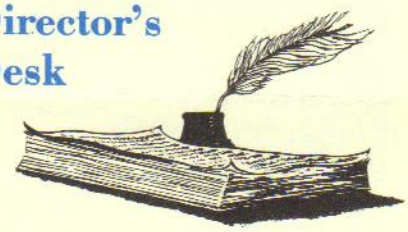
THE CONTENDER

December 1986

". . . it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith . . . " – Jude 3

Published for the faithful supporters of County Corrections Gospel Mission

From The Director's Desk



Oh, make but trial of His love;
Experience will decide
How blest are they, and they above,
Who in His truth confide.

Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then
Have nothing else to fear;
Make but His service your delight,
Your wants shall be His care.

– Hudson Taylor

Dear, dear Loved Ones:

Nothing more drives me to prayer and the hunger of His Word than to spend quantities of time in this dying generation of men.

I want you to know that my heart still aches, my eyes still tear and my emotions are still tender to continue seeking the operation of God's Spirit in these difficult hours and perhaps closing moments of America as I once knew her.

I am hopeful for yet a great Revival in His Church and a sweeping movement of the Holy One in the breaking and melting of men's hearts. We are able daily to bear witness of His powerful love and saving grace! Life after life is being confronted by His divine majesty and we can only ache the more for an outpouring of Calvary's purpose and plan!

Because of so many of you, we can truly rejoice in a blessed 1986 and look forward to an exciting new year! I am still astounded as God moves you to care and spend on our behalf! We, in turn, are privileged to spend on behalf of lost men and suffering humanity.

Just this week I was able to see great evidence of the spiritual vacuum now experienced in so many of our institutions and streets . . . men, women and little ones who know only enough of Jesus to speak His name, yet so desperately bankrupt in the experience and understanding of His precious love and saving power.

My prayer is that God will break and melt and mold me for His perfect will and usefulness. He has been so faithful and patient in His Fatherly affection and all too often we've been reminded to spend more private hours at His wounded and tender side.

I want to ask you to pray for our wisdom and strength in these very busy days and that God will direct our goings and commitments. The field is truly vast and our heart only breaks the more when feeling overwhelmed by our smallness!

Will you be excited with us about penetrating the Corrections field for Christ's sake? Will you labor in faithful prayer on our behalf so that our hands and feet, resources and opportunities might clearly declare the soul-saving glory of a wonderful Redeemer?

Please let me remind you of Stu and Nancy Tripler as they seek financial support for full-time service at CCGM. Stu right now is in Alexandria, Virginia training under the Good News Mission for the tasks before him.

Pray for the supply of God for a facility for aftercare and discipleship.

Remember the precious lives already maturing at the Bowery Mission and Keswick Colony!

My dear friend and loved one, we pray for open doors and wise communication of His precious Word as we soon face in-prison seminars, Warden visits, attendance at the American Correctional Association Conference in Atlanta and countless opportunities to minister in individual lives.

My greatest desire for 1987 is that pastors would open their hearts to our burdens and concerns that in His Church there might be a call to Home Missions manifested in unprecedented ministry to the poor and perishing neighbor.

As noted in the book of Amos, "Woe to them who are at ease in Zion (the place of His worship) . . . but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph (their own spiritual condition).

The tears of Christ for His Church are perhaps almost as many as His cries for the lost.

This can be a wonderful year. We look forward to serving and being a servant to many.

We Love You!

Jack Crans
I Cor. 15:58

On The Home Front

"O give thanks unto the Lord;
call upon His name: make known
His deeds among the people."
– Psalm 105:1

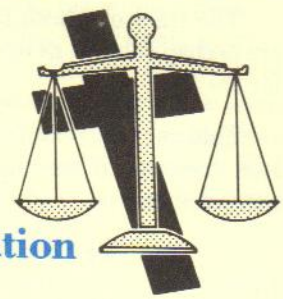
I surely hope your holiday was a blessed one. Ours was wonderful. With the boys home from school, and Jack slowing down **a little**, we were able to spend some real quality time as a family. At times we were able to share this special time of the year with many young men who frequently joined in the comforts and pleasures of our home. One very special joy was our ableness to give gifts to those boys who come to our house often and those boys at a juvenile detention center. We are so grateful to those who sent money to give towards these gifts.

