

# JUST FOR MENTORS

Tips, inspiration, and encouragement as you mentor men and women in prison



APRIL 2025

Dear Mentor,

The reflection of Jesus was all around me in the prison chapel. A small group of church volunteers joined me in a chapel service. The worship volunteers followed the lead of the prison worship team, laughing and talking with them as they practiced for the service. During the service, as the volunteer pastor shared his message, enthusiastic vocal responses filled the air, affirming the points that resonated deeply.

After the service, many of the men approached us, asking the same heartfelt question: "Will you come back?"

As I drove the pastor and worship volunteers back to the church, the van was filled with lively discussion about their experiences with the men. Having never been to a prison before, they now asked me even more questions than they had before we entered. As we neared the church, all three eagerly asked, "Can we go back?"

In that chapel, the inside and outside church came together. Compassion flowed from the volunteers toward their incarcerated brothers in Christ. In return, the men expressed gentle humility, waiting patiently in line to speak with those who had come to visit them. It was clear why everyone longed to be back in one another's presence.

*"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience" (Colossians 3:12).*

These attributes do not come naturally to us (Jeremiah 17:9). As we learn to guard our hearts (Proverbs 4:23-26) and live in Christ (Galatians 2:20), His expression becomes more powerful and transformative in our lives. When I see someone showing compassion, humility, or a gentle spirit, I see someone who has taken their eyes off themselves, impacting those they encounter.

May I offer a prayer for you and, in turn, ask you to share this prayer with your student about growing in their expression of Jesus?

*"Lord, may each of us reading these words know who we are in You. You are our King and Counselor. You have shown us Your desires and will for us. May we come to understand You better. May the Scriptures come alive in us and be placed deep within our hearts. We long to express Your attributes to our students behind prison walls. Help us. Prompt us through the Holy Spirit to be more compassionate, to be humble and kind to others, and to be gentle and patient with everyone we encounter. Thank You, dear Jesus."*

We experienced the presence of Jesus in a prison chapel and hope to return soon. May each of you continue to be His reflection as you reach out to your student.

*"Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion is to look out to the world. Yours are the feet with which Christ is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which Christ is to bless all people now." - Saint Teresa of Ávila*

Serving alongside you,



Douglas Cupery  
Director of Church Engagement

**Have a question?** You can contact the mentor support team at [mentor@cpministries.org](mailto:mentor@cpministries.org) or 800-668-2450.

(Continued on next page)

# NEWS & NOTES

## April Mentor Community Gathering

Join us for our quarterly virtual gathering!

Board member Nathan Roels will share why Christians should care for incarcerated individuals, his experience filming a prison documentary, and how it has shaped him.

Nathan, a Grand Rapids native, owns Second Mile Video and has produced award-winning documentaries on justice and restoration. He is also a third-year MDiv student at Calvin Theological Seminary and a chaplain at Exalta Health. Married with two young sons, he is passionate about supporting incarcerated individuals and their families.

We are transitioning from Zoom to Microsoft Teams for our virtual gatherings going forward and will require registrations to keep our meeting secure and to ensure we can follow up with any questions that come up during the meeting. **Please use the QR code below to register and receive a reminder email closer to the time of the gathering.**

Date: Tuesday, April 22, at 3:00 p.m. (ET)

Open your phone's camera to scan the QR code and register online.



We look forward to seeing you there!

## Mentor Training Website

Last year, we sent an email to current mentors announcing the release of the mentor training portal. We'd like to remind you about the ongoing training modules available for mentors:

- Writing Letters to Crossroads Students
- Reviewing Crossroads Lessons
- The Prisoner's Plight
- The Family Experience

If you would like the link to the mentor training portal, please email [mentor@cpministries.org](mailto:mentor@cpministries.org).

*Please note: This is not the same website as the mentor portal where you report students' progress reports.*

## Volunteer Appreciation

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we want to take a moment to say THANK YOU! Because of your dedication, approximately **49,500 lessons** were returned to students during the first half of our fiscal year (July to December 2024). These lessons included encouraging comments and letters that helped people behind bars experience Christ-centered relationships as they studied God's Word.

Your efforts brought over **49,000 pages of hope** into dark and hopeless places. This incredible work could not be accomplished without volunteers like you, who serve the Lord with your time and talents. We are deeply grateful for you and give thanks to God for allowing us to partner in this ministry together.