

An HFP Heart-Warmer! The Sequence of Events:

September, 2015

Doug and Matt travel to small-town USA to make a Sunday morning presentation to an adult education class in a small, local church. Members of the audience love the story of HFP, respond with a gift and promise their prayers.

January, 2016

A mother contacts HFP saying that her son would like to correspond with HFP. He had heard Doug speak at his prison facility 3 years earlier and appreciated our work.

Later that month

Here's my dilemma: I'm a part of the MDOC flagship college program operated by Jackson college here at the Cotton Fac. (Prison Education Initiative). There are 200+ inmate students working toward an associates degree. Proudly I am a top student maintaining a 4.0 grade pt. average. However interestingly, this is the only college program in the prison system that inmates foot the bill via outside sponsors (classes run roughly \$560 a term), most of us take 1-class per semester. Unfortunately I lost my sponsorship and won't be able to continue unless I find an alternative source of funding. I would be grateful if you could help draw the attention of someone who's in the position to sponsor me...perhaps a church? Funding would go directly to the program and they could track my progress through the college website. FYI, I grew up in small-town USA (the very same city where Doug and Matt spoke in church!)

The next step

Matt contacts Small Town UMC to see if they might be interested in helping this man.

The Church responds

People in our church know him and his family. Nice guy! We'll help.

The prisoner reacts

My aspiration is to use my Associate's Degree as an avenue to move towards a Bachelors in Social Work, with a blended area of focus: Military personal suffering from PTSD, Troubled youth, and Opiate addiction prevention (I lost a dear sister to the epidemic in 2013).

*I Wanted to thank your organization again for taking on my cause!
Thanks from the bottom of my heart!!! Mr. J.*

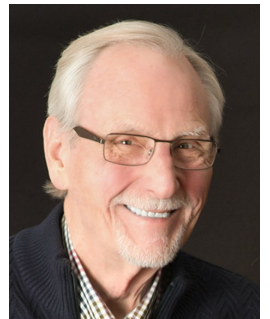
***Nobody is doing what you do!
Nobody wants to do what you do!
Nobody dares to do what you do!***

-Prominent Consultant working with HFP

From the desk of Doug: A bright future! And we don't get the credit

The famous composer Johann Sebastian Bach penned the initials S.D.G. at the conclusion of every religious piece of music that he wrote. Not only do I love the music of this wonderful composer, but I love the sentiment.

The initials stand for the words Soli Deo Gloria, and loosely translated, this means, "To God alone be the glory!"



I bring this up because somedays it could be pretty easy for Matt and me to start feeling smug and yes, even boastful, about the work of HFP. I don't mean to say that our tasks and results each day are that huge and spectacular, but they are, indeed, impressive and amazing!

One could get an inflated ego in a hurry when reading the notes of gratitude that regularly arrive at our desk from prisoners, both by email and U.S. Mail. Not only that, but we were flattered by the words of a nationally known consultant who—thanks to some generous donors—was retained by our Board of Directors to help chart our path into the future. You'll see his quote about this ministry in bold print at the bottom of this page. That's heady stuff!

The progress we've made in the past 15 years is nothing compared to where we are going, thanks to you, your prayers, and your financial support. But it's not Matt and Doug, our Board, our Development Committee, or our panel of professions who get the credit.

S.D.G.!

Donate Online
Humanityforprisoners.org

HFP Calendar

Saturday, August 6



Hot Dog! A Parade!

Planning to be in Grand Haven for the annual U.S. Coast Guard Anniversary Parade? No need to bring your lunch along. Once again this year HFP volunteers will be selling pulled pork sandwiches and hot dogs, along with beverage and chips, along the parade route. You'll see our booth right in front of St. John's Episcopal Church, 524 Washington Avenue, across the street from the parade reviewing stand. All food has been donated, so every dollar raised will go to HFP!

Sunday, August 7



Doug preaches!

HFP President Doug Tjapkes will deliver the sermon in the morning service at Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain NE, in downtown Grand Rapids. Summer services are held in the air-conditioned chapel, and begin at 10 AM. Sermon title: **The Road to Prison**. Doug founded HUMANITY FOR PRISONERS in 2001 and still serves as its President. He is an award-winning broadcast journalist, and the author of the book SWEET FREEDOM, which tells the story of his 9-year fight to free a wrongly-convicted prisoner. An organist and choir director, he has served in his church's music department for 52 years. Doug and his wife Marcia live in Ferrysburg, have four adult children and 9 grand-children.

Monday, September 19

Sister Helen comes to Grand Haven!

Sister Helen Prejean, arguably the highest profile death penalty opponent in the United States, will be in Grand Haven for a community lecture and book signing. The event will take place at Lakeshore Middle School Auditorium, 900 Cutler St. in Grand Haven. On Sunday, September 18, HFP will also host a showing of the movie "Dead Man Walking" at 7 p.m. at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 920 Fulton St. in Grand Haven.

Sister Helen joined the Sisters of St. Joseph of Medaille in 1957 (now known as the Congregation of St. Joseph) and received a B.A. in English and Education from St. Mary's Dominican College, New Orleans in 1962. In 1973, she earned an M.A. in Religious Education from St. Paul's University in Ottawa, Canada. Sister Helen began her prison ministry in 1981 when she dedicated her life to the poor of New Orleans. She turned her experiences into a book, **Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States**, which was Number 1 on the New York Times Best Seller List for 31 weeks. It also was an international best-seller and has been translated into ten different languages. Stay tuned for ticket and sponsorship details!



Why not better nutrition behind bars?

Quotes from the letter of inmate parents:

Poor nutrition is a big issue for our son. As we visited for 8 solid hours each day (sat/sun) we went through about \$50.00 in quarters for the vending machines. What an absolute waste! ALL JUNK. It's a no brainer to have more healthy choices for vending machines. It would cost the state ZERO to have healthy vending machine options? He was interested in just a piece of fruit or some cheese, etc.

Crochet Program Needs

One special program HFP participates in is supplying yarn to multiple prisons for crochet and knitting programs. Recently, a request came in from Parnall Correctional Facility asking HFP for 50 sets of Crochet Hooks. The approximate cost of this purchase would be \$250.



We're seeking five supporters willing to donate \$50 to cover this cost. If you'd like to contribute to this purchase, simply make a donation to HFP online at humanityforprisoners.org or by mail to PO Box 687, Grand Haven, MI 49417, with a note saying "Crochet." If you have plastic crochet hooks already that you'd like to donate, call our office at 616.935.0075.

Thanks to your continued support, HFP continues to touch lives!

Just Goods New Location

Humanity for Prisoners has been partnering with another Grand Haven non-profit called Extended Grace to provide prisoner-made items to the fair trade/social cause store called Just Goods.

If you are interested in taking a look at all the items Just Goods has to offer, visit them at their new location at JSD Studios located at 219 N 7th Street, Suite #4 in Grand Haven.