



SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

WISHING YOU WARMTH AND JOY IN THIS NEW SPRING SEASON

A Note From The Chaplain:

Most of us spend our days with people who share our world view. We pretty much think the same way. We have a "high" view of the Bible and have spent years or decades trying to apply it to our lives. We vote the same, care about the same issues, and doubt our world view will change much after one Wednesday night Bible study. In short, we feel safe in our circle of influence. This is not a bad thing - we have not all "arrived." We meet and pray and wrestle with the Scriptures because we know we all fall short and need the sweet fellowship that we share. It is more a fellowship of helping each other APPLY the Bible to a given situation or stage of life. What a comfort it is to have friends that have weathered the storms of life and held on to their faith!

But we have other friends that are not like us. They are friends that look in the table of contents to find the Book of Matthew. They can't imagine wanting a driver's license or car insurance. They can be our dear brothers and sisters, but they are not like our "other" brothers and sisters. Instead of singing "We Rest on Thee," we sing "The Books of the Bible." A local Pastor put it this way, "If you are serious about birthing spiritual children, you better be willing to change some spiritual diapers." This can seem a nuisance, but it can also bring great joy! What fun it is to have

a new believer ask a question about the Bible instead of saying something like, "I am going to stay clean this time. I am only going to smoke pot." Phrases like this drive me crazy, but I once had an elder that gathered us young people together to give us a class on how to answer or make a phone call. He was tired of us calling and not identifying ourselves. He took the time to teach a bunch of hooligan teenagers how to talk on the telephone!

Our generation is not the first to struggle with the balancing act of staying where we feel safe and the art of "going out." It must have been hard for the Jewish leaders in Judea, as they had to experience a total transformation of their ministries. No longer were "outsiders," like Ruth, forced to come to Judea to find "refuge under the wings of the God of Israel." The disciples would "go out," not simply call people in. Paul would die in Rome. Matthew was reputed to have died in Ethiopia, Andrew in Greece, Mark in Egypt. Jude was reputed to have been crucified in Mesopotamia, Thomas martyred in India, Luke also may have died in Greece. The bottom line is this: "They Went." The geography of the Holy Land was perfect for "going." The words on the cross screamed, "GO!" in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. He was not just the God of the Hebrews, but of the whole World!

Having wrapped up our most recent Jail Ministry Banquet, I am

always thankful for those of you who support us in our mission to the lost, and to those who do not always look or act exactly like we do. A friend of mine said, "I love going to that banquet because I get to see all of my old friends that go to so many different churches." We are all so thankful that we have friends that see some value in what we do. We do not travel far, but in our own little way, we hope we "go into all the world and preach the gospel . . ." We also hope that you know that we value you as our partners in this work! We could not "Go" without you.

- Chaplain Tom



SUPPORT & DONATIONS

If you are interested in supporting The Mesa County Jail Ministry financially and/or through prayer; scan the QR code below or contact us at: 970.244.3351
[Mesacountyjailministry.org](https://mesacountyjailministry.org)

2536 Rimrock Ave Suite 400-171
GJ CO 81505



HOW CAN I GET A STUDY BIBLE?

"How can I get a Study Bible?" About 50+ Bibles are distributed each month at the Mesa County Detention Facility. As inmates read and study God's Word, those inspired to learn more about the message of redemption and restoration in the Bible ask if they can get a Study Bible. Typically, someone will find a Study Bible on their bookshelf at home and donate it to the Chaplain for distribution. There is one person in Aspen, Colorado who periodically provides us 10 or so Study Bibles. With demand typically exceeding supply, Chaplain Tom came up with the idea of having an inmate memorize Psalm 1 to earn a Study Bible.

Memorizing Scripture is not the habit of most inmates. They are taught the value of hiding God's Word in their heart, and about the power of God's Word that is active, alive, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of a person's heart.

When an inmate has memorized Psalm 1, they notify the Chaplain via an electronic message known as a "kite". For many, Psalm 1 is the first Scripture they have memorized. Usually, they are a bit nervous as they begin to recite the Psalm. At times, some coaching is needed. We are not looking for perfection, we look for the inmate's effort and intention of their heart.

So, if you have a Study Bible you are not using and no longer need, consider blessing an inmate with it who is seeking to reroute their life from "the counsel of the wicked."

Psalm 1

1 Blessed is the person who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

2 But his delight is in the Law of the LORD,
And on His Law he meditates day and night.

3 He will be like a tree planted by streams of water,

Which yields its fruit in its season,
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so,
But they are like chaff which the wind blows away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked will perish.

-Paul vG

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Thanks to Our Church & Business Sponsors:

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- The Message Store

A MINISTRY WITHIN THE MINISTRY

Ministering at the Mesa County Detention Facility (MCDF) has many facets. However, the primary goal of the Ministry is to bring glory to God by teaching the Gospel to all comers, and encouraging believers in their faith. Every day, the Chaplain and 20+ volunteers lead Bible studies and Church services. Through their efforts, Bibles and books are distributed, inmates are engaged in the hallways, in one-on-one visits, and relationships are built.

Many of these relationships continue when a person is sentenced to the Department of Corrections, Community Corrections, or is released back into the community. There are many testimonies of those who are booked into jail and develop a saving faith in Jesus. Then there are those who have fallen away, being restored to fellowship with God. Watching inmates grow in their faith is a privilege. To see the Holy Spirit working in a person and to see their demeanor and decision making mature is a wonder and great encouragement.

