



the connection

WINTER 2025



DONUT DAYS 2024

*Inside:
Staff Directory*

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DONUT DAYS 2024

By Kevin Kennell



It is still dark as we make our way down quiet roads in the early morning hours. Anticipation builds as we turn down the last little tree-lined driveway. No, we are not heading into a hunting escapade in the pre-dawn morning; rather, we are preparing for another round of the We Care Donut Days!!

There is always excitement in the prison camp when the Strite's Donuts wagon pulls up at the back gate! The first year we partnered with Strite's to serve fresh donuts to Alabama inmates and staff was in 2015 at Bibb Correctional. Since then, we have served about five institutions each year, and the news has spread. Most of the inmates have either enjoyed a fresh Strite's donut themselves, or they have heard of them from fellow inmates. Because of this reputation, there is much anticipation in the prison when we roll up with the trailer and begin the process.

This year we set up in southern Alabama and served donuts at Holman, Fountain, Fountain Annex, and Century, Florida. As usual, the inmates were thrilled with the two large donuts they were given, and the staff were very pleased to be included as well. The crew that Carl and Miriam Strite assembled to bring with them this year was once again an excellent bunch of volunteers. Not only did they do a great job making the donuts, but they also did very well interacting with the incarcerated men at the chapel services, one of which was outside the fence for death row inmates. Winston Pearson, who joined us from Indiana as our speaker, challenged the men with the Word and brought smiles through his puppet. This year was the first time we

served a Florida prison, and it was a huge success! The staff at Century CI were very accommodating, as they learned about Strite's Donuts.

Sharing the love of Jesus through the gift of donuts gives us the opportunity to be the hands of Jesus in a very tangible way. One of the things that We Care Program strives to do is create ways to get people involved in prison ministry. The Donut Days outreach is just another way for that to happen. If you don't see yourself as a softball player, a chaplain, or a ReNew Hope volunteer, maybe you would like to help in this way to put smiles on the faces of some otherwise pretty forgotten individuals. Maybe they don't all deserve the gift of a donut that day, but it is a demonstration of the love of Jesus, and none of us deserve that. The book of Ephesians makes it clear that the gift of redemption is not earned, but simply accepted by faith!

I extend a big thank you to each person who helps make this event possible: the volunteers, the prison staff, the sponsors and supporters, and most of all...the Strites! This year we were able to give two donuts each to about 3,000 inmates, plus staff. I don't know what all goes through the mind of these individuals as they enjoy those donuts, but maybe...just maybe there is a thought of the goodness of God!!



A Milestone Graduation

By Don Metzler

On December 9, We Care celebrated with 35 residents who completed the full Pathway to Freedom curriculum at Bibb Correctional Facility. These were some of the men who helped get Pathway to Freedom started at Bibb and now are the first graduates at that location. The celebration included a program, delicious food, and the presentation of a certificate of completion and a study Bible to each graduate. Congratulatory remarks were given by We Care President Don Metzler and Vice President Kevin Kennell,

several Department of Corrections officials, and two Pathway to Freedom teachers. We Care Chaplain Frank Gossett delivered the main address. Chaplain Gossett challenged the men to follow God's vision for their lives as they move on from this program.

As these graduates leave, 35 new participants will be coming into the program to join the other 45 men who have already taken one, two, or three quarters of classes. Please pray that these men, graduates and current students alike, will cooperate with God's continuing work in their lives and that He will use the lessons being taught to help them walk in freedom!

MAP ABBREVIATIONS:

CBF - Community-Based Facility CI - Correctional Institution
CF - Correctional Facility WF - Women's Facility

WE CARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Dale Brubaker, Marcus Freed, Richard Graber, David R. Landis, Daniel Martin,
Dean Miller, Derric Miller, Durell Orendorf, Ed Ranck, Sherwin Wenger, Brent Yoder



2025 Staff Directory

OHIO

● Madison CI
● London CI



Marcus Freed
Associate
London CI (OH)



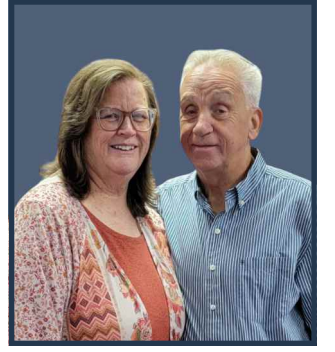
Ralph Smith
Associate
Madison CI (OH)