Our basketball team (The CCGM Hoyas) has started up once again on Monday nights. This past week we had 26 fellows show up to play, many whom we have never had contact with before. Pray that as we share the love of Christ each one will see their need for a Savior. After every practice, Jack has a mandatory Bible study. We are always looking for teams to play, so if you are on a team or know of a team that would play us, please let us know.

I can never write without telling you how **good** the Lord has been to us. I am **constantly** overwhelmed with His blessings. He continues to meet our every need. What a wonderful Savior we have!

– Sue Crans

For Your Information



A recent magazine special published in a Montgomery County Paper entitled, "Graterford: A Perpetual Powder Keg". This well-written article revealed the following message and summary of one Pennsylvania State Prison.

Quoted Facts

Graterford is populated by 2,500 convicted criminals.

Tension is a way of life.

Anything legal or illegal is obtainable – drugs, weapons, law degree.

Violence is often the final arbiter.

$37 million is their annual budget.

42% return upon release; 57% of whom return the first year.

They are overcrowded 25% above capacity.

The same temptations and vices exist inside the walls as on the street.

"If you've lived here five years without getting stabbed, raped or maimed, that's something".

The only thing to look forward to are phone calls and church services on weekends.

A move into Graterford simply means a reunion with old friends.

You learn how to be lazy and more irresponsible.

Graterford inmates manufacture all inmate and correctional officer uniforms for Pennsylvania.

The turnover among correctional officers is high and experience low. There are 380 officers.

Superintendent Zimmerman says, "Security is like peddling a bicycle uphill. You cannot coast."

There are 80 inmates to one officer.

Correctional officers readily admit daily stress and emotional strain.

I do not list these items to be critical, but rather to call us each to bear a real prayer burden for the Superintendent and his staff. As the editor of the article and Newspaper asked, "What better place should we look for enlightenment than behind prison bars?"

We will labor in prayer to be all God wants us to be in the declaration of His Glory in the midst of this most intense "industry".

What's Happening Around Pennsylvania?

The Kensington Outreach Center a ministry of the Kensington Bi Church. It was started by myself, Stephen Meyers, on August 5, 1985, because of the great needs I saw on the streets. The purpose of this Center is to bring people off the streets and into an environment which meets their physical needs and shares the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are praying for the start of a women's shelter in the future. We are also hoping that someone will donate country property to help provide a rehabilitation center for street people and a camp for them to get refreshed physically and spiritually.

Everytime our doors are open we share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we praise God for those who have decided to follow Christ. A man, Rodney Richardson, came to us about one year ago hooked on cocaine and heroin. We shared with him the transforming power of Jesus Christ, and he turned to the Lord, forsaking his old lifestyle a friends. He is now helping us at th Center to reach out to other drug addicts and alcoholics. We have a 60-day program to help men get off of drugs and alcohol.

There is much work that still needs to be done on our building. At present we are not able to get the furnace working on the first floor, and there is no heat on the second floor. We need to put sheet rock on the basement ceiling and build a wall around the furnace. We are also in need of a metal firedoor.

We are in need of workers to help with the many building renovations, an assistant pastor, a song leader and a youth pastor. If you would like more information about our ministry, please write or call, The Kensington Bible Church, P.O. Box 29341, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19125 (215) 426-2910.

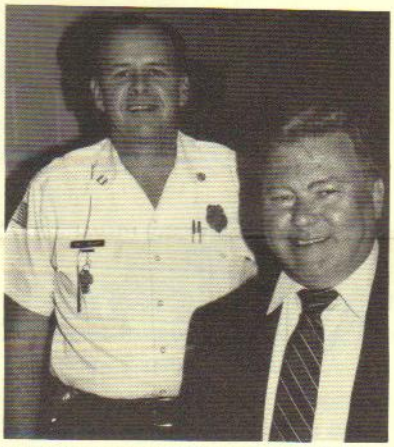
From The Bookshelf

This month we invite you to read t book, **Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret** written by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor and published by Moody Press in Chicago, Illinois.

