

FALL / WINTER 2022

# Catalyst

MINISTRIES

Moral Rehabilitation:  
Creating Hope & Purpose  
within the Prisons  
of West Virginia

Our goal is to continually share the amazing work God is doing within the prisons of WV



The Covid pandemic has impacted the world. The men and women in our prisons have not been exempt. Over the last several years, the incarcerated have endured many challenges and changes in addition to the daily stressors prison brings. As we begin to navigate ministry post-covid, I want to provide you with an update regarding our work.

With our partner, Appalachian Bible College, we have added a new program at Lakin Correctional Center for Women and Mt. Olive Bible College. Additionally, we have launched our Catalyst Certified Peer Mentor Programs at Mt. Olive Correctional Complex, Huttonsville Correctional Center, and St. Marys Correctional Center.

## FROM THE FOUNDER

I am often reminded of our humble beginning in the summer of 2012. We launched Malachi Dads at Mt. Olive prison with six inmate men attending. Today, at various times, we are sponsoring programs inside every adult prison in West Virginia. We have served as God's vessels delivering hope and purpose to many men and women within WV's prisons. We have heard many stories of lives being changed through a spiritual encounter with Christ and discipleship opportunities to grow in their faith.

When I think about Catalyst Ministries, I am reminded of the parable of the lost sheep. In Luke 15:4-6, Jesus teaches, *"suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'"*

Dear friends, every soul matters to Jesus, and we have the privilege of going into the prisons in search of that one lost sheep. The one lost soul who feels as if all is forever lost. However, we do not stop at salvation. We make disciples and send them out to save and serve their peers. Our vision equips the men and women to shepherd their flocks, as we believe the largest untapped resource in the prisons is the men and women themselves.

We are honored to go into West Virginia's prisons but need you to send us. Catalyst Ministries remains a crucial donor of Mt. Olive Bible College. Catalyst also funds the certified peer mentor programs in four WV prisons and all related discipleship programs throughout West Virginia's prison system.

Catalyst Ministries' 2023 budget is approximately \$100,000.00, of which 100% comes from private donors. We receive no state or federal funding. Please help us by making a tax-deductible donation or hosting a fundraiser lunch or dinner. Our team would love to come and share more information.

In West Virginia, ninety percent of the men and women incarcerated in our adult prisons have release dates. Your support today translates to fewer future victims and safer communities upon release.

*Calvin Sutphin II*

Isiah 6:8



To host a lunch/dinner fundraiser, contact:

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 304.539.1097

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PLEASE MAIL CHECKS TO:



Catalyst Ministries Inc.  
PO Box 4385  
Charleston, WV 25364

OR DONATE ONLINE AT:



[catalystministriesinc.com](http://catalystministriesinc.com)

# FACILITY HIGHLIGHT

## LAKIN CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOR WOMEN

We are excited to announce the expansion of our ministry at Lakin. Catalyst Ministries has served the women at Lakin for years by sponsoring various discipleship programs.

In January 2022, we launched a thirty-hour Bible Certificate program with our partner, Appalachian Bible College. The program consists of thirty hours of college-level courses. These courses can be counted toward an A.A. or B.A. degree. Our goal is to offer an A.A. or B.A. degree program in the future. As with Mt. Olive Bible College, the women graduates will become peer mentors responsible for serving their peers and bringing positive change to the prison culture.



## CATALYST CERTIFIED PEER MENTOR PROGRAM AT LAKIN

We saw the need to launch a certified peer mentor program at Lakin. This program caters to potential leaders who, for whatever reason, do not want to take college-level courses but want to serve their peers. This year-long program includes spiritual health, leadership, forgiveness, emotional intelligence, and abuse courses. As with the Bible college, the women graduates will serve their peers and bring positive change to the prison culture.

Lakin Chaplain Diana Vinscavich provided the following insight. "The peer mentor program is proving more and more each day to be a success. At Lakin, fourteen peer mentors work with the chaplain's office. These mentors move throughout the inmate population (tier walk), encouraging, counseling, and sometimes just listening to the issues of other inmates.

