

ENGAGING DISCIPLESHIP

Open My Eyes, My Heart, My Hands MARK 10:46-52

America for Christ Offering 2012

Engaging Discipleship and Hope

This year's America for Christ (AFC) theme, "Engaging Discipleship: Open My Eyes, My Heart, My Hands," reminds us of the purpose of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) in making a difference in the lives of individuals and communities. One mother, whose son, R.A., is in prison, found hope and support through the "Praying and Preparing for Their Return Home" program at First Hispanic Baptist Church of Lancaster, Pa.

ABHMS' Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry provides guidance to churches that would like to conduct the program. A church then invites its surrounding community to join with families of prisoners and the congregation in an evening of prayer for the incarcerated as well as a movie and snack.



First Hispanic Baptist Church of Lancaster found the program particularly eye-opening, as many families in its neighborhood have loved ones in prison. The congregation's hearts were also opened, since they were able to feel the pain of those families, including three of their own members. Likewise, their hands were opened, as they decided to provide care and hope.

When you support the AFC Offering, you are doing mission across the street. R.A. and his mother now have a place that is a Station of

Hope, where people are praying for them, encouraging them to continue to attend church while he is in prison, and supporting the rest of their family.

"We didn't know we were going to get such response," says Raúl Morales, president of the church's board. "There is a lot of need, and we are glad we can provide a space for people to hear that there is hope in Christ."

For more information, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries & Programs > Justice Ministries > Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry or contact the Rev. Fela Barrueto, national coordinator, at fela.barrueto@abhms.org or 1-800-222-3872, x2493.

AFC'12

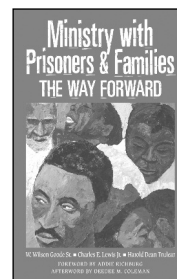
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