



“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them ...” Hebrews 13:3

Florida Prison Ministries

VOLUNTEER

Training Manual

“I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.” Matthew 25:36

“Remember that the Lord Jesus is the Master Worker. He waters the seed sown. He puts into your minds words that will reach hearts.” Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 41

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PRISON MINISTRIES

Seventh-day Adventist[®] Church
FLORIDA CONFERENCE

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FLORIDA PRISON MINISTRIES

PRESENTS

MINISTERING WITH JESUS

Matthew 25:31-36

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’”



Visit us at: www.floridaprisonministries.org

REVISED March 2024

FLORIDA PRISON MINISTRIES ORGANIZATION

Florida Prison Ministries will be under the direction of the Church Ministries Department, under the leadership of the Florida Prison Ministries Director. Each church in Florida is encouraged to have a prison ministry program to work with inmates, their families and friends in their area.

Most families do not know how to deal with the situation of having loved ones incarcerated. This is a perfect opportunity to witness to those who are hurting and need encouragement and understanding.

SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS AND RESOURCES FOR SERVICE

Pointing lost souls to Christ is the grandest, the highest and the holiest business known on earth or in Heaven. The individual engaged in prison ministry (layman prison workers) should have the same concern as that of his Lord who stated plainly that He came to seek and to save lost souls. There are certain basic qualifications or personal traits that a layman prison worker must possess.

Consecration

- The first and no doubt most essential qualification is consecration. “Christ asks for an unreserved consecration, for undivided service. He demands the heart, the mind, the soul, the strength. Self is not to be cherished.” *Christ's Object Lessons, pp 48, 49*
- “He who loves Christ the most, will do the greatest amount of good.” *The Desire of Ages, p 250*

Faithfulness

To have success in prison ministry outreach the lay-volunteer prison counselor must have the quality of faithfulness in keeping appointments and being on time. A Christian leader ought to be faithful to the promises he makes, cost what it may. It is a wonderful thing to find a person whose promises are as sure as the rising of the sun, whose simplest word is as good as his oath, who does just what he says he will do at the moment he says he will do it. This is the kind of faithfulness God wants.

Perseverance

In the name of the Lord a lay-volunteer should work with the same untiring perseverance and unflagging zeal that Christ brought into his labors. (Don't get discouraged)

Tact and Wisdom

“In the work of soul-winning, great tact and wisdom are needed. The Savior never suppressed the truth, but He uttered it always in love. In His intercourse with others, He exercised the greatest tact and He was always kind and thoughtful.” *Gospel Workers, p 117*

Genuineness

“There must be no pretense in the lives of those who have so sacred and solemn a message as we have been called to bear. The world is watching Seventh-day Adventists because it knows something of their profession of faith, and of their high standard, and when it sees those who do not live up to their profession, it points at them with scorn.” *Testimonies, Vol. 9, p 23*

Preparation from God

“God can and will use those who have not had a thorough education in the school of men. A doubt of His power to do this, is manifest unbelief; it is limiting the omnipotent power of the One with whom nothing is impossible. O for less of this uncalled-for, distrustful caution!” *Gospel Workers, p 488*

Entire Dependency on God

“All the good qualities that men possess are the gift of God; their good deeds are performed by the grace of God through Christ. Since they owe all to God the glory of whatever they are or do belongs to Him alone; they are but instruments in His hands. For if one comes to lose sight of his entire dependency on God, and to trust to his own strength, he is sure to fall.” *Patriarchs and Prophets, p 717*

Overcoming Obstacles

“Obstacles to the advancement of the work of God will appear; but fear not. To the omnipotence of the King of Kings, our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. Nothing can stand in His way. His power is absolute, and it is the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to His people. He can remove all obstructions to the advancement of His work. He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered. His goodness and love are infinite, and His covenant is unalterable.” *Testimonies, Vol. 8, p 10*

Equipped by God

“We are laborers together with God.” He provides us with all the facilities, all the spiritual weapons necessary for the pulling down of Satan's strongholds. Present the truth as it is in Jesus. Let the tones of your voice express the love of God. Lead, but never drive. Approach the most obstinate in a spirit of kindness and affection. Dip your words into the oil of grace and let them flow forth from your lips in love.” (*Letter 105, 1893*) (6 BC 1086.6)

Seek the Will of God FIRST!

