

Enablers Hinder Change for those who need it

Greetings ministry partners! Wow! Can you believe it has been one year as of March 13, 2020 that all volunteers were suspended from serving at the Jail due to the Covid 19 concerns? I have been allowed to come in the Jail but I still cannot have one on one contact with inmates or go into the housing units. God has called me to minister to inmates in the Jail, so it's been hard on me. Despite this I am very thankful the door has remained open for me to be inside the Jail the entire year. Sherri, my secretary, has had clearance to come in since August to serve. I miss the volunteers greatly, and will be extremely grateful when they can return to co-labor beside me.

More than ever your powerful prayers are needed to face the obstacles, challenges and the many discouragements of each day. God is still doing a great work but much has changed from before Covid. If and when the volunteers come back things will look different and everyone will have to be adaptable to ever changing logistics. In spite of not being able to go in we still receive requests (kites) daily. We distribute Bibles and books, set up visits on the monitor, and place the book cart in a pod periodically. The Father is still working to draw individuals to His Son! Praise God some people are broken and open to the good news that Jesus came to set them free from their sins! Despite all these obstacles God remains in control and knows how much time we have left to minister freely. Faith in His promises can bring us through these tumultuous days. May we stand firm in our faith and may we not fear. **Thank you** for your partnership and friendship as we endeavor to proclaim the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Numbers at the Jail are averaging over 950 to 1020 with some inmates shuffled to other facilities. Masks are mandatory inside the Jail and our temperatures are taken daily upon entry.

Quarantines are routine for all new Jail residents. Most of the inmates remain here even after a year awaiting court and sentencing. Court is happening, but on a much slower pace by using monitors rather than face to face with judges. Many workers have been in the pods this whole time while others are phasing back in. Detention Officers oversee inmates, and service aids do clothing exchanges. Medical staff go in for initial evaluations, do testing, mental health visits, and give diabetic injections. Hopefully the volunteers and I will also be allowed back inside soon.

After fifteen years at the Jail I'm still amazed at how family members, and others enable their arrested loved ones. Over and over again they try to be amateur Providences in someone's life. These are indeed amateurs, coming in to actually prevent God's will and say, *"My loved one should not have to experience this difficulty."* The inmate is immediately bailed out. I believe God brings folks to the Jail to experience consequences for their actions, to sober up, and take a good look at themselves. Well meaning loved ones or friends stand in the way of what God wants to do by quenching the Holy Spirit who's trying to bring conviction of sin and repentance. A stay in the Jail can also cause brokenness and be the wake up call to change. I have had many long phone conversations with these enablers. I'm sure they have good intentions, and may be thinking, *"I must protect him, I must show her sympathy, or I must make up for lost time"*. Others express insecurities, fears and guilt over their own inadequacies or failures. Some believe their loved one can do no wrong. They're pampered and protected. Enablers keep their loved ones stuck in life styles that are destructive. The inmate says why should I stop when I can always get bailed out? Often these enablers are well intentioned mothers who've had to raise their children without a father or he's a very passive one. In

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Tip of the Month:

You may often have to watch Jesus Christ wreck a life before He saves it (Matt.10:14).



Shawn Melvin

Shawn Melvin – Another RESCUED Life!

My name is Shawn Allen Melvin and I am 39 years old. I have three wonderful children. Brianna is 21, Rashawn is 20 and Payden is 13. They are the love of my life, and a big reason why I'm writing this today. I have not been a very good father, son or brother the last ten years. I have struggled with alcohol and drug addiction, lost all faith, guidance, direction and hope also. I have spent 4 out of the last 5 years in jail, prison or in programs. I have always believed in God, but never had asked Him to fully be a part of me.

In 2017 I was released from prison and went to Kingdom Living. I did well for a year, but even though I was sober I was incomplete and still hadn't accepted God fully. I thought I could figure it out

myself, but soon relapsed and went back to jail. While serving time in PCJ, before going back to prison the last time I met Chaplain Jerry. I attended his Bible studies and the seed was planted. Once again another year was lost. I spent more time out of my family's life, and my kids were without a father. I was truly lost and in complete darkness. Depression and other mental health issues had a firm grip on me. On October 31st of 2020 I was released on parole again to Kingdom Living. I wanted to be a better father, son, brother and person. I was tired of being chained to drugs and alcohol. I was willing to do whatever it took to find happiness.

