

Prison Fellowship Names New CEO

✖ Prison Fellowship had named a new CEO. James Liske, who currently serves as senior pastor at Ridge Point Community Church in Holland, Mich., will begin his term with Prison Fellowship in late July. He succeeds Tom Pratt, who has served as interim president since October.

During his nine-year tenure at Ridge Point Community Church, Liske has been committed to prison ministry. Under his leadership, the church began a nonprofit organization that helps newly released prisoners deal with addiction recovery challenges, find employment and transition back into the community.

The organization has a valuable partnership with the Department of Corrections in Michigan—directly engaged with the Michigan Prison Re-entry Initiative—and has helped numerous former inmates with life after prison.

Liske gained a strong work ethic and firm foundation in the Christian faith as he grew up the youngest of three siblings helping with the family farm. He sensed a call to ministry at an early age and earned a Master of Divinity from North American Baptist Seminary in 1986. Since then, he has led churches and organizations in the United States and Canada.

Liske has also led ministry efforts to assist the poor in sub-Saharan Africa, Belize, Romania, the Dominican Republic and Honduras. His experience in the local church, with community organizations and in the arena of commerce will assist him in directing the nation's largest outreach to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

Liske has a demonstrated commitment to those with broken lives and has employed strong entrepreneurial skills to bring

together the church, businesses, local law enforcement agencies, corrections and parole officers, and other stakeholders in order to get people working together for a common good.

"I'm honored and blessed to be given this amazing opportunity to serve God," he says. "I'm energized by the rich history of Prison Fellowship and the organization's role to reach people that much of society has discarded as useless; I look forward to leading this organization focused on fixing what is broken in the hearts and lives of inmates, their families and the communities in which they live and work."

Liske will lead all aspects of Prison Fellowship's now 35-year-old ministry, including spiritual outreach in prisons across the nation, the Angel Tree program that serves children of prisoners, and a variety of programs that equip prisoners and former prisoners throughout the United States with a Christian foundation and vital life skills.

Since its inception, Prison Fellowship has served more than one million prisoners and nearly nine million children. The organization currently partners with some 8,500 churches and 14,000 volunteers.

Chuck Colson, Prison Fellowship's founder and former aide to President Nixon, expressed great enthusiasm about Liske's appointment. "We clearly see God's sovereign hand in bringing Jim to Prison Fellowship. He has a pastor's heart, an entrepreneur's mind and a genuine passion for this work, which makes him extraordinarily well-equipped to lead this ministry into the future," says Colson.

Liske has been married to his high school sweetheart, Cathy, for 28 years, and the couple has two children: Allison, 21, and Joshua, 19.