“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord [is].” *Ephesians 5:17*

Workers Together with God

“When we realize that we are workers together with God, His promises will not be spoken with indifference. They will burn in our hearts, and kindle upon our lips. To Moses, when called to minister to an ignorant, undisciplined, and rebellious people, God gave the promise, ‘My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.’ And He said, ‘certainly I will be with thee.’ *Ex. 33:14; 3:12*. This promise is to all who labor in Christ’s stead for His afflicted and suffering ones. Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God.” *Desire of Ages, p 641*

What Promises Do We Have?

- *Prov 3:5-6 KJV* "Trust in the Lord with all (your) heart, and lean not on (your) own understanding; in all (your) ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct (your) paths."
- *Proverbs 16:3 NIV* "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."
- “Those whose affections are set on God will succeed.” *Testimonies, Vol. 7, p 90*
- “To every worker I would say: Go forth in humble faith, and the Lord will go with you. The power is of God. Work in dependence upon Him, remembering that you are laborers together with Him. He is your helper. Your strength is from Him. He will be your wisdom, your righteousness, your sanctification, your redemption. He will be your comfort, your rest.” *Gospel Workers, p 38*

Do I Need to Teach Doctrine?

“Christ is to be their text. They need not dwell upon doctrinal subjects; let them speak of the work and sacrifice of Christ. Let them hold up His righteousness, in their lives revealing His purity. The true missionary must be armed with the mind of Christ. His heart must be filled with Christlike love; and he must be true and steadfast to principle.” *Testimonies, Vol. 7, p 228*

Unity!

- There are diversities of gifts (1 Cor. 12), but there is to be unity of spirit, objectives, and beliefs. There are to be no strivings for supremacy such as had recently plagued the twelve (Luke 22:24-30). The unity springing from the blended lives of Christians will impress the world of the divine origin of the Christian Church. (*From the Biblical Commentary on John 17:21*).
- “That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in me, and I in You, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that You have sent me. And the glory which You gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.” *John 17:21,22*
- “Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin.” *Manuscript 111, 1903*) 5 BC, p 1148

The Lord's Work!

Zechariah 4:6 “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Chosen by God!

Isaiah 43:10 “Ye [are] my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I [am] he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.”

Daily Prayer

“Our daily prayer should be, ‘Lord, help me to do my best. Teach me how to do better work. Give me energy and cheerfulness. Help me to bring into my service the loving ministry of the Savior.’ ”

Ministry of Healing, p 474

Attitudes To Be Successful In This Work

- **Love** -- is an outgrowth of unselfish concern for all persons involved.
- **Respect**-- is the ability to treat inmates as God’s children, with the worth and value that Christ has placed upon them, in giving His own life to save them.
- **Empathy** -- is the ability to feel with people and put oneself in their place.
 - ⇒ It is rather difficult to empathize with an incarcerated individual unless you have shared a similar experience. One should never say, “I know how you feel” if you have never been in prison, because you don’t. Better to say, “it must be very difficult for you.” By your actions and words an inmate can determine your prison experience and even the sincerity of your efforts.
- **Sense of Mission** -- a desire to give this priority, a belief that this is something he or she would rather be doing than anything else in all the world.
- **Spiritual Growth** -- a Lay-Volunteer must not only lead others to new spiritual growth but likewise must be willing and anxious to grow as well. We must search our hearts and lives and see wherein we lack in any of these qualifications for successful service.

MINISTRY AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE INMATES

- “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with people as one who desired their good. He showed sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He invited them, ‘Follow Me.’ ” *The Ministry of Health and Healing, p 73*
- “We need to come close to the people by personal effort. If we would give less time to sermonizing and more time to personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those who weep and to rejoice with those who rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit.” *The Ministry of Health and Healing, p 73*
- Simply teach about Jesus, about following Him – show love for the inmates and seek their salvation and good.
 - ⇒ Spend the time listening to the inmate so you can understand the inmate’s point of view. Following are several rules of listening.
 - ⇒ Face the speaker.
 - ⇒ Listen to the speaker.
 - ⇒ Listen for ideas and underlying feelings.
 - ⇒ Allow for your own bias.
 - ⇒ Keep your mind on what the inmate is saying.
 - ⇒ Make a conscious effort to evaluate the logic of what you hear.
 - ⇒ Don’t judge ideas by the inmate’s appearance or delivery.
 - ⇒ Don’t interrupt immediately if you think a statement is wrong.
 - ⇒ Let Christ, who is the answer, have the last word, not yourself.

