I'LL WALK WITH GOD

All the years, miles, churches, prisons, Prayer Partners, Pen Friends and Faith Partners have walked with us. We have had many mountaintop experiences, been in the deep valley a time or two. But in all times like these, God's presence was vital. Our prayers have been a bit different as we grew, so did the growth itself. We grew faster than our funding base and had to direct prayers differently. God is so wise.

I received a letter from Helen. She said "Folks, I have supported your ministry with my mite for a long time, but I am 83 and my funds not so secure. To save a little, take me off your mailing list."

This we would never do. You do not have to support this ministry to be a part of it.

I started looking through the names on our computer, as frankly there are names that I have no idea why! Yvonne called me to the garage, so I shut down.

She said "It's time we got all our possessions in their proper place, as we finally have them in one spot. We have a large two-car garage with not room for one car. I’d said those famous words, "I’ll get around to it."

I looked at the boxes and there was one That said "TAXES." All our records were in another place. I pulled it out and praise God, it was full of slips sent to us by folks we had matched with Pen Friends, names of those who supported us, names and more names. We had lost a whole lot of names in a storm that had knocked out our computer, God has allowed us to put the pieces back in the computer. Many of you getting this have not gotten a newsletter in a long time Thank God you were never lost!

We never thought unpacking could be so rewarding. We have added 347 names back to the computer and next month we will bring you up to date.

WAS I SURPRISED...

when I went to my mail box and saw an envelope from Someone Cares. When I quit receiving your newsletter I thought you closed up. Inside was the name and
address of my Pen Friend and I had quit writing. Also a note promising $5.00 a month. The check is enclosed. Thank you.

LOST BUT NOW I’M FOUND

Don & Yvonne, I was truly thrilled when I received the slip I filled out so many years ago and a current News Letter from you folks. There is a small miracle involved. I had moved and my change of address ran out; but your letter, no others, came on to me. Please assign me a Pen Friend.

MY NAME IS PASTOR JAMES WILBER

A member of our Youth Department came to me several years ago with a packet from your ministry regarding writing Inmates. They were excited but I blew that candle out in a flash! I was not about to deal with the Board, the parents and the school, on a ministry I did not believe in.

Well, six of my youth went ahead on their own. Using one of the parents, you matched them with 12 inmates. Through several Bible schools used by your ministry, they enrolled seven in Bible School right away, and ended up enrolling all twelve. The first twelve brought another seven, and three of the parents got involved!

Several days ago I was embraced by four parents and nine of our youth. The leader of the pack told me that the Jesus in them was more in tune with God’s message in Matthew 25 than the Jesus in me. Well, the information was more than convincing, and you have my full endorsement. I also took a good look at Voice Of Prophecy’s Bible study. Keep on keeping on.

WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO QUIT?

... my friend and mentor, Jim Finn, wrote.

You know, I have never once thought about quitting. Due to some bad turns in a family member’s life, we have our grandson for awhile; he is nine. When he is ready to take over the ministry, if God tarries, and we are still around, and he is ready, he can move me over.

Both Yvonne and I have played golf, tennis and racquetball with him, and bowled. I guess, even when we can no longer do any of that to keep in shape, we will still keep doing what God tells us to Go Do. Hopefully there will be a day when we can take a vacation, or the honeymoon I promised Yvonne, but so much gets in the way, MOSTLY Satan. As we continue to share the stories of what God has done though you and us, we get totally recharged. Well, almost.
I GUESS WE ALL LEARN

My Father-in-law, a man of God, dedicated his life to serving Jesus. He hit a point where he thought he was not effective, sat down and died. As we were rebuilding our computer base, we looked at all those a little older in years and said “Praise God,” as their witness is still effective.

We then looked at all the names we had matched and they had quit writing without informing us. I wrote one inmate to ask what happened.

He told us, “I got a nice letter and answered it right away, I told them why I was in prison. They never answered!” I pray that person is reading this, as we rematched the inmate. God's word tells us to Rebuke Publicly so others will fear. We don’t want to do that, but if we matched you and you have not written or quit writing, at least tell us. We all need to remember what is written in The Book of Life.

