Equipped to Serve
Angel Tree Volunteer Training Manual
# Equipped to Serve
Angel Tree Volunteer Training Manual

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter from Garland Hunt

I. Introduction

II. Prison Fellowship’s Core Values

III. Angel Tree Vision and Program Goals

IV. How Angel Tree Works
   A. Church/Coordinator/Team’s Role
   B. Program Timeline

V. Angel Tree History

VI. Volunteer Overview
   A. Definition of a Volunteer
   B. Volunteer Philosophy
   C. Commitment to Volunteers
   D. Working with Volunteers
   E. Purpose of Policies
   F. Scope of Volunteer Policies
   G. Ex-Prisoners as Volunteers
   H. Benefits of Volunteering
   I. Volunteer Rights
   J. Volunteer Responsibilities
   K. Reporting
   L. Volunteer Representation of Angel Tree
      1. Code of Conduct
      2. Dress Code
      3. Confidentiality
   M. Conflict of Interest
   N. Recruitment
      1. Recruitment of Minors
   O. Certification and Assignment
      1. Assignment
   P. Staff/Role
   Q. Volunteer as Leaders
   R. Lines of Communication
   S. Corrective Action/Dismissal
   T. Concerns and Grievances
   U. Resignation
   V. Reimbursement of Expenses
   W. Recognition

VII. Volunteer Opportunities

VIII. Volunteer Resources

IX. Growth Opportunities

X. Outcomes of Your Commitment

XI. Appendices
   A. Appendix A – Biblical Perspective on Ministry
   B. Appendix B – Volunteer Agreement
   C. Appendix C – Confidential Information and Financial Solicitation
   D. Appendix D – Why Church Membership Is Important
   E. Appendix E – Church Contact Management Log
   F. Appendix F – Correctional Facility Contact Management Log
Welcome Letter from President Garland Hunt

Grace and Peace to you, our valuable Angel Tree volunteer!

Thank you for volunteering to partner with us this upcoming Angel Tree season. Without you, this program could never be as successful as it is. As a result of your time and commitment during one of the busiest seasons of the year, children will be served and shown the love of Jesus Christ.

We hope our new online Angel Tree training we provide will be helpful to you. This new training will give you valuable tools as you move through each phase of the Angel Tree season, from registering children and contacting caregivers to purchasing and delivering gifts.

We are grateful for your willingness to serve with us. The children of prisoners are so precious in God’s sight, and as you serve them, you will bless their parents and families as well. We have heard an overwhelming number of firsthand accounts detailing how the love of Christ – demonstrated through Angel Tree – was the catalyst for transformation in the heart of an inmate.

Your part in our mission goes way beyond just Angel Tree Christmas. We hope you will consider volunteering in other areas within our programs, too. You play a significant role in our overall ministry to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

May God richly bless you and your family in all things. He knows what you do and He will reward you in a mighty way. Thank you for your service and your commitment. Prison Fellowship is blessed because of you!

At His feet,

[Signature]
Garland Hunt
President
I. Introduction

Angel Tree, a program of Prison Fellowship, reaches out to the children of inmates and their families with the love of Christ. This unique program gives your church an opportunity to share Christ’s love by helping to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the families of prisoners. Volunteers play a critical role in accomplishing the mission of Prison Fellowship. Our goal is to provide volunteers with opportunities to serve in positions compatible with their skills, abilities, and interest. You will be informed of your duties and responsibilities as appropriate to the service you are providing. Some of those responsibilities include, but are not limited to, providing direct ministry to inmates in prisons, assisting inmates with a successful exit strategy, or leading a team of volunteers in the community. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the general policies and procedures of Prison Fellowship and Angel Tree. The contents of this manual will answer many questions concerning our organization and it outlines how volunteers like you can become an integral part of achieving the mission and vision that God has given to Prison Fellowship and Angel Tree. To retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, Prison Fellowship reserves the right to amend any of the policies and/or procedures described in this manual.

II. Prison Fellowship’s Core Values

- Centered in Jesus Christ – in our obedience to the Risen Lord
- Grounded in the Bible – in our life and ministry
- Dependent on Prayer – as the foundation for ministry
- Partnered with the Church – as the biblical means for ministry
- Committed to Unity – with all believers in Jesus Christ as our Lord commands
- Compelled to Evangelize and Disciple – to bring Jesus Christ to the lost and to help people grow in Him
- Loving Others – by treating all people with grace, trust and respect
- Seeking Excellence – by demonstrating integrity and wise stewardship

III. Angel Tree Vision and Program Goals

Every child has a story. For 1.7 million American children, that story is filled with the abandonment, loneliness and shame that come from having a mom or dad in prison. For many, it may also include following their parents down the same destructive road to incarceration.

