

Report to Arizona Ecumenical Council
Chayah Ministries of Arizona
September 2011

Chayah Ministries of Arizona (www.chayah.org) is an ecumenical ministry for incarcerated youth. In cooperation with the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, four times a year, 3-day, volunteer run retreats are conducted at the two facilities in North Phoenix: Adobe Mountain School for boys and Black Canyon School for girls. During the three days, talks are given by clergy, lay volunteers, and incarcerated youth who have participated in a previous Chayah. Chayah is a place to learn about the love of Christ through the prayers, worship, and acts of service of a loving support community. The three days are also filled with singing, games, fellowship periods, and special food.

There are weekly group reunions on Saturday afternoons, alternating for the boys and girls. These two hour follow-up groupings include prayer, worship, devotions, time to catch up with the youth about their progress, and, of course, snacks.

Chayah is based on the youth retreats of Cursillo, Walk to Emmaus, Tres Dias, Via de Cristo, and similar 3-day movements. Volunteers come from these programs and from numerous churches throughout the valley. Presently, we have 60 full-time, cleared volunteers, representing Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, and several non-denominational churches. In addition, there are many one-time volunteers who participate regularly.

The mission of Chayah is to teach and demonstrate unconditional love in such a way that God, through Jesus Christ, is manifested to the incarcerated youth of Arizona. The three day Chayah retreat provides participants the opportunity to expand their faith, to experience Christian love and support, and to renew their commitment to Jesus Christ. The focus is on God's grace, how to experience Jesus Christ as Friend, Savior, and Lord, and how to respond to Christ's call to discipleship.

Chayah came under the AEC umbrella in February 20011. We have a separate checking account with a current balance of **\$9447.42**. These funds consist of personal, church, and corporate donations and team fees. We are also able to secure grants by being under the AEC umbrella as a 501(C)3 organization.

Our upcoming 3 day Chayah is planned for September 29, 30, and October 1 at Adobe Mountain School. Our lay director is Violet Todd from Celebration Lutheran Church; her co-lay is Cindy Staggs from Peace Lutheran Church. Team members for this Chayah consist of people from ten different churches throughout the valley, including Lutheran, Methodist, and non-denominational congregations.

Committee Members
Chayah Ministries of Arizona
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Past President/
Adviser:

Patrice Ek, Trinity United Methodist Church, Walk to Emmaus

Spiritual Adviser: Chaplain Jim Ek, Trinity United Methodist Church, Walk to Emmaus

President: Kathy Twitchell, Trinity Bible Church, Tres Dias

Vice-President: Karen Lo Pinto, Celebration Lutheran Church, Cursillo

Secretary: Jo Jaffe, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Cursillo

Treasurer: Martin Twitchell, Trinity Bible Church, Tres Dias

Members: Rich Henschel, Light of the Desert Lutheran Church, Cursillo
Lita Johnson, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Cursillo
Chris Lang, Christ Church of the Valley, Cursillo
Bob Poucher, Light of the Desert Lutheran Church, Cursillo
Violet Todd, Celebration Lutheran Church, Cursillo
Dan Weichart, Peace Lutheran Church, Cursillo