- ⇒ Don't judge the inmate's motives.
- ⇒ Do not in any way reprimand them about their previous conditions or what they "may" have done to be placed here.
- ⇒ Do not give any money or anything that can be converted into money. This is against the law.
- ⇒ It is against the law to give anything to an inmate. If you have anything for him, you can give it to the guard and ask him if he can give it to the inmate.
- ⇒ Do not make the mistake of letting an inmate think he can run a game on you (con you or fool you) simply because you are a Christian. Be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.
- ⇒ Do not bring into the prison or jail a phone or any other digital device (including a smart watch).
- ⇒ If a doubtful situation arises, consult the Florida Prison Ministries leadership.
- ⇒ If someone's name is not on the entrance list at the prison at least two weeks ahead of time, do not try to get them in at the last minute.
- ⇒ We have dealt with some "don'ts". Now let us take a look at some positive factors that a layman prison counselor must consider:
- ⇒ Do meet and arrive together as a visiting group of layman counselors, this is essential at the designated prison or jail and arrive on time.
- ⇒ Follow guidelines for roll call and sign-up sheets where you are serving.
- ⇒ Do remember that the responsibility you assume as a volunteer is a very serious one. Every action you undertake in behalf of the inmates must be taken with utmost dedication.
- ⇒ Do remember that until you see the inmate/s the next time you visit them, you hold their hopes, dreams and prayer requests in your hearts and hands. Guard these well and remember that through Christ every inmate is redeemable. (When serving in a county jail, you may never see the inmate twice.)
- ⇒ Don't make promises you can't keep.
- ⇒ Don't try to be a theologian.
- ⇒ Don't have a "holier-than-thou" attitude.
- ⇒ Don't come as an expert or reformer.
- ⇒ Don't come to help yourself.
- ⇒ Nothing is to be given to the inmates -- no stamps, no letters, no clothing, no pencils, no pens. **Absolutely nothing.** There is a procedure by which inmates may receive articles that they need. Consult the officer in charge in the prison where you are working for proper procedures.
- ⇒ Don't take anything out of the prison.
- ⇒ **No telephone numbers are to be given to the inmates.**
- ⇒ Don't give money to an inmate.
- ⇒ Don't ask why a person is or has been in prison.
- ⇒ Don't be "preachy" or push people into making a decision for Christ.
- ⇒ Don't criticize staff, an institution, other races, countries, or religions.
- ⇒ Don't enter into any personal or business transactions with prisoners. It could be a felony and you could be prosecuted.
- ⇒ Don't forget to check the rules if you are an ex-prisoner going into prison.
- ⇒ Don't run on prison grounds.
- ⇒ Don't take any chewing gum into prison.
- ⇒ Don't shake hands with inmates through prison bars.
- ⇒ Don't take camera or recording equipment into prison without permission.
- ⇒ No worker's home address is to be given to an inmate at any time.
- ⇒ Do not allow the inmates to become personal with you. You are either "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," or "brother" or "sister". Remember familiarity breeds contempt.
- ⇒ **No person of the opposite sex will be allowed to have a one-on-one relationship with an inmate.**

- ⇒ No stickers, seals or non-post office stamps are to be placed on the outside of the envelopes.
- ⇒ **Do not take inmates into your home.**
- ⇒ Follow the prison rules.
- ⇒ Be a Christian friend to inmates.
- ⇒ Share your faith with inmates.
- ⇒ Keep your objectivity.
- ⇒ Before giving the name and address of your church, first consult and have approval from your pastor.
- ⇒ Be dependable.
- ⇒ Be patient.
- ⇒ Be honest.
- ⇒ Your name must be on the gate entrance list.
- ⇒ Do dress properly.
- ⇒ Do be careful about physical contact.
- ⇒ Do be aware of con games.
- ⇒ Do be trustworthy when someone shares with you personal or confidential information.
- ⇒ Do be prepared to handle flirting or romantic advances.
- ⇒ Do try to find ways to encourage and give hope.
- ⇒ Encourage the inmate to express his/her thoughts or feelings on the subject at hand.
- ⇒ If you are with a group, stay with your group.
- ⇒ Do be very kind and courteous to everyone.
- ⇒ Do be natural.
- ⇒ Gain the confidence and respect of an inmate by:
 - ◇ Always display concern, especially in your words and attitudes.
 - ◇ Know when to talk and when to listen but make sure that you are in control of the situation not the other person.
 - ◇ Never give a false impression -- explain what you can and cannot do.
 - ◇ Make only promises you know you can fulfill.
 - ◇ Never compromise your ideas or standards.
 - ◇ Try to handle problems yourself by relying on prayer and divine wisdom.

