



TRACK MINISTRY NEWS

Race Track Chaplaincy of America, Pennsylvania Division, Inc.

www.rtca-pa.org

Sharing God's Love at Philadelphia Park

SPRING 2012



“Who rose from the grave on Easter Morning... JESUS!”

There was a lot of sound and excitement at the Chaplain's Easter Party. How was the Lord going to be honored and given recognition? How could anyone get the attention of this crowd and tell, or remind everyone that the Resurrection is the most important part of Easter?

The decorations, crafts, and even the cake were quite a declaration of Jesus as our Risen Lord and Savior. The story books that the children brought home with them would, we pray, be read over and over again, and help many be our Savior's disciples. Would that be all that would be done that day to honor Jesus?

The Holy Spirit was moving in a mighty way as Bob Valentine put it later that day as he reflected on the starts of each round, by age, of the Easter Egg Hunts.

The children lined up along the starting line, their baskets in hand, waiting. Chaplain Bunker asked, “Who rose from the grave on Easter Morning?”

There were a few on the line and some parents behind, who replied, “Jesus.”

The Chaplain spoke again, “Jesus died on the Cross on Good Friday for our sins. Who rose from the grave on Easter Morning?”

Many more replied, more enthusiastically, “Jesus!”

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years.

– Genesis 1:14 (ASV)

It will soon officially be, as of the writing of this article, spring. We would not know it if it were not for the calendars. I thought spring had already started a dozen times since the beginning of the year. The winter has been historically mild, and I still would not know that it were actually spring without the calendar to tell me. Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night and I don't know if it is 1 o'clock or 4:45 and the alarm is about to go off. Without the clock I have no idea.

One particularly harsh punishment that is perpetrated sometimes is to put someone in 'solitary' without windows or clock, and leave the lights on all the time, or off all the time. It can drive most people 'crazy' in just a few days. Within ourselves we have little sense of time. The creation of God, and God Himself, is the true measure of time and all else.

If we are not careful we can get rather confused – even our calendars need adjustments. In 1582 when some first stopped using the Julian calendar and converted to the Gregorian calendar we had to skip 10 days in October. It took over 1500 years for the calendar to get that far off, that's pretty good if you ask me, I sometimes don't even know what day of the week it is. Older calendars were adjusted every couple of years, and even more often, so farmers could plant at the proper times, festivals could be celebrated in timely ways, and we could keep accurate records.

We have always known when our calendars were falling behind because of the 'lights in the heavens'. Without them we would not have been sure. We might have thought how the flowers are blooming early this year, but we would not have

been sure. God and His created time pieces are the most reliable time keepers.

There have been times when God's people were wondering and worrying, that God had lost track of time. The Israelites in Egypt for that 400 years waiting to be delivered to the Promised Land, and those who had been waiting even longer for the Messiah to come were laboring under extreme anxiety and misapprehension. Wondering, what time is it? Has God forgotten about us? Has God changed His mind and gone back on His promise?

Jeremiah looked out over what had once been the most blessed and beautiful city in the history of the world, Ancient Jerusalem, and saw it's burned and utterly broken buildings and streets filled with rubble and death. He thought that all was lost. He thought that this was surely a game changer and the great and glorious plans of God were thwarted. He writes that he was "far from peace...and my strength and my hope have perished." And then, a light from outside of himself entered into his spirit and ministered to him this truth recorded in the Bible book of Lamentations: "22 Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."

The external events of springtime are a most visceral and profound reminder that God keeps His promises. That God's creation is amazingly resilient and able to provide so many wonderful blessings. May this season call us out of whatever dark winters our souls may be wrestling with and help us to see the goodness of the Lord all around us and work by His light and in His might.

Even the darkness is not dark to You, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You.

– Psalms 139:12

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Chaplain Bunker said, "I will ask you who rose from the dead on Easter Morning. As you hear the g of morning, shout Jesus, and take off to hunt for the eggs. Let's practice it a few times."

