



Christian Science Institutional Committee for New York State

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OUR MISSION

For over seventy-five years, those who have participated in Christian Science Institutional work have been following these words of Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, "The Christian Scientist has enlisted to lessen evil, disease, and death; and he will overcome them by understanding their nothingness and the allness of God, or good." (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 450:19–22)

Our work has embraced individuals in nursing homes, mental hospitals, youth facilities, veterans hospitals, and prisons. In the past twenty years, it has been primarily in prisons, providing Bible study, one-on-one visits, and written correspondence.

Mrs. Eddy tells us, "... the *mission* of Christian Science, now as in the time of its earlier demonstration is not primarily one of physical healing. Now, as then, signs and wonders are wrought in the metaphysical healing of physical disease; but these signs are only to demonstrate its divine origin, —to attest the reality of the higher mission of the Christ-power to take away the sins of the world." (*S & H*, p. 150:10, emphasis added)

PLEASE PRAY WITH US...

In the months following our Winter 2022 Newsletter, many problems have arisen in the correctional facilities located in the Central New York area. There have been attacks by inmates against the guards and other inmates. Much of this has been attributed to gang violence due to the transfers of many gang members from other facilities.

According to news reports in the Central New York State area, this activity has increased dramatically over the past few months. Some inmates are committing violent offenses in order to be placed in solitary confinement, where they feel they will be safe.



Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

John 4:35

A worker reports receiving phone calls and emails from frightened inmates asking for prayers for their safety. An inmate in the Mid-Hudson Zone, asked the worker not to visit him at this time, as he felt the conditions at the prison are unsafe, even for a visitor. In response, our worker assured the callers that God is ever present and omnipotent Love, and also stressed the importance of including everyone within the prison system in their prayers. Citations from the Bible and Mary Baker Eddy's writings were found to be very helpful, especially Proverbs 29:25: "...whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." We found 33 Bible verses reminding us to fear not.

News and Inspiration from the Suffolk Zone

THE JOY OF SERVING

Thanks to the willingness of devoted workers in the Suffolk Zone on Long Island, services have continued despite restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. This is the only Zone where the Committee has been able to continue in-person services. The Chairman of the Suffolk Zone is very grateful that the dedicated committee members there have remained active during the past year.

This is her report:

We were able to maintain a consistent presence at Riverhead, but were unable to serve at Yaphank for several months. We have recently been able to return to Yaphank and are very grateful to be back.

As Chairperson of the Suffolk Zone of the Christian Science Institutional Committee for New York State, I want to share our thoughts about the significance of our work.

If I were pressed to choose one quote from the Bible that underscores the work we do, it would be a verse from Jeremiah 17:15, **"Where is the word of the Lord? let it come now."**

That "word of the Lord" is our motivation for going every Monday afternoon to the Riverhead correctional facility. We all read a Bible Lesson together from the Christian Science Quarterly. The discussions that arise from these sessions bring out many ideas that some of our guests may be hearing for the first time.

For my part, it is a delight to say to these men that they have a unique, God-given purpose—that God is good, only good, and that He loves each one of them unconditionally. This is always a special moment for me.

I'd like to share some wonderful insights from my fellow Suffolk Zone members regarding the moments at Riverhead that they find special.

One worker reports:

"It's all Mind's unfoldment. And when Soul is directing, it feels like heart is meeting

heart! Part of the unfoldment is deciding what lesson to read, what questions to ask, and what to highlight. It is such a humbling experience to be a part of this work.”

Another colleague writes:

“Two inmates are regular attendees at our weekly Bible Lesson studies. They are both very receptive to the truths we read and discuss. And both are accomplished readers. They read with understanding, and a love of the messages in the Bible and *Science and Health*. One inmate has read completely through both books. At the end of our sessions, the young men choose Sentinels and Monitors that they take back to the cell block with them. They share these periodicals with their cell neighbors, one of whom has visited our services a few times. We are so grateful that through our visits these men have the opportunity to learn of their true selfhood as the well-loved and well-cared-for children of their Father-Mother God.”

The following comments from our members illustrate their great love for the work they are doing.

“Knowing that all men are the Christ-man that God created makes one never fooled into thinking we are teaching the inmates we visit. They already are the expressed image of God. Not partially, but completely. That includes the image of Truth. Our first job is to know this. Then, communing with God directs our activity at the jail.”

“Listening to God and following His direction allows us to meet their needs. Since many of our guests are new to Christian Science, this has helped us to guide them without turning them away. Because we listen to God, we also benefit in our spiritual progress, and we are filled with joy watching their growth.”

“Why do I serve? It’s just so gratifying. I love sharing Christian Science and especially with people who (without knowing it) are thirsting for spiritual truths. It is wonderful to see their progress as they attend more and more Bible Lesson studies. And it is so special to hear them read as we go through the lesson. Some of them are very familiar with the Bible. Others find *Science and Health* is the book that unfolds the meaning of the Bible.’

Another teammate writes:

“My contribution is to highlight the gratitude we feel for the opportunity to meet these men, sharing ideas, and seeing as God sees.”

“Institutional Committee work is so uplifting! Each visit is a gift which we and our visitors unwrap and enjoy. I have never left a session without feeling joy and gratitude for being able to serve, and to see God’s man in all guards, administrators and inmates. I understand our goal is to afford each one the opportunity to see him/herself in a way that might be new to them.”

A former chair of this Zone writes:

“I have been going into the Riverhead jail on a regular basis for well over 25 years. And the institutional work is just as gratifying now as it was when I started. I would say to others: Try it! Go to your nearby detention facilities and prisons, and ask to be able to

come in to conduct Bible Lesson studies. You may need to be persistent. You definitely need to be prayerful!”

“I love the parable about the lost sheep. It came from Jesus in response to the Pharisees and scribes who challenged his contact with sinners. He said: ‘What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.’” (Luke 15:4–6)

This prison activity is a wonderful opportunity to share what we understand of God's love for each of us through the timeless Bible truths and the insight about them as understood in Christian Science. Other denominations send priests and rabbis to the prison. We take our Pastor—the Bible, “...our sufficient guide to eternal life,” and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by Mary Baker Eddy.

The activity is selfless, blessed, and special as we share our “pearl of great price.”
(Matt. 13:46)

THANKS....

The Christian Science Institutional Committee is so very grateful for the continued prayerful and financial support from the Christian Science Churches and Societies in New York State. This work would not be possible without their generosity.

Those we serve express their gratitude continually. It is a blessed work and we are thankful to be a part of it.



We thank Thee for work in the wide harvest field, For gladness
that ripens when sorrow is healed;
Made strong with Thy goodness that meets every need,
We gather the fruit of the Sower's good seed.