

*The Voice of the
Yokefellowship*

Sharing the Good News

*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."*

summer
2018 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.

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Lisa M. Perry

Spiritual Advisor
Alexis "Lex" Perry

Chairman
Jesus Ramirez

Vice Chairman
Alexis "Lex" Perry

Treasurer
Linda Lovette

Secretary/Editor
Norris Lovette

Someone Needs You!



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

**Interested in being a Volunteer
Contact Lisa M. Perry at**

Yokefellowpa@yahoo.com

610-820-8469

A Word From Our Council Director

It has been an exciting spring and summer for Yokefellowship. We had our training in March with speakers from the Lehigh County Jail, Lehigh County Community Corrections Center, Allentown Rescue Mission, PA State Parole, the Fountain Hill Police Chief and from a former correctional officer/current YPM volunteer. Thanks to them for sacrificing their time off to share their information which will help us in our mission to serve Christ.

On August 20th we started the Stepping Up – A Call to Courageous Manhood from Family Life's Dennis Rainey DVD series. I was there for the first night. It was great to see men hungry for the Word of God and eager to learn how to become Godly men. We were blessed by the Lord that money was donated to cover the costs of the workbooks (\$400) and Bibles. The men opened up about their struggles, how most of them grew up without father's in their lives and how they are searching to change their lives by accepting Christ. They want to make a difference in the lives of their families and those around them. It is a time of reflecting on the choices they made and how they need to make right choices. We shared how Yokefellowship can connect them with churches and men's groups in the area to help them grow and mature in Christ. **One of the participants told his caseworker how good the Stepping Up Program is. He said he is disappointed every night when it has to end. Wishes it could be longer.** The entire class is participating and really enjoying it. Yokefellowship is looking for Godly men and women willing to answer the call of the Lord to go into this mission field. Training will be held on September 10th for new volunteers and those needing recertification.

Next series we will be running will be The Art of Parenting from Family Life. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact me.

God Bless.

Working for Him Always ...

Lisa M. Perry

Isaiah 6:8

Put Truth in the hands of 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

Upcoming Events

September 10 – Volunteer Training
September 20 – Board Meeting
October 13 – Coordinators' Meeting
November 15 – Board Meeting
December 20 – Annual Membership Meeting

Go to our website for more info



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



Christian books needed for men and women in the facilities where we can hand them out. Read our Statement of Faith on our website before submitting to make sure books qualify for our mission. If you have new or used books in good condition there are many who are searching for the Lord and need guidance. Share what you have and do some summer cleaning!

Contact Lisa @ 610-820-8469
for more information.

Volunteer Training

Our next volunteer training will be held on Monday, September 10, 2018, 7 pm – 8:30 pm at Relevant Church, 1080 Flexer Avenue, Allentown, PA. It is located next to St. Thomas More Church.

We are required by our state organization to have training every two years. If you need recertification, are a new volunteer or interested in becoming a volunteer please attend.

**Please RSVP by September 5th
so we have enough materials for everyone.**

See you there! Please call or email if you have any questions and to RSVP.

If you have been called to share the gospel with those incarcerated these are the slots we have available and if we don't have enough volunteers the slots are vacant:

Sunday Meetings

- Third, fourth and fifth week - 7:30 - 9:00 pm at LCJ Housing Units 2B/2C (men) - **VACANT**
- Every week 2:00 - 4:00 pm - CCC (men) - **VACANT**
- Fourth and fifth week - 7:30 - 9:00 pm - LCJ 2A/2D (men) - **VACANT**

Weekday Meetings

- Every Monday 7:00 - 9:00 PM LCJ Housing Units 2A/2D (men) - **VACANT**
- Every Tuesday 8:30 - 10:00 pm LCJ Housing Units 4A/4B (men) - **VACANT**
- Every Wednesday 7:00 - 9:00 pm LCJ Housing Units 4C1/4D (women)
- Every Wednesday 8:30 - 10:00 pm LCJ Housing Units 2B/2C (men) - **VACANT**
- Every Thursday 8:00 - 9:30 CCC (men)
- Every Thursday 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm LCJ Housing Units 4C1/4D (women) - **VACANT every other week**
- Every Friday 7:00 - 9:00 pm LCJ Housing Unit 3B (men)
- Every Friday 7:00 - 9:00 pm LCJ Housing Units 3A/3D (men)
- Every Friday 7:00 - 9:00 LCJ Housing Units 1A/4A/4B (men)
- Every Friday 8:00 - 9:30 pm CCC (men) - **VACANT**
- Three Saturdays a month 9:30 am - 10:20 am LCCR (women or men)
- Three Saturdays a month 10:30 am - 11:20 am LCCR (women or men)