NOTE: Florida State Law says,
 we cannot proselytize in prison,
 this means our goals cannot be to
 convert inmates to our denomination,
 but we can present the Bible
 and allow the Holy Spirit to lead.

PREPARATION AND GIVING BIBLE STUDIES TO INMATES

Prison inmates are persons with mixed hope and despair for the future. Many are seeking a way out of the delusion and confusion of their life's experiences. There are many in correctional institutions who are not reached by the gospel message and they will return to society more embittered by their experiences and subject to more and greater crimes against society. Giving Bible studies in correctional institutions is a glorious opportunity for any evangelistic-minded Christian. In correctional institutions there is a vast harvest to be reaped.

Preparation for Prison Bible Studies

- The very first step for the lay-volunteer in preparing to give Bible studies is to be led by God's Holy Spirit. This can be accomplished through prayer, study and fasting. This preparation helps to put the teacher in the frame of mind to receive and to be led by the Spirit. This important work should not be attempted in one's own merit or strength.
- The lay-volunteer must be well acquainted with the topic of his/her study. A personal experience with Christ is necessary in order to teach others of Him. He/she should be prepared to answer vital questions. Some people come to a Bible study just for the purpose of challenging. The teacher must be prepared to defend his/her faith in the spirit of love.
- In giving the inmate Bible studies, the lay-volunteer is to be aware, and likewise to be sensitive, to the social, economic and political environment and conditions from which the inmate comes. The majority of inmates come from the lower social-economic scale. Many could not afford good legal services and had to rely mainly on court-appointed attorneys for legal defense. In many cases the accused is counseled by these court-appointed lawyers to plea-bargain rather than to seek to plead innocence. Some inmates have waited in city detention centers for months before their trial. Many cannot afford the high bail that is often set. Inmates often react to these conditions in the judicial system with anger, despair and hopelessness. The awareness by the lay-volunteer of these conditions helps the instructor to meet the inmate on his/her own level.
- The lay-volunteer should be sensitive to some of the inmate's stereotyped notions of Christianity.

Giving The Bible Study

The following points should be considered in the actual conducting of the Bible study:

- Encourage inmates to look up in their own Bibles and read and follow the Scripture texts in giving their answers. This method helps the inmate to become more familiar with the Bible.

Do not become easily discouraged.

Sometimes the most difficult inmate may in time become the most spiritual. They should be kept spiritually active. Many of these individuals are quite talented and their appropriate talents should be utilized for God's service.

Printed Material Available for Use by Prison Ministry Volunteer as Needed or Appropriate

- **Bible Lessons**

- ⇒ First Set of Bible Lessons: A six set of lessons “Steps to Eternal Life” with “Happiness Digest” will be distributed to inmates. These lessons will have presented the Gospel to lead a person to Christ. The sixth lesson will ask if they want a second set of thirty-two lessons "What the Bible Says".
- ⇒ Second Set of Bible Lessons: Thirty-two lesson sets are for the prisoners to study on their own outside of the regular program. This will insure that what they discover, they can say that "the Bible told them this truth." This will eliminate conflicts between Lay-Chaplains and the Prison Chaplains in charge that might disagree with Bible truths.
 - ◇ If using the second set of lessons within a correctional facility, REMOVE the following lessons from your in-person teaching plan to avoid doctrinal issues that could be controversial, and detract from why we are there: Lessons 5, 6, 7, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, & 31 (13 total)

- **English/Spanish Bibles**

- **The Desire of Ages**

- **Patriarchs and Prophets**

- **The Acts of the Apostles**

- **Prophets and Kings**

- **The Great Controversy**

- **Happiness Digest**

- ⇒ **No hard back books or bound printed materials are to be given to inmates without permission** (ask for details of what is allowed at the corrections institution where you are serving).
- ⇒ It is imperative that we have bible lessons printed under the Conference Prison Ministry name to be successful in this ministry for the following reasons! This adds legitimacy and authority to the ministry as a credible prison ministry program. It will be more acceptable as being tailored for this particular use and is the only way to control the cost and keep it down is to print our own material.
- ⇒ **By printing our own material this puts us in the category of a publisher** and this is an advantage in the prison system as this gives creditability to our organization. In addition, this puts us in class as a supplier and they are always looking for organizations that can supply religious material.
- ⇒ If you need any printed materials for your ministry, contact your local FPM Leadership for more information.