Steve (& Cathy) Webb
Associate
Bibb CF



Tim & Marian Stutzman
Associate
Bibb CF



Frank & Kathryn Gossett
Chaplain
County Jails



Sheila & Blaine Copenhaver
Eli, Wil, Noah, Truman
Graphic Designer



John & Shirley Kurtz
Webmaster



Fawn Jacobs
Chaplain
Birmingham CBF



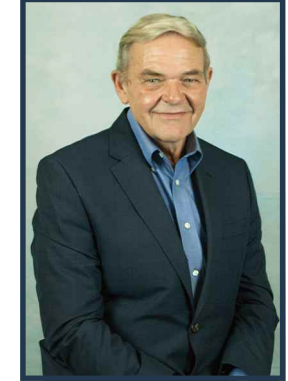
JJ & Paula Stanbridge
Associate
Bibb CF



David & Veola Bucher
Chaplain
Cheney, Ethan, Sean, Benjamin, Edward
Bibb CF



Steve & Trana Stoltzfus
Ja'meire, Roseana
Chaplain
Bibb CF, Staton CF



Allen Screws
Associate
Montgomery Area



Wendy (& Rex) Seabrook
Associate
Montgomery WF



Sid & Susan Chapman
Associate
Camden CBF



Dorsey & Karen McDonald
Associate
Monroe Co. Jail



Carl & Davonna Carpenter
Chaplain
Frank Lee CBF

★ BIRMINGHAM
● Birmingham CBF

● Bibb CF

● Frank Lee CBF

● Staton CF

ALABAMA

★ MONTGOMERY

● Montgomery WF



FLOMATON RECYCLING & SORTING CENTER



FLOMATON THRIFT STORE



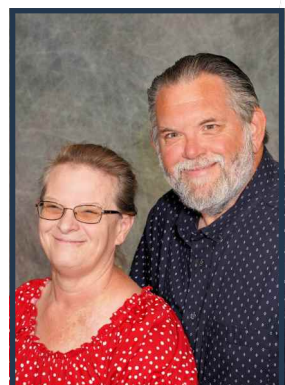
MONROEVILLE THRIFT STORE



ATMORE THRIFT STORE



Noreen Horst
Administrative Assistant
Office

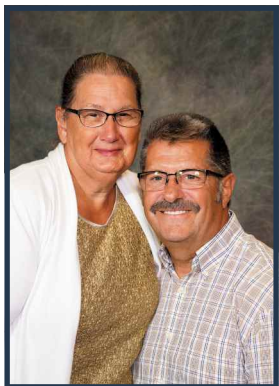


Tracy & Kristi Benner
Chaplain
Fountain Annex



Ben & Terzah Nolt
Sabina, Olive, Vienna
Thrift Store Asst. / Chaplain
Office / Fountain CF

● Camden CBF



Steve & Sara Petersheim
Hosts
Headquarters



Savilla McGhee
Bookkeeper
Office



Don & Phyllis Metzler
President
Office

● Monroe Co. Jail
★ MONROEVILLE

● Holman CF
● Fountain CF
● Fountain Annex

● Headquarters

★ ATMORE ★ FLOMATON

● Century CI



Nathan & Deborah Kennel
Alexander, Maria
Overseer of Store Building Project



Justin & Heather Halteman
Thrift Store Director



Kevin & Renee Kennel
Sophie, Autumn, Kylie, Tyson, Jenna, Asher
Vice President / Chaplain
Office / Fountain Annex

● Mobile Metro Jail

FLORIDA

● Walton CI

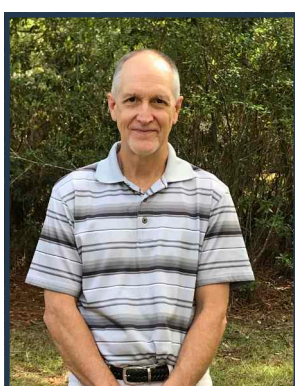
● Santa Rosa CI



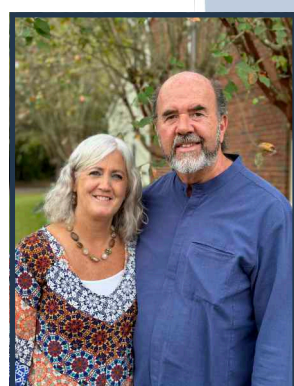
David & Mary Landis
Joshua, Benjamin, Lizzy, Matthew
Chaplaincy Director / Chaplain
Office / Santa Rosa CI (FL)



James & Charmaine Smoker
Dexter, Isaiah, Ava, Jacob, Garrett, Tiersha, Gideon
Recruitment Director / Chaplain
Office / Fountain CF, Holman CF



Tommy Williams
Chaplain
Mobile Metro Jail



Irvin & Kathy Martin
Chaplain
Century CI (FL)



Mike & Patty Strehlow
Chaplain/Teacher
Century CI (FL)



Tannier Rogers
Chaplain
Santa Rosa CI (FL)



Jerry & Judi Stahly
Associate
Century CI (FL)



Daniel Earley
Chaplain
Santa Rosa CI, Walton CI (FL)



