

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL WORK IN CALIFORNIA

Selected Chaplain and Corresponding Chaplain Fruitage Reports Oct 2025 – Jan 2026

Chaplain: As a chaplain and a Christian healer, I believe it is important to thoughtfully share what I can to the inmates, many who never leave their cells for more than an hour or two. What better time to live as a monk and learn as much as one can about God and our relationship to Him? As a result, I try to give them articles that can pique their interest, in addition to the periodicals shared. The men in the jail have bonded and daily hold morning and evening Bible studies. One told me that he no longer worries about what the other fellow inmates will say or do to them. He's confident that God will protect them.

One woman in particular at the jail is leaning heavily on Christian Science. Last week she talked about facing another hearing. This note was included with the Bible Lesson and periodicals I left for her: "You have the spiritual sense to feel that connection to God, and let that love and care from God flow through your consciousness and take away any sense of injustice. You have the humility to courageously face the decision, moving with progress, leaving this behind you, and going forward onto the next step of your spiritual journey with grace."

Chaplain: The story of the Ark and Dagon was in the Bible Lesson, so after the service we discussed the March 19, 1910 Sentinel article, "The Ark of God and Dagon," by Florence Donaldson, which gave us all a deeper understanding of the story. I also brought in handouts of "Taking Offense" and "Love Your Enemies" from *Miscellaneous Writings* by Mary Baker Eddy. We discussed highlights from the articles and everyone wanted a copy to take with them to study later. One gentleman asked if he could take the extra copies to share with a group he attends that deals with anger issues – yes, of course!

Chaplain: Here are some healings of the heart which were recorded from assignments given out to the incarcerated women I minister to:

"Forgiveness means to forgive like Christ did, to avoid falling into hatred. Forgiveness is to feel normal, that there is no hatred."

"I strive to not call or consider anyone an enemy. My enemy is the spirit of control, the spirit of anger and fear, whatever worldly mechanism causes us to try and dominate each other to get our needs met. Often these efforts are to cover up feelings of constant fear – that is the enemy. I pray for the animalistic mechanism that produces the spirit of fear to be abolished, and for the fruits of the Spirit to flood all our hearts and minds. That all the women here are healed."

"God is molding me into the person He created me to be. Before my incarceration, I was very unpleasant, explosive, selfish, and rude but I have gained a significant amount of patience and

for that I am grateful. I have been working on building self-control. I've had to let go and let God, surrender to the Lord, allowing God to take over the reins of my life. It has not been easy but when I yield to the Holy Spirit, I can receive the strength needed to overcome control, pride, greed, stubbornness & disobedience. I've learned what it is like to live this life without God, I've learned that bad choices lead to bad consequences. I know that God loves me. What I am going through now is His discipline"

Chaplain: I purposely asked for services in the Maximum-Security Yard. These seem to be those who need inspiration and guidance the most. Some religious groups are currently not attending due to violence in the yard and being shut down repeatedly. However, I find eager men who wish to learn about spirituality, the life of Christ Jesus, and how they can improve their outlook and relationships. This work is very rewarding, and I look forward to bringing the light of living in the Truth, Life, and Love as taught by Christ Jesus to these men. "The good we do can never return unto us void." (ISAIAH 55:11).

Corresponding Chaplain: When I first began corresponding with a gentleman, he couldn't sleep at night and struggled with "dark thoughts" day after day, but when he started to read his Bible and began to study Christian Science again, all that went away. In his last letter he was so happy because he gets to train as a fire fighter, and he plays the piano in the prison band and for the church services – he calls that a "double blessing." He said, "My cup runneth over." His life is now full of hope and gratitude.

Another gentleman's article was printed in the December 29th Sentinel, "I no longer saw myself as a prisoner." He gives a moving account of how Christian Science, specifically Mrs. Eddy's poem, "Mother's Evening Prayer," gave him peace when a prison fight between two rival groups in the yard was about to break out. He quietly repeated the words of her poem, and not only was he comforted through prayer, but unlike the typical scenario, the disturbance quickly dissipated with no violence.

Chaplain: One of the individuals I work with at the jail was having a particularly difficult time feeling hopeless and helpless about his situation. He was so desiring to feel the dread of his possible future of long incarceration to be lifted from him. As we worked to see how God was meeting his need right where he is we talked about "God knowing our need before we ask him." We looked in Science & Health where it says – "Thoughts unspoken are not unknown to the divine Mind. Desire is prayer; and no loss can occur from trusting God with our desires, that they may be moulded and exalted before they take form in words and in deeds." (p. 1:10) The fact that we don't have to tell God what we want because He already knows, was a relief to him. On my next visit, as I walked up to the jail I asked God to let me know how I could most specifically help this individual that day. When I sat down in the visiting room and opened my Bible, out fell a piece of paper that my dad had written on many years ago. It said, "Joshua 1:9." Wow! The person I was visiting was named Joshua. Could it be that this was my very specific message from God? And so perfect that Joshua's name was on it! The scripture is: "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." That turned out to be the very message that was needed that day. He felt lifted and hopeful. It was a lovely healing.

