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*Sharing Christ with Truckers and Travelers Since 1985*

Spring 2024

Dear Ministry Supporters and Friends:

Happy Easter! We sure have much to be happy about. At the empty tomb, “The angel said to the woman, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said.’” “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead;” (Matthew 28:5-7) We should have that same kind of urgency to “go quickly” and tell others that our Savior is risen, alive and will save all who call upon His name.

At our fundraising banquets last year, we emphasized God's faithfulness to the Ministry by singing *Great is Thy Faithfulness* which, in part, reads, “Summer and winter and spring time and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above, join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.” (Thomas O. Chisholm) The Lord has always been faithful to provide the resources we need to touch many lives. The chaplain's reports that follow will provide some of these opportunities.

For the last 12-15 years, we have relied on your giving at our banquets to provide approximately one-third of our annual operating budget. Over those years, and in particular post COVID, we have experienced a consistent decrease in attendance at the banquets resulting in decreased offerings. Holding a banquet requires a significant amount of time and funds, and we rely heavily on our sponsors for funding much of the costs involved. To be quite honest, we are coming close to the break even point between the cost of having banquets vs. the offering received at the banquets. Although we certainly enjoy these banquet times together, it just doesn't make sense to continue them just to break even financially.

As such, the Board of Directors has made the very difficult decision to suspend these fundraising banquets. However, we still need your continued financial support. Our plan is to send out newsletters 2-3 times a year with a donation envelope enclosed so you can give on a regular basis throughout the year. We hope that you will consider giving at least as much as you would give at the banquets. For those of you who have IRAs, please discuss with your tax consultant

about giving directly to the Ministry through Qualified Charitable Donations (QCDs). This is a great way to make contributions to non-profit organizations without having to pay any tax on the funds withdrawn from your IRA. You can also donate online anytime at: [www.carlisletruckstopministry.org](http://www.carlisletruckstopministry.org).

And now, some words from our chaplains:

Chaplain Dave:

It's hard to believe, but I have started my eighth year here at Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry. I have truly been blessed with so many opportunities to interact with so many different people from so many different walks of life. I have had the opportunity to speak words of encouragement and words of life to individuals, and I've had people speak words of encouragement and words of life to me.

Let me share with you one special divine encounter I recently had. It involves a driver I have known for a number of years. He called me on a Wednesday (not my normal work day) and asked if I wanted to have breakfast with him. I, of course, said yes and we arranged to meet at the Sunnyside restaurant in Carlisle for an early morning breakfast. I arrived and waited for him to park his tractor. As he stepped down off his tractor, I noticed a significant difference in his gait and his mannerisms. As I watched him shuffle across the parking lot, I asked him if he was okay. He mumbled something and we walked into the restaurant. As we sat down at the table, I noticed that he was gasping for air. I said to him "I need to get you to the emergency room now" but his reply was, "Not 'till I have my eggs and grits." So, after breakfast I drove him to the emergency room where the ER staff immediately began processing him. It ended up that he had significant congestive heart failure (stage four), kidney failure and an extremely high sugar level from his diabetes. During the stabilization process of this driver by the medical staff, several of them commented to me, "It's a good thing you got this driver in here because nine chances out of ten, he would have just crawled into his truck and passed away."

The driver ended up spending seven days in the hospital with the understanding that when he was discharged, his driving days were over. He had been driving for 38 years, the last 10 of which were with a company out of Oregon. The unfortunate thing about many of the drivers, and the trucking companies, is that the companies are more concerned about the loads in the truck than they are about the drivers. This driver had to get home to Florida to follow up with his local doctors on his medical situation. The company refused to provide a bus ticket, airplane ticket or allow him to rent a car to get home. After much searching, we were able to find an airplane ticket to his home in Florida for \$125. I took him to the airport, prayed with him and he got on his flight to get home to begin the healing process.

All of his personal belongings were left in his truck. Before he left, I told him that I would clean his truck out and store his items at my house until we were able to get them down to him. He agreed to this and thanked me. We were able to get his personal belongings transported to his home in Florida by another driver who was headed that way for a load.

I see God's gracious hand all through this encounter: It all started on a day that I don't normally work, the driver contacted me to see about breakfast, I noticed that there was something physically going on with him, the hospital staff immediately began treatment, the transportation to get him home came together, and finally being able to ship all of his personal belongings by another driver to his home. This driver still calls me on a regular basis, we talk, and I pray with him. He is still dealing with his ongoing medical issues, but is trying to change his lifestyle and looking for new employment.

Chaplain Mike:

### Come Boldly Into His Throne Room

Working as a chaplain for Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry can be rewarding and inspiring, but also heart wrenching. One day we can hear stories of how blessings from the Lord have guided a driver into the best life he or she could have imagined. We can hear stories of how the Lord has redeemed a driver from a life of addiction. But, we also hear stories of broken marriages, lost loved ones, and hurts from family members, friends and employees.

Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16). Having a relationship with God, and knowing His word, relieves us of stress and worry over troubles that happen in our lives. I know that I can find the solution for a life situation either in His word or through prayer. This is the foundation of our seed planting in the hearts of drivers, the homeless, the poor, sinners, addicts, and alcoholics. Chaplain Dave and I use it on each other in our times of iron sharpening iron conversations. It will work for you too if you have faith to trust God and His word.

I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth (Psalm 40:1-3a). We encounter many people throughout the week who say they need help with housing, food, a bus ticket somewhere, domestic violence, fuel, clothing, a ride to a job interview, just to name a few issues. We try to discern the situation and then help

as best we can. When we can't help them, we try to get them to an agency that can help them. Some people will take that help and some people won't.

A woman came to us, a domestic violence victim with no money, no I.D. and only the pajamas she was wearing. We counseled her and got her to a place that handles these exact situations. They fed, housed, and clothed her, and arranged a ride for her to get back to her hometown. I saw her two days later still at the truck stop trying to get a ride out of town on a truck. Sometimes people just pick and choose how they want to be helped. It reminds me of Deuteronomy 31:15-20; Before they cross the Jordan, God offers the Israelites life and prosperity or death and destruction. It may seem like an easy choice, but for some it is not. That's where we need to plant the seeds of the gospel and pray.

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Enclosed with this newsletter is an insert with ads from faithful sponsors that have graciously supported us financially by paying for their ads. We sincerely appreciate their support and we ask that you consider patronizing them if at all possible.

In closing, we want to thank you for your very generous support of the Ministry, not only financially, but with your prayers. Our chaplains are on the 'front line' of so many different situations every day. Pray for them to have Godly wisdom and discernment, and physical health and safety. Pray that they would be encouraged as they demonstrate God's love to others and that they might have joy over the 'one' who accepts Christ as their Savior.

A verse we have often used in our mailings is from Matt. 25:40. "...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Won't you help us to help others as unto Christ?

For the Board of Directors,



David D. Bell, Secretary/Treasurer

PS - If you have an email address, we would appreciate it if you would be willing to receive newsletters, etc. via that address. This will save the Ministry on our printing and mailing costs. Simply check the last box on the enclosed envelope, clearly print your email address in the space provided, and we'll make sure you get everything we send out. Please also let us know if you would like to have your name removed from our mailing list. Thanks!