

PMUNY Issue – Joyce’s email (Aug 2, 2022)

Hi Kevin,

As per our phone conversation on Friday afternoon July 29th I am writing to share some information and seek your guidance.

Recently PMUNY was asked to facilitate the Houses of Healing (HOH) program inside Attica Correctional Facility.

Together with the Coordinating Chaplain at Attica, we submitted a program proposal to the Department of Corrections and Community Services (DOCCS) for HOH.

We are awaiting DOCCS approval of the proposal. Once approved, PMUNY hopes to begin a 2 hour-13 week program beginning September 2022.

One of the individuals applying to serve on our team of volunteers is a Jewish Rabbi. She is talented, compassionate and eager to begin her volunteer service inside a correctional facility.

To my knowledge this is the first time a potential prison ministry volunteer is not part of an Christian faith community. Given PMUNY’s relationship with EMP I am seeking your guidance.

PMUNY’s website specially states that we “enable Christian volunteers to minister to incarcerated individuals and share Jesus’ message of love, mercy, healing, forgiveness and reconciliation”.

The REC program is historically a Christian program. The HOH program is not affiliated nor does it encourage any organized religion. HOH encourages each participant to develop a spiritual path most meaningful to them.

HOH is definitely a spiritual program however it is not a religious program from the standpoint of endorsing or encouraging any organized religion. Christians, Jews, Muslims, Agnostics, Atheists etc....all are welcome.

Given the Jewish Rabbi’s recent interest in serving on the Attica HOH team...

Given PMUNY’s Vision statement and Christian emphasis...

Given the term “ecumenical” implies Christian and HOH is an “inter-faith” program not “ecumenical”...

I suggested we look at our website from an “inter-faith” perspective vs. “ecumenical” and consider making some edits.

My suggestion raised concern from some of our Leadership Team members.

Thus, all of us on the PMUNY Leadership Team would like you to weigh in.

Will you please share your comments, suggestions or concerns given our Leadership Team’s recent discussion?

We look forward to your perspective.

THANK YOU Kevin!

Joyce, Ministry Leader

Relevant Provisions of the EMP Bylaws

Article I, Section 3 – Purposes

The purposes of the Corporation shall be as set forth in its Certificate of Incorporation, as amended from time to time.

Article VI – Operating Ministries

(a) From time to time the Corporation may permit various structured outreach programs known as operating ministries, consistent with Christian values, to operate under the auspices of the Corporation.

Relevant Provisions of EMP Certificate of Incorporation

Para. 3 The purposes of the corporation shall be:

(a) The corporation is organized and shall be operated exclusively for the charitable purposed of supporting and strengthening the various Christian ministries in conformity with Christian ethical and moral teachings by promoting the efficient governance and management, cooperative planning, and sharing of spiritual, material and financial resources among such ministries.

Merriam Webster definition

Definition of *ecumenical*

1 **a:** of, relating to, or representing the whole of a body of churches
 b: promoting or tending toward worldwide Christian unity or cooperation