Angel Tree Christmas works by connecting parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts. Every Christmas, thousands of churches help brighten the lives of countless children by purchasing, wrapping and delivering gifts on behalf of their incarcerated parent – not only delivering a message of love from parent to child, but also the true meaning of Christmas – the Good News of Jesus Christ.
Angel Tree doesn’t end with Christmas. That first Christmas connection can be the beginning of a rewarding, ongoing relationship with prisoners’ children and their families. Year-round ministry can help these children and their families grow in their faith, strengthen their relationships with imprisoned parents, and fulfill the purposes that God has for their lives.

A. Program goals:

- Increase prison and prisoner participation each year
- Increase church commitments to serve eligible children each year
- Serve 100 percent of eligible children through local churches and organizations

For additional information please visit [www.angeltree.org](http://www.angeltree.org) or call 1-800-55-ANGEL.

IV. How Angel Tree Works

Angel Tree is a wonderful way for churches to express Christ’s love. It helps open hearts to receive the most important gift – salvation and forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ – while providing incarcerated parents the opportunity to reach out to their children. Angel Tree is a great vehicle to introduce these families to your church and enfold them into the body of Christ through continued ministry.

Over the summer, prisoners who have children receive Angel Tree applications from prison chaplains. (Participation is restricted to children 18 or younger; they must be children or stepchildren of the prisoner; there must be no court order barring the prisoner from contacting their children and the children must live in the United States.) The chaplains ship the completed applications to the Angel Tree processing center where the information is entered into a database. The children are assigned to local churches or organizations who have registered to participate in Angel Tree.

A. Church/Coordinator/Team’s Role

The Angel Tree church coordinator and team use the Angel Tree Church Resource Kit as a guide for reaching prisoner’s families and to engage their church in this outreach ministry.

Each child receives one gift that costs between $15 and $25. Gifts are given through the generosity of the participating church or organization. The prisoner is able to make a suggestion regarding a gift type for each child, and this information is listed on the application. After the church coordinator receives the Child Listing Report from Angel Tree, the applications are distributed to the team who will be making contact with the caregivers. The first step will be to have volunteers contact each caregiver by phone (or immediately by mail if unable to reach by phone) to confirm participation, address and the gift selection. The volunteers write this information and the message from the incarcerated parent on the Angel Tree tags. The tags are placed on a Christmas tree or display area in the foyer or hallway of the participating church. Church members select tags, and purchase and wrap the gifts.

Shortly before Christmas, the gifts, purchased on behalf of the incarcerated parent, are either delivered to the child’s home or distributed during an Angel Tree party or open house at the church. Individuals who purchased the gifts or evangelism teams, youth groups, and/or theatre and arts teams present the gospel to each child at time of delivery.
B. Program Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Submit church reports and children not served forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February-July</td>
<td>Correctional facility re-engagement and recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February-December</td>
<td>Church re-engagement and recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Chaplain Resource kits and program materials shipped to facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June-August</td>
<td>Prisoners complete participation forms and submit for processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September-November</td>
<td>Church resource kits and materials shipped to participating churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October-December</td>
<td>Children assigned to churches and organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Church deliveries and parties for Angel Tree families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January-December</td>
<td>Year-round ministry activities with Angel Tree families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Angel Tree History

An ex-prisoner, Mary Kay Beard, started it all.

“I am both awed and humbled to have been a part of something so enormously effective,” says Mary Kay Beard. “Being there at the beginning – I consider it one of the highest privileges of my life.”

Mary Kay was a safecracker, a bank robber, and one of America’s Most Wanted. Arrested in June of 1972, she quickly collected 11 federal indictments and 35 charges against her. But her 180-year sentence turned into a six-year sentence, during which time she asked God to change her hardened heart.

On the three Christmases that she spent at the Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women in Alabama, local church groups brought the inmates gifts of toothpaste and soap. Intrigued, Mary Kay watched as her fellow prisoners wrapped up the small gifts and gave them to their children at the Christmas visit.

“Most children wouldn’t think much of such small gifts, but in prison there was such joy on their faces!” says Mary Kay. “It didn’t really matter to them what they got; it was from Mama.”