Florida Prison Ministries Opportunity in Orange County Jail Ministry

Male & Female Inmates – Saturday's: 33rd St Jail (3723 Vision BLVD Orlando, FL 32839) Orange County Corrections Department (OCCD) is one of the largest county detention facilities in the nation. Situated on a 76-acre secure compound in Orlando,

[OCJM in OCCD INSTRUCTIONS](#)

First Steps

Orange County Jail Ministry was founded in 1980 for the purpose of bringing inmates to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, to receive the gift of His salvation, nurturing them in the principles of Christian living. Recognizing that the inmates' come from various religious backgrounds, this ministry invites volunteers from all faiths to join them in this ministry.

- Fill out the single page background form provided by OCJM through the FPM Leadership.
- Submit as instructed through FPM Leadership.
- Wait for a contact from the correctional facility, notifying you if you will be granted or denied a chaplain interview.
 - ⇒ If an interview is granted, set up a time to meet with the chaplain, and complete interview.
 - ⇒ After the interview, If the chaplain gives you the go ahead, follow the chaplain instructions for "Next Steps".

Next Steps after Chaplain Interview

- Submit application, copy of drivers license, letter of recommendation from church pastor on church letterhead.
- Fingerprinting at 33rd Street Jail
- Training Coursework – both in-person AND virtual thru OCC.

After these things are submitted the following process will include:

- Submit application, copy of drivers license, letter of recommendation from church pastor on church letterhead.
- Fingerprinting at 33rd Street Jail
- Training Coursework – both in-person AND virtual thru OCC.

Note: If you want to be part of this team start the application process as outlined above AND contact either Eileen or Tammy with any questions (contact info below).

Our hope is we will build teams that enable us to be able to go on Sabbath, once a month per team. The volunteers who respond to this call to serve within OCC with OCJM will be personally contacted and receive training and mentoring as needed.

Eileen Krause, FPM Area Coordinator
eileen@jkrause.net
407-342-3708

Tammy Harbour, FPM Liaison/Mentor
82669jo@gmail.com
702-203-3609



Florida Prison Ministries Opportunity at Lake Correctional Institution

Seventh-Day Adventist Service and Study for Male Inmates

6-8 PM IN THE CHAPEL

Lake Correctional Institution. Address 19225 U.S. Highway 27
Clermont, Florida 34715-9025. Phone (352) 394-6146. Chaplain (352) 394-6146.



NOTE: If you choose to go to LCI, no appointment will be needed. Just show up Thursdays, between 9 to 11 am. Bring your Social Security Card, Driver's License, and also a copy of the email you received which displays your Application Form responses.



LCI INSTRUCTIONS: Process for State Corrections Clearance

Step 1: Go to www.dc.state.fl.us/volunteer/index.html (Click on link blue link "Volunteer Application" on right side of video intro)

Step 2: Go to the online form and fill out the "Personal Information" – all 25 required (helpful info below):

- Volunteer Type: Select "Regular (Entering facilities MORE than 5 times a year)"
- Volunteer Services Provided: Select "Religious Services"
- Location for Service: "LCI Lake Correctional Institution"
- Job Title & Work Location: This is a required field—enter your current job/title where you work. If retired, still fill the blanks with the correct information – no required field can be left blank.

NOTE: On each page of the application process when prompted **click, "I am not a robot" and "SAVE"** (make sure you click "save" on both pages of your application – this will generate an email to take for your fingerprinting step).

Step 4: When your online application is complete, find the email sent to you (if not found, also check your spam). This email will have next step instructions and will also display your Application Form responses. Print it and bring it to your fingerprinting appointment.

NOTE: Once you submit your application, a thank you screen will display. Click the Livescan locations on this screen to get the fingerprint locations. You have 180 days to complete fingerprinting, or you will need to start the process over again.

Step 5: Call facility and make appointment for fingerprints/get fingerprinted or go to LCI.

