

Pastors to Prisoners

Helping broken people put their lives back together...



THE DIFFERENCE INSIDE

Pastors to Prisoners Founder Receives Presidential Award

Pastor Jack was told to report to the Warden's office at 9:00 AM on Monday morning April 11 to receive a Volunteer of the Year Award. The award was presented during the Executive Staff Meeting. Along with the California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation Award, there was a presentation of the California Senate's Certificate of Recognition of Outstanding Service, the California Assembly's Certificate of Recognition for Distinguished Volunteer of the Year, A President's Volunteer Service



**Pastor Jack Oien,
Founder and Yard
Pastor
RJDRCF San Diego**

Congratulatory Letter and the President's Volunteer Service Award pin.

The Presidential Volunteer Award read, "Presented by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation to Rev. John D. "Jack" Oien in recognition and appreciation of your commitment to strengthening our Nation and for making a difference through volunteer service".

The accompanying congratulatory letter was framed and read in part, "Congratulations on receiving the President's Volunteer Service Award, and thank you for helping to address the most pressing needs in your community and our country". – While government can open more opportunities for us to serve our communities, it is up to each of us to seize those opportunities. Thank you for your devotion to service and for doing all you can to shape a better tomorrow for our great nation".

The letter carried President Obama's signature.

Special Christmas Edition 2011



Accredited by the
Evangelical Council for
Financial Accountability^(R)

We're on the Web!

www.PastorsToPrisoners.org



follow us on
twitter

Brothers continue Pastors to Prisoners ministry spirit when paroled

by Yard Pastor Elena Hernandez (Spanish Ministry Coordinator)

I wanted to share with you some stories about brothers whom I ministered to while they were in custody that are now serving the Lord on the outside.

What a blessing to see what God has done in the life of Moses. I gave him a large print Bible while he was at Donovan Correctional Facility. Then I learned that he was illiterate and couldn't read or write. However, through a great effort, Brother Moses started writing the whole Bible and it was through the Bible that he learned how to read and write. Brother Moses is presently serving as a co-Pastor in a modest church in Tijuana and started a small choir at his church. He is a transformed man by the power of Jesus Christ and doing the work of an evangelist.



**Pastor Elena Hernandez,
Pastora Spanish Ministry**

This week I heard from Brother Jose and his wife Maria Elena. They told me they were grateful for the seven years the Lord had placed Jose at Donovan, and the spiritual guidance he received thru Pastors to Prisoners. He began attending Spanish services at the chapel. He attended faithfully and became a leader of the evangelism team in the yard. He learned welding while at Donovan. Now he works for the Welder's Union and is presently working as a welder in the new Federal prison that is being built here in San Diego.

I thank God for the Pastors to Prisoners Organization which makes it possible for me to volunteer as a Yard Pastor for these Hispanic brothers who don't understand any English. Thanks to the Spanish chapel services, they can hear the Gospel and worship the Lord in their own language.

Most of the men in prison will be released back into the community. Those who are born again while incarcerated, seldom return.

You are a part of the transformational changes in these men through your prayers and financial support of Pastors to Prisoners. Your support of Yard Pastors allows us to continue ministering in the California Prisons. Thank you!



Letters from the INSIDE (Edited for Space)

Submitted by Yard Pastor Roger Ziegler

Dear pastor Roger,

When I first arrived at Donovan I was on the 4 yard, reception. The state makes it impossible to have any contact with those in reception - no phones, no calls, no incoming calls, sporadic mail if any, and locked down in a cell 90% of the time you are there. They take you out and give you a shower once every 3 days. "Reception" takes you to the lowest point in your life. It is meant to break you and break your will.

You have no idea how grateful I was to have you come visit and bring me that small NT and the study bible. I ended up reading the Study Bible you gave me 3+ times through, and the Psalms and Proverbs 7 times each. After all, I had the time right? I continue to use the same

(Continued on page 3)

Follow-Up Makes A Difference

by State Chaplain Bill Brown, RJ Donovan Correctional Facility

The Kairos program in Donovan is the heartbeat of what God is doing, bringing men out of darkness into light. And, it is the work of our Yard Pastors to follow-up on these many decisions for Jesus.