MY NAME IS BERNICE

Don matched me with an inmate several years ago and asked me to keep him informed of any problems. I wrote Carlos and found out he was a little slow and did not write well. I got a Mexican member of my church to help me reach him. This is what happened as a result: Carlos found out what caring was. Through much direction, he got his GED and each letter got better.

Carlos was arrested the first time at 8 for stealing a loaf of bread. He’d spent 13 of his 27 years locked up. He got out 7 months ago and is the manager of a car wash, saying he will have his own some day. I wrote the first people Don had matched him with and asked them what happened—God had told them not to write an inmate so they quit? Friends I have written 50 inmates over the years and have failed totally with 11 of them but they quit, not me. Prison is a place where you talk to yourself more than you talk to others.

If you don’t have money or are hooked up in a gang, it is a rotten life. Most of your matched inmates will really learn why mail is called Paper Sunshine. Don or Yvonne told a story I will repeat.

Tonight after dark go into your bathroom with a match. Turn off the light, and when your eyes are adjusted a bit, light the match. That is what one letter can do for an inmate. Sure, some are so institutionalized they live on the hustle. Some who work make as little as 6 cents an hour, but they try.

If you say no and be candid and open, they might just understand.

One inmate Don wrote about had so many people writing him he was making a street living in prison just from stamps. Some trade dinners to write you. Yvonne told a friend of mine, a women’s group leader, to call a local prison Chaplain or write and find out what prison does for men and women. Not much. Im 86 now and I pray I can write 100 inmates before Jesus comes, or I go.
She made it to 56 inmates, and arranged for someone to write her kids when she knew she was going to be ready.

**SAY, MAN, YOU ARE A COOL DUDE**

Dig? I sent you a KITE (letter) to hook me up with a lady or two. You shot me down, brother, and wrote me yourself. You told me I was shopping in the wrong store. You said man, if I wanted to go back were I came from, don’t change. Talk all the jive talk (street lingo) you want, but you will always be a fool. Well O.K., I don’t dig (understand), but start the trip (where are we going?).

I matched him with an English professor and the next two years were a lot of fun. His handle (name) in prison: Blaze. His real name: Luke. The professor handled him like a chess piece, moving very slowly. He (the professor) even got a vice squad cop, who became a Pen Friend, to help with the Jive talk. Well, after 18 months, George went to meet Luke, aka Blaze, a member of the Black Guerilla Family. When they started, Luke grew up knowing he was going to die, or go to prison and die. But someone from the other side of the street came on down to care and share. Luke quit the gang and lived. Finished High School in prison and was accepted in a small college. He got a job that gave him a place to stay, money for food and school.

At 16 he’d paid cash for a Cadillac because his new Lincoln had gotten 6, 000 miles on it.

Luke went from high life to Life Forever because of a caring person, a will to make it, and a job at Burger King.

Jesus teaches us not to bring those to whom we witness up to our standards, but to be willing to get down with them. Care to try?

We would love to hear other experiences, good and bad. It’s not broke so we need to improve it, not fix it.

**HI, FRIENDS!**

A few weeks ago, my first letter to an inmate was returned. As Don suggested, I wrote to the Chaplain to see if he could find a forwarding address for the fellow. He was in the Federal system, and I guess they don't let folks know where they move to. So, could you send me the names and addresses of two people who need someone to correspond with? They can be inmates or not, it's O.K. with me!

After reading your newsletter yesterday, I thought I'd better get a move on. I don't know how much time I have to live. Many of us forget that, but just because I'm a relatively healthy person doesn't mean something might come up. I want to do what I can while I'm cognizant and able.
I am also asking for your prayers. I am 3 months into a high-risk pregnancy and the doctors want me to undergo a procedure to check the baby which will guarantee our blood mixing. Please pray that baby's blood type will be compatible with mine. I want to glorify God and do what is right in His sight. I have already decided to trust Him and give Him all of the glory, whatever transpires. Satan cannot rob from God. If baby should die, which I hope not, I have the hope of seeing and holding it in Heaven. Should baby live, I will have the pleasure of taking my third child with me wherever I go in this world and sharing my faith with it. I do not know what is God's best will in this situation. For my husband and me, it was planned to be our last baby, so it is a rather precious thing to anticipate. Like I said, I want to glorify God, whatever happens. Please pray for strength and wisdom, both for myself and the medical workers.