Step 6: Wait to receive training email and then open it and click on the training link in the email.

- Once the training email is received follow instructions to email Volunteer Services for your personal training username and password at

OPR-VolunteerServices@fdc.myflorida.com

Step 7: Once you receive the login information, go back to the original email with the training link, login and complete all the components of online training in one setting (recommended to use chrome or Microsoft edge). Complete all components of online training in the order below:

- Volunteer training manual
- The CJIS component (where you use the username and password; when complete, you will receive a certificate).
- Entrance and exit procedures
- HIPAA
- PREA

NOTE: In training be sure to click all 13 "read, click and sign" boxes—at the end **SAVE!** When the final page is clicked, dated and signed you will receive a screen saying "PREA and HIPAA trainings successfully completed".

STEP 8: Once training is complete, check your email for the LAST STEP of the process (check all mailboxes, including spam). You will contact facility, indicate all steps are completed, and email the following to receive your PIN#:

- Ronda.Flowers@fdc.myflorida.com
- John.Moriarty@fdc.myflorida.com

Contact the Florida Prison Ministries Liaison/Mentor Tammy Harbour @ (702)203-3609 to start to volunteer.

FLORIDA PRISON MINISTRIES PEN-PAL PROGRAM OPPORTUNITY

A program to provide inmates with spiritual correspondence friends.

How Does The Pen-Pal Program Function

- All requests for a spiritual correspondent friend from inmates will be directed through the Pen-Pal Coordinator. Inmates and spiritual correspondent friends will be matched together by the Pen-Pal Coordinator.
- All correspondence from inmates to their spiritual correspondent friend will be directed through the Pen-Pal Coordinator. This is to help avoid problems that may arise, and inmates are never to be given their spiritual correspondent friend's address.
- Contact Florida Prison Ministries Leadership for Pen-Pal training and involvement.

FLORIDA PRISON MINISTRIES MONTHLY PUBLICATION

It is impossible to reach all those that would have a knowledge of salvation due to the fact that we do not have volunteers working in every prison in Florida. Second, not every inmate will come to our programs but would like to have some Spiritual correspondence.

- Answer inmates Bible questions
- Bible trivia
- Editorial
- Health news
- Character issues
- Your turn (inmates submit their contributions)
- Order Bible Lessons
- Prayer requests
- Offer inmates Pen-Pal Program

These are provided by dedicated prison ministry volunteers giving their time and talent to design the newsletter each month. Our thanks to those that have supported this worthy effort.

YOU CAN START YOUR OWN PRISON MINISTRY

“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners.” Heb. 13:3 NIV

The Florida Prison Ministries outreach has several basic spiritual and social objectives.

One of the services of the church is prison ministry outreach, each church is encouraged to have a prison ministry outreach program. Any person who has a real concern for lost humanity can be a successful lay-volunteer prison worker. No one except the Chaplain can authorize time for (you) to do a program in prison.

Some of the spiritual objectives are:

- To present the gospel of Jesus Christ
- To share the love of God
- To express the meaning of faith
- To show the power of prayer

Some of the social objectives are:

- To prepare persons confined for re-entry into society (physically, mentally, morally and spiritually).
- To help a person find a redeeming religious experience involves his finding the same in the people around him/her.
- To know the meaning of forgiveness involves being forgiven and offering forgiveness to others.
- To know the meaning of love involves being loved and a chance to love.
- Through Christ every inmate is redeemable.
- To reconstruct the whole person.

Steps to Take in Gaining Entrance to A Correctional Facility

- Pray about establishing Prison Ministries in your congregation!
- Have a Florida Prison Ministries training program in your church.
- Vote a leader from your church to be the Lay-Volunteer Coordinator of the prison ministry volunteer group from your congregation, if possible.
- Make an appointment to visit the Chaplain of the correctional institution where you hope to establish a work, explaining your plans and your connection to this state-wide network of Florida Prison Ministries volunteers. Emphasis should be on that this is a Bible-based Christian program.
- If you get turned down, pray some more and return back to see the Chaplain again. Repeat this till the prison doors open by the Lord in His time. Amen!