Everyone who does the work of an evangelist is aware that follow-up is critical to success. And yet, typically our talk is better than our walk. Usually many who come and make professions of faith at Kairos return to their old way of life.

At Donovan we are blessed by our Yard Pastors who are diligent to follow up individually with each Kairos graduate. The pastor sits down with each man and gets acquainted with his story, prays with him, and invites him to become a part of the chapel program.

This is the beginning of an ongoing discipleship ministry, and that is the core of prison ministry, seeing men's lives transformed day-by-day as they are confronted with the truth of God's word, repent and seek the power of God to make lasting changes for good.

We have a number of programs that help men grow up in Christ: 40 Days of Purpose, Self-Confrontation, Slaying the Giants in your Life, Bible Studies, Intercessory Prayer Meeting and worship service.

Many begin in Kairos, and it is the Yard Pastor who makes the difference, following up one-by-one, incorporating each one into the body of Christ and helping each one grow to maturity in Jesus.



Letters from the INSIDE (Edited for Space), Continued...

(Continued from page 2)

Bible though I have to say I'd like to get it re-bound.

I continue to give thanks for your ministry and the help you provided when I was at a very low point in my life there in "reception." You persevered in locating me, visiting me over and over again until I was actually where I was supposed to be. You provided me the tools I needed to survive as a believer in an atmosphere where there is much brokenness. I was able to lead my cellie while there in Donovan for 3 weeks back to the Lord and gave him the New Testament you provided.

Though I am not on my feet financially yet, I will continue to stay in touch with you and provide anything I can for the furtherance of your great work for the Kingdom of God. Certainly without your perseverance and ministry, those incarcerated remain forgotten by the rest of the world and even our own congregations. Most of my former fellow inmates have been forgotten by even their families long ago. It sounds sad, but the truth of the incarcerated is: "Out of sight, out of mind." Be encouraged and keep reminding believers of the forgotten.

In His Remarkable Love,

Steve Maurer



Within me he began a mighty work!

(REPRINTED BY SPECIAL REQUEST FOR THIS HOLIDAY EDITION)



I grew up in a Christian home. I knew the Lord growing up as a child. I grew up knowing Jesus but as I got older I was lured away from that relationship by the world, drugs and gangs and violence. I wanted to be part of the tough crowd and I wanted to be accepted by my friends. I wanted to be a part of the cool crowd. I turned eighteen in the month of March 1995, and by May of that year I was arrested under the influence of drugs. I was taking meth, heroine, LSD, alcohol and everything from A to Z; I've done it all! While doing a robbery I shot someone, thank God he didn't die. I was convicted and ended up doing almost fourteen years in state prison. It was 1996 during my first year in prison, I was nineteen years old, I was invited to Kairos and I figured, "why not give it a try and see what The Lord can do." It was a wonderful experience as I felt the love from the outside volunteers. The cookies were wonderful and the Agape letters flooded my eyes with tears. But I was soon lured away and became involved with a White Supremacist gang, "The San Diego Skinheads."