Chaplain: I continued speaking with a man who submitted a request for weekly visits. He asked about a Citation Quarterly for the Bible Lessons, which I gave him. One week he asked if we could read a section of the Bible Lesson together. He was also able to bring his tablet with him to our meeting, and I was able to show him how to access Christian Science content. One week the Bible Lesson included Ps. 23:6. We talked about how “goodness and mercy” follow us, not past mistakes. He said he’s looking forward to being one of the 99 sheep, rather than feeling lost and needing others to save him.

Corresponding Chaplain: One fellow communicated with me via tablet that he has gone from feeling hopeless, lost, and forgotten, with no possibility of parole — to now feeling hope, feeling supported by CS and the Bible Lesson, and he has an attorney who approached him about the possibility of a parole hearing in the future. He was initially very positive and grateful for our correspondence; then he wrote and was angry and felt all was lost and he said don’t bother writing to him again. I did continue writing and sending him the Bible Lessons. Then very recently he wrote and even called and said that he is now reading the Bible Lessons and finds real truth in them; he states many good things have happened recently: he has found some peace of mind, he feels supported by my letters and the CS material, he feels deep gratitude for my consistency in writing, and now he has an attorney that just seems to have shown up, wanting to help him with his case. Now he feels there is some hope and some prospects for the future.

Chaplain: There’s a slang term that the youths (who I minister to in juvenile hall) were saying multiple times in each sentence. I mentioned that word would not be appropriate to use in a job interview when they are released. When I suggested they stop using the word, they explained how hard that would be since they had been talking that way for many years. The next week the word was hardly used at all, and when it was, the group would point it out in a good-natured manner. As we were wrapping up the last week of the month, I remarked to the group that I hadn’t heard the word the whole hour we were together. One of the youths, who had said the word excessively during previous sessions, said he hadn’t even thought of saying the word. Everyone had taken to heart that we can choose how we think and act.

Chaplain: The last visit of the month was with one man who is a sincere and disciplined seeker of Truth, trying to base his actions on the teachings of the Mosaic Law AND the teachings of Christ Jesus. It is challenging, given that he had a printout of some 600 instructions found in the “Law,” and wanted to harmonize all of them with as yet uncounted instructions to be found in the parables and other elements of the New Testament and the words of Christ Jesus. We had had an incomplete conversation last week. This week no inmates had come out in the first pod, and in the second pod no one in the group released for rec wanted to meet, so I asked the guard if he would be willing to let this man out early so we could finish a discussion from last week, and he agreed, as long as we sat on two chairs in front of the desk. The man had had a very abusive childhood and spent years in prison, been shot and stabbed and endured all manner of conflict, and yet he clearly felt he was not going to live in that world, and would never abuse his own children, or any man. Outside of the jail he was busy building a constructive business life in many dimensions. He felt blessed to be in jail at this time as an opportunity to do nothing but try to deal with all remaining temptations successfully once and for all.

Our goal was to use our one-on-one time to consider his views fully. In the course of his articulation of his ideas about God's instructions for man, given his sincere desire to learn from every source, he was happy with probing questions and in our two hour long conversation he ever so subtly began to let go of what was a nagging temptation to justify his sense of a need or direction from God to provide corrective discipline [i.e. punishment] to others based on his sense of judging their righteousness. He commented that he felt he and I were essentially in a wonderful protected and heavenly space, sitting in the center of the busiest spot in the pod. He said twice that he was sure all the men in the pod were being blessed simply by observing us, passing by and listening, etc. and feeling the utter peace and perfect Love between us as we focused only on spiritual truth. When I had to go the guard nearby was beaming, and opened the door for me to leave the facility, unescorted.

Chaplain: Six months ago, an incarcerated man approached me and requested prayer treatment for what he described as torturous shame and brooding despondency relating to his felony charge. I countered this claim with the healing testimony of the blind man, whom everyone wanted to know who was at fault — was it him or his parents that were at fault — and Jesus intervened: it was neither him or his parents but that the works of God be made manifest in him. And that his true identity with God is unfallen, intact, blameless, untouched and hid with Christ to serve. Many one-on-one meetings ensued between us where I re-enforced the idea that “shame” can be seen as a grace, and that this grace can transform a great wrong into the highest right—his true identity in the eyes of God. Over the course of some months with steadfast engagement with the weekly Bible Lessons shared at the chapel services, this man has fully embraced the Christian Science healing practice, is actively engaged in multiple prison sponsored college courses as well as other mental health program courses related to his felony charge, and the characteristics of spiritual transformation are clearly visible. His demeanor is engagingly animated, thoughtfully insightful, and helpful to others at our Bible Lesson study at the chapel.