Select mentors visit the segregation and medical units. This has proven to be a success in the recidivism status of inmates in the segregation unit. Over the past year, there has been a sharp decline in the number of inmates housed in segregation. I believe the peer mentors program has contributed to this reduction."

Chaplain Vinscavich further notes, "As a chaplain, the peer mentorship program has not only changed the lives of many inmates; it has proven to me repeatedly that lives can be changed for the good behind prison walls."

## PEER MENTOR SURVEY

Catalyst Ministries constantly seeks to evaluate its ministry outcomes. Recently, we conducted a three-question survey at Lakin. We were excited with the feedback we received from the women. Below are some of their responses.

### 1. How has becoming a peer mentor changed you?

- Being a peer mentor has helped me realize that I can give back something valuable to others despite being in a negative situation. The mentorship program has taught me to be the best version of myself and what it truly means to follow Christ.
- It has given me the courage to speak to others.
- I have realized that who I was to who I am now is the story God wants me to share. It is my story of not why I am here but how I came to be here.

### 2. To date, have you witnessed any positive changes within the prison there?

- Before the program, segregation had a waiting list for offenders, and now, segregation is almost empty, largely due to the mentors.
- I've witnessed multiple changes, one being my roommate. She has come from a place of attempted suicide and zero confidence to a woman who practically shouts to people about God. The Lord is doing great work through her.
- Tier walking has made the mentors known to all inmates. Women are reaching out to mentors for questions, encouragement, suggestions for Bible reading, etcetera. This has created a positive atmosphere along with a sense of hope.
- I have seen a lot of positive changes. Fewer people are going to segregation, and more are going to church. More and more people are asking to talk to us about their problems to stay out of trouble.

### 3. Do you believe equipping additional women to serve as peer mentors has the potential to change the culture?

- Yes, because no two women here had the same journey.
- Yes, more women helping would make a tremendous difference. Letting others know someone is willing to invest in them to change their life could help them – maybe for the first time.
- Everyone should have this opportunity. We change every day because we're helping others. As others receive help, they want to become helpers, also.
- Yes, the Lord tells us to go forth and multiply.



## THE MEN

**In 2014 Mt. Olive Bible College (MOBC) was launched inside West Virginia's only maximum security prison.**

Initially, only a four-year degree program was offered. We are excited to share that MOBC now offers a two-year degree program, too. The two-year degree program expands the door of opportunity to a larger portion of the inmate population.

Graduates will be sent to other West Virginia prisons as peer mentors. The peer mentors will establish inmate-led churches, facilitate moral rehabilitative classes, and visit the mental health, medical and hospice units. Additionally, the peer mentors will become side-walk counselors. They spend time with their peers, helping them in times of struggle.



## CATALYST CERTIFIED PEER MENTOR PROGRAM

As with the women, we realized there were leadership qualities within men whom, for various reasons, did not want to attend college. These men were willing to serve, so we decided to equip and provide them with opportunities to serve. Thus, we launched the Catalyst Certified Peer Mentor Program at Mt. Olive Correctional Complex, Huttonsville Correctional Center, and St. Marys Correctional Center. Upon completion, the men will become peer mentors, and just like the Bible college graduates, they will begin serving their prison communities.



## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to select, educate, train, and theologically equip West Virginia inmates to become peer mentors. The peer mentors will counsel, comfort, serve and disciple their peers, thus serving as agents of moral change within the prison culture. The peer mentors will help bring evidence-based positive change to the prison system, reduce recidivism, translating to fewer future crime victims.

## OUR VISION

We have partnered with the West Virginia Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation and Appalachian Bible College to accomplish our mission. Catalyst Ministries funds the partnership, including Mt. Olive Bible College, along with moral rehabilitation programs. Additionally, Catalyst Ministries assists with strategic planning and program development.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

- EVANGELISM** "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe."  
Romans 1:16
- DISCIPLESHIP** "You have heard me teach these things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people, who will be able to pass them along to others."  
2 Timothy 2:2
- EQUIPPING** "Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do His work, and build up the body of Christ."  
Ephesians 4:12
- SHARING** "Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce much fruit."  
John 15:5

Once you read, consider passing it along to a neighbor, friend, or family member to help us spread the good news!



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