encourage them with prayers and support. As they await sentencing and think about how hopeless their situation is, we can keep sending notes of encouragement and care packages. More importantly, we as a church can walk them through a process to begin taking steps to bring healing to them and their families.

Ministering to the inmate begins at the church. It is a congregational awareness with an attitude of assistance and acceptance. Jesus wants to heal them and their families through us. We hold them up in corporate prayer and care, and they begin to see the church as a Station of Hope and they have an expectation of success in the future.

To learn more about how to build relationships with inmates and returning citizens as a church body and to help them plan for a successful outcome visit [www.healingcommunitiesusa.com](http://www.healingcommunitiesusa.com) .

**SEE THE ATTACHED FLYER FOR THE  
UPCOMING PICNIC IN AUGUST.**