Chaplain: The calling to chaplaincy work always delivers. I do plan ahead some “service” notes with a focus on the CS Bible Lesson as a collective study. However, unexpected things do happen within a prison setting, and I have found it necessary to pivot in other directions when called for — trusting the divine impulse to guide. For example, on one chaplain visit this month, no one showed up to ALPHA compound chapel service call. My response was to turn to our Pastor in prayer, and then listen to hear the guiding voice of the Christ. I was then prompted to walk the yard, wearing my chaplain badge. On my walk a man called out to me from behind. I turned around as the voice behind caught up. “Chaplain! Chaplain!” he said, catching his breath, “I’ve been wanting to attend your services ever since the lecture. How can I join your services?” — “Follow me,” I responded, as we returned to the chapel. There we spent an hour or so speaking one-on-one about his needs and the Christian Science healing practice as a whole. In the end, I gave him a CS Bible Lesson to study, encouraging him to sign up on the service list for call out, and be prepared to share his insights on the lesson on my next chaplain visit. He did show up, along with another, on my next visit. This is just one example of many of following the divine impulse for guidance.

Chaplain: What a joy it is to serve the men in the Jail on Wednesday evenings, 5 PM to 6PM! I am only allowed the one hour, to serve up to three people, but there are now seven men that I am sending packets to each week, along with the four women on the other side of the jail, and the four men I'm writing to in prison.

Unlike prison, jail can be overwhelming to the inmates. There are no activities, sometimes little time allowed to go outside, no sunlight, no windows. I think this is due to the limited staff, who seem kind, just busy. Because of this, the inmates say they can fall into despair, one was even feeling suicidal, if not attended to by their brothers in Christ, who every day hold morning and evening Bible Studies, featuring the Christian Science Bible Lessons we are providing each of them, as well articles that can bring insight and comfort.

Because there are so many who want to see me, they have all agreed to take just ten minutes to check in with me. Through prayer, God gives me a message for each one of them that I trust meets that individual's need. For example, to the man who was feeling suicidal, our God told me to share the Bible story of the woman with the "issue of blood," who felt so forsaken, and was not only healed, "But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour." She was welcomed back to the fold with the highest regard of calling her "daughter!" (Matthew 9:20-22) This dear inmate cried openly, wanting so much to know that as a lost lamb, he was found! Our God is good!

Chaplain: One man, a new student of the Bible, was interested in helping coordinate having a Christian Science lecture in his dorm at Main Jail. I used the Board of Lectureship promotional materials to make a flyer for his dorm. He posted the flyer and a sign-up sheet, and 11 men signed up! With that level of interest, I'll now follow up with programming on the next steps.

Someone who I visit regularly had been having trouble with others in his dorm. They gave him a hard time for studying Science and Health. One person spit on him. During one of our weekly meetings, I shared two articles from the CS Sentinel with him: the poem "Love Our Enemies?" by Jacob Moon, and "Do we act or react?" by Aileen Wavro. A few weeks later he reported that he no longer gets hassled.

Corresponding Chaplain: One incarcerated man describes a deep healing of his inner self, from loss of faith and feeling abandoned and left to die, to feeling a state of "pure bliss" through the "benevolent companionship of our comforter." After a long period of darkness and many years of incarceration, he says that through the study of the weekly CS Bible Lessons and my letters of support, he realizes he is "called to minister" to his fellow inmates. He has a life sentence with no chance of release, but he feels a sense of inner freedom. He realizes that freedom is a state of mind, and he feels free while still being in prison. He is filled with a sense of overwhelming gratitude for the work that I do as well as all fellow chaplains "who work diligently on the behalf of inmates in a spiritual way; Oh how sacred is the work you are doing," he says. "I am truly grateful for grace, sister. Christian Science as well as you are very much instrumental in saving my life." He feels inspired to write a book on his life and he says his inspiration to write is a desire to contribute to a cause, the cause of Christian Science.

Chaplain: An incarcerated man I met with told me he was not feeling well but still wanted to see me. I could see in his face that he was not well. I immediately started sharing truths with him about how he could not be separated from God, divine Love, and as His beloved son that he was made in the image and likeness of God as described in Genesis chapter one: spiritual, whole, loved. I also shared the parable of the prodigal son and emphasized how the Father never stopped loving his son despite all he had done. The Father represents God and his unfailing love for us no matter what we have done. After about 45 minutes, it was time to say goodbye. He declared how he felt so much better and I could see the visible evidence in his face. He left feeling renewed.

Chaplain: One man pointed out something which I encourage in our conversations: to turn to God and let LOVE work things out so it blesses everyone involved. He is embracing this and using this same approach to situations that come about in his life—living by example. Another gentleman joined us today and expressed his joy in seeing us chaplains volunteering our time and bringing “the light” with us each week.

Chaplain: We had an incarcerated woman today state how excited she was about Christian Science due to listening to the CS lectures on her tablet. She felt that Julie Ward’s talk, “You’re not guilty,” was specifically addressing the 3 things she is challenged with. She was so grateful! She also loved Nicole Vigil’s talk too.

Chaplain: A request came in for a visit by a Christian Science chaplain at one of the two facilities I visit. During our first conversation, I asked what prompted his request. He said he found the Christian Science content on his tablet and had been watching the lectures in Spanish. As we talked, he said, “This is awesome!” Another man has been studying Science and Health for close to a year. Although others in his dorm give him a hard time about reading a book other than the Bible, he said what he’s learning is answering questions he’s had for a long time. He attributes a healing of diabetes to his study of the Bible and Science and Health.