

LA CROSSE COUNTY JAIL MINISTRY
P.O. Box 2675
La Crosse, WI 54602-2675

Looking for an easier way
to donate funds?

Donations to support the
La Crosse Jail Ministry can be made
online at Lacrossejailministry.org
(Support & Donate).



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Our Mission:

La Crosse Jail Ministry offers inmates spiritual direction,
rehabilitative support, and connections to faith communities.



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Your gift is greatly needed!

Donations to our ministry can be made online at lacrossejailministry.org (Support & Donate)

Please cut and mail

La Crosse County Jail Ministry Gift Form—Your Support is Welcome!

Please consider helping Jail Ministry with a tax-deductible donation.



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

YES, I would like to make a donation to Jail Ministry in the amount of:

_____ \$100 _____ \$75 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ Other \$ _____

This gift is "in memory of" _____

This gift is "in honor of" _____

Plases make checks payable to:
Jail Ministry
P.O. Box 2675
La Crosse, WI 54602-2675

BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

As a new resident of La Crosse, I was asked by a church friend to consider serving on the Jail Ministry Board. I thought long and hard about my choice as I looked at the application forms. Previously I have volunteered with literacy students, immigrants applying for citizenship, those living with mental illness and persons in need of affordable housing. I taught English as a Second Language in an IL county jail where I came to know people who were lacking job skills and the support of family or friends.



I remember one student who was released but begged to return to jail just so somebody would know him by name. My pen pal in a Texas prison writes that he was born to a drug-addicted mother and an absent father. Because he lived with different foster families and moved often, stability and role models were lacking. Consequently, like many incarcerated individuals, he had little experience deferring gratification in favor of working for long-range goals. Now he lives a life full of regret and depression. I believe our faith calls us to reach out to the marginalized, the ignored and the forgotten. These people of worth long to be useful respected members of our community.

The La Cross Jail Ministry Board works to connect inmates to resources. I have found that everyone on the board has unique gifts to share. I am honored to be part of this group that works tirelessly to ensure a better future for all in our community. (If you are interested in being on our board, please email our president at: president@lacrossejailministry.org.)

Karilyn Parrott

**LA CROSSE JAIL MINISTRY
2024 BOARD MEMBERS**

Chris Magnuson
President

St. Charles Catholic Church in Genoa
President@lacrossejailministry.org

Karilyn Parrott
Vice-President

Bridges United Methodist Church

Harvey Witzenburg
Past-President

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Sister Nina Shephard, *Secretary*
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Dee Paque, *Circles of Support*
Roncalli Newman Church

Amy Jo Van Arsdall
Cornerstone Community Church

William Pretasky
Hope Community Church

Martin Gunderson
*Former La Crosse County
Jail Officer*

Mary Atkinson
Catholic

Elliot Bujan
Roncalli Newman Church /
Mary Mother of the Church

An email sent to Pastor Jerry Hatlevig of Connect Church and a volunteer for La Crosse Jail Ministry from someone formally incarcerated our jail:

How are you this morning? I am very blessed, and I wanted to update you on my life. After years of Recovery in Christ, I am an Associate Pastor locally studying the path toward ordination. I am working concrete to pay for bills and classes. I now have joint custody of my son, because of you, Pastor Nancy, and in fact your entire congregation who showed me love when the world called me a failure. I now go into jails myself preaching

the Gospel. I have 2 sermons per quarter at my local nursing home, and lead Men's Recovery every week. I just wanted to reach out and thank you for taking the Grace to bring the Gospel back into my life.... in the La Crosse County Jail.



Pastors Jerry & Nancy Hatlevig

We are so grateful to the Beer By Bike Brigade for their donation of \$500.00 to the ministry! We are also thankful for all our board members and volunteers who served at the event.



Rabbi Brian Serle

2023 La Crosse County Jail Statistics:

- The average daily population in the jail was 118.
- The average length of stay in the jail was 9.55 days. There were 90 people confined for an average of 153.26 days.
- There were 3707 bookings (officially arrested & taken into custody).

La Crosse Jail Ministry Statistics from April 1, 2023, to April 1, 2024:

- 1695 supply bags were filled for residents.
- 132 services were provided by volunteers.
- 104 studies were provided by volunteers.
- 5 circles of support were working to mentor people transitioning out of jail or prison.