Preparations for Becoming a Ministry Volunteer

- If possible, create a team for presenting the Word, music, and attending to the needs of the inmate/s.
- Remember at all times, no matter how often you enter a correctional institution, that it is a facility of custodial care. It is not a mundane office building, but rather an institution operated on a para-military system. The men and women employed there are referred to as Security Officers (not guards). This is the first lesson in “on site” training. These rules learned will give you the confidence necessary to work in close association with Security Officers, who also will serve to keep you safe while on the correctional premise. These officers may view you in the beginning as everything from bleeding hearts to do-gooders until you win them over with the respect you have for them, yourself and the unwavering principles Christians live and work by.

There are a limited number of methods used in gaining acceptance by the institution as a valid religious program, particularly if you do not represent a major religion.

- One recommended method in beginning, or starting, prison work is the distribution of tracts or leaflets which offer Bible courses. The church receiving the return applications, dispatches Lay-Volunteers to that institution. Most institutions will not reject a request of this nature coming from the inmate because it would be in violation of his/her civil liberties to deny him/her a bona fide religious request.
- Another method in beginning prison work is to open our doors to the state, or city work release program (inmates are paroled to programs that allow them to live out of the prison setting) where Adventist have functioning programs available.
- Yet another method to begin prison work, or open doors is through offering some social services as the stop smoking plan, understanding personalities, health seminars, complete with literature and exhibits. There are several other social aspects that your prison ministry can incorporate which will help the church to gain entrance.

HANDLING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

The safety and security of visitors, staff and offenders are the most important concerns in any correctional facility. Department of Corrections staff are trained and have planned for emergency situations ranging from mediating a fight between two offenders to handling a major disturbance. The following are a list of emergency situations that, **while unlikely**, you may encounter while volunteering for the institution.

Hostile Offenders

- Talk calmly to the offender and avoid being argumentative.
- Signal to get a staff member.
- If you are alone with the offender, maneuver yourself into the vision or hearing range of a staff member.
- Do not attempt to resolve the situation on your own get assistance from staff.

Offender Fight

- Summon staff.
- Do not put yourself between offenders.
- Stay clear of the altercation and do not try to break up fight.
- Tell them firmly to stop.
- Await the arrival of staff.
- Follow staff directions.

Riot

- Do not intervene.
- Remain where you are.
- Find cover.
- If a telephone is available, contact Staff to notify them of your position.
- Await the arrival of staff.

Fire

- Follow staff orders.
- In case of fire:
 - ⇒ Remove yourself and others from the area, following posted escape route.
 - ⇒ Pull the fire alarm nearest the emergency if one is available.
 - ⇒ Notify staff. Be prepared to provide the following:
 - ◇ Name & location of the caller
 - ◇ Location & type of fire/emergency

Hostage

- The likelihood of being taken hostage is remote; however, if you are taken hostage follow these guidelines:
- **DO NOT** be heroic. Don't try to attack.
- Be cooperative and obey hostage-takers demand. Failure to cooperate increases the potential for violence.
- Look for a protected place to dive or roll if either authorities or offenders attempt to assault your area.
- Remain calm.
- Keep a low profile. Avoid the appearance of observing crimes that rioters commit.
- **DO NOT** make threats against hostage-takers or give any indication that you would testify against them.
- Avoid physical resistance. In the event of sexual attack, offer verbal resistance and passive physical resistance. **Do not risk your life.**
- Try to drink water and eat even if you are not hungry.
- Act neutral and be a good listener if your captors want to talk.
- Appear friendly. It's harder to hurt someone you like.
- **DO NOT** attempt to negotiate. Your credibility as a negotiator is nonexistent.
- Even though you must appear disinterested while being held hostage, observe all you can.
- **DO NOT** argue.

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA PRISON MINISTRIES
Fill out and return to the Florida Prison Ministries Leadership at Training Event

Date _____, 20_____

Name Mobile Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

How many years prison ministry experience: _____ Date of Birth: _____

NOTE: All volunteers must be 18 years of age or older.

FLORIDA PRISON MINISTRY TRAINING

Date of course _____ Training Location _____

Instructor's name _____ Phone _____

Instructor's email address _____

Instructor's name _____ Phone _____

Instructor's email address _____

Name of institution(s) you are planning on working in _____

Have you completed an institution orientation? _____

May we verify the information you have provided on this application? _____

Signature of Applicant _____

Name of Church _____

Name of Pastor to Contact for Referral _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY FPM LEADERSHIP:

Verbal Pastor Referral of Volunteer for Florida Prison Ministries

Date: _____