That was how it went for the four Easter Egg Hunts, divided by ages. Chaplain said, "I didn't plan on doing this, it just happened, but I had been praying that the Name of Jesus would be lifted up. Those children and so many of the others assembled there lifted up His name with, I believe, glorifying joy."

We pray that the Risen Lord Jesus is always at the center of the Race Track ministry here at Philadelphia Park. Thank you to all the volunteers present that day and all of our supporters who make evangelistic outreaches like the Chaplain's Easter Party a reality.



Track Tours a great blessing

Would you like to get a close up look of what you read and hear about? Saturday mornings is a great time to see a lot of exercise riding, starting gate practice, horseshoeing, and much more. It is a race day as well and the first race starts at 12:25 p.m., so you could easily watch some races.

Any day there is a lot to see, here at the Philadelphia Park Mission, and we race about four days a week, so there are many days that you can see races. We exercise horses everyday as well; the horses have to be cared for each and everyday too.

Everyone who has had a tour has greatly enjoyed it and left wanting to come back again. There is way more to see than can be seen in a day.

You can schedule a tour by calling or emailing us. Depending on how much time you have we can adapt a tour to meet your time restraints and interests.

The workers at the track love having visitors as well. It is truly an encouragement to them to know that someone is interested enough in what goes on to want to come and see.

You may be interested in doing some work when you come. There is plenty to do, cleaning, visiting, filing, and more. Your talents may determine how you would like to bless and be blessed. Hope to see you soon!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Needs:

We have many basic needs for household items, clothing, and food. Donations can be accepted seven days a week from 8 am – 9 pm. For special arrangements do not hesitate to call the office. Please do call ahead and/or leave your name and organization's name so we can send a thank you.

If you are not sure whether we can use what you would like to donate feel free to call, but most likely we can use it or have a friend who needs it.

Work boots of all sizes, belts, and gardening tools are greatly needed at this time.

Upcoming Special Events:

- ♦ 5/25 Memorial Day
Family Picnic
11-3
- ♦ 6/29 Independence Day
Family Picnic
11-3

*Behold, the LORD'S hand
is not so short
That it cannot save;
Nor is His ear so dull
That it cannot hear.
Isaiah 59:1 (NASB)*



Evidence of God's Work at the Track

Joe will be 50 years old in a few months and he lives on the backstretch. He is tired and barely making ends meet. He has a daughter in college and another in high school. The mother, his ex-wife, is out of the picture. The children live with their grandparents who may not be able to care for the children anymore because of health issues. Joe also gets picked on a lot and has a bad temper as you might expect of someone who has these things happening to him.

His reactions to the teasing often make him get blamed for the disruptions that ensue. He has had to go before the stewards a couple of times as a result of altercations. Some people just won't let up on him, as if they know that they can get to him. I have talked with Joe many times about controlling his temper and not letting others cause him to react in ways that are going to hurt him and his family. We were praying together the other day and he believes that Jesus came into his heart. He is much more relaxed, calm, and peaceful. Externally nothing has changed, in fact things

are getting worse in many ways, but Joe is dealing with everything in a much healthier manner.

Tina has been living in denial for most of her life. She has made many bad decisions and it is depressing for her to look back on her life and see all the hurt that she has caused to herself and others. Finally she has begun to come to the Chaplain's 12 step meetings. She had come in the past for a meeting and then not come again for many months and then come again for another meeting. There were never two meetings in a row. The past several weeks though she has been both going to group meetings and meeting with the Chaplain individually. She has even begun to go to church! She is doing this without being forced to do it by authorities. It is really a cause for hope. Pray that she accept Jesus as her Savior and that she continue to improve.

These are just a few of the many that are growing and being helped in and through our ministry!

Racetrack Chaplaincy Joyful Thanksgivings:

Praise the LORD with joyful acclamations for all the churches that support this peculiar ministry. God's Son did command us to go "into all the world" (Mark 16:15), and this ministry is in obedience to His great commission. We rejoice that the ministry is supported by track management, and the horsemen. The prayerful and financial support of churches is also essential to maintain independence, to be Spirit-powered and to be God honoring and glorifying by this being a ministry of His Church. THANK YOU for your partnership!!!