



Faith Based Unit

Writings from Prisoners in the Faith Based Unit .

The Love Of Christ. Eph 3 v 14-21

For this reason I fall on my knees before the Father, from whom every family in Heaven and on earth receives its true name.

I ask God from the wealth of His glory give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, and I pray Christ will make his home in your hearts through Faith.

I pray that you may have your roots, and foundation in Love, so that you, together with all Gods people, may have the power to understand how broad, and how long, how high, and how deep, is Christ's Love. Yes, may you come to know His Love- although it can never be fully known- and so be completely filled with the very nature of God.

To Him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we ever ask for, or even think of: to God be the Glory in the church, and in Christ Jesus for all time for ever, and ever! Amen
Prisoner FBU

A Loving Father

The Lord is faithful to all his promises, and loving to all he has made.

How good, and pleasant it is when brothers live together in **Unity!**

Let us not become weary in doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Be strong, and Courageous, Do not be terrified, Do not be discouraged. For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Amen!!

Prisoner FBU

As another year goes by I remind myself of the importance to Gods Kingdom the role we play in the men's life in jail. We are called to make disciples, to help develop men of God who will leave and return to our churches and our communities bringing what the Spirit of God has developed in them during their journey in the FBU.

May Psalm 23 be real for all of us this year. That He is my Shepherd, that He is my comfort, He is the one that leads me, He is my shield and he is my eternity.

Blessings for the New Year from the Pastoral Team at the FBU

Conferences this year

As we are concentrating on developing the regions this year we are going to hold a series of regional meetings rather than a national conference.

The timing and form of these meetings is still being developed but will be aimed at identifying reintegration communities and empowering and connecting local and regional PF groups with the churches in their region.

We would expect to hold the next national conference in 2010.



The search for a National Director

We are continuing the search for a permanent National Director to replace Basil Wakelin who has been filling the role on temporary basis since 1 July last year.

If you are aware of possible suitable candidates ask them to contact PFNZ National office on the free phone 0800 777 887



Newsletter of Prison Fellowship New Zealand

February 2009

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Future directions for Prison Fellowship in New Zealand

2008 was an interesting and challenging year! Significant events were the successful national Prison Fellowship conference in May, the funding crisis, Kim Workman's retirement as National Director and Basil Wakelin's assumption of that role until a permanent appointment can be found. At the PFNZ regional coordinators and staff conference in Rotorua in late October a change in emphasis was proposed and has been accepted by the Board.

Looking to the future it is clear that if the conviction rate remains at the present level and yet prison numbers and recidivism are to be reduced then there will be a greater need for community acceptance and involvement in the successful transitioning of prisoners to the community and in the mentoring of those convicted people who will serve their sentences in the community. It will take some effort and time to develop this changed focus but PFNZ is uniquely equipped to undertake this work for several reasons:

- PF strongly believes in the possibility of redemption, change and reconciliation
- PF has a history of prisoner mentoring in a unique way not replicated by other organisations in New Zealand
- PF has a good but developing relationship with the community through the churches
- It is ecumenical
- It is able to connect with prisoners in prison and in the community
- It is able to leverage its activities through volunteers and the churches.
- PF is now seen at political and government levels as being a real contributor to the sector

The 2007 PF conference "When the prisoner comes home" also gave a broad mandate for a higher level of community involvement.

The long term focus is therefore on restorative reintegration, ie change, using a positive, strengths based approach while maintaining the high quality services we provide through the Faith Based Unit, Operation Jericho, Sycamore Tree and in Restorative Justice

The vision

For our work through to year 2020 the vision is:

That every prisoner has the opportunity to embrace the Christian faith, to be mentored holistically and join a supportive community upon release

This means that the focus in the short to medium term will be on developing the PF regional teams and their connection with the churches to enable a national implementation of some new reintegration initiatives.

How we are going to do this is described in the section on Target Communiites.



Tight Financial Times



Most of you will be aware that in the middle of 2008 we faced a financial crisis and were forced to make an emergency appeal for funds. This resulted in an amazing outpouring of prayer and money from extremely generous people around the country. Over \$170,000 was contributed by individuals and organisations as the result of the appeal.

