

# Missionary Evangelism to Corrections

Sharing the gospel & Christ's love with those in corrections since 1982

I was in prison and you came to me Matt. 25:36cESV



## The Heart of the Matter

The desires of our hearts are not always apparent to us. As faith grows God shows us His desires.

Some of the men who we minister to could not be called gentlemen, they may be chivalrous and at times courteous, but are not honorable. When they express the dark desires that lie in their heart, our cry in prayer is for God to change these desires.

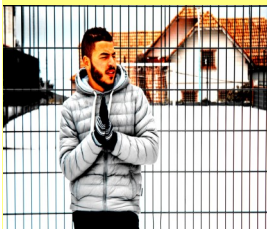
When teaching the Set Free class, I ask what it is they would like to be set free from. Most initial responses are about legal issues, temptations or an action that is external. When asked what it is in them that leads them to that, the responses get closer to the areas Christ wants to heal us in. Even those who were steeped or, in their words, "heavy into God or the Bible", the internal conditions are not often apparent. Trouble (s), worry, pain, anger, disturbed relationships, depression, lust, boredom, pride and misunderstanding are ones we all deal with.

In the fiction, but well researched book, John, Son of Thunder, Ellen Gunderson Traylor writes of the apostles struggle in the development of his relationship with Christ. He says, "Master, I love your words, but they do not seem to grow in me. I must be bad soil, for I do not bring forth the peace..."

The Heart of the Matter Cont. pg.2

## Help Write Letters to Youth

MEC has had a new opportunity to be able to have the youth we minister to fill out a form if they want a letter from us. This will mean several letters a week and we need help. Would you be willing to write (a) letter(s) to youth? You would be provided their first name and prayer request, send the letter back to us by e-mail and we will add a



## Coats for Inmates

It is warming up and the thrift stores have specials so it would be a good time to get good quality coats to donate for the jails. When inmates who came in without one leave, they need a warm coat. We put a tract and personal note in the pocket so that they hear the gospel & of Christ's

Bible Study and some resources.

Audio CD's of MEC's 2018 Fall event are here!

If you already signed up we will send yours soon.. If

February 28, 2019

## MEC Spotlight

Doris Hurney

Mary Crouse

Doris Hurney went to be with Jesus September 19<sup>th</sup> 2018. She did jail ministry for many years with MEC at Anoka County Work Release. She lived in Blaine with her husband Bill and was a part of a team.



Diane Weber, who ministers with her husband James, Doris's husband Bill and Randee Christiansen, shares, "We have so many fond memories of jail ministry with you and Doris. We have enjoyed the breakfast times after those Sunday mornings where we talked together about faith, family and life. Doris was a bright light for Jesus, and will be missed here on earth, but is burning bright in eternity."

"The word for Doris is that she was a spitfire. She would sing nice and loud all the time, and was very engaging with the inmates. She loved doing it and had a passion for life. Afterwards we would go out to eat and talk about our families. When her cancer had come back, it went fast. She looked well and was herself with such a contagious laugh. Doris was upbeat and happy, always full of life, joyful in the Lord and very positive. She shared with strong convictions. We would sometimes disagree and would agree to do so. She was very direct with what she had to say but she had a tenderness and you knew that she cared [deeply].

You can leave a note for the family at [washburn-mcreavy.com](http://washburn-mcreavy.com) website.

Spotlight Mary C. Cont. on pg. 2

MEC Spotlight—Doris Hurney & Mary Crouse.....page 1,2  
The Heart of the Matter.....page.1,2,3  
Ministry Friend Shout out: Tree Top Kids..... page 3

## February 28 Highlights

MEC Spotlight—Doris Hurney & Mary Crouse.....page 1,2  
The Heart of the Matter.....page.1,2,3  
Ministry Friend Shout out: Tree Top Kids..... page 3

[As John continued to learn he saw that the seed and the soil were tended to by the master], “The lesson was becoming clear, but was still hard to accept. Jesus who could heal diseases, ...and who claimed the power to forgive sins, was now also *claiming the most impossible of all things, ... mastery over the design and character of the human heart. Only one condition* was required of the man wanting change. The part of the soil is to yield...to yield,” (Pg.209) italics added

Nicodemus went to see Jesus after dark. In addition to keeping his visit quiet, I like to think he chose this time because after the busyness of the day he could sit and talk to Jesus about what was really on his heart. When it is quiet and there is time, it is then that we become more aware of our spiritual and relationship processes, needs and how they should be met.

In recent conversations where God gave the privilege of people sharing with open hearts. Ours attitudes reflect those of individuals in scripture. One came for the bread provided at the time and doesn't seem to want to deal with the hard issues. My hope is she will be there for more than just the physical bread. One came to listen and learn what he could. Perhaps he will be one who leaves, like the crowds and followers who left when Jesus said that they must partake of His flesh and blood. (John 6) Those not wanting to let Him unveil the current desires of our hearts, and to receive Him in adoption, forgiveness and the strength of His spirit do not want Him to replace current desires with His good ones. This man may also be one who takes it in, digests it and grows in Christ. When the prodigal came home, Jesus did not say what the older brother chose. If he returned to the party and accepted the prodigal, it took time and understanding on both of their parts.



