

# WHY PRISON MINISTRY?

THE LADIES AT CAMDEN COUNTY JAIL NEED TO KNOW

- THEY ARE NOT FORGOTTEN
- GOD IS WITH THEM EVEN IN JAIL
- THERE ARE NO UNFORGIVABLE MISTAKES
- THEY ARE BEING PRAYED FOR BY PEOPLE WHO CARE
- THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE
- THEY ARE NOT DEFINED BY THEIR PAST OR THE JUMPSUIT THEY CURRENTLY MUST WEAR

Matthew 25:35-40 - "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

## **Prison Ministry Offers Opportunity to Serve – A History of Prison Ministry at the First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield**

*“I was in prison and you visited me....Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:36; 40b.*

For more than 50 years women have heeded Christ’s call and have gone into the Camden County Correctional Facility to bring hope and peace to the women detained there.

Begun by the Society of Friends in the 60s, the program had an office with a paid director provided by federal funding. In time, the funding ended and the Society of Friends went on to other concerns. The women of our church continued to make visits. In the beginning there were no more than 10-12 women detained at any one time. Today there are 100-150.

Every Friday morning a small team of “Good Ladies” packs their cart with Bibles, books and puzzles and heads to the Camden County Correctional Facility to bring the good news to women inmates who are struggling to redefine themselves and follow the path of Christ. We remind the women that the place where they are now and the clothes that they wear do not define them. They are children of God, and God has not forgotten them while they are in jail.

Time with the women consists of a devotional time including scripture and prayer. We distribute “Daily Bread” devotionals, greeting cards (for them to send to others), calendars (for keeping track of court dates, etc.) and Bibles, written especially for the incarcerated, called ***Free on the Inside***. Each woman who attends receive either a books or puzzle and an envelope with a word search puzzle, a golf pencil, a blank decorative card, a sheet of stationery, and a devotional booklet.

As Good Ladies, we are constantly told how important our visits are. We are prayed for and thanked often. For us as well as the women we visit, it is a deeply satisfying and rewarding experience. Before the pandemic Carol Carty, Judy Grantham, Janet Lehman, Joan McCullough, Isabel Pross, Barbara Smith and Judy Blank served as “Good Ladies” as well as Kelly Stout who established a corresponding relationship with several of the women.

During the pandemic, the “Good Ladies” were joined by Karen Andres and Beth Tourtellotte and we continued to “visit” the ladies via Zoom.

After the pandemic Judy Blank, Karen Andres, Beth Tourtellotte and Paul Nussbaum have been visiting CCJ. Sadly, we are down to four volunteers who are able to visit the jail. We NEED additional volunteers to keep this important ministry going.

**There is room for you in this vital ministry.** Ask Judy, Karen, Beth or Paul for an application. After your application is received and the background check is complete you will complete online training about the Camden County Jail. Then you will be interviewed, fingerprinted and drug tested. The final step is a visit to the jail to review the rules and take a tour. Then you will receive your coveted visitor ID badge.

You will visit the jail with an experienced team to ease you into the ministry.

If you wish more information, please contact Judy Blank [jmblank451@verizon.net](mailto:jmblank451@verizon.net)

# **Prison Ministry**

## **What Happens If I volunteer?**

- 1. Fill out an application.**
- 2. Complete online training.**
- 3. Interview at the jail.**
- 4. Drug test.**
- 5. Return to jail to review rules and take a tour.**
- 6. We go into the jail every other Friday. Schedules are made according to your availability. Join us once a month, every other month—whatever works for you.**

Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2:17)

# **Prison Ministry**

## **What is it like to go into a jail?**

- **Camden County Jail for Women is a jail NOT a prison. The ladies are either waiting for trial or sentencing. The jail is more of a holding area. Unfortunately, some inmates can spend years in the jail.**
- **We spend about 1 hour with 10-15 ladies (numbers vary) every other Friday.**
- **We offer a message, singing and most importantly prayer.**
- **We give each lady a puzzle or a book, coloring pages, crossword puzzles, a greeting card for them to send to someone and the Daily Bread.**
- **You as a volunteer define your role-- Whatever you are most comfortable doing.**

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. (Hebrews 13:1-3)

# Prison Ministry

## I don't want to go into the jail, how can I help?

- **Remove staples from Daily Breads, Calendars, etc.**
- **Assemble packets that we give to each lady including (a pencil, crayon, coloring sheet, devotional, etc.)**
- **Put together Christmas presents which we deliver to the jail for every inmate.**
- **Solicit contributions of puzzles, greeting cards and calendars.**
- **Talk to others about volunteering.**
- **PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!**

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" (Matthew 25:34-40)

# **Prison Ministry**

## **Donations Needed...**

- 1. Puzzles (make sure all the pieces are there). We accept any size puzzle but have a real need for those with less than 1000 pieces.**
- 2. Calendars for 2025 (if you have time to remove staples, it will be appreciated but not necessary).**
- 3. New greeting cards—Birthday, Get Well, Thinking About You, etc.**
- 4. Small note pads.**

**There is a box in the Prison Ministry closet specifically for donations. Please don't just put them on a shelf where they might be missed.**

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners." (Isaiah 61:1)