- 468 trips to the library by blocks of people getting books, magazines, and puzzles.
- 175 video visits were set up with residents and spiritual advisors.
- There was an increase in the library of spiritual books by 7

- shelves and books for diverse interests by 8 shelves.
- 252 visits with residents and the chaplain were completed.
- 182 phone calls were completed with the chaplain to assist with healthcare, treatment, financial issues, and emergencies.



We thank Culvers for a wonderful fundraiser that raised \$390.00 for our ministry. Here is a picture of those who served at the event: Sister Nina Shephard, Dee Paque, Chris and Keith Magnuson and Lynn Blakely.

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

Our Circles of Support program is looking for faith communities to create a group of 4 to 5 people to mentor a person transitioning out of incarceration. The group would be provided with training and a person interested in pursuing the same faith.

Our Circles of Support program is also looking for volunteers interested in being a part of a diverse circle of people mentoring someone transitioning out of jail or prison.

A huge thank you to our volunteers who work in the jail, in the juvenile detention center, and in our Circles of Support program. **You make a difference!**

Buddhist Service: Looking for volunteers on the second Sunday of the month for a 6:15 p.m. service.

Muslim Service: Looking for volunteers to lead a service or prayer time.

WHY I SERVED LA CROSSE JAIL MINISTRY

Friends, I am so grateful to have reached the milestone of five years of service to the La Crosse Jail Ministry. This service has affected my life in so many positive ways.

What is the La Crosse Jail Ministry, and what do we do for the residents of our county jail? You can imagine how lonely and depressing it must be to be incarcerated. In many cases, the resident doesn't know how long they will be kept there, until their case is adjudicated. Some will be destined for release, others for further detention in other institutions.

We are so lucky to be free, to leave our homes any time we wish, to walk down the street, to stop at the store, to visit friends and family. When I first visited our jail 5 years ago, I was struck with how stark and isolating the place is. I always thought to myself, "How can we help these people and give them hope for a better future?"

Our ministry supports residents, from the moment they are incarcerated, throughout the period they are in jail, and then help them rejoin "normal" life once they are released. Like many other religious leaders in our community, I have experienced the joy of meeting with residents as a group. These services and studies certainly can get them thinking positive and optimistic thoughts. More than anything else, it can give them HOPE. These meetings also provide an opportunity to connect them to faith communities.

I am grateful for the five years I have served at the Jail Ministry, and for the incredible volunteers who provide their time and energy to people who are truly in need. I have been blessed by this service. I hope you will help the Jail Ministry, with your money donations and the gift of your time. Thank you!

Rabbi Brian Serle
Congregation Sons of Abraham,
La Crosse, WI

DERECH ERETZ

The La Crosse County Jail Ministry has provided me with the opportunity to live out the core Jewish value known as *Derech Eretz*.



This Hebrew phrase, which literally means "the way of the land" (commonly translated as "the way of the world"), demands us to treat all of humanity with dignity and respect, demonstrating genuine care and concern for the welfare of everyone without regard to their status in life.

The Jewish services at the La Crosse County Jail reach inmates probably at one of the lowest points in their lives without pressuring them to conform to a set of rigid theological beliefs as Judaism places a strong emphasis on right action in the form of good deeds and far less emphasis on right belief. During Jewish services, we share with inmates the Hebrew scriptures, Jewish prayers, and the diversity of Jewish thought and practice that together serve to support the ideals of human dignity, universal justice, equality, and freedom. In fellowship, we share the joy and goodness found in God's creation and God's desire that each of us experience a life filled with peace, purpose, and joy – a life of meaning that is achieved when we love and care for each other without conditions. For inmates, many of whom have lacked the social supports needed to succeed in life, Jewish services provide a supportive forum during which they are free to envision a hope-filled future lived in community with others.

Molly Van Atta

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

I am so grateful for the board's support in supporting my education and training.



Ann Wales

I have passed two courses already for a correctional chaplain's certification provided by CMCA (Correctional Ministries and Chaplain's Association). Thanks to Dean Ciokiewicz for nominating me to receive a free ticket and hotel for the CMCA summit this May. It was great to be able to worship with all the people there serving God in jail and prison ministry. The testimonies of many who had been in prison but were now working in correctional ministries were especially inspirational.

One take away from all of this is the power of discipling which in the Christian faith means to help people become more like Jesus. I know our volunteers serve because they believe their faith can bring hope and change to our residents and former residents. Please pray for wisdom as we seek the best ways to disciple residents this next year. Any ideas or resources that you would like to share with me, please email me at: Chaplain@lacrossejailministry.org.

Ann Wales, Chaplain