

**Koinonia House® National Ministries (KHNM) 2009 Banquet**  
**Thursday, October 29, 2009**  
**Keynote Address**  
**Manny Mill**

## *Who is my Neighbor?*

*TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR, IT REQUIRES OF US TO ALWAYS ASK THE  
QUESTION: WHAT IS BEST FOR MY NEIGHBOR?*

*Aleluya! Look at you all!* You are all very colorful, diverse, loving, joyful people - loving each other. You are a real picture and glimpse of heaven, indeed. Jesus is coming back, EXCLUSIVELY, for a colorful and diverse bride.

We have lots of diversity here tonight—CULTURE AND CLASS—including lots of Christians Dutch from everywhere, including Demotte, Indiana and the “holy city” of Grand Rapids, Michigan. That is, indeed, a clear sign that Jesus may be coming back tonight.

How do you like my AFRICAN LIBERIAN SHIRT? I was bestowed as the first Cuban Liberian CHIEF by Bishop Yenner Wanti. I am also the first Cuban to also become Dutch by ADOPTION. *My real name is Manny Van Der Wind Mill. SO, I have tons of FIRST cousins here tonight!! Being all things to all people - Aleluya!!*

*CROSS OVER YOUR TABLE AND GIVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AT ANOTHER TABLE A HIGH-LOVING, ALELUYA FIVE!!* The angels are doing the RUMBA and CHA-CHA-CHA tonight with Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost AND THEY want FOR US TO JOIN THEM. *Come On!* God the Father may be telling Jesus “VAMONOS, VAMONOS, JESUS”(Spanish for “Let’s go, Let’s go, Jesus”) Get on that WHITE HORSE and come back for THEM (US) and bring them TO THEIR PERMANENT HOME, HERE, IN ALELUYA CITY, RIGHT ON GOLDEN STREET!! What we are seeing and experiencing here tonight is at the heart of God and His Glorious Gospel!!!

WHEN ONE IS A CHRISTIAN, ONE ENTERS INTO A PERMANENT AND JOYFUL ADVENTURE WITH GOD, OUR LOVING CREATOR, where God wants to surprise us daily, with His amazing Wonders and awesome LOVE through His people!!

God's Love for us is VERY REFRESHING, AWESOME AND COMPELLING. He will not leave us hanging at the gate. Jesus will always meet us at our gate and invite us IN, with wide open arms and pierced Hands. God has given us a guarantee that Jesus is coming back FOR HIS PEOPLE. I know because He came once already. Jesus coming back is at the heart of the Gospel!

*Jesus said to us in John 14: "And if I go to prepare a place for YOU, I WILL COME BACK and TAKE YOU to be with ME that YOU ALSO MAY BE WHERE I AM."*

I really want for you to know that I am eternally grateful *to each of you* for coming out tonight to worship God our Father with total loyalty, with no other idols in your house, and with deep and joyful gratitude. God's love is an amazing, awesome, persistent and irresistible LOVE for us, clearly and convincingly demonstrated in and through Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus, that God's Love and Truth is fully embodied and clearly manifested, in the historical, redemptive eternal events of the Cross and the Resurrection, with indisputable eye witnessed evidence and against such evidence, there is no argument. *Aleluya!*

○ *The Late Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR once said: "The Question is not what may happen to me if I do not love my neighbor, but rather the question is what may happen to my neighbor if I do not love my neighbor."*

*Therefore, we do not serve and love God and our neighbor because of what God may do for us today or tomorrow, but rather for what God already did for us through and in Jesus Christ!! Hence, we love God and our neighbor with fresh and genuine joy, "Out of duty and gratitude", as my mentor, Chuck Colson, says. Aleluya!!!*

God gave me a very precious gift in Mt Zion, Jerusalem, Israel, on the last day of my federal parole over 20 years ago. That gift was my wife Barbara (READ CHAPTER 9 OF OUR BOOK), who I love radically. I NEED her big time and for sure I do not deserve her (I also rub her feet daily). Barbara is my closest neighbor.

- With clarity and eloquence, she told you WHAT it is that we do just a few minutes ago.
- *My main objective and focus* tonight is to tell you, AND SHOW YOU, WHY we, at Koinonia House® National Ministries, do what we do to equip the Church through the loving Gospel to do post-prison ministry. We do this with Agape love to deal *effectively* with OUR BIG MESS of crime and recidivism, due to our sin that is manifested in the broken family in America.

I want to make sure that you do not miss out on the unspeakable joy of being part of THIS AWESOME MINISTRY OF AGAPE LOVE, which is at the heart of God meeting our Christian Neighbors at the prison gate and beyond. This is done with Radical Biblical Love, for God's glory and the common good of all! Aleluya!! I believe God is inviting you tonight to come ONTO the field and PLAY YOUR GOD-GIVEN ASSIGNED POSITION BY becoming a player and by getting "DIRTY". There is much fresh joy WHEN ONE GETS "DIRTY".

