

Coffee Talk

March 2008

- OWPM offers three weekly programs at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville, Oregon. Service locations include: medium/maximum security, minimum security and the treatment facility.
- OWPM ministers and prays with anywhere from 50 to 100 women inmates a week.
- OWPM offers aftercare for inmates upon release. Aftercare includes, basic household items and gift cards for clothing purchases.
- OWPM provides Bibles and Bible study texts to inmates free of charge.

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Oregon Women's Prison Ministry

His Love is Powerful *by Christina Gould*

I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. - Luke 15:7

What a joy it is to know that our God is gracious and abundant in compassion to all people. His truth and love reach down to even the last of the lost. This includes prisoners, many of whom are lost sheep and in need of our help and support.

So many of the inmates we meet on a weekly basis are lonely and feel abandoned both emotionally and spiritually.



How wonderful it is to share with them, that God is safe hiding place and the rescuer in the midst of trouble. We are blessed to let these ladies know that they too are precious in the eyes of God and they can have eternal life and freedom.

Christ came to give us hope and direction and His time here on earth was spent ministering to the lonely, the sick and the sinful. If Jesus were to come today, I believe that He would be in the prisons, ministering and befriending the inmates.

I want to thank all of you who make this ministry possible, through your prayers, and your financial support. It is your faithfulness which enables us to provide for the spiritual and physically needs of inmates and of those who have been recently released.

I also want to uphold our faithful volunteers who correspond with the inmates through letters and cards and our volunteers

who visit the prison on a regular basis. Our OWPM team ministers to inmates week after week and we know finding that one lost sheep will bring joy to our God in heaven. Our volunteers pour out their passion for Christ to these women in prison.

I would like to give special acknowledgement to the prison Chaplains who work hard to support the ministry.

Most importantly, I thank God for giving us the privilege of sharing His Gospel with the women inmates. It is a blessing to be able to love on them and comfort and pray with those who are alone and in need.

Once they were lost and had no hope, but in Christ Jesus they find hope and new life.



Kembr's Letter

Kembr is a beautiful young woman who attends our weekly OWPM services. Her joy and enthusiasm for the Lord are a blessing and testament to her changed life. Although she is physically in prison, she is indeed free. Kembr wrote this article for our newsletter.

I used to ask myself; how could God possibly know what

I'm going through or even all the pain I have been through? Where are you if you exist? How could you God, even know what this pain feels like? And along with this gut wrenching question, that I have asked myself over and over came an overflow of emotions - hopelessness, despair, agony, hatred, confusion, loneliness, desper-

ately longing for someone, just one person to understand the road I have been dragged down, depression, insecurity, brokenness, shame, guilt, self pity, self centeredness, and many more lies that came with my separation from God.

Well now I can answer this

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**“God
understands our
suffering
because He
experienced it.”**

Kembr’s Letter (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

question. How can God possibly know my suffering? The answer is clear in the Bible. Because He himself in the person of Jesus Christ went through much more than I have ever or will ever have to suffer. The Bible certainly makes it clear that although his character, words and actions place him head and shoulders above all who ever lived, He was truly and fully human. He knew what it was to be tired, hungry and thirsty. He was concerned at tragedy coming upon others, he wept, and even more significantly, he was tempted, just as we are. His work here on earth was so difficult. He was betrayed by His closest friends. He faced false charges. He was tortured. He felt what it like to be terribly alone. And then He died in agony.

These powerful words point to this truth: God understands our suffering because He has experienced it. Christ was the spotless, perfect lamb of God. He did no wrong. I have been

a wicked person most all of my life. I have been greedy, envious, a fighter, a liar, full of malicious behavior, a gossip, a hater of God, insolent, boastful, disobedient, heartless, and unforgiving. God says all who do these deserve the death penalty and will never see the Kingdom of Heaven.