After being paroled, Mary Kay accepted Prison Fellowship’s challenge to become their first Alabama state director in 1982. One of her assignments was to create a Christmas program for prisoners. At one of her speaking engagements, a conversation with an ex-prisoner’s daughter solidified the program’s focus.

“What about the inmates’ kids?” the woman asked. “They are the real victims.”

Mary Kay recalled the toiletries that prisoners gave their children on Christmas. So she and a crew of volunteers began creating a program to provide real gifts for prisoners’ children.

Their plan was to erect a Christmas tree at Birmingham’s Brookwood Mall, encouraging shoppers to buy presents for specific children. Then someone suggested writing
the children’s names on paper ornaments shaped like angels, creating an “Angel Tree!”

Mary Kay helped cut out 100 paper angel ornaments and then visited prisoners to invite them to sign up their children. “God never wastes anything,” Mary Kay says. “He used my own criminal past to give me credibility in their eyes. And they trusted us.” Mary Kay called the caregivers of the children and asked what they wanted for Christmas. Then, she wrote each child’s name and his or her gift preference on an angel ornament.

On the day after Thanksgiving, the busiest retail day of the year, the first Angel Tree greeted shoppers at the top of the mall’s escalator. An advertisement in the Birmingham News had notified readers of the project. Many of the store owners agreed to offer a 10-percent discount to shoppers who bought their Angel Tree gifts at their stores.

The response was overwhelming. That weekend, shoppers took all 100 angels to buy gifts. So Mary Kay visited more prisons, called more caregivers and put more angels on the tree. She and the volunteers wrapped gifts and made sure they would get to the right child. Then Mary Kay called the caregivers of the prisoners’ children to pick up the presents. She mobilized the Gideons and the Birmingham News deliverers to take gifts to children who lived far away.

That year 556 children received gifts, but the effects spread even farther. “In January, all of my Bible study groups at that prison doubled or tripled,” said Mary Kay. “The newcomers were the inmates whose children had received gifts.”

The next year, Angel Tree branched out to 12 states and soon became a church-based program. Now, as PF’s most popular program, it reaches prisoners’ children not only throughout the U.S. but in 90 other countries as well.

VI. Volunteer Overview

A. Definition of a Volunteer
A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond normal reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of Prison Fellowship. A volunteer must complete an orientation and role-specific training by Prison Fellowship prior to performance of the task. Unless specifically stated, volunteers shall not be considered as employees of Prison Fellowship. Individuals under the age of 16 are required to have parental or guardian consent to become a volunteer and the assigned duties must meet the state’s child labor laws.

B. Volunteer Philosophy
From its beginning, Prison Fellowship has partnered with local churches to carry out this ministry of
transformation and hope. In recent years God has brought together tens of thousands of men, women and even youth to work with prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. Across the country they are uniting in communities, providing support and services both inside and outside the prisons. These churches also collaborate with scores of other faith-based ministries, community organizations and corrections officials to ensure that, together, we can reach prisoners and their families with the best possible teaching, resources and support.

C. Commitment to Volunteers

- We believe that leadership is an opportunity to serve and not an occasion to be served.
- We believe that all people are created in God’s image and deserve honor and respect as divinely created beings.
- We believe that volunteers are an integral part of Prison Fellowship’s mission and are critical to the delivery of effective ministry. As such, they are to be afforded all of the professional rights and obligations appropriate to their tasks.
- We believe that the ministry of service to others is itself an act of worship and service to our Lord. Consequently, the act of enabling others in their service is also a spiritually significant endeavor.
- We believe that all tasks and responsibilities in Prison Fellowship can, with proper specificity and the right people, be performed by volunteers.
- We believe that every hour contributed by a volunteer is a valuable gift that deserves to be managed, recognized and honored.
- We believe that all volunteers have the right to understand the big picture of the ministry and to see where their efforts fit into the overall structure and mission.
- We believe that it is the primary responsibility of the volunteer manager to place the volunteer in a position that fits both the interest and giftedness of the volunteer and the needs of the ministry.
- We believe that all followers of Christ have an obligation, motivated by love and gratitude, to be involved in the ministry of serving others.
- We believe that God has given us the opportunity and responsibility to ensure that service through Prison Fellowship is a spiritual and personal growth experience for all volunteers.