Listen to the Word of God in Proverbs 3. "Do not withhold good from those who deserve it when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, 'Come back later; I will give it tomorrow', when you now have it with you".

### EDDIE'S STORY

I knew I could not withhold good from Eddie Wells when he asked us for help by loving him in his time of great need, although it did not fit our time table. I knew I had to change my plans for God's plans. *We love our neighbor because God first loved us - even those who REJECT Cuban Food!!*

I had to love Eddie Wells with extra A G A P E love when he was released from Vienna Correctional Center in November of 1996. We were eating Thanksgiving Dinner with my

“Paisa”, Jorge Valdes - former lord of the Medellin Drug Cartel - by now a homeowner in Wheaton. Jorge also came to live with Barbara, our boys and I in the Koinonia House® of Wheaton, when he was first released from prison.

Let me tell you: Eddie experienced a cultural awakening! Eddie and I had our first fight because he did not want to eat a Cuban turkey smothered with garlic, Cuban black beans with GARLIC, and everything else with Garlic! Jorge’s house was immersed in garlic!!

However, Eddie and I made up quickly! We love each other for LIFE no matter what, as neighbors, even though he will not eat Cuban Food!! I am wondering what Eddie is going to eat at the Supper feast with Jesus then?

Eddie became a very credible witness for Jesus Christ as part of our Koinonia House® of Wheaton. He graduated with high honors and he and I have traveled all over America equipping the church and other ministries to love our Christian neighbors coming out of prison. Eddie has been impacting thousands for Christ, which he continues to do with his wife, Phyllis, and children, at the Glenwood School for boys and girls (at risk) in St. Charles, IL.

God’s Agape Love is supreme and our highest pursuit!! Christians are known by their Agape Love that does not fear. That love comes from our permanent position at the Cross and in Christ! This right here is our “practice run” to love God and one another because we are going to spend eternity together, so *we better get use to each other now!!*

Perfect Practice Makes *Permanent*. Hence, our love for God and our Neighbor must become part of our fabric as Christians to show the impeccable *loving* character of Christ!

Please listen carefully, again, to the *all satisfying*, all delicious, (Mmm) *all reliable* Word\_of God which contains all the Truth we need to live and experience real and eternal LIFE. With this Word we know how to live LIFE to its fullness, in love, with God and our neighbor.

*John, the Beloved Apostle, wrote in I John:*

*“God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God, and God in him. In this way love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the Day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, ‘I love God’, yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God, must also love his brother.*

We, at Koinonia House® National Ministries, believe that those 2.4 million men and women in prisons and jails, and most importantly, those 800,000 men and women coming out of prison and jail this year, are not only 100% *precious* human beings just like you and I, (who God created in His very own image) but they are also our neighbors!! We must then love our neighbor with what is best for our neighbor. We also believe that loving our neighbors must require for us, the Church, to love them *up close and personal*, (not only in prison) with consistent Biblical Truth that will set them free from self, because self will only destroy self. We must also love them with joy, EVEN with all of their unresolved messes, at the prison and jail gate and beyond.

These men and women must be met at the prison gate because the Jesus Christ they *must see and experience in us, when we go in the prison or jail, will also give them a very secure hope that He will also be very RELIABLE to come back and SHOW UP and meet them at the prison or jail gate upon their release.* Otherwise, the devil will be meeting them at the gate every time, offering them false hope, or better yet, half truths, that leads to eternal death and hell. Furthermore, we believe that *we have a biblical, moral, and ethical obligation* that leaves us no choice - to at least meet the 70,000 Christian Neighbors coming out of prison and jail this year, with the FENCE OF Love from God (THRU THE CHURCH) that loves without fear.

F. E. A. R. means False Evidence Appearing Real.

In 1 John God gives us a very practical (IN HOUSE) test to EXAMINE OURSELVES to see and to make sure that we are the real deal.

This is how we know that we love the children of God - by loving God and carrying out His COMMANDMENTS. This is LOVE for God: To OBEY His commands. HIS COMMANDS are NOT BURDENSOME, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

Listen now to John 13: “A new command I give you: Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. Whoever has my commands and OBEYS them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father and I too will love him and show myself to him.” JESUS replied: “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you ALL THINGS and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

### DEREK’S STORY

I remember when Derek Marshall told me, in Danville prison, that he really wanted to come and live at the Koinonia House® of Wheaton. However, because of his offense, we could not take him. I had known Derek since 1992. I knew he was the real deal, so I asked God for HIS FRESH grace to help me obey His commandment, which is not BURDENSOME. I told Derek: “Derek we will become creative in loving you, my friend”, which gave him fresh hope!! I did not know exactly how we were going to do. However, I know the “WHO” who knows the “HOW”!!! God was faithful ONCE AGAIN and the Holy Spirit HELPED!! Aleluya!!