Another man shared that he had come to Christ and started reading the Bible while he was in prison. He shared his current pain in such a way that it reflected his decisions were hinging on others and he reminded me of James writing about being tossed like the waves of the sea. Because he shared so much, I felt led of the Spirit to ask if I could be straight and direct with him. He indicated one other person who did so, and that it was much appreciated. The challenge of the desires of heart came out. Others directed him to temptation but he needed to know “What about you? What about your relationship to Christ—to God - and what it was doing to your other relationships?” He compared himself to Job and thought that if he was like Job, he would come out better off in the end. This could be true, but he needed to look deeper. We looked together at the reason that Job came out better in the end. Because He met God face to face and realized who He is. Job saw His awesomeness and power, His glory, sovereignty, goodness and love. When He encountered God Himself, it took him beyond the concept that -even as a godly man - Job had held. When He saw God's character, Job saw himself and others more clearly. He realized that His search for justice based on His own merits were not what he really needed. Seeking justice for himself was not enough. Psalms 75 says that no one should raise an angry fist to God. Job had not talked against God before, but once He saw God and knew His character and deep, deep love, Job was healed. He also now knew his place. God is the one could help Him and



us through the trial(s). Now his desire changed. . God was good and right. Knowing Him allowed an awesome shift in understanding. It is more than knowledge. It gives a peace that passes understanding. (Phil. 4:7) Knowing and cooperating with God also altered Job's relationship with his others. It allowed Him to forgive friends and pray for them. Now they were all right in front of God, together.

A fourth conversation was with one who was like the woman at the well.

The Heart of the Matter—Cont. on pg. 3

Spotlight from pg.1

## Mary Crouse

Mary E. Mellgren-Crouse, age 85 of Forest Lake, Minnesota, went to be with Jesus peacefully Friday, January 25, 2019. Mary was the office manager at Lake Office Equipment in Forest Lake for over 15 years.

She was a volunteer mainstay of the community; until a week prior to her death, Mary could be found at a variety of organizations giving her heart and soul. She was a generous contributor to Lakes Life Care Center, Fairview Lakes Auxiliary, St. Bridget of Sweden Baby Blanket program, Missionary Evangelism to Corrections, John Birch Society, Cambridge Pregnancy Center, the Republican Party; both local and state, Forest Lake Senior Center and active in her church.

When she was not volunteering she enjoyed time spent reading, playing cards and traveling. Above all, time spent with her family and friends were the moments that kept her young and active. *You can leave a note for the family at [mattsonfuneralhome.com](http://mattsonfuneralhome.com)*



She had been trying to follow God for a year and had been accused of something she had not done. But she also knew that her being in jail was saving her from somethings that were worse. She understood that when she was troubled or overwhelmed and prayed, God helped her sort things out. Although she had not yet understood the gospel, when it was explained, and she understood Christ's life, death, resurrection, and what He accomplished, she prayed, believing. In further conversation she indicated she wanted to be all in, and the understanding that, now being born again, the need to grow.

In working through the transformation of his character, the apostle John's identity was challenged. Raised by a Pharisee and seeking answers that went deeper than the law and the rules, he may have followed John the Baptist first and then Christ. John the Baptist would have been an enigma to his upbringing. Tax collectors were fellow Jews who were used by Rome and considered traitors who made themselves rich collecting extra money when they collected taxes by force. Samaritan women were considered half breeds and one who had had several husbands would have been one that he would not even talk to, much less eat with. If John felt negative about Matthew as a tax collector and suspicions about this friendly woman who talked to men, he most likely needed to work through his presuppositions and feelings when he went to supper with Jesus. In order to relate to and to love these followers of Christ, the desires of his heart had to change. He had to overcome fear and join in Fellowship.

May we open our hearts to God to show us what our desires are and to let Him give us His desires. Change My Heart of God by Eddie Espinosa reflects Psalm 51 and Jeremiah 18. May we be soil that yields to the plow, dust and clay that yields to the master. May we be open to the watering, remaining faithful until the fruit comes and the beautiful vessel is formed, baked and useful!

*In Him, Karen Selby*



Free Bible Images: LUMO project

We know we are not alone in Ministry and so each month do a shout-out to others  
This month our Ministry Friend Shout Out is to

## Tree Top Kids

Tree Top Kids is a Christian based mentoring program for kids and teens. Learn to care for animals and all sorts of outdoor activities while building strong ties to other youth and great adult mentors. After school and Summer programs available. Transportation provided for students in Stacy, Wyoming and Forest Lake.



[www.treetopkids.net](http://www.treetopkids.net)



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[www.mecjailministry.com](http://www.mecjailministry.com)

*Saul Selby Director, Karen Assistant Director,*

*Sandy Hanson Office Administrator, Grace Schmidt volunteer*