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The Polk County Jail Ministry

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either case she's trying to make up for inadequacies with the rearing of her child. Some have sheltered their sons from birth, and not allowed them out from beneath their thumbs. One author I've read calls this the "mother wound." These young men can't think or make decisions without their mother's consent or guidance. Nor are they able to reach emotional maturity, because they're kept dependent on their mother's support and reassurance. These men become either "dominant males" who control women or "soft males" who

are passive towards women. This cycle must be stopped or there will be devastating consequences. Are you an enabler? Anyone can be an enabler; mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, spouses, employees, employers, church leadership, those in public service even our justice system. Please seek the wisdom and strength from the Lord God Himself, His Word, and wise counselors to put a stop to this harmful cycle.

Your servant,

Chaplain Jerry

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- Prayer for continued wisdom for our government officials as they make decisions for the direction of our country.
- Pray God's protection against the Covid-19 virus for employees, families, and inmates. Also protection and good health for the community.
- God will use my efforts as I partner with the Holy Spirit to have an impact on the entire Jail population, and the Sheriff's office staff to touch lives with the Gospel.
- Volunteer David Hamlin to be healed of cancer from Agent Orange. His wife Edna and son Jason are also ill with cancer and need divine intervention.
- Former volunteer and Board member Bud Krisinger would be healed in his battle with leukemia.
- Ongoing prayer for volunteers Rich Thomson and Delbert Howell dealing with prostrate cancer recovery.
- Continued prayer for an Assistant Chaplain who's called and uniquely being prepared by God when we get back inside the pods of the Jail.
- God will make the hearts of inmates sensitive as we emphasize the Resurrection of Jesus Christ this Easter season.
- God will keep our public servants the Detention Officers in the Jail, and Deputies out on patrol safe from harm's way and this virus. Also those in dispatch would have emotional strength in dealing with their job related daily stress.
- Sunday services at 10:00 A.M. will be well attended, a greater number of inmates wake up to watch, detention officers would realize the importance and play it.
- The Christian inmates will daily exercise more self-discipline in their efforts to grow.
- An awakening of local churches to participate in this incredible ministry prayerfully, and financially as a viable mission's effort.
- Inmates who have gone off to prison will stay faithful to God's Word, and be active in sharing their faith.
- Brokenness will be evident in new inmates to the Jail, they'll see their need for a relationship with Jesus Christ and kite me to talk about it by monitor.
- God will raise up more prayer warriors, and financial partners to come along side in this great work of God. Consider how you might impact this ministry.
- Need daily prayer for spiritual oppositions that come against the ministry.

- Churches to attend and jobs for released inmates who desire to stay faithful to God.
- Inmate led Bible studies would be greatly attended and have impact with their prayer groups.

ANSWERS:

- A huge answer to prayer! A year ago under most wanted I requested solid wood book shelves to replace a 20 year old metal one in my office. God provided through a church I preached in about a year ago. This week I picked them up!
- There is an amazing hunger and thirst for the Scriptures in each pod.
- Giving out many Bibles.
- Favor with administration and staff.
- Clothing donations have been strong.
- Good health!
- Praise that access is still available to Sherri and me.

MOST WANTED:

- Clothing closet needs - jeans and tennis shoes for men only.

Ministry Monthly Report: March 2021

	Monthly:	Ytd:
Inmate Request:	748	2,017
One-on-One inmate counseling:	611	1,720
Religious reading materials given:	391	1,078
Bible Study groups:	61	182
Inmates involved with studies:	327	1,051
View Worship Service:	245	969
Volunteer Hours:	51	114
Number of Volunteers:	18	23
Bibles given:	254	597
Number of New Believers:	13	42

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I asked Mike Nelson to be my sponsor knowing he was a man of God and works the 12 steps of AA. I wanted someone that I could trust and relate to my story. As I was working my steps I came to step 3, and made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understood Him. That night as I prayed on my knees I cried over all the pain and burden I have caused my children and loved ones. I asked God to come into my life. I believed His Son Jesus Christ died for my sins and He is my Lord and Savior. I asked for my addictions to be gone and to fill my heart with love and happiness. I asked Him to take my fears and heartache, and to guide me out of the darkness into the light. Since that night, a light has turned on. My life is not just centered around me anymore. I actually care about how others are doing

and want to help them. I have had no urge to drink or use drugs and I am 508 days clean! I would like to give a big thanks to Grace Church, Pastor Phil, Chaplain Jerry, Pastor Matt, and Mike Nelson. I truly believe I was saved to share my story and the message of my Lord and Savior to help others just like me.

*Here is another rescued life made possible by faithful partners like you!
Thank you! — Chaplain Jerry*

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The Polk County Jail Ministry

(THANK YOU for your financial support! Please make checks out to the Polk Co. Jail Ministries Inc. and use the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.)