"*Blessed are those who work for peace…"* (Matthew 5:9a, *NLT*)

According to their website, ***Coffee with a Cop*** (coffeewithacop), endeavors to invite people to gather for more positive interaction, meaningful connection, and respectful conversations. The stated mission of this effort is "to break down the barriers between police officers and the citizens they serve." In other words, the goal is to build bridges of relational trust between diverse individuals from different groups who may hold negative stereotypes or suspicions about one another.

This is the work of peace: bringing people together not to accuse and argue, but rather to listen and learn from one another. This is also a good first step in establishing healthier, more equitable, and peaceful communities. In turn, this can help create the environment that acknowledges and affirms mutual concerns, including the importance of both social and personal wellness.

The Corrections side of Law Enforcement—working inside jails and prisons—is stressful and isolating, as well as dangerous. As a result, there are staffing shortages across the nation. The reason(s) people are leaving or never choosing this profession are complex, but often include negative impressions of law enforcement.

As Senior Chaplain for the Washington County (OR) Sheriff's Office (WCSO), I have witnessed the trauma of incarceration. My work involves, first and foremost, supporting the men and women hired to manage a safe and secure facility. While the staff are well-trained to recognize that the individuals booked into the jail are not just in their custody, but also in their care, this produces a heightened sense of personal responsibility that only increases the potential traumatic stress and self-isolation for those working in the Jail.

To provide an opportunity to gain insights and a greater understanding of the difficult and demanding work attempted inside the jail, the WCSO Peer Support Team and WCSO Chaplain Services coordinate with a local coffee shop to host ***Java at the Jail***. The vision, like *New Wine, New Wineskins* and *Coffee with a Cop*, is to work for peace and build relational bridges of trust with members of the public. A guided tour of the jail is followed by a visit to the SO WELLness Room for peaceful Q&A with Peer Support Team members and staff chaplains in hopes of achieving a deeper understanding and appreciation for one another.

"Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding."

~ Albert Einstein

You may contact Chaplain Paul Lyda about Java at the Jail at the following email address: Paul_Lyda@washingtoncountyor.gov