

“Love Lifted Me Recovery” - April, 2019
Newsletter for January, February, March, 2019
Pastors/Chaplains Tom & Dottie Hooper
Web Site: www.Loveliftedmerecovery.com

Here is the purpose of our ministry as written in our Federal and State applications when we became a non-profit organization: “To work alongside and with the conventional church to help people who are struggling with alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual addictions, eating disorders, co-dependency, or suffering from depression, or with dysfunctional family issues. To use Biblical principles and the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to bring people out of their addictions and to reach their full potential in Christ Jesus. To help those whose lives have been damaged by any of the above issues, and to restore them to productive lives in society, and to be fruitful members of God’s kingdom.” Second, but most important, here is our purpose and mission statement from God’s word:

•**Luke 4:18** “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed.”

•**Ezekiel 34:12 & 15-16** “As a shepherd seeks out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.” “I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick....”

•**Jeremiah 23:3-4** “And I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countriesand will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, says the Lord.”

•**John 20:21 & 21:15b** “Then Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be unto you: as My Father has sent Me, **even so I send you.**” “.....**Feed my lambs.**”

We teach Biblical principles and use the Twelve Steps as an outline or format. We are basically a Bible study and discipleship ministry, with our focus on the principles from God’s word that bring deliverance from bondage, and help in resolving issues from the past and in solving problems of daily life today. Our goal is to help those whose lives have been damaged by sin - either their own or others’ sins against them - to help transform them into productive and fruitful members of God’s kingdom. To replace the low self-esteem caused by damaged relationships in the past with the true knowledge, awareness and “self-esteem” of who we are in Christ.

Monthly Evangelistic Outreach to Venice Beach

Saturday, January 5, 2019 - Our ministry group today consisted of Tom, Dottie, Shami, Sheldon, Keith, Kaela, Felipe, Marcelino, Apple, Suchart and Yasuko. It was the first time going on the outreach for Marcelino and for Yasuko, and they enjoyed it very much. We had 176 lunches for the homeless, lots of socks and used clothing, including some nice warm jackets, hygiene/toiletry packets, lots of knit hats (made with love by Debbie in Phoenix and with love by Bunnie here in Venice), and dog and cat food for their pets. We also had a few blankets to give out. The weather was kind of overcast, and rain was forecast for the afternoon or evening, and it was very cold, so the jackets, knit hats and blankets were especially appreciated. Felipe, Sheldon and Marcelino saw a young man who looked really cold, and he had no jacket of any kind. Felipe and Marcelino ministered to him in Spanish, which Sheldon said was

quite a treat to hear. They gave him a nice warm jacket, food, toiletries and socks and he was so happy and grateful. At some point, they met up with Shami and her group, and they worked together sharing items when one person ran out. They found many grateful recipients, and all lunches, clothing and even the dog and cat food were all handed out. Shami, Keith, Apple, and Suchart went together, and although everyone was very thankful, it seemed that no one wanted to pray with them this time. Kaela and Yasuko came with me, and we covered the north end of the Venice Boardwalk, and there were a lot of homeless people up that way. A large group of people were waiting for Dan (from a church down in Redondo Beach), who usually brings a truck full of food that the grocery stores give away after the "sell-by date", but he wasn't there yet, so we gave them all lunches. We gave away all the toiletry/hygiene packets, and one of them just happened to have a roll of duct tape in it that someone had donated. The man who received it said, "Oh! Duct tape - I can really use that!" so we were glad he was the one who received it. A lot of the homeless people have tarps over their belongings to keep off the rain, so that's probably what he was going to use it for, securing the tarps. After giving out the food and clothing to the homeless, we continued to hand out gospel tracts on the Boardwalk. There were several police officers standing around (don't know if there had been some trouble down there recently, or what), and we gave them gospel tracts, too. Felipe and Marcelino were both doing our program and Bible studies at California Medical Facility in Vacaville, and have been out of prison for about a year now. Marcelino served thirty-one years, and Felipe almost twenty-five years. We were glad to have them helping us on the outreach.