Scott (& Aldine) Blunier
Associate
Santa Rosa CI (FL)



Charlie & Liz Sytsma
Associate
Century CI (FL)



Eddie & Velecia Miller
Chaplain
Santa Rosa CI, Century CI (FL)

SPRING TOUR 2025



Special Music by **Amos Raber** **ByGrace Ministry**

Sat	Mar. 15	Atmore, AL
Sun	Mar. 16	Meigs, GA
Mon	Mar. 17	New Holland, SC
Tues	Mar. 18	Prospect, VA
Wed	Mar. 19	Harrisonburg, VA
Thurs	Mar. 20	Franconia, PA
Fri	Mar. 21	New Holland, PA
Sun	Mar. 23	Newburg, PA
Mon	Mar. 24	Walnut Creek, OH
Tues	Mar. 25	Plain City, OH
Wed	Mar. 26	Shipshewana, IN
Thurs	Mar. 27	Arthur, IL
Fri	Mar. 28	Montgomery, IN

Testimony *by Omar Redmon*



Updates *from We Care Leadership*

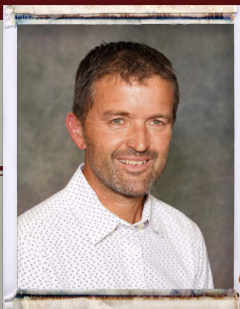
NEWS

GRAPHIC DESIGNER TRANSITION

After nearly 12 years serving as We Care's Graphic Designer, Amy Martin has moved on to other pursuits. It was a pleasure working with Amy, and we thank her for a job well done! In God's perfect timing, Sheila Copenhaver was again available and open to taking on the role. Sheila was our Graphic Designer for several years just prior to Amy and had left the position for family responsibilities. Welcome back, Sheila! It's good to have you on board again.

HOMEGOING

Mrs. Anna Weber, wife of We Care founder Martin Weber, passed away peacefully on November 17, 2024, at the age of 100. Mrs. Anna was loved by all who knew her. Though we, as a We Care family, will miss her smile, prayers, and encouragement, we also rejoice that she is now home with Jesus.



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

James Smoker, Recruitment Director

As we strive to "Proclaim Christ and Disciple Inmates," I often think of John 1:5 which says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (ESV) That gives us hope as we find ourselves being "light bearers" in some very dark places. In our own strength, the darkness is impenetrable, but thank God that His Light can reach into even the darkest situation.

Chaplaincy is a much-needed role inside prisons. As I stand in the hallway at Fountain Correctional, passing out literature and making myself available, hundreds of men pass by heading to the chow hall. Although many stop to talk and pick out some literature, most walk on by looking very downcast. Some have other things on their mind. They may be trying to figure out how to get their next "fix." Others may be feeling hopeless or desperate. Some are just trying to make sense of life. At times the need looks

overwhelming to me, especially when I think about this being only one of many facilities. What would it look like if we could meet more of these men and women, listen to their stories, and share the light of the Gospel?

We are excited about the prospect of additional workers joining the efforts. Recently a couple of individuals began the process of applying to serve as chaplains with We Care Program. God is good, and we continue to trust Him to call men and women to serve in this capacity. The need is great, and doors are open.

If you are interested in finding out how to become involved in prison chaplaincy with We Care, please contact our office. We would be happy to answer your questions and explore the possibilities with you. Opportunities exist in prisons in both Alabama and Florida, and more people are needed to be "Light Bearers and Messengers of Love" in the darkness. Will you be one of them?



WHAT WILL GOD DO THIS YEAR?

A MESSAGE FROM DON METZLER, PRESIDENT

don@wecareprogram.org

2025...what will this new year hold? Will it be the year that our new Thrift Store finally gets built? How many new chaplains will come on board to serve with We Care? Will you be one of them? How many men will graduate from the Pathway to Freedom program at Bibb C.F.? Will our Read-a-thon, Softball Outreach, ReNew Hope, and other events grow or shrink in size? How many lives that we touch, both inside and outside prison, will be impacted for eternity? Is this the year our Lord will return?

Each time we enter a new year, the possibilities ahead are endless. Some things are beyond our control,

and yet at the same time, the daily choices we make have a huge impact on what happens in our lives. I'm excited about what God is doing through We Care, and I'm looking forward to seeing what the coming year brings. I invite you to join me in looking for God's work in your life, church, and community, and then join Him in what He is doing.

If you're not sure where God is at work around you, we welcome you to contact us here at We Care to let us help you explore how God might use you in prison ministry. May we all be found faithful when our time on this earth is complete, and until then may we make

wise daily choices that help to build God's kingdom in this new year.

“
Each time we enter a new year, the possibilities ahead are endless.
”

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Email: wecare@wecareprogram.org

