

## GLAD TIDINGS

### A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT'

by Rev. David Morton

These verses speak loudly to me as I contemplate our role as Yokefellows. Please take a few minutes to read these scriptures and ask the Holy Spirit to interpret the meaning for you. The first is **Proverbs 19:21** – “Many are the plans of a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.” The second is **Romans 8:28** – “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.” The third is **Philippians 2:1-2** – “If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.” The Yokefellow movement, a movement in which you are involved, is an organization that is made of people who do everything to please God.

Yokefellows are a people who enjoy a very special quality of fellowship. I describe it as a sweet, sweet spirit. Yokefellow is a grace-driven organization. We attract sinful people. I say this because the people of our world hunger for grace. Sinful human beings are drawn to grace like a bee is to honey. We see this in the way people responded to Jesus during His earthly ministry. We see this in the way people are drawn to you. What will make our organization, the movement called Yokefellow, great? God’s grace will! Remember Proverbs 19 – “many are the plans of a man’s heart, but it is the **Lord’s purpose** that prevails.” I pray that God will continue to bless each of us as we strive to be His faithful servants. I extend my best to you in this wonderful season.

### PLEASE STAY TUNED...

In the autumn months of 2016, we are going to provide multiple Yokefellow volunteer and coordinator training sessions for you. While the details of these are still being determined, there will likely be 3 sessions – 1 in the Mountain Region, 1 in the Central/Triangle Region, and 1 in the Coastal Region. This should enable more people to attend because the travel distance will be reduced. These sessions will be facilitated by our Yokefellow Board Members. It will be a time to listen to one another and discover how Yokefellow is doing across each region. It will be a time to learn from one another, as we seek to uphold Yokefellow’s mission and ministry. It will be a time of instruction, dialogue, and fellowship. You will get to meet with other Yokefellow volunteers from your region. Refreshments will be provided. Please plan to attend one of these very important sessions! More information will be provided in the Summer Newsletter, so stay tuned...

## A Note to Our Yokefellow Coordinators and Volunteers...

In the event that a challenge or crisis situation occurs within your Yokefellow group (whether it concerns a volunteer, coordinator, or something that has happened), please take the following steps:

- 1) **Notify the Prison Chaplain and then notify the Executive Director (336-724-9801) as soon as possible!!!!**
- 2) In consultation with the Executive Director and/or President of the Board, decisions will be made about how to resolve the challenge or crisis. If it is necessary for the chaplain and/or prison administration to become involved, they will be a part of the process as well. There may be situations that arise which will necessitate the involvement of the Executive Committee of the Board and/or the entire Board of Directors.
- 3) It is very important that all rules, guidelines, and protocol of the NC Department of Public Safety/Department of Corrections are followed, as well as the rules, guidelines, and protocol of Yokefellow Prison Ministry of NC. Please always remember that we are guests in the prisons.
- 4) Yokefellow Prison Ministry of NC is a **community** of volunteers across the state that provides compassion and a listening ministry for the residents of our state's correctional facilities. The Yokefellow volunteer groups **are not islands** unto themselves that operate separately from the administration and board. It is **vital** that each volunteer group maintain direct contact and communication with the Executive Director, particularly when there are challenges that need to be addressed. The Executive Director and Board of Directors must know how things are going in each Yokefellow group, so that we can function more effectively as a **whole community**.

### *News and Notes...*

Two training sessions have taken place this winter and spring for our Yokefellow volunteers – one February 6<sup>th</sup> at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Eastern Region North Yokefellow Prison Ministry meeting and one on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Craggy Minimum Custody Unit in Asheville. *There will also be a training session taking place on Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10:00am-12:00pm at Cary Church of God, located at 107 Quade Drive in Cary.* If you are a coordinator whose volunteer group has never had a training session or could benefit from a refresher training session (especially if you have new volunteers), please call the office at 336-724-9801.

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Thanks to the generous support and assistance of the Bob Barker Foundation, Yokefellow is going to begin planning and recording a video, highlighting the mission and work of our ministry. This will be a major project during the summer months and we hope to have it available for viewing on the website by late summer or early autumn. We will plan to show the video at the autumn training sessions!

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We are in the process of finalizing an online Yokefellow volunteer training program that will be accessed from our website. We hope this will help those volunteers (both new and current) who utilize technology and may not have the time or resources to travel to a training session. Please stay tuned for further information and how you can access this method of Yokefellow training. If you have never visited our website, please do, so that you can become familiar with it –

[www.yokefellowprisonministry.org](http://www.yokefellowprisonministry.org).

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