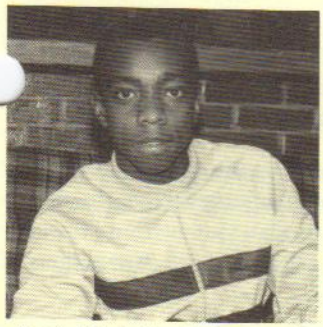
Our Prayer: "Worthy Is The Lord To Be Praised!"

"Now thanks be unto God, which causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place . . . "

– II Cor. 2:14

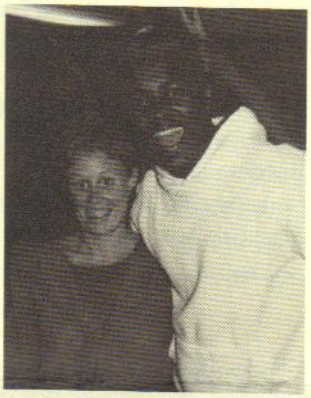


I praise Him for Captain Rilatt (now ill with cancer) and Deputy Warden Cloud of Chester County Prison.



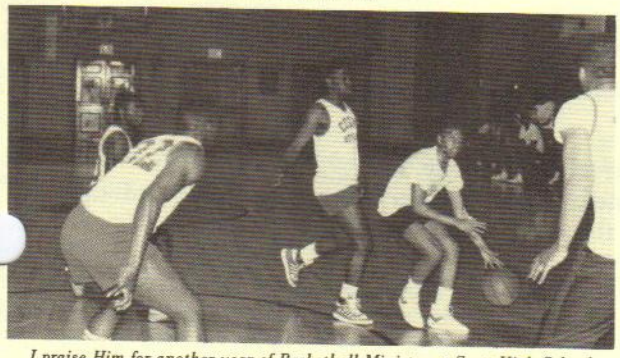
I praise Him for Ronnie James now in Plumsteadville Christian School.

I praise Him for faithful board member, friend Dr. Joe Eckman.



I praise Him for my dear, faithful wife and Richard . . .

I praise Him for 3 precious loving sons. Timothy, Joshua & Jonathan



I praise Him for another year of Basketball Ministry at Scott High School Gymnasium.

Mark Your Calendar

CCGM is hosting Life Action's multimedia presentation of **America, You're Too Young to Die** on Monday evening, June 15. Plan to bring some friends.

Hear The Prophet's Cry

Luke 1:17 "And shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; and to make ready a people prepared for the LORD."

The above text describes the absolute power and focus of John the Baptist's ministry. Recently, I sat in a McDonald's bordering Chester, Pennsylvania, when a gray-bearded, long-silver-haired man came quietly alongside my table carrying a Bible. On the Bible and on his back were the words, "Jesus is my LORD God!" He proceeded to speak to me (as I am somewhat easy to approach) and I shook the hand of a man calling himself "ELIJAH!"

Although many laughed and whispered against him, I cautioned my initial cowardice to listen and heard from his mouth and tear-filled eyes a heaviness for America's sinful state and need for repentance!

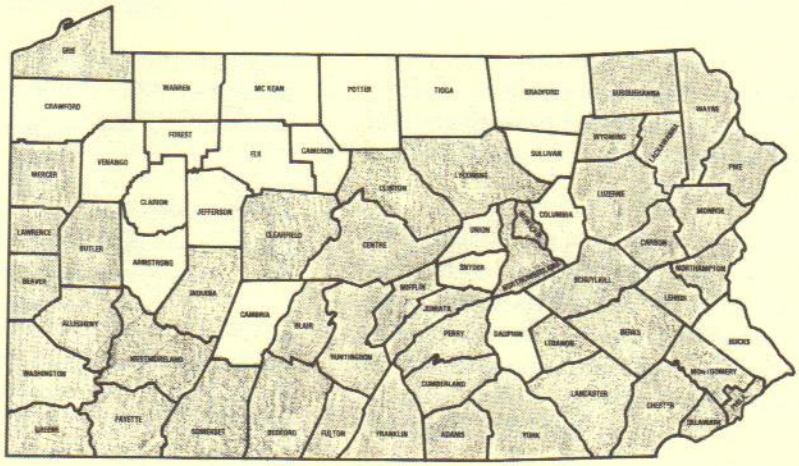
He preached a tender, soft and powerful word of truth most clearly supporting every word with solid Biblical reference.