I was a racist. If you weren't white I didn't like you and I didn't want anything to do with you. The members of the gang that I hung out with were hard core, involved with stabbings and violence. We would purposely hurt people so that we could run some dope to "The Hole." The Bible speaks of the road to destruction being wide and I was running down that path full force on my way to hell. I got involved with Odinism, and I began to worship Thor and other mythological figures. My philosophy was "might is right-you rule by the sword." I'm a big guy and it was easy for me to call the shots and to push my weight around. I started at the bottom and I worked myself to the top by carrying out missions. You go out and attack people and earn your rank. I did that for awhile and then I began to move up where all I did was call the shots. I made the decisions and a lot of people got hurt because of me. Years went by, strung out on drugs trying to numb the pain. In 2005, I was at Calipatria state prison and I had just scored a large amount of crystal meth and I was taking it from one housing unit to another to trade it for something else. It was a huge amount, enough to kill you if you were to take the whole thing. I was crossing the yard with this drug in my hand and there was no one on the yard, at least I thought so. Out of nowhere this officer came around the corner and asked me what I had in my hand. I told him I had nothing. As I held this dope in my hand, I thought to myself, "This is a life sentence that I am holding in my hand." I had two strikes against me, one more and it would have been life in prison. "I can't let him find it on me," I thought. As more officers approached me I had no choice but to swallow the drugs which were inside of a balloon. They tackled me to the ground and took me to a holding cage. They then took me to another room for observation. It was a small room with gray walls, a small drain in the middle of the room with a plastic mattress off to the side. When I walked into this room the only thing I could think of was, "Wow this is the place where they bring you to die." Easy clean up, they just carry you out and hose the room down for the next person.

Approximately forty-five minutes later the drugs hit me and I just fell onto this plastic mattress. I felt moisture come out of every pore in my body. My heart began to speed up as the drug began to take effect and then it stopped. A blackness began to surround me and consume me. I felt death closing in around me and I began to feel fear and shame which I can't describe with words. I knew that I was about to die and I would have to face a loving God who I had rejected. I felt that Jesus would look at me and say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." My whole adult life had been garbage, and filth. Racist, skinhead, hatred, drugs, violence, hurting people. All my life was about running around being a servant of the devil.

As I lay there in fear I began to remember my childhood. I began to think about Jesus. I had known Him as a young boy. As I felt my heart stop and then moments later start again I began to call on The Lord. "Jesus, I'm sorry for what I've done." "Please Lord, don't let me die this way." "I'm all alone." The Lord reached down and touched me that very moment. He saved me and he healed me and He set my feet on solid ground. He gave me a new heart and a purpose in life. For the next two years I began to grow in my faith under the teaching of the Yard Pastor and other volunteers who came regularly into the chapel at R.J. Donovan. I am blessed with a wonderful wife and I am happy to announce that we are going to be parents. The Lord has also blessed me with a new job. I am very thankful for my wonderful parents who love me and never gave up on me. My thanks to Pastor Roger and all of the Christian brothers and sisters who reached out to me in Christian love when I was in prison.

God Bless, *Brian G.*



02-26-1998

HEY WARDEN, I'M IN CHARGE OF THE PRISON BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK AND MY TOPIC IS "YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW" ... I'M GOING TO NEED A FEW SHOVELS FOR THIS OF COURSE, AND MAYBE A HOE ... AND PROBABLY A LADDER

The Last Word

by Pastor Jack Oien—Founder

Chaplain Bill Brown told me that I was to report to the Warden's office; that I was to participate in the Volunteer's Appreciation Week Activities.

Several years ago I had been chosen as the Volunteer of the Year so I supposed that that might be what was coming down (that is prison slang for what is happening or what you could expect).

Five of the old guard that are volunteer chaplains with 16 or more years of service at Donovan were there. Two were Catholics and the rest were Protestants; and I might add, we all love Jesus and know that we are saved by grace.

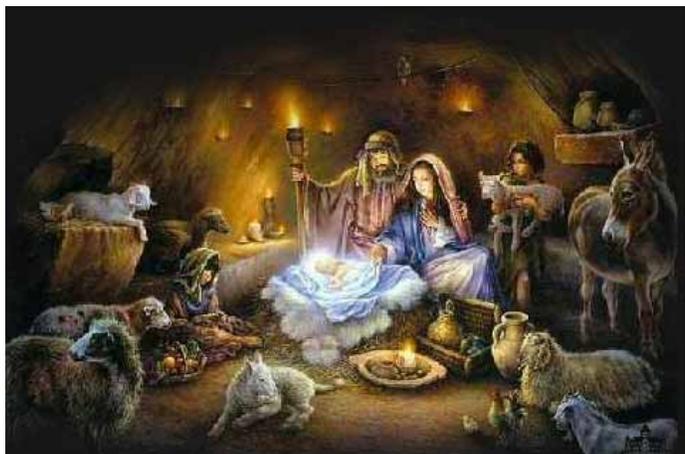
The Warden joined us and told us that we were going down to the Executive Staff meeting where he would host the presentation of several awards. At the time I did not imagine that we would each receive an award, among which would be the President's Award for Volunteer Service including a very prestigious lapel pin. The state Senator's office representative was there along with the state Assemblymen's office representative.