LCJ - Lehigh County Jail
CCC - Work Release
LCCR - Recovery Center

PRAYERS & PRAISES FROM INDIVIDUALS AT THE FACILITIES WE GO INTO

For my family, mom, kids and grandkids. My court date so I can get home to my family. A new home. Please Lord. Stay clean and sober, pray for all my kids' moms. Thank you. God bless everyone. Stay safe. T.T.

I need prayer for court and my family. O.R.

From Anonymous individuals:

Thank God I'm alive and my family. Children and Youth case being closed.

Pray for my wife and family. Keep them safe, healthy and to keep watching over me Lord.

For my family, mom and son.

Pray for my family and myself to be strong, safe, healthy and lead me not to temptation but deliver me from evil.

For my daughter "Daniella" who is in the Navy and is currently deployed overseas.

Pray for my mother and mind. Let it not be dementia or Alzheimer's.

Pray for my son Atticus.

That God help us with patience. I'm thankful for the opportunity to be on 1A and to experience Yokefellowship.

I need special prayer to get into treatment. Waiting on Northampton County to hopefully unsecure bail in order for me to go to rehab. I'm thankful for life, I'm thankful for food, thankful for church, I'm thankful for my daughter. I'm thankful for another day, I'm thankful for God. G.G.

I need prayer for my family to comfort them in these trying times and also for my mother Phyllis for her health. Also I would like to thank God and Yokefellow for bringing their peace and Joy. I would also like to say hello to Ms. Lisa Perry wish you well. B.R.

Pray for my wife and kids for my court case. Thankful for God getting me sober and taking care of all my needs. L.M.

I need prayer for court and my family. C.R.

Pray for my family and good health. To help me when I get out to keep my life manageable this time. Thanks for my home plan going through. D.K.

Pray for my home plan. Praise that God has sent a series of great books and is working deeply in my life. Yokefellow has been a great blessing on this journey. A.M.

To pray for my loved ones and for a new beginning. Thankful to still be standing and my children. D.B.

Pray for volunteer Nick and for the people that come to us and donate their time. God willing to be accepting into the Stepping Up program Yokefellow will be running. A.S.

Pray for my children that I have not talked to them for 5 yrs. I need & would like prayer to hear from them soon. M.R.

Pray for my family that God protects them, also for the inmates and homeless of the whole world, and for me that God guides me through the good path and keeps blessing me and gives me strength so I can keep seeking Him. R.R.

Pray for my father to stay healthy and well, also please keep me sober and doing the right things. B.J.

Please pray for me. J.D.

God, please guide me through these tough times so I can tell my story to help many others. A.M.

Pray for my recovery and for my family. H.S.

Pray for my family inside and outside of these walls and for a stronger recovery. S.P.

Please pray for my recovery and for my children staying safe. U.B.

WHY YOKEFELLOSHIP EXISTS



The Reverend Elton Trueblood was instrumental in starting the Yokefellow movement. He was a Quaker preacher, philosopher, author and teacher at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. Following the Second World War, Trueblood observed that too many Christians were superficial in their practice of the Christian faith. In his writings, which were prolific, he urged a return to New Testament Christianity. He encouraged the formation of small disciplined spiritual groups that would engage in discussion on living the Christian way in contemporary society. He became much in demand as a speaker to promote these ideas.

In May 1949, Dr. Trueblood was traveling by train from Richmond, Indiana to Cleveland, Ohio, where he was scheduled to speak at the First Baptist Church. While on the train, he was doing his morning devotions, which called for the reading of Matthew 11:25-30, in which are these words of Jesus, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and you shall find rest unto your souls." While meditating on these words of Jesus, he had a revelation from the Lord that filled him with renewed enthusiasm and gave a name to the movement that he was promoting. Listen to his own words on what happened: "My reading that morning was 11:25-30. Though I had of course read the passage on many former occasions, it struck me with unique force. It was almost as if I had never before read the words, "Take my yoke upon you." Suddenly, I saw that this is Christ's clearest call to commitment. I realized that the yoke metaphor involves what we must require if the vitality of the Christian faith is to be recovered. With a minute or so, as an entire complex of thinking came together, I had a different sermon. The words which came to me on the train that morning I preached with the hour, recognizing that I was participating in a new development." p. 97, "Elton Trueblood" by James R. Newby.

