

Not a Hand Out . . .  
But a Hand Up

Bibles Given Out.....	300
Toiletries Given Out.....	500
Baptisms .....	54
Confessions of faith.....	70



Jail Chaplaincy Ministry  
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Calhoun County Jail Chaplaincy Ministry is a ministry of CROSS.

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# CROSS

Calhoun County Jail Chaplaincy Ministry Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1



*changing lives—one at a time*



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Above: Inmates being baptized

## Words from the Sheriff

For many years local believers in Christ have ministered to inmates in the Calhoun County Jail. When I came to work with the Sheriff's Office in 1975, there was already evidence of an established ministry with Christians acting on the Great Commission. Remember Paul during his imprisonment for his belief in Christ? You can be certain Paul ministered to his fellow inmates. Even on the Cross Jesus promised grace to a convicted criminal.

Today, many people are not incarcerated because they planned to start a life of robbery, forgery, or other crimes but for risking everything to experiment with drugs. They made a choice to break the law by choosing to use prescription drugs illegally or to use illegal drugs such as meth or crack. These people deserve the punishment that our legal system is delivering. As Sheriff I have no sympathy for their choice to break the laws of our state and country, and we at the Sheriff's Office will continue to pursue and arrest those that break the law.

We all realize in today's society bad choices are promoted on television, in movies, and in music. The entertainment world portrays bad people as heroes and as those who we should emulate. At the same time school teachers, parents, church leaders, and others who make up the foundation of our society are ridiculed. Those that follow the straight and narrow path are ignored. What can be done for the people who do not follow the straight and narrow path that end up in jail?

I believe that the true problem is simple: When they arrive in the County Jail, the people have a void. They have tried to fill the empty place in their hearts with alcohol or drugs. Today's jails and prisons are full beyond capacity; approximately 98% of the people in jail and prison right now will go back into society. We who work in the system see people making these same choices over and over that lead to both jail and, ultimately, hell. While the people are in the jail and are out of the drug-induced state, we have the opportunity to change their lives.

What can Christians in Calhoun County do? Chaplain Richard Green and volunteers are guiding the continual effort of ministering to the inmates. Through CROSS Ministries local believers in Christ and churches can support this ministry by either donating funds or volunteering. We have the chance to guide the inmates along the road of salvation to our Savior Jesus Christ. You *can* make a difference—one life at a time.

Below: Sheriff Larry Amerson with volunteers, Louise Morris and Nellie Sanders



Chaplain, Richard Green

## Chaplain's Corner

On any given day the Calhoun County Jail houses an average of 450 inmates. Many are experiencing life behind bars for the first time, while others are a part of the 67% residual rate often referred to as "the revolving door."

Drug use and the perils that surround it (such as robbery and theft) account for as much as 90% of the population in jail. Sociologists inform us that the mind-altering effects, coupled with often a history of childhood hurt from torn and disrupted lives, have become a common underlying nationwide factor.

Unfortunately, the Calhoun County community is not immune. All too often the legal system serves as our front line of defense, and limited funding for law enforcement is no help. Yet, the time for all good citizens and Christians to step forward and seize an active role in taking back our communities is long overdue.

Good news: Calhoun County has numerous Christian law enforcement professionals who call on our Lord for strength daily. One such man is Sheriff Larry Amerson who, without hesitation, allowed **CROSS** (Christian Resources and Outreach ServiceS) Ministries—a small

group of participating churches from every corner of Calhoun County—to place a full-time chaplain in the jail. This historical event allows inmates to hear and be taught the Word of God that results in lives being changed and families reunited—to God be the glory!

At the time of this publication only a "handful" of churches are financially supporting the needs of the Chaplaincy Ministry. Several hardworking individuals who have been led to send support are also supporting this ministry. One such brother shared, "Had I not received Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior while in prison, I know I would not be alive today." This brother supports our mission because of his experience, and he wants today's inmates and families to have the same chance he had to hear the Word, surrender to our Lord, and be born again! Today, he is a successful businessman and has been blessed with a wonderful family. Praise God!

As I conclude, God is building this ministry by calling on His people and the churches to financially keep this program alive. Funding is needed, and some churches and individuals are choosing to participate. It is my prayer that you will seek our Lord's guidance and follow His will.



Chaplain Green and volunteer praying with a County Jail inmate

*"Follow Me . . . and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19 NIV)*

## Advisory Council and Staff

The Calhoun County Jail Chaplaincy Ministry serves as an entity under **CROSS** (Christian Resource and Outreach ServiceS), which is a nonprofit organization. Below are the members of the Advisory Council:

- Sheriff Larry Amerson
- Ms. Anne Bradshaw
- Rev. Jim Burke

- Sgt. Jon Garlick
- Rev. C. O. Grinstead
- Rev. Bob McLeod
- Mr. Jake Matthew
- Mr. Eric Starr
- CROSS officer

Rev. Richard Green is the on-staff chaplain.