Thank you, thank you, thank you

This has allowed us to remain solvent and continue the programmes to date but we remain financially uncertain and critically dependent upon ongoing donations. We are only just surviving and still have insufficient funds to do all that we really need to do. New long term fundraising plans are being developed but this takes time.

This year is obviously going to be financially challenging for many people and we would ask you all to spread the word of our ongoing need so as to expand our base of contributors.

May you all be richly blessed in 2009.



Reintegration Developments

Since late 2007 we have been developing an exciting new approach to reintegration building on the mentoring experience and training of Operation Jericho.

Successful restorative reintegration involves full inclusion in and of a wider moral community. **Successful reintegration is "community led"**. Restorative reintegration occurs when it draws on community processes through which informal support and controls traditionally take place - thus community is the primary agent for reintegration. However the communities, even if willing, are often somewhat fearful of ex-prisoners and uncertain as to how to proceed.

The aim of Target Communities project is therefore to identify communities, most often churches, willing to accept, mentor, support and hold accountable ex-prisoners and their families and to train and equip them to do so safely. This is very much in line with the vision articulated last year (see above).

The initial development work commenced in August 2007 with funding from the Ministry of Social Development, Wellington region, with later funding from the Tindall Foundation to provide mentoring materials for prisoners inside the wire who wished to become part of the Target Community programme and to continue to be mentored upon release which includes being brought in as a contributing member of the target community environment. These materials are in various stages of completion and it is a sub-project that will continue for some time.

The Target Community project had been in progress since November 2007 and successfully completed its first year in 2008 with several communities established.

The task now is to expand this programme nationally with PFNZ providing materials and training to these church communities.



Excerpts from a victim-offender conference.

The prisoner told his victim that he deserved to die for what he had done to her. "When I did the crime I didn't care what you thought of me. But now it is hard for me to look at you – you deserve respect. I promise to try my best to stay off drugs and alcohol and to live a life of kindness, to try and love myself, others and God and to move forward as best I can."

A victim responds....."There is good in you. If you get out and re-offend it would hurt me more. You can do it!"

A victim responds....."You can look back on today and know this is the beginning. This is the start of the rest of your life."

These words are a wee snippet from a restorative dialogue taken from real face to face meetings. Not all victims of crime want the offender to spend forever in prison. Our experience is victims want to tell their story, they want to be heard, they want to hear a meaningful 'sorry' – they deserve that, they deserve the opportunity to heal – when the time is right for them.

Restorative Justice **doesn't let the offender 'off the hook'**, the opposite happens – honest remorse accompanied with shame and an offer to make it right.

PFNZ has worked hard to establish good RJ practice in NZ prisons and we believe it's 'paying off'.

Restorative Justice Services is ever expanding with referrals for victim/offender face to face meetings on the increase.

This is an exciting time for us as we work through establishing protocols and processes with the Dept of Corrections.

The Parole Board has thanked us for the work we are doing in this arena.

Please support PFNZ:
Click "Donate" at
www.pfnz.org.nz

or to make an internet bank transfer from your account – our details are ANZ, Penrose, 010242 0138571 00 (please include your name and phone number in reference) or call us on 0800 777 887 to make a donation over the phone.



The Angel Tree Programme delivered 3364 presents to prisoners' children around the country for Christmas 2008 - an all time high.

A willing band of helpers from churches, schools, charity groups, and others helped in the organisation of this mammoth, but very rewarding exercise. The financing of this programme is from donations from people from all walks of life.

One church has a group that donate into envelopes just what money they can afford from \$2 up to \$50 and this year the total donation came to \$400.

At one of the prisons the prisoners themselves donated \$500 with money they had raised making and selling cards, and winning a sports competition.

At this opportunity Prison Fellowship would like to thank all those people who volunteered their time and energy working in this programme, also to those churches, businesses, individuals and others that provided finances to make this a very happy Christmas for so many children in New Zealand.