Trueblood now had a name for the movement - YOKEFELLOWS. He had lapel pins made with the yoke as a symbol of the movement. He continued to encourage the formation of small discussion groups. He emphasized seven disciplines that persons need to practice in order to grow spiritually. He called them the Yokefellow Disciplines. They are as follows:

1. Read the Bible every day using some plan.
2. Pray every day.
3. Attend the worship of God every Sunday letting only serious reasons interfere.
4. Give proportionately of one's income to the Lord's work. If your income increases, your giving increases.
5. Engage in some definite service for the Lord.
6. Be unapologetic in witnessing to what the Lord is doing in one's life.
7. Read and study Christian books and magazines.

These spiritual disciplines are still emphasized in the Yokefellow movement and those who want to belong to Yokefellow are required to subscribe to them. Yokefellow groups began to spring up all over the United States and in other countries. I was in theological seminary at the time, the movement touched our campus, and I joined a Yokefellow Group and received my first Yokefellow lapel pin.

In 1955, Dr. Trueblood gave an address in Washington, D.C. to a group of chaplains from the federal prisons. He emphasized the power of the small disciplined spiritual group to affect a change for the better in the lives of participants.

Two chaplains, one at Tacoma, Washington and the other from Lewisburg, Pennsylvania saw the possibilities and soon, working independently of one another, established Yokefellow groups in their penitentiaries. This was declared a success, thus was born the Yokefellow Prison Ministry.

Trueblood began to encourage the establishment of Yokefellow groups in prison. He made contact with a devoted Yokefellow in New Jersey by the name of Newman Gaugler and asked him to head up the National Yokefellow Prison Ministry. Newman accepted the invitation and established the headquarters in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. Later it was move to Shamokin Dam, just across the river from Sunbury. He traveled throughout the U.S., promoting the establishment of Yokefellow groups in federal and state prisons. Later, he did a pilot project of a Yokefellow group in a county prison and found that it would work in that setting. He also developed the area council concept to insure the continuation of the Yokefellow Ministry in local areas.

WHY SMALL GROUPS FAIL

Why does any small group fall apart? It is not because God doesn't send His laborers. Here are four reasons why small groups fail according to Rick Howerton, Small Group and Discipleship Specialist at LifeWay Church Resources.

- They don't have a leader who can move the group toward a common vision.
- They ignore having a written covenant.
- They don't really have discussion about the Bible; they just have discussion.
- They don't pray.

It is difficult to have a leader with a vision while the small group members only want to be in the group without getting involved in the vision. They have no idea of the full mission of the small group and therefore are isolating themselves from the mission. We are all in the body of Christ as stated in **1 Corinthians 12:27**. Members of one small group do not know other members and it is up to the leader to try to bring them together. As the saying goes, you can bring a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. This is a precursor to members leaving the small group when they are not amongst like-minded members who don't have the same passion or vision.

There are warning signs to look out for because small groups don't fail overnight. Over time they run out of steam ... according to Mr. Howerton a "slow go" small group becomes a "no go" small group. Leaders set the vision for the small group and ensure that it arrives to that destination. Leadership helps the group move towards the vision by utilizing the members' spiritual gifts.

Healthy boundaries need to be set for the group. One person can't do all the talking, everyone should be participating. Members need to make a commitment to come when scheduled and show a passion for the mission at hand. Everything discussed should be held in strict confidence. In the jail setting we are not bound by this. If an inmate confesses to a crime or is a harm to another person, themselves or administration we are required to report it. We can be subpoenaed to Court, and we tell the inmates that before they say anything.

Are there times when you have been in a small group and members want to talk more about their own thoughts than the Bible? Run as fast as you can. We are there to center attention on the Word not personal opinion.

Prayer is very important. Mr. Howerton states "prayer connects a community of people with a Holy God. Prayer in small groups is more than sharing prayer requests; it's 'crying out to God on one another's behalf because we love each other so much and believe that God has the power and is willing to be at work!'"