I really do not think this passing life in my experience was Elijah but he really broke my heart to be moved at his zeal, passion, burden and boldness. Would you have laughed?

I had just finished a study on the great book of Amos. How timely to see a little glimpse of a nobody ("Elijah") who knew somebody (Jesus) that he wanted everybody to know. **God saw much ceremony, religion and churchianity in Amos' day but cried for right living of his people!** Israel hardened her heart at all of God's appeals so as to hear the tragic and inevitable woe, **"Prepare to meet thy God!"** Oh, that men might see the right spending of our lives before He calls us home.

Warden's Corner

Three Wardens received Bibles this month, those being in the counties of Perry, Cumberland and Lancaster.



December 1986 Report

P.O. Box 1136 • Coatesville, PA 19320

County Corrections Gospel Mission

A Letter From Linda

As I look back on 1986, I can only get excited at what is in store for us at CCGM in 1987. God continues to open doors for ministry and teach each of us valuable lessons concerning His hand on our lives.

The office continues to be busy, and Lord willing, I will be getting a computer this month which will be a tremendous help to me.

Since I have last written, there has been a change in my role with the women at Chester County Prison. I am now going over to the prison on Tuesday mornings and meeting with them in the day room by their cell blocks. We have had many tremendous hours of study in God's Word, prayer and even the shedding of tears together. Not only has the Lord enriched my life by preparing a lesson each week, but I have been so blessed to see these girls come to truly understand their salvation and learn of the spiritual warfare that exists even there in prison. Please pray for the Holy Spirit to work in and through me so I will be sensitive to their emotional and spiritual needs.

Please continue to pray not only for the ministry but also for each of us personally as God brings many situations and people into our lives to conform us to His image and bring glory to His name! We appreciate each of you so much as you've so faithfully supported us in 1986!

Christmas Update

During the torrential rains of Christmas Eve, it was a real joy to deliver over 50 packages to the young men of SESTU (Southeast Secure Treatment Unit), a juvenile detention center for boys. These packages contained Bible study curriculum and helps, Gospel tapes, table games, after shave, puzzles, candy and words of love. A Christmas tree was also purchased for the dining room of their housing unit and was decorated by the East Goshen Bible Church days prior to Christmas. Mr. McNeil, the Director, expressed heartfelt joy on behalf of the boys. As the rain poured upon us that evening, I could sense the great excitement in many of the boys who helped in the unloading of my trunk full of presents.

Here on the homefront, nine of our boys received leather Bibles and a $[illegible] gift certificate for sneakers.

We wish to convey a deep word of appreciation for many who thought it important enough to contribute towards the total expense of these expressions of Christ's love.

Tripler Update

Stu and Nancy are most excited about joining the staff of County Corrections Gospel Mission. Critical areas such as Modena and Chester, not to mention the great multitude of youth concerns, await their arrival.

We praise the Lord for a gift of $900 as well as $85 of committed monthly support. We again ask you to pray about your role in their lives for service. Please make use of the attached response opportunity as the Lord leads. May His will be done. If you desire to contact Stu and Nancy, they can be reached at 53 Glenview Road, Glen Mills, Pennsylvania 19342.

Tear off and return only as God leads.

Dear Jack:

☐ **I/we have prayed and sense definite leading to support Stu and Nancy Tripler. Here is my/our pledge to encourage them in their ministry at CCGM.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount per month: _____