But I’m forever thankful that God also says this is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us while we were still sinners. Christ willingly took the punishment that I know I would have never been able to pay, I’m thankful through His death that He gave me life. I’m thankful He is showing me how to love and to see temptation before it overtakes me. I’m thankful God has ransomed me and lifted off the veil from my eyes. I’m thankful in my times of hardships and suffering because God is purifying my faith and building my character like His glorious son, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I’m thankful that that God works all

things for my good because I love Him and I’m called according to His purpose for me. I’m thankful that I am actually a child of His. I’m thankful that my Lord is my rock, my salvation, my shield. That His blood is covers me and is my forgiveness of my sins. I’m thankful for my son Keegan. I’m thankful for all my family no matter how they hurt me. I’m thankful I understand that if God Almighty the creator of the heavens and the earth can love me enough to forgive me for all my wickedness, and that he has took my heart of stone and replaced it with a heart of flesh so I can forgive. I’m thankful that I love and serve a God who has no favorites and that all who want to can have a life of abundance if they humble themselves. I’m thankful all we have to do is truly repent and seek Him and we will find life everlasting in Jesus. I’m thankful for new beginnings and I’m grateful I can be thankful.

Note: This article has been edited for space considerations.



Renovare is a restorative time of Bible readings accompanied by spirit filled music.

Renovare

Once a month in maximum/medium security, OWPM and the inmates are blessed by Liz Martin who conducts a Renovare service. Renovare, which means to renew in Latin, is a time of reflection and restoration, facilitated and accompanied by music and Bible readings. A Renovare service outside of prison, is 45 minutes in length and takes place in a candle lit church sanctuary, with a live orchestra. Throughout the sanctuary are crosses draped with cloth and people are encouraged to sit apart from one another. The mood is serene

and peaceful with the reader, Liz, and musicians dressed in black.

In prison, the shortened 30 minute service doesn’t include candles or a live orchestra, but Liz is able to recreate that serene, peaceful mood and provide a time for inmates to pause and quietly reflect on God’s word. At Coffee Creek, Liz brings in a CD of music both instrumental and voice, which has been carefully coordinated to correspond with Biblical readings. As the music plays, and Liz reads the word of God, the listeners are able to

focus on what is truly important. Although candles are not permitted and the overhead lights stay on, Liz encourages the inmates to close their eyes not to be distracted by outside things. At times the verses and music provoke such emotion, that the women cry quietly in their seats.

I encourage you to attend a Renovare service. Although you may not be able join us in prison, you can attend a service at SouthLake Church in West Linn . (www.southlakechurch.com search for Renovare)

Inmate Prayer Requests

Aislyn-Pray that I will continue to be willing to surrender my will for honesty, open mindedness, and straight to persevere. My mother needs a financial blessing. I am thankful that God has shown me that He is with me and cares for me deeply.

Bimla-Pray that I find a friend and family to help me parole to (a Christian family). Pray that my family will be safe in God's hand and we become close, as one. Pray I will be safe and loving to others. My son forgave me, after five years of being ashamed of me and refusing to communicate with me. He blamed me for being missing in his life as well as his sister's life. I thank God for this!

Chelsea-I need continued strength and courage and to keep on the path with God and not to stray. My mom needs prayer for her heart condition.

Debra- That my children and grandchildren be safe while I am away. Pray that they are able to handle life's everyday problems and challenges with the children.

Dezarae-Pray that I will stop swearing and teach others the word of the Lord. Pray that my corrupt dreams will stop so I can stop worrying. Pray my families eye's, hearts, and ears Will be open to the Lord.

Dottie-I need healing emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. I need to have peace with my enemies. I want to know Jesus intimately with all my heart and mind.

Jennifer-Pray for me for endurance. I have anxiety and depression. Pray fore my husband who cares for my children. My daughter who has run away from home; choices that my

son, makes and how the kids do in school. I'm thankful for friends who ask me about church and Jesus.

Julie-I need relief from hives. Pray for peace within. Pray for blessings, protection, and prosperity.

