

## Ring Praise Music Ministry

On Sunday, February 20, following our worship services, we headed to the Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario, Oregon for two concerts, one at 2:00 pm and the other at 6:30 pm. We have been there several times over the last few years, beginning in 2005. It takes a while to get us plus all the equipment checked in so we need to allow plenty of time. When we finally got to the chapel, it was just about time for a few guys to arrive to help us and get the room in order. They set up chairs and got all the sound hooked up and adjusted. Sean uses an electronic keyboard so he needed that working plus a monitor and Phyllis needed her microphone adjusted. We also decided to use the theatre organ accompaniment track for *Glory Bound* so that also needed to be set.

Over 230 guys attended the two concerts. Since many have heard us before and they know us, we were greeted with lots of handshakes and words of gratitude for coming again. As always, the sense of worship is dynamic and Spirit-filled. They are not hesitant to say a hearty "Amen" after a piece. A very moving time for each of us was during *The Rugged Cross*. During each concert, both of us could hear many of them softly singing the words while we played.

For each concert, we have an exact amount of time so we plan to fill it completely with music. Phyllis watches the clock carefully so adjustments can be made if necessary. Well, it took longer for everyone to get checked in for the first concert so we needed to cut one piece. Then the time we had for the second concert was 10 minutes shorter to begin with and would take even longer to check everyone in since it was a much larger group. So during our delicious dinner between concerts in the staff dining room, we decided what we would need to cut for the second concert.

After the second concert, we were invited to join in a prayer circle with about 12 inmates as they prayed for each other and also for the success of Ring Praise. It is so exciting to see the Lord shining in them through the care they have for each other and the joy that is on their faces when they are in worship.

Shortly afterward, we received a beautiful letter from one of the inmates who has been at all of our concerts thanking us for our ministry.