Saturday, February 9, 2019 - We were supposed to have the outreach last Saturday, but it rained and rained all day. Today, we prayed for no rain, and although it was raining at 5:00 am when I got up, we prayed for it to stop and the sun to come out, which it did by a little after 7:00 am. Johnny called when it was still raining, to ask if we were still going out, and I said, "Yes, we've prayed for the rain to stop, and 'Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen' (Hebrews 11:1)." As soon as I hung up the phone with Johnny, the rain actually stopped, and the sun started coming out over the next half hour or so. We had Tom, me, Sheldon, Felipe, Ricardo, Burt, Johnny, Jacob, Kaela, and Apple to go on this outreach. We had 165 lunches, lots of used clothing, including quite a few warm jackets, knit hats, and some shoes. Oh, yes! We had the usual socks and toiletries as well. We were surprised to see as many homeless people down at the Boardwalk as there were, because of the recent rain. Maybe when the sun comes out they all come out from whatever shelter they may have found. As it was, we gave out all the lunches, most of the clothing, and the knit hats and jackets were a big hit. Sheldon and his group went down some of the alleys and found people there. They had a pair of size 12 shoes, and one older man said size 12 was "just perfect" for him, and he was so happy to have new shoes. Ricardo had some T-shirts in larger sizes, and he found just the right guys who needed that size, and we found people who fit the jeans we had, and everyone was glad to get new, dry clothes. Jacob prayed with a man named Luca, and then Luca said he would like to pray for Jacob. I prayed with a young woman named Myra, and she also received a lunch, a sewing kit, some reading glasses, and toiletries. We passed by some of the vendors, and I offered a gospel tract to a woman there. She spoke with an accent, so I asked her what language she would prefer, and she said, "Chinese." I was able to find a Chinese tract in my bag, and she took it gladly. Ricardo and Felipe also handed out tracts in Spanish, and we all gave out tracts in English. All in all, we thought it was a successful and fruitful morning, as we "ministered the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Romans 15:16) to the people at Venice Beach, and also provided for some of the physical needs of those who were homeless.

"He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing." Deuteronomy 10:18

Saturday, March 9, 2019 - After many months of not being able to come, we finally had some of the

guys from the Bible Tabernacle in Canyon Country here to go out with us: Ararat, Frank and Eugene. Besides them, there was Tom and me, and then Sheldon, Keith, Kaela, Yasuko, Felipe, Ricardo, Justin, Johnny and Cody. We had 181 lunches, and lots and lots of used clothing, shoes, socks, toiletry/hygiene packets, rain ponchos, mittens, knit hats (both handmade by Debbie, and also some store-bought ones). Johnny and Keith's group found quite a few people out by the handball courts and skateboard park, and were surprised at how fast all the lunches were given out. One group of three older men were so grateful to get the food and clothing, and Johnny prayed for one man who asked for prayer. Ararat, Sheldon and Eugene went down the alleys and found some homeless people there, while Frank stayed on the Boardwalk and gave tracts to people passing by. My group went up to the north end of the Boardwalk, and after we gave out the lunches and other things, we handed out tracts to the passers-by. Felipe gave out tracts in English and Spanish, and I gave them out in English, Chinese, Russian, Italian and Ukrainian. I offer people a tract in English, and then if I detect they have an accent, I ask if there is another language they speak. You should see the big smiles on their faces when I offer them a gospel tract in their native language! They always give me back the one in English and take the one in their "heart language." This was the first time on the outreach for Justin, and he was great! He even spotted some homeless people we had passed by without noticing them, and he was so happy to be able to give lunches to them and all the other homeless people we encountered.

Prison Ministry

Our prison ministry reaches men and women in every state prison in California, some federal prisons around the country, and prisons and jails in Oregon, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, and Oklahoma. We have well over 400 people doing our Bible studies and 12-Step program by correspondence. They are growing in their faith, because God's word does not return void, but will accomplish His plan and purpose. Here are a few portions of letters we've received from inmates:

Chris Allen, Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, Blythe, CA - "Tom and Dottie, remember when I told you I had asked "Dad" for four Christmas cards, and the next day or so I got four cards in the mail from you guys? You asked me, "Which "Dad", my earthly father or Heavenly Father?" Well, I've never had an earthly father, so any reference to my "Dad" is always referring to my Heavenly Father. Thanks again for the cards and everything. Chris"

Miguel Rodriguez, CTF/Soledad State Prison, Soledad, CA - "I want to thank you so much for having me in your program all these years, studying these beautiful and helpful studies that you are so kind to send me. You do not have any idea how much these Bible studies are helping me in my daily walk with God. As you know, I am a "Lifer", and I am going to my parole hearing in July. If I get released, I want to go back to my country of Mexico and share everything I have been learning, not only to loved ones, but to whoever needs it. Love you so much in Christ Jesus, Miguel"

