



Missionary Evangelism to Corrections

*Sharing the gospel & Christ's love
with those in corrections since 1982*

Welcome and Testimonies

January 31st, 2015 Newsletter

MEC Spotlight



Pictured are Jane & Jack Surina, John Bremseth, Peter Doherty, Lori Hockert, Mindy Martinez, Barbara Stampley.

God Knows

One of the characteristics of God that I appreciate the most is how He lets me know He understands what I am experiencing.

The examples are many. When I was feeling the pain of being separated from loved ones He brought to mind that although John the Baptist and Jesus were cousins and lived in a culture where family meant a great deal, they lived in separate cities. At three different times close friends who I felt close to were divorcing their spouses and would not communicate with me, I was hurting deeply and read something the prophets had said, it was exactly what I was feeling. Then I knew God understood that pain. When my Grandfather died and I dealt with guilt for not reaching out to him, Hebrews 4:16 "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of

Cont. on pg. 3

On Saturday, January 24th, six new volunteers attended MEC orientation. Many of these are already in the jails! Jane Surina, who attended with her husband Jack, will be going into Hennepin County Adult Detention Center. Lori Hockert is going into Anoka County Work Release assisting with Celebrate Recovery; Peter Doherty is going into the Washington County Jail; Mindy Martinez is going to the AC Juvenile facility and plans to go to Scott County Jail for Celebrate Recovery. John Bremseth will be doing re-entry at Anoka County Work Release; and Barbara Stampley goes to the Ramsey County Adult Detention Center. Here are excerpts from Peter and Barb's testimony

Peter

As a teenager and throughout most of my adult life I abused drugs and alcohol. At the time I hit rock bottom a few years ago, I literally cried out to God to have mercy on me and I surrendered my life to following Jesus.

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Peter's story

Cont. from pg. 1 My career was a mess, I was loosing my relationship with my sons & friends, and was struggling to even find enough money for food and to pay my rent. My health was suffering and my life overall was a wreck.

Since I surrendered my life to following Jesus, my career is back on track, my relationships have been restored and I have a inner peace that I have never known. It's through God's mercy and forgiveness that I'm alive today.



Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ" this verse gives me the strength I need to stay sober and deal with any issue that occur in my life today. I choose to live in faith not fear. My faith continues to grow stronger every day and I regularly see God's blessings and favor in my life.

I've been praying for God to work His will on me so He can work His will through me. God spoke to me and told me to move into ministry and use my life story to help others with addictions. I met Jim Johnson at a retreat and he explained that he ministers to inmates and asked me if I would be interested in joining him. I believe this is God at work and we were brought together for a purpose.

Barb's story

Barb Stampley was raised in a small town in Nebraska. They would go to church, scream and shout and then go out drinking. She say's " I grew up more afraid of God than of the devil.

She knew God was real when her mother was dying of cancer and they were taking time to go in to say good bye to her.

Barb was outside the room when her dad prayed for healing. She remembers a bright light shining under the doorway and when she went into the room her Dad was on the floor and her mother's color had come back. Unfortunately her mother started drinking and months later went to prison. Barb went to Omaha to live with her dad and there she started to love and trust God more.. They were told her father would die soon would not leave the hospital. Through prayer, he was given 18 more months. After his death she bombarded herself with drugs.

When her daughter was born, she was in church and taught Sunday school but in her second marriage drinking and drugs complicated life. She experienced a series of ups and downs. When life was not going well, it included fearing that God was mad at her. and even thinking "if I died, I would not be held accountable". She gave her husband a kidney and read the Bible but did not really trust,. She also knows God never left her. Psalms 27:14 gave her hope.. Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and He will strengthen your heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Life was so bad that she was thrown out of cars and had guns pulled on her. She describes their hearts as "being hard and [attitudes as] stiff-necked, like the children of Israel. ...She remembers a time that God

spoke to her to 'get real' and when offered some drugs did not take them.

Instead of being angry, the man offering them said I am glad. We left praising God and she has not taken any for 17 years. Then God began to broke up the hard ground, fertilized it,

planted good seed. Now, I can't go back.

"Now I am not scared of God, but can trust Him."

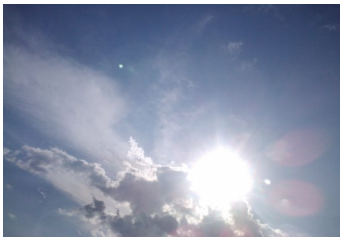


Cont. from pg. 1—***God Knows***

need.” (NASB), brought relief. It was a time of need.. During a time of failure “A bruised reed He will not break and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out” (Isa. 42,3 Matt. 12:20) ran through my mind over and over again, deeply comforting me. After an accident and when dealing with a difficult situation and such low energy, I did not know how I could go on, I was surprised by a card in the corner of my mirror that taught me Malachi 4:2 “But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out and go forth like calves let out to pasture.” I knew there was hope.

There are other times when He “has turned my mourning into dancing and has put off my sackcloth” (Ps. 30:11). And that Entering His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with Praise are foremost.

Blessed are **those** who **mourn**, for they will be comforted (Matt. 5:4), Rejoice with those who rejoice, & weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15), and the greatest & second commandments (Matt. 22 & Mark 12) have increased my capacity for connectedness and relationship. If we do not do the mourning we do not receive the comfort. Our shortcomings in feeling for others show us the need for His supernatural love to do so. Loving the Lord with all of our heart, soul and mind can cause, but also protects us from, rejection by others. Loving others as ourselves brings us a healthier definition and experience than the worlds concepts of pleasing others without meeting our own needs, or having all our needs met by another person.



Join me in thanking God for His Word and the Holy Spirit which are alive and active. They cut, expose, comfort, heal and let us know God understands us at all times. (Heb 4:12 & 2Cor 1:4, Acts 10:38)

Picture “Maria”
from Compassion
Sponsor Tour
K Selby



“I assure you,”
He said, “unless
you are converted
and become
like children, you
will never enter
the kingdom of
heaven. Mtt.
18:3 HCSB

Ministry Friends

Safe Families Helps families from churches care for children temporarily without entering child protective services and if necessary comes around the family to support them in raising the children.

www.safefamiliesmn.org

Empowered to Connect

Although these resources are for adoptive and foster families, they are valuable tools any family can use.

www.empoweredtoconnect.org

see MEC’s website for more resources

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