



# JAIL MINISTRY OTSEGO AND SCHOHARIE COUNTIES

*Helping troubled lives find hope and wholeness in the Christian walk*

JMOC Newsletter

Annual Report

## A Word From the Director

Choice greetings in Christ,



First of all I want to thank you for your prayers and financial support for the jail ministry. Without churches and individuals like yourselves we could not do all that we do. Thank you so much!

This past year has been a very challenging time for the ministry. I never expected that we would go through this challenging time **but God** has been so faithful in every area. On Halloween evening 2019 our area had a terrible rain storm that caused some damage to the jail. This forced the jail to be closed and the inmates boarded out to neighboring county jails until the repairs were completed and it was safe for the inmates to return. Then the COVID pandemic hit our area which further delayed our ministry team being able to get back in the jail to continue our ministry to the inmates. It has been God's faithfulness and the prayers of believers like yourselves that has brought us through these challenging times.

Despite the uncertainty of the times we find ourselves in with the COVID-19 pandemic the ministry continues to move forward. In this quarterly newsletter I want our two Chaplains and our two Aftercare Coordinators to give a brief report on the opportunities for ministry that God has provided during 2020.

Lastly, I want to share with you an opportunity for you to get involved in helping us carry out the ministry that God has called us to. The Jail Ministry of Otsego and Schoharie Counties is again partnering with Prison Fellowship during the month of April to emphasize the need for second chances for those individuals coming out of jail or prison. They have served their time and now want to be given a second chance to become a contributing member of society.

Would you help us by designating one Sunday in April as Second Chance Sunday and consider sending a financial gift of any amount so we can continue providing second chances to this population. You can go to our website [www.jmoconline.org](http://www.jmoconline.org) and click on the news and events page there you will find resources that will help you promote second chances to your congregation. We would also love the opportunity to come to your church or mission group to share about the jail ministry and the need for second chances. You can contact me either on my cell phone or e-mail. Thank you so much.

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“You’ve never  
gone too far that  
God can’t  
redeem you,  
restore you,  
forgive you, and  
give you a  
second chance.”

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## Contact Us

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## 2020 Schoharie County Jail Ministry Report



Jail Ministry in Schoharie County actually began in 2019 when, by God's grace, a Divine meeting between me and Ameen Aswad started the timeline moving forward.

After meeting with our area clergy, and spreading the news of the beginnings of a new ministry in our county jail, training, our 9 volunteers from various churches in our area, and meeting with the jail administrator, all looked good for a launch.

However, between delays in finishing the building, and now, COVID -19, ministry has not fully happened yet. Inmates did not arrive until mid-Summer, and because of COVID, we have not been able to do any kind of face-to-face ministry!

Whereas, this may seem like a lot of dead ends and discouragement, we have been able to minister to 11 inmates' families this Christmas through Angel Tree. A total of 25 children were blessed by the generosity of two area churches, Calvary Assembly of God (Rev. Dr. Ray Richards, pastor) and Cobleskill United Methodist Church (Rev. Anna Blinn Cole, pastor).

The team from Calvary Assembly delivered and mailed the packages to the children and families, along with grocery gift cards purchased from Price Chopper.

I have also been able to speak with one inmate via phone as he has requested to speak to a clergyperson. This has been a joy to me to minister and pray with this person.

I feel confident that soon, in the Lord's time, we will be able to meet our inmates and begin in person ministry. Until then, we continue to explore creative ways of reaching into the mission field of our jail here in Schoharie County to offer hope, healing and wholeness!

Respectfully,

Rev. Cyd Collischonn,  
Chaplain

GETTING A  
**SECOND  
CHANCE**  
WITH A  
**FRESH START**  
IS AN  
**AMERICAN VALUE**



According to a national survey, most **Americans and evangelicals strongly agree** that people who have completed their just punishment should have the opportunity to be productive members of the community.

[prisonfellowship.org/secondchances](https://prisonfellowship.org/secondchances)

## 2020 Otsego County Jail Ministry Report



Dear Friends in Mission and Ministry to the Otsego County Jail,

I pray you and yours are all staying healthy, safe and strong in body, mind and in the Spirit of our gracious Lord Jesus Christ. On behalf of all of our volunteers, I thank you for your on-going prayers for our ministry to the inmates and their families of the Otsego County Jail. Please keep them coming! We are struggling to increase the numbers of participants in our services, particularly Sunday services. After consulting with the JMOC board of directors in response to low numbers of men attending our new virtual 1 PM Sunday

services, we have changed our service time to 10AM. This will continue through the month of February as we evaluate the best way we can reach the men in Sunday worship.

We are having a bit higher numbers of the men coming to Wednesday's Bible Study, and One-On-One Counseling sessions. I am very thankful for the dedication and the gifts of ministry given in recent weeks by Russell Anderson, Todd Hoose, and Randy Velez on Wednesdays. Also, great thanks to Ameen Aswad and Lona Smith for teaming with me for Sunday Zoom worship. Though the numbers may be low, yet we hear from our most faithful attendee that he is witnessing several inmates that do not attend church, sharing in reading from their Bibles. Praise God! As Philippians 4:19 says, "19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." His Holy Spirit is always at work behind the scenes. Our faith and the future of our services rest on that!

Lastly, I would like to report another remarkable time of outreach and sharing of God's love through our Angel Tree Program. Though we had to forego the wonderful tradition of the Christmas party and present pick-up this year at Saint Mary's school, thanks to Susan Pinkey and her tremendous leadership and organization skills, coupled with an ever faithful group of volunteers, many children received beautifully wrapped gifts this Christmas. All together we had 111 children receive this year. Numbers were down some because of COVID closing our contacts with the families at the Drug Court. We also had twelve local families receive gift cards to Aldi grocery store in Oneonta. Once again special thanks to all the volunteers who gave copious amounts of their time to this mission of giving as we celebrated the giving of God's son, to us.

Yours in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Pastor Kurt, JMOC Chaplain 607-859-2436

SECOND

CHANCE

MONTH



## Update from Lona Smith and Diane DeDominicis our Aftercare Coordinators



### JAIL MINISTRY OF OTSEGO and SCHOHARIE COUNTIES AFTERCARE REPORT 2020



The JMOC Aftercare Program ministers to released inmates, and their families, who were incarcerated at the Otsego County Correctional Facility, or are being released to Otsego or Schoharie Counties from state prisons.

Many returning inmates often have no resources and no family or support when they are released from jail or prison. Most of our requests come from Sally Tedesco, the Otsego County Community Services Forensic Transitional Case Manager, Brad and Noel Feik from The Crossroads Inn, and Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie Counties through Rev. Ameen Aswad.

Although we often don't get to know the recipients we serve, we are sometimes able to meet them, have lunch with them, and offer support and encouragement.

Through the early months of the COVID Pandemic our communication was limited with both agencies and recipients. In July, Lona Smith and Diane DeDominicis were appointed by the JMOC Board of Directors to coordinate the Aftercare Ministry. This report details the activity.

Our most requested needs are for trac phones and clothing. We have also provided food cards, toiletries, bedding, bus passes, paid for emergency accommodations, rent, filled propane tanks, and towed cars.

Your continued support will enable us to do even more. Thank you.

**61%** of evangelical Christians  
**STRONGLY AGREE**



that **people with a past**  
can still have **a bright future.**

Source: Justice Reform Survey fielded by Barna for Prison Fellowship, 2019

[prisonfellowship.org/secondchances](https://prisonfellowship.org/secondchances)