Read **James 5:13–16** and then pray for your small group. Think about how you want the group to look like based on this scripture and memorize last part of verse 16: "***The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.***" I know when we have prayed before going into the jail and when we came out it made a big difference not only on how the Bible study went but also joined the volunteers as one.

Remember **Mark 10:43-44** "... ***Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.***" It is not all about us and what we bring to the table or our lesson and our wanting to teach all the time. It is about sharing the responsibilities among other volunteers for His Glory. We are not there to teach but to make disciples of the men and women we serve in the name of Our Lord. We don't go in as chaplains or pastors because we don't hold a higher position in the facility. We are all sinners. We are there to bring the Word and therefore held to a higher accountability by Our God as stated in James 3:1, "***Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.***" This is why we go in as a team of two or more . . .



In Yokefellowship we are MEMBERS of a TEAM

Following our Lord's example:

Luke 10:1 - "After this the LORD appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go."

Why do we minister as a team? Because we have been created to work together, not alone. We are not called to be 'Lone Ranger' Christians (Christians who avoid fellowship with other believers or avoids going to church and being a part of a local body of believers), which most time ends in falling into theological error and self-deception. But instead, we are members of the whole, working together in unity to portray a clear and accurate picture of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:27 – "...you are the Body of Christ, and each of you is a member of it."

Although various parts of the body have independent functions, each still relies on the others for the work to be successful. We absolutely must rely on each other to ensure we impart accurate WORD to those we minister to.

When we are working together in unity of Spirit we will:

- assist and support each other
- pray for and encourage each other
- offer instruction and suggestions to each other
- show up and be reliable for each other
- *and most importantly...
- be accountable to each other to remain in the truth and in love.



Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." - One can do the work of one ...but two do the work of many.

Ecclesiastes 4:9 "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour."

If we are the only representative of Jesus Christ that person will ever see . . .do we portray Him accurately?

We are looking for VOLUNTEERS THAT ARE ASSETS

Team Players – We are working together for the good of the inmates.

Servants – "Here I am, send me to where I am needed."

Dependable – Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."

We are not looking for VOLUNTEERS THAT ARE LIABILITIES

Ego-seekers: "If there is anyone who knows how to do it right, it's me."

Private Chaplains: "I'm here to do my own thing, my own way." Feels persecuted if he isn't given his way.

Trophy Seeker: "How many can I get saved."

Bible Thumper: "They are going to hear about God's love whether they like it or not!"

Better than them: "I'm the good guy and you're the bad guys and I'm going to teach you how to be like me."

Been There, Done That: "I can't wait to tell you all about my past." (But isn't real about day-to-day struggles.)

One-Way Communicator: Presents the Word in a one-way fits all manner. Doesn't listen to inmates' pain and questions so he can make the Word come alive and apply it to their lives.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

Lehigh County Jail ("LCJ") is a state-of-the-art maximum-security facility, 250,000 square foot, opened in 1992 with a capacity of 1,352 inmates who are pre-trial detainees and those serving local terms of sentence. Corrections Officers have direct contact and interactions with the inmates because they work inside the housing units.

Lehigh County Community Corrections Center ("CCC" or "Work Release") was renovated in 2011 and is a 400-bed facility which provides a cost-effective alternative to secure confinement. It offers sentenced individuals varied prescriptive rehabilitative programs, the opportunity to enter the community for work, to perform community service work, and to utilize community-based resources, under structured parameters. The CCC is actively looking for mentors for various positions. For more information, please contact the Warden at 610-778-5328.

THIS PAGE IS DEDICATED TO:

First off, we want to

Praise the Lord for His Amazing Grace

and how He is drawing people to Himself and changing lives. **We want to give Him all the Honor and Glory.**

We would like to recognize all the men involved in making Stepping Up come to fruition:

Steve Miller, Treatment Supervisor at Lehigh County Jail, who worked effortlessly to get the approval for the Stepping Up – A Call to Courageous Manhood from Family Life's Dennis Rainey DVD series to enter the jail and to vet all the inmate participants who signed up.

Thank you to the **facilitators** who gave of their time and talents to invest in the lives of these men.

Thank you to all the **participants** who have committed to the ten day series because they want to mature and grow.

One facilitator emailed his testimony: "The Holy Spirit was present in an unusual way. Men were confessing their sins, and their hope in Christ. Many confessed openly their failures to be the man they want to be. One man wept openly, in front of all his peers. **GOD WAS GLORIFIED.**"