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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Jail Ministry Students Return in Person**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- Frustrated that they were unable to foster personal relations with inmates at the Clark County Jail because of restrictions implemented during COVID-19, Cedarville University's Clark County Jail Ministry student chaplains found a way to minister to inmates. They began serving at Greene County Jail in Xenia, Ohio.

"We'd been praying to return to in-person ministry, and then we learned that Greene County Jail was admitting visitors," said jail ministry member Kelton Moore, a sixth year [accelerated M.Div.](#) student at Cedarville. "So, we jumped at the chance."

The students' persistence derives from how vital they believe their ministry is. "I want to help people struggle through addiction because I struggled with addictions in high school," student chaplain Hannah Jeffers, a junior [biblical studies](#) major, said. "I want to help people feeling isolated – like I did – to find a place in the church."

"Inmates have an hour each day to talk with a chaplain, to get down to the nitty-gritty of their hearts and determine what they want to live for," Jeffers continued.

Though COVID halted in-person ministry in spring 2020, the Clark County Jail Ministry group refused to give up and began writing letters to inmates. Naturally plagued by return-to-sender notices and their inability to follow up with inmates, the ministry members continued searching for a way to return in person.

Early in the fall 2021 semester, the students received the green light to return to Clark County Jail, only to have the COVID resurgence cancel their plans.

Rather than be disappointed, the group searched for other local jails admitting chaplains and were rewarded with Greene County Jail. The students are thrilled to minister in person again. They were able to spend several Sundays at the end of the semester at the jail.

"My heart hurts for these people, and we want to show that we love them and have a gift to share that's more important than any riches they could acquire," third year accelerated M.Div. student Jeremy Gieske noted. "The gospel changes everything."

While the ministry is often gritty and fruitless, each of the students involved is eager to share encouraging stories of times they were able to serve as an encouragement.

Moore shares the story of a man he met in Clark County Jail after offering to talk with Spanish-speaking inmates, thinking the language barrier might make them feel isolated. "I talked to him regularly for months. I met him the September after the summer he came to Christ, and by the

time he left the next year he had read through the Bible five times. I found so much joy in watching his growth in Christ and the increase in his zeal and love for his family.

“I’m so grateful I was able to help deepen and widen his perception of the gospel. This is why we’re so passionate about jail ministry.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,715 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, including its [accelerated Master of Divinity degree](#), strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit [cedarville.edu](http://cedarville.edu).

Written by Brendan Rowland