Kameron-Pray for my relationship with God and strength to get through this. Pray for my children to be taken care of in love and to be healthy. Pray for their caregivers. Pray that my family and boyfriend get through this hard time.

Laura-I need prayer for peace, strength, serenity, hope, comfort, security, faith, safety, protection. My family needs prayer for the things I asked for first and they need to know that I am okay. I am thankful that I am no longer hassled at work. Work has been good. I'm not depressed or down anymore.

Lucretie-Pray that my family stay safe.

Maria-Please pray for strength that I need and God's guidance. Pray my family has strength and for my daughter to take care of them.

Nancy-Pray that I be more set and direct with my focus on the Lord. I would also like prayer for opportunity for another job, besides the kitchen.-ASAP! I am thankful that I am growing in Christ. I am getting along well with everyone and feel better about my weight. Pray that I continue to lose weight.

Nicole-Pray that I get into AIP Program as soon as possible. Pray that my daughter and father have good health and I get a visit from my father, please.

Patricia-I am thankful ... my friend Michelle is losing weight. Pray that my family is safe and happy. I ask for guidance for my sister and her new little family. Please keep my friend's son, Billy, in your prayers to stay away from drugs, and for happiness and guidance.

Peggy-Please pray that I will be accepted into the AIP Program. Pray that I will keep growing in the Holy Spirit and get closer to God. Pray for my family to be able to come and visit me. Pray for all the women in CCCF and in prisons all over the world. Pray for my best friend, Joe. Thank-you!!

Prettybird (Andrea)-Please pray for strength and endurance to deal with the stresses of life in GP. Pray for my family's safety and my mother's peace of mind, strength, and patience. Pray for my closest friends and their families. Pray for the women back in segregation, please! I am thankful that I am out of segregation and doing good. I am not involved in other people's drama!

Rebecca-Pray for my transitional leave for 30 days, starting 6/17/08. Pray for the health of my family, especially my mother, who is in bad health.

Therrell-Pray for my family, my kids, my mom-who has some things going on with her. Please keep us all in your prayers. Thank-you! I thank God every day!

Twila-Pray that God remove my critical, prideful thinking. Pray for protection, blessings and prosperity. Pray for the lost girls at CCCF. I want to thank God and praise Him for all that he does for us!



“I am thankful that He has answered my prayers about hearing from my family and that I get to come to this OWPM service. The services have brought me closer to God. God bless all of you in OWPM!”



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Oregon Women's Prison Ministry

Your business tag line here.

Oregon Women's Prison Ministry is dedicated to restoring hope and direction to the lives of women prisoners by sharing the love of Jesus Christ through evangelism, discipleship, one-on-one counseling and aiding in their transition from prison to the community.



Coffee Creek Correctional Facility

Vision for the Future ...

As OWPM has grown and is ministering to more women, Christina has had the opportunity to share the ministry vision with believers in places such as greater Portland, Seattle, California, New York and as far away as Korea. We are blessed to have such a diverse group of Christians praying for OWPM.

Our vision for the future is to continue expanding the ministry and reaching the lost throughout Oregon Prisons. We are currently looking for women of God who have a heart for those who are in bondage.

Currently we are acquiring office space in the greater Portland area. This space, which is conveniently located close to MAX and bus routes, will allow us to provide spiritual counseling and job seeking assistance

to those women who have recently been released. The office will also provide greatly needed storage space for donated household items that are available for those ex-inmates who are in need.

We are also seeking funds and aid in developing a bakery/coffee house. As inmates are released they frequently face the problem of finding work, housing and meaningful relationships and many times revert back to prior habits such as theft, drug use and selling. Statistics show that in Oregon 30% of inmates will return to prison within the first year of freedom. Our vision is to provide job skills, guidance and counseling in order to aid them in returning to society and living out the Christian life with joy and fulfillment and give them a sense of hope and pur-

pose.

As we continue to grow, the need for volunteers and supplies continually increases. If you have felt God leading you to reach out to the lost, please contact us or visit our Ministry Needs or Donation sections on our web site and get involved.