Derek became a *Meet Me at the Gate*® recipient (in 2004) as we know it today, and moved in with another of our *Meet Me at the Gate*® recipients, Bill Tindall. Today, Derek is joyfully married to Tracey. He is impacting thousands for Christ and His Kingdom, including our friend, Dr. Paul Merrick, and his wife, Jessica!! Derek is working at Wheaton College where he is excelling! He is fully engaged in his church, where he also teaches the Word. In addition, he ministers with us at Danville Prison, thanks to Chief Fewes, and serves on our Selection Committee.

*We believe and are seeing* that our very unique post-prison biblical model, in partnership with the local church, is not only breaking the cycle of crime for good, but it is also infusing and recharging the local church with fresh joy and vitality as the church fulfills the Great commission. In other words, the church OUT HERE is discovering that loving our neighbors coming out of prison is much more rewarding to them than to their neighbor!! *You got that?*

- “*Who is My Neighbor*”? is the most critical, essential, fundamental, urgent, and real question that we, as Christians, must answer and answer correctly. We must answer this with a consistent and loving action plan that validates our Love for God by the ways in which we love *any* neighbor God chooses to send our way and we must always love them without any evil intent or selfish ambition. We must answer this question correctly; otherwise, God’s glory and our joy are at stake!!

We envision equipped, loving churches meeting Christian Neighbors at the prison or jail gate everyday, somewhere in America, through our unique *Meet Me at the Gate*® initiative. This is where one local church tailors to what they can do - BY USING OUR EFFECTIVE MATERIALS and training, via discussion, conversation and visits, to meet one Christian neighbor at the prison or jail gate. This is done with a strong, solid fence of practical love, to make them into effective disciples and credible witnesses for Jesus Christ and lovers of the Cross. Through this experience, they will experience the indisputable evidence of God’s Agape Love and Jesus’ resurrection. To such a transformational and redemptive experience there is no argument!

- This Biblical and effective radical action of Agape LOVE will cause, in the Church in America, an explosive radical revolution of FRESH AGAPE love. Amazing grace and fresh JOY, filled with tangible and visible HOPE in the Church in America, as we become the faithful tool for restoration of the family in America which will reduce crime ONE PERSON AT A TIME!! The World will then seriously take notice of Christ’s POWER of love through us, which they desperately are looking to also experience!!

I believe that this is why God has called and gathered us HERE tonight in loving *KOINONIA*, as we belong together in mutual partnership, as credible witnesses of Jesus Christ. God is calling us, the church, to righteous loving action, whose identity is the Cross. This is done with a genuine spirit of humility that will give us the ability to repent at a moment's notice, as we die to self, so that others may experience the real Jesus Christ!

*Why we do what we do?*

- *Because God is LOVE.* It is that simple!! *Say it with me please:* Because God is Love!
- One of the many ways in which we love and equip the church in prison and the church out of prison is to bridge their gap so that WE can become one, as God so clearly **COMMANDED** for us in the biblical text we just read. We do this by *introducing one to another* so that fears will disappear! We can then *NETWORK together—in Agape love-- always seeking the benefit of our neighbor FIRST.*
  
- I am so eternally thankful to my friends Warden Burl Cain, Sheriff Mark Curran Jr., Chief Jennifer Whitherspoon, Senator Randy Hultgren , and Chief Roberta Fewes, who are here with us tonight and who give us *ACCESS AND FAVOR—so we can invite you to come into the prisons and jails so your fears will disappear AND you become filled with fresh, abundant, and Agape love that will drive you to keep YOU coming back!*

### PICTURE OF THE HORTONS

This has been one of the joyful experiences of my super, duper friends, Tom and Wendy Horton. God has used the Hortons in Angola with “Big Lou” and “Shelby”, in Danville, and Lake County Jail, to spark the flame of Agape love in them with fresh passion and commitment. This love has spread into their home, marriage, family, and church, including Willow Creek, to show that Jesus always comes back to meet our Neighbors at the prison gate and beyond!!

- We do what we do because we are clearly commanded by God to love our neighbor as required by Scripture, to obey His Word without delay. In other words, we as “Believers” do not



have a choice not to obey. We believe that God did not give us a suggestion for us to consider, *but rather He gave us a very clear directive for us to obey.* This requires that each of us become creative in how to love our neighbor.

The opposite of Agape love is not hate, but rather, it is FEAR. LOVES BECOMES EFFECTIVE when one loves one's neighbor with God's Agape love. That is love without fear and love from the very will of God - sacrificially, tangibly and intentionally.