Thank you, and Happy Sabbath!

Sue H.

**TODAY I GOT A CALL:**

A serious problem? Could the problem cause serious damage to an inmate?

Like many Pen Friends, a couple chose to write direct. Their inmate was buying cigarettes from a guard at very high prices, the practice very illegal. Some gang members asked him to get some for them and there would be a little in it for him. He agreed and was given the money. The guard got caught, the cigarettes were never delivered, the gang members want their money, which is now gone. The gang members threaten the inmate who now is very scared.

Here are his choices:

1. Repay the money. He does not have it.

2. Tell staff. They will want gang members’ names and he has also informed on himself. For this he can get killed. Even protective custody in prison does not mean safety.

We are going to try to help and will keep you informed.

**YVONNE'S CORNER**

God is Great and we have so much fun sharing Jesus with others! Yes, it is true that times are tough right now, but we must remember that "In Times Like These We Need a Savior". Without Jesus we can do nothing, I am so Thankful for Christian education, and being raised in a Christian home. Unless you have seen the other side, you have no idea what I am talking about. Before I met Don I did not know anything about the world and all its downfalls, but thanks to my husband, I received a totally different education and was very much surprised at how much I did not know. I'm thankful today that Jesus stayed with me at all times and continues to stay...
with us. "Because of You, Someone Cares."

Keep up the good work!

**ASK IN THE NAME OF JESUS**

And we are asking... I have just spent a massive amount of time going through current and old records. We have found that many of you actually did write an inmate, got no answer, and quit. To help us to help the Lord do this ministry properly, please check your label. If it has a P, some time in the past you were a Pen Friend. If it has an F, some time in the past you were a donor. If it has a W, you are, we believe, a current Pen Friend. If it has a D, you are a current donor.

Now, if it has any of the above, with pars ( ) around it, that means we just don’t know. We have written and asked for confirmation and not received it. It would be neat if all of you had a W and D.

We are asking again in the name of the Lord, if all of you not supporting would send a dollar a month for a year, we would be a mile ahead of Satan! You could send $12 all at once for $.37 and save $4.07. So even if you made that donation $15, you’d have enough for a treat. ? J.

Special items needed: if within 500 miles, we need a used organ, a quality copier, used musical instruments (especially guitars). We also need a car that runs reliably.

We can spend our time either ministering in prison, or raising funds; one is a waste of time.

**JEAN’S JOTTINGS**

My computer has been in the “hospital” for an extended stay and system upgrade. Despite downloading printer drivers for three+ hours, mine refused to speak to any of theirs! I’m an “end user,” not a tinkerer. An installation that doesn’t work causes an instant nervous breakdown. So the delay in receiving your newsletter this month is all on me; I pray you’ll forgive me. I know Don and Yvonne are frustrated, but no more than I.

I, too, had a letter this week but not like the one on page 3. This came from one of the re-located inmates from our ministry. He was transferred to a facility that actually has classes which means he will have a trade when he’s released! How rare these days, in Michigan.

This young man is a committed Christian, and has organized a group of believers who are anxiously waiting to have services together, but they are having trouble getting the Chaplain to put these men on the chapel schedule! You would think that a Chaplain would be happy to have all the evidence s/he could, that his or her influence was promoting God’s good throughout the institution? Why else would
they have the job in the first place?

The inmate loves music and has been pressured by a Sunday-keeping group to play for three services a day; all he has to do is sign up for their group. That would, in turn, leave this Chaplain off the hook to set up Sabbath services for those who worship on the day God set aside for us at Creation.

He saw through their scheme and gave them his reasons. He plays guitar and keyboards. The Chaplain can issue a day pass for him to play for the group that’s asking.

Volunteers aren’t allowed to invite inmates from other faiths to our services, but inmates can and do invite friends to come. Our Chaplain has been very kind to us, and we do appreciate him! He has been to our church as well as others, to learn what each believes, so he can relate to those in his care. Good job!

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