

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



NOVEMBER 2026

Dear Mentor,

As we headed out for a game of kickball at a state prison one Friday evening, we navigated through a crowd of men who were out on the main yard. It was pleasant weather, and there were many people outside enjoying it. We paused to talk to people we knew or answer questions, but our group of volunteers kept moving alongside our staff escort. Passing by the prisoner garden plots, we stepped out onto the softball field to meet the men who were waiting to play. We divided up into teams, and it wasn't long before the laughter and banter started.

The clattering of men lifting weights in a different area echoed across the yard. Other men were doing push-ups, while still others walked and chatted on the track that circles the yard. A soccer ball flew past us. The prisoner worship team had gathered around a picnic table behind the backstop, and the strumming of their guitars drifted in and out above the laughter and cheering from the ball field. They worked through familiar worship songs, stopping when someone missed a chord or sang off-key. They laughed, talked for a moment, and started again.

In those moments, it almost felt like a neighborhood gathering.

Perhaps that moment carried extra meaning for me because, many years earlier, I had walked into a similar prison yard as someone who was incarcerated. This time, I walked past the garden plots and onto the yard with a group of non-incarcerated volunteers, invited to share an evening of conversation, laughter, and fellowship.

As I reflected on the evening, I found myself thinking about the question an expert in the law asked Jesus: "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:25–37). Walking onto that prison yard reminded me that being a neighbor has little to do with geography. It has everything to do with how you choose to see another person.

"So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer" (2 Corinthians 5:16).

We kept score during the game, but in the end, the score did not matter. If a prison yard can feel like a neighborhood park for an evening, perhaps it's worthwhile to consider who Jesus says our neighbors are.

Serving alongside you,



Douglas Cupery

Director of Church Engagement

Have a question? You can contact the mentor support team at mentor@cpministries.org or 800-668-2450.

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NEWS & NOTES

November Mentor Q&A Gathering: Review Mentor Responsibilities

This month, we will walk through the mentor handbook and review the four main mentor responsibilities. If you are new to mentoring or have been a mentor for many years, this call will be a great time to ask questions or be refreshed on the basics of mentoring with Crossroads.

To help us prepare and provide the best answers, feel free to email your questions to us in advance to **GatheringsQA@cpministries.org**.

Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2026, 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!



REGISTER

Reviewing a Lesson

Please remember that lessons should be reviewed and mailed within one week of receipt. Mail takes quite a long time to get from students to Crossroads and then to you—generally about two weeks (even longer for students within facilities that require mentors to mail lessons back to Crossroads and not directly to the student). It will take about another week to be processed through the postal service and the prison or jail's mailroom.

If you know you will not be able to review and mail back a lesson within one week of receiving a lesson, please request time off so that students do not experience more of a delay receiving their lesson and letter back in the mail.

Upcoming Crossroads In-Person Mentor Gatherings

- Glendale, Arizona (November 2026)

For more information and to register for upcoming events, visit our events page at **cpministries.org/events**.