

the Northumberland shore who has participated in AVP for several years. When asked what it's like to be a woman visitor to a men's prison, she said, "I don't give much thought to it. I just consider myself another participant, and I'm always treated with respect. But I've noticed that outside the prison I'm less likely to feel fearful in situations with strangers since my involvement in AVP."

The sense of joy and lightness that often accompanies the end of a workshop usually spills over into the next week and beyond. It's difficult to imagine how after working Monday through Thursday at my job, followed by a three day AVP workshop in Dorchester, I would feel refreshed and rested on Monday. But stepping clearly outside the parameters of my "normal" life apparently has that effect on me. I arrive home full of gratitude and appreciation for my good fortune in matters of life and family.

On the Sunday drive home as the shadows of the trees lengthened across the highway, 'Musical' Mike Miller, 'Just' John McKendy, and I made the two-hour drive back to Fredericton. While drinking in the beauty of the New Brunswick forest all around us, we recounted experiences and felt calmly melancholic. My experience of AVP seems to have opened the social world to me in new ways. I now know myself, and the person I present to others so much better than before. Could AVP be something for you?

*Vince Zelazny, New Brunswick Monthly Meeting
Co-clerk of Quakers Fostering Justice, a Standing Committee
of CFSC.*

[For individual Friends or Monthly Meetings interested in starting AVP in their area, small grants to assist in this work are available from Quakers Fostering Justice. Contact Meredith Egan, Programme Coordinator, at either 604 832 0954 or qfj@quaker.ca]



On Being a Chaplain

My name is Kate Johnson and I am a member of Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting. I am also the chaplain at Pittsburgh Institution, a minimum-security federal institution, about a half hour north of Kingston Ontario. Friends may be interested to know that I am your representative employed by Canadian Yearly Meeting. The Correctional Service of Canada reimburses CYM for my salary and associated costs. This 'contract model' of doing chaplaincy in the correctional service, could provide opportunities for other Friends who share my leading to be "released" to this work. I have the blessing of being first but hope I will not be the last.

As chaplain I am responsible for providing pastoral care to interested individuals among the two hundred and thirty plus men in residence here, and the one hundred and ten staff members and their families. I run groups, provide one-to-one counselling, coordinate a volunteer program of about thirty volunteers, and lead worship. I provide public education to churches and community groups on the issues of incarceration and its impact on all who come in contact with the system. I approach each of these duties from the perspective of Restorative Justice.

Being a Friend is a real advantage in this work. It is my responsibility to ensure that the spiritual needs of all the prisoners are met. The liberal theological approach of Friends with our insistence on "meeting that of God" in everyone is a very helpful starting place. Because Friends have a history of involvement and interest in prison work, my Meeting is interested in what I do. Some are supporting me through the committee of care for my chaplaincy, and others will be coming to the institution to facilitate workshops in Alternatives to Violence. Many Friends from across CYM have been involved in setting up the contract and making sure it runs smoothly. I am very grateful for their support. Many of my colleagues receive very little support from their denominations and feel isolated in their work. I do not have that feeling at all.

It is challenging to uphold Friendly values in a dehumanizing, oppressive prison environment so opposed to our Quaker ideals. CYM and QFJ can support my work by continuing to hold this institution and my work here in the Light. Resource materials for work I can do with the men, the staff and their families, would also be most welcome. K.J.