Every year, more than 6,000 people are booked into the MCDF. The daily population averages between 400 and 450 inmates. Our best efforts cannot reach every person. However, the fruit resulting from the efforts of Chaplain Tom and the volunteers is used by God. One aspect of the culture of the inmates is the care they show for each other. Most of them realize that, like themselves, others are experiencing difficulties like facing prison for the first time, family separation, job and material loss, and broken relationships. Inmates usually have at least one bunk mate. Living in close quarters locked down for hours, inmates can develop significant relationships. That is where the ministry within the ministry occurs.

Inmates who come to or return to faith share that reality with others. During Bible studies and one-on-one sessions, many inmates want to discuss how best to share their faith with others. By their witness and the power of the Holy Spirit, these inmates lead others to faith in Christ. Their conviction to share how Jesus has blessed their lives carries over into them starting prayer circles and leading Bible studies. I like to tell inmates that a good way to learn the Bible is to teach it. When these inmates are in a pod (housing unit of 50 or more inmates), attendance at Bible studies and Church services increases.

The next time you cross the viaduct on West Grand Avenue, look south and you will see the MCDF. Please offer a prayer for the inmates, deputies, staff, Chaplain Tom, and the volunteers. While you are praying, please remember those inmates who are ministering within the ministry.

-Paul vGt that!

YOUR SUPPORT HELPED US TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING MINISTRY

OCTOBER 2025:

- Religious Classes: 150
(With 930 attendees)
- One-on-Ones: 68
- Bibles Distributed: 62

NOVEMBER 2024:

- Religious Classes: 149
(With 1,030 attendees)
- One-on-Ones: 45
- Bibles Distributed: 49

DECEMBER 2024:

- Religious Classes: 163
(With 1,148 attendees)
- One-on-Ones: 34
- Bibles Distributed: 52

JANUARY 2025:

- Religious Classes: 165
(With 1,078 attendees)
- One-on-Ones: 51
- Bibles Distributed: 51

FEBRUARY 2025:

- Religious Classes: 137
(With 980 attendees)
- One-on-Ones: 57
- Bibles Distributed: 56





RECAP

We are very thankful and humbled by the support we received at this year's Banquet. We, as a group of about 20 volunteers, are very humbled by God's blessing of our efforts over the years. As we always attempt to express, "This is God's ministry, and it will rise or fall at His good pleasure." Years before Mesa County Jail Ministry was an entity, God's people ministered at the jail. One friend expressed how they walked through the classrooms while they were being built, and prayed God's blessing on the work here. Again, I walk in the shadow of several former chaplains that still pray for this ministry. I use systems they put in place, and furniture they procured.

The banquet itself is a sign of God's good hand. Our speakers were all humble followers of God, and continue to be. I still see the "Local Guys," every week, and they encourage and admonish me as much as I do them. Other ministries beyond my sphere of direct influence are discipling people who have left the jail. Celebrate Recovery, Reformers Unanimous, Warriors at Heart, and a myriad of other churches and Bible studies are quietly serving the Kingdom of God.

I am very encouraged by the number of COMCOR folks that help us clean up after the banquet. The COMCOR guys have stepped up and been cheerful servants in this regard. Bill Moore and Joe Hemmer make sure they get there, and Tom Verdick from First Presbyterian guides them, but to me it is a load off my mind!
Thank you!

And, as always, thank you to Pastor Tom Hansen, Debe Colby, Gene King, and Tom Verdick, for so graciously letting us use First Presbyterian Church. What a blessing that is to us!

Thank you to all the businesses and individuals that donated items to our silent auction, it was a great success and your contribution was so appreciated.

Thank you also to the Sheriff's Office for supporting our banquet. Thanks especially for keeping us and our children safe. You are God's servants restraining evil, and we pray we will never forget that!



INMATE EXPRESSIONS

Broken Crayons

Broken crayons still color.

The sun still shines through the clouds,

Weeds can bloom into a flower.

Clay can be molded into a masterpiece.

Don't let your brokenness fade into guilt and shame,
Let it build your story because your story isn't over.~AK

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"My Mission - My Purpose"

My mission is to successfully fulfill my purpose here on  
this earth.

You know the one that was designed for me, the day of  
my birth.

From the very beginning God has had His hand placed  
upon me.  
But the sins of this wicked world had me, too blind to see.

As I made my way through life, I thought that I knew the  
best route.  
But all along it was the enemy, plotting and scheming to  
take me out.

As I hit rock bottom, I cried out to the Lord from inside a  
jail cell.  
To please come into my heart and save me from this hell.

"God, please if you're real come into my life and show me  
a sign."

"That you would want to save a soul that's as wretched  
as mine."

All the darkness I was surrounded by slowly starts to fade  
away.  
And this soul that was once lost, begins to now, find his  
way.

Guided by the light, the Lord has shined down on me  
from above.  
He has now filled my heart with His compassion and His  
love.

So if you're reading this poem, please don't seal your fate.  
Make your mission - your purpose, before it's too late.

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Angels Here on Earth

If you look with your heart, then maybe you will see
That God puts people in our lives so strategically.
These people that cross our paths, it's no accident.
They are "Angels" here on Earth, that he has truly sent.
He places them in our path, it's all part of His plan.
To guide us towards his light, in any way they can.
It could be a friendly gesture, or a tidbit of advice.
Or maybe just to listen to a story once or twice.

These "Angels" in our lives, they're all meant to be.
I can't speak for you, but I know what he's done for me.
The "Angels" I've encountered, trust me there's a few.

Have helped me see the light that I never knew.
With encouragement and support just by being there.
And simple acts of kindness, showing that they care.
The results of their actions, how do I even measure.
But each and every one of them, I will always treasure.
This poem is my message, take it for what it's worth.
Let's all help each other as "Angels" here on Earth. ~~