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Yokefellow Prison Ministry of N.C., Inc. announced today that its Virtual Aftercare program has been prepared to provide online group mentoring for the additional 3,500 inmates who will be released from state custody over the next six months as part of a settlement agreement.

As more inmates are released into a community operating under pandemic conditions, Yokefellow Prison Ministry uses Zoom technology to assist inmates in developing new disciplines for personal responsibility and contribution to family and community as they return from incarceration.

“We can offer hope to those who are feeling restless or gloomy. We can offer encouragement to those feeling isolated or uncertain about tomorrow,” said YPM President David Morton. “We can provide support to those who feel disenfranchised, misunderstood, and beaten down.”

Yokefellow Prison Ministry’s Virtual Aftercare group mentoring program is provided weekly on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at 7 p.m. using Zoom. Participants can choose whichever night is more convenient for them.

Meetings are accessible from any computer or smart phone using video or audio, or from any telephone using audio only. Anyone who could benefit from group mentoring support to help them transition from prison back into society is welcome to attend.

Interested persons can register to join the meetings by calling 336-724-9801. There is no charge to participate.

Yokefellow Prison Ministry, based in Greensboro, has served inmates across the state of North Carolina for more than 50 years. Yokefellow is an interdenominational, racially diverse Christian ministry of reconciliation founded on the idea that people’s lives are changed through committed relationships.

The ministry is conducted by trained volunteers who are not focused on worship, preaching, teaching, counseling, or Bible study, but provide a ministry of listening, sharing, caring, encouragement, and support for those who are or have been in prison, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Before the pandemic closed prisons to all volunteer activity, more than 230 volunteers conducted regular Yokefellow Prison Ministry meetings in 2/3 of the state’s prisons. Yokefellow plans to resume those meetings once the prisons are reopened to volunteers.

Yokefellow has also developed in-person aftercare programs for returned citizens in partnership with interested local churches and is making its group mentoring support available to Local Reentry Councils across the state.

For more information on Yokefellow Prison Ministry, visit its website at yokefellowprisonministry.org or email yokefellowprisonministrync@gmail.com.

“Life inside and after prison can be difficult and challenging,” said YPM’s executive director Vita Alligood. “Yokefellow Prison Ministry is there to listen and care for those who want and need to be heard.”

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