We received two framed plaques from the President and the prestigious President's Volunteer Service Pin. The warden presented each of us the Volunteer of the Year certificate and the State Legislature Representatives presented their Certificates of Appreciation and Honor.

We then returned to the warden's staff meeting room where we were invited to share in a continental breakfast. The warden spent a few moments talking to each of us sharing his appreciation for the work we do.

As I was driving home with my stack of accolades, I was thanking the Lord for allowing us to be appreciated. I prayed to the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ how I realize that it is God who works in me to do His will and good pleasure. I really think that He ought to be wearing the pin and have his name on these plaques and certificates. Don't get me wrong, until I am able to present the pin and certificates in His name I will be careful to mention that I am blessed by God and it is God who works his purpose in me.

It is the Lord who gives me the opportunity to serve Him in prison sharing the truth that sets men free and it you who are reading this article who are my partners in prayer and support who have been so faithful over these past 20 years. I thank and praise the Savior for your love, support, and partnership in this prison ministry.



"THE DIFFERENCE INSIDE" NEWSLETTER

Check	Pastor	Prison	Donation
X	Pastor Jack	RJD	\$
X	Pastor Elena	RJD Spanish	\$
X	Pastor Roger	RJD	\$
X	Pastor Jorge	RJD	\$
X	Pastor Clyde	Centinela	\$
X	Pastor Michael	Centinela	\$
X	General YP Fund or Special Projects	All Prisons	\$

Method of Payment

Check Enclosed (Mail Only) Name _____
 Address _____

Visa/MC/AMEX Phone _____
 E-Mail Address _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. date _____

Signature _____

Mail Donations to:
Pastors to Prisoners
PO Box 2757
La Mesa, CA 91943-2757

Undesignated donations will be placed in the Operating Fund and distributed quarterly on a shortfall basis.

Board of Directors

- Officers**
 Rev. Jack Oien
Founder, Chmn & Yard Pastor
- Mr. Chris McKellar
President
- Rev. C. M. "Buzz" Brewer
 Chaplain CDCR, Retired
Vice President
- Rev. Bill Fink
Secretary
- Ms. Anna Hughes
Treasurer



- Board Members**
- Rev. Clyde Huff
 Yd Pastor Representative, CSP
- Dr. Roger Ziegler
 Chiropractor, Retired
 Yd Pastor Representative, RJDCF
- Dr. Rod Stark
 Owner
 Virtual Memory Pix
- Rev. Bill Brown, Chaplain
 R.J. Donovan Correctional Facility

- Yard Pastors/Coord**
- RI Donovan Correctional Facility
 Rev. Elena Hernandez
 Dr. Roger Ziegler
 Rev. Jorge Molina

- Centinela State Prison
 Rev. Clyde Huff
 Pastor Michael Gappinger

- Advisory Board Members**
- Rev. Steve Francis, Chaplain
 Centinela State Prison
- Captain Jerry Esqueda
 Commanding Officer, El Centro
 The Salvation Army
- John Ratelle, Warden, Retired
 R.J. Donovan Correctional Facility

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#).

Questions or comments? E-mail us at RealJoy@cox.net or call us at (619) 691-7720



Would you help us meet our support goals by sending in your donation before the end of the year? You can print this page, fill out the form, and send in your donation, or you can donate directly on our website. To do that, just click [here](#). Thank you and Merry Christmas!