### DUSTIN'S STORY

That is how Dustin Shipley loved me. He is here with us tonight. Dustin was met at the gate of Lino Lakes Prison in Minneapolis, where we first met and where I have been coming back for the last ten years. Dusting refreshes me with his radical, Agape love for me.

I remember receiving a phone call from Dustin, early last year, at God's precise moment. You see, I have been going back to Minnesota and Wisconsin, *soooo many times* for the past 10 years. With some of our ministries' initiatives, we are equipping the churches in and out of prisons, networking, doing *Meet Me at the Gate*® workshops, and meetings with Pastors (even with my friend, Dr. John Piper). We now even feed them Cuban food in Minneapolis (*NOW-- THAT IS TRUE LOVE—and they DID NOT REJECT THE CUBAN FOOD, EDDIE!!*). ☺

During this time, we were not just seeing churches meet our neighbors at the prison gate, so I was wrestling with God telling him that I was just about to give Minnesota and Wisconsin up!! At that point, God sent me Dustin with a refreshing phone call. He said, "Please come". That was enough for me to come back to Minnesota. Let me tell you how radically and lavishly Dustin loved me, which filled me with unspeakable joy and fresh passion!!

Not only did Dustin meet me at the gate of the airport with snacks, but then he took me to meet with a neighbor – someone that I knew from prison. We met at the gate at Lino Lakes. Afterwards, we went to Dustin's home where his wife, Ali, cooked us a home-made Cuban meal. After our delicious meal, Dustin gave me a precious gift (THIS CROSS), which he

himself made for me from very rare clay. On the cross Dustin wrote *Luke 9:23* to remind me that for me to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, I must deny myself daily, pick up my cross, and follow Jesus!! Finally, Dustin asked to wash my feet and pray over me while washing my feet!!!

Today, Dustin owns his own construction business, where he hires men coming out of prison that he meets at the gate. He also owns his own home, is a terrific husband, and daddy to his two boys. Dustin and his wife have a very effective ministry to men in jail who are fathers called *Fathers for Christ*. I have had the joy of going back to jail visits with Dustin, where he is very effective with the men!!

*So, who is our neighbor?*

Answer: Anyone who in the absolute sovereignty of God He chooses to send my (our) way and anyone who is in need!! Remember, we are commanded by God's Word to love any neighbor that He sends our way. Therefore, it does not require our prayer, but rather our prompt loving action.

There are at least 70,000 baby Christians being released from prison or jail this year in America in great and desperate need of our AGAPE and tangible LOVE. Therefore, the doors of our hearts will always need to be open to receive and love my neighbor, trusting and resting in God for His provision and peace.

We must love at least one Christian neighbor coming out of prison because *it is the right, credible, and Biblical thing to do*, which will cause a revolution of radical and joyful love in the Church in America. It will astonish and impact the world for Christ by making His Kingdom much more visible!! We know the "WHO" who knows the "HOW". We come to God Yahweh, in Jesus' name, with confidence to fill you and I with fresh radical love, so we can become free to give God's love away to any neighbor that God sends our way, including those coming out of prison.

Finally, listen to the powerful and clear Words of Jesus, as His main focus was to obey His Father by making Him look good at all times because HE LOVED HIS FATHER TO DEATH, even when He did not feel like it as we see in John 14:31: “But the world must learn that I love the Father and that I DO EXACTLY what my Father has commanded me.”

Why do we do what we do? We do it because our conscious and our hearts are 100% captive to the *entire* Word of God - Jesus Incarnate - which points us to the amazing, indisputable, and irresistible Agape Love of God our Father. Through this experience, we come to its climax at the Cross through Christ Jesus, who endured the Cross for the joy of loving His Father for our benefit - defeating death forever through His resurrection! *Aleluya!! We DO WHAT WE DO BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO AND WE DO IT WITH FRESH AND RADICAL JOY EVERY TIME!!*

Now as Eddie Wells and the choir come back up and sing, I want to ask for those of us who have done time in prison to have the courage to stand up, without shame for Jesus, and to stay up for one minute. Everyone else look around you – these are your neighbors. There are many men and women in our churches that are there incognito, not wanting anyone to know that they are there because they are afraid of rejection. How about becoming intentional in our love for our neighbors coming out of prison by utilizing the *Meet Me at the Gate*® initiative?

*SENATOR RANDY HULTGREN AND CHIEF FEWS: Look at how many tax dollars are being saved for God! Aleluya!!*

Now, those of you who never gotten caught and should have done time in prison, would you please stand up? ☺

Please prayerfully beg God to make you into a radical lover of God by loving anybody God chooses to send your way by bursting the doors of your heart wide open. *Aleluya!*

*Please listen: The MORE RADICAL OUR LOVE FOR OUR NEIGHBOR, THE MORE RADICAL THE GLORY GOD RECEIVES, AND THEN THE MORE RADICAL THE JOY GOD WILL RELEASE INTO US THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT!!*