Pedro Pinedo, Lancaster State Prison, CA - "I am grateful to God for putting the both of you in my path, and a part of my life that you two will always be. Now, as for Steps 6 & 7, on how I feel I'm doing, I think I'm doing great. It's not only a learning experience to me, it's adjustments for me to better myself and bring me closer to God. As I go through the Steps I learn more about myself, and I learn to forgive and not be bitter or angry. I have more trust and faith in God, and I feel at peace and liberated as I work through the Steps. I know sometimes things get rough, but I trust God and out of every bad thing God has something good planned for us. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Sincerely, Pedro Pinedo"

Sokorn Check, Sacramento State Prison, Represa, CA - "You guys are a true blessing, people of God"

doing God's work. You must know how much my life has changed since you and your ministry have been in my life. Things are finally looking up, and being sober, I am proud of myself and my accomplishments. Things can get frustrating, but today I know that God won't give me more than I can handle, and I give it all to Him and let Him handle the mess, and I just do my part. Thank you again, and I just received my next lessons. Also, thank you so much for the birthday card. It's been so long since anybody sent me a card, I was really surprised and excited to get it. Love, Sokorn Check"

Marcus McJimpson, Lancaster State Prison, CA - "Thank you for your support letter, and keep me in your prayers that all works out. I've been training service dogs here in prison, and I was able to place my first service dog with a veteran with PTSD last week, and it gave me a really good feeling to be able to do something good for someone. I try to live my life now doing things that help others. Well, thank you again and God bless. Sincerely, Marcus"

David Singerman, Calipatria State Prison, Calipatria, CA - "I went to the Parole Board a few months back, and I also needed a new psychological evaluation. I must say, Tom and Dottie, the two of you have earned quite the exceptional reputation with, not only the Parole Board, but with the psychological evaluations as well. The Lord's hand is upon you and the works you guys do, and it is evident. I do have plans of donating my time and financial assistance to your ministry when I get released. I was born and raised out there on the Westside, specifically in Culver City. Thank you for all the love and effort you guys provide for us behind these walls. With sincere respect, David."

Benigno G. Espinoza, CTF/Soledad State Prison, Soledad, CA - "I am very grateful to God and to you for taking your time in helping me with Bible studies, the 12-Step program, and the "Serenity" Bible. You are willing to go out of your way to help others. I've been reading the Bible more than ever this last year and a half. I'm still learning how to read and understand the Bible, so please pray for me to read and learn and apply it to my life every day. May God bless you, Sincerely, Benny"

Royce Casey, Valley State Prison, Chowchilla, Ca - "Thank you so much for your letter and Bible study. These words are always encouraging. I truly appreciate the ministry you bring to us, we who sometimes feel like society has forgotten us. The same goes for those on the beach who are homeless. Hundreds of people probably walk by them every day, but you guys go to them, bless them, and bring them Jesus' love. You are a real blessing to so many! Love always, Royce"

Neco Patterson, Calif. Institution for Men, Chino, CA - "Thank you for all your support, and the wonderful things you do for the people that are behind these walls. So thank you for reminding me that I'm still a person. If it's not a problem, I wish to continue to do the Love Lifted Me Recovery 12-Step program again. Your recovery program is one of the best I have done, and the support you have given me is outstanding. God bless you both, Neco Patterson"

Darryl Santiago, Mule Creek State Prison, Ione, CA - "Thank you so much for letting me take your 12-Step program. I also received the small Bible you sent. Yes, this does get a person to really search himself inside and out. It has made me look at things a little different, and not get so angry. I'm in a program here that deals with anger, depression and things along those lines, to help me deal with things and deal with difficult situations. Thank you. In Christ, Darryl"

Linda Rivera, released from prison several years ago, and still doing our Bible studies - "Thank you so very much for reaching out with the Bible studies to my grandson Joel, who is in Ventura County Jail. It's been a joy and enlightenment to study the Bible and learn all the riches of God's wisdom. Thank You, Jesus, for my salvation and strength! Thank You, Jesus, for helping me to overcome by faith! My

grandson is a long way from being who we all want him to be, and only God can do the transformation and circumcision of his heart. God bless you, Linda”