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Stories of Good News

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The Good News is one of the many ways in which Oklahoma Christian University serves churches.

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Tulsa Church Has Active Jail Ministry



by: Stafford North | October 7, 2019

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The Park Church of Christ, formerly Park Plaza, has a very active jail ministry in the Tulsa County Jail and in other locations as well. There are twenty-one active pods in the Tulsa County

Jail, each one of which can hold up to a hundred prisoners. Currently there are about 1,500 inmates.

Under the leadership of jail minister Jim Pinkston, shown here along with his wife, teachers from the Park church hold two-hour classes in the pods each week. Four women teach the classes each week in the three pods for women with Elaine Russell as the coordinator. Currently three men teach in the other pods, going in several times a week. One person holds classes in Spanish for those who need it while another teaches a class for the hearing impaired. Each pod has a classroom which allows those teaching a good venue in which to teach up to twenty-five persons.

The classes are built around material in the New Life Behavior program which focuses on how to have a better life. There are several sets of lessons in this material. Pictured are some of those who enter the jail with Pinkston.



Jail officials allow baptisms only every three months, using a baptistery which is provided by the jail. So, about two weeks prior to the time for baptisms, the classes focus on why and how to be baptized. For this study, the classes use two pages of passages of scripture about baptism which Pinkston has prepared. These lessons start with the baptism of Christ and move through the stories of conversion in the book of Acts and further references to baptism in the epistles.

The last time for baptisms, the Park group immersed ninety-seven. While this is somewhat more than is typical at this location, it shows the effectiveness of their teaching program. Since they can bring only a few at a time, these baptisms took from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Following the baptisms, the group mails those baptized a package with a variety of materials including correspondence courses from New Life Behavior for them to use as further study.

The Park church group also conducts services each week at the Dick Connors Correctional Center and at the Rogers County Jail. They also send correspondence courses to many prisons in Oklahoma totaling over 6,000 packages sent each year. In all of these works together, they baptize about 400 each year. Their best way of following up with these prisoners as they move from place to place is through their correspondence course.

It is interesting to see how facilities in different locations allow a wide variety of options for teaching. These range from teaching larger groups to teaching one at a time through a video and phone connection.

For more information on this effective program from the Park Church of Christ, send inquiries to www.prison05@gmail.com.

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