The Prison Ministry Commission seeks to share the love of God with people involved in the criminal justice system by providing direct services to prisoners and their families, advocacy on criminal justice issues, and by recruiting and supporting prison ministers, both lay and clergy.

What is Prison Ministry? It is any act done in the name of God that benefits those who are involved in the Criminal Justice System. It may be direct contact with incarcerated people, but many activities do not require direct involvement. It can be a full time commitment or take as little as a few hours a month.

Who can do prison ministry? Anyone who has experienced the love of God and believes that people with God’s grace, can turn their lives around. Anyone who takes Jesus’ command to heart.

In the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington we have volunteers who:

- Attend meetings to plan, support and educate on Prison Ministry issues.
- Speak about prison ministry to churches and religious organizations.
- Mentor individuals being released from prison for six months.
- Write cards and letters to prisoners.
- Visit prisoners and provide a listening ear.
- Lead Bible Study, meditations, and worship.
- Serve as volunteer chaplains in prison.
- Stay abreast of criminal justice issues. They receive criminal justice newsletters and communicate relevant information to the volunteers.
- Write letters to newspapers, legislators and other lawmakers advocating for better sentencing laws, voting rights, reduction in mass incarceration, abolition of the death penalty, reentry of prisoners into society, among other issues.
- Support organizations that work on criminal justice issues, such as CURE, The Sentencing Project, Centurion Ministries, Kentucky Coalition for Abolition of the Death Penalty, American Civil Liberties Union, and Southern Poverty Law Center.
- Work for the benefit of prisoners’ family members and the children. In our diocese we have had Camp Haven, a Camp for Prisoners’ Children and the Children’s Christmas Stocking Project. Others have provided parties and get-togethers for prisoners’ children. While others conduct support groups for prisoners’ families.

Our appeal: Please pray for what Christ would have you do to minister to prisoners and their families.

Please contact The Rev. Deacon Emily Cardwell, Chairperson, Prison Ministry Commission with any questions 859-559-2170; or emily_cardwell@yahoo.com