D. Working with Volunteers

Angel Tree’s goals are best accomplished through the active participation of committed volunteers. To this end, Angel Tree accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at various levels within all programs and activities. All Prison Fellowship leaders and staff are encouraged to assist in the creation and support of meaningful and productive volunteer roles and to assist in recruitment of volunteers from the Body of Christ. At Prison Fellowship, we aim to live by our values in the way we do our work, and in the way we treat everyone who volunteers for us. The Angel Tree Program Support Center is one way we do that. Its goal is to provide volunteers a single location where they can receive ongoing quality support, guidance, training and services. This group can be contacted in the following ways:

- E-mail: angel_tree@pfm.org
- Phone: 1-800-552-6435 (1-800-55-ANGEL)
E. Purpose of Policies
These policies provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in the management of volunteer activities. These policies are intended to be a guide only and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. Changes to or exceptions from these policies may be granted only by the Angel Tree National Director and must be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the Angel Tree National Director.

F. Scope of Volunteer Policies
Unless specifically stated, these policies apply to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken by or on behalf of Prison Fellowship, and to all departments and sites of operation of Prison Fellowship.

G. Ex-Prisoners as Volunteers
Former inmates may be accepted as volunteers, where such service does not constitute a breach in their responsibility to the Department of Parole and Probation.

H. Benefits of Volunteering:
- Volunteer training with program resources provided
- Build relationships and grow your network of contacts
- Volunteer leadership experience
- The satisfaction of transforming your local community with Christ’s love
- Transferrable skills for employment
- Contribution to the Kingdom of God
- Program awareness and expansion
- Increased program transition from Christmas only to year-round ministry
- Increase percentage of children served by a local church

I. Volunteer Rights
Volunteers are a valuable resource to Prison Fellowship, Angel Tree, its staff and those we serve. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to effective supervision, the right to appropriate information and participation, and the right to recognition for work done.

Additional rights:
- Assignment based on interests, skills and availability in addition to the needs of the program
- Clear expectations of the volunteer position
- Treatment as a valuable member of the team committed to accomplishing program goals
- Staff support and resources necessary to fulfill your volunteer role
- An opportunity to provide feedback
- An opportunity to develop and grow as a volunteer through increased program responsibility
- The opportunity to discontinue your volunteer experience with reasonable notice (preferably 2 weeks)
J. Volunteer Responsibilities
Volunteers shall agree to actively perform duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of Prison Fellowship and Angel Tree.

- Abide by Statement of Faith
- Communicate as agreed upon with Angel Tree Program Specialist
- Submit complete and accurate reports in a timely manner
- Honor privacy considerations discussed in detail with Angel Tree Program Specialist
- Exercise discretion in managing received data
- Do not engage in activities leading to a conflict of interest

K. Reporting
We consider it a privilege to partner with volunteers and churches to share the Gospel in the lives of those impacted by crime and incarceration. Part of our mutual desire, responsibility and accountability in this partnership is to share what God has been doing through each of us in His work of transformation. One of the ways we do that is through reporting. We believe reporting is a Biblical principle that God endorses as a tool to encourage His people and for His people to give Him glory.

We see this lived out in a number of Scripture passages, including Acts 14:21-28, which tells how early followers of Jesus gave detailed reports of their missionary endeavors. A few things we observe from this passage and others are what occur when we report.

The report:

- Encourages other believers
- Educates/encourages non-believers (a means of proclaiming the Gospel abroad)
- Provides a feedback mechanism for improvement/clarification of issues
- Provides specific content for prayer
- Unites the Body of Christ in prayer

We desire to be used of God to proclaim the Gospel together, be a source of encouragement for our brothers and sisters in the faith and ultimately give God glory for the great things He has done. Information you collect while performing your responsibilities will be submitted to your staff contact per the reporting schedule requested using specific reporting tools provided. You are encouraged to track best practices and share those with your staff contact as well.

L. Volunteer Representation of Angel Tree
Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate Prison Fellowship, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from the Angel Tree National Director. These actions may include, but are not limited to: public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of Prison Fellowship and Angel Tree as specifically indicated within their job descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

1. Code of Conduct
As an Angel Tree volunteer you agree to uphold Prison Fellowship’s Statement of Faith and abide by the core values of Prison Fellowship. We will work together to support the highest levels of excellence and integrity in our work.
2. **Dress Code**
Day by day, what volunteers are and do is on display to the general public and to our constituency. Volunteers are representatives of Prison Fellowship and of Jesus Christ. Therefore, all volunteers should strive to ensure that their conduct and manner of dress do not call undue attention to themselves or demonstrate a lack of appropriateness, modesty, or decency that could cast doubts upon their faith or the ministry of Angel Tree. Those tasked with supervising volunteers must ensure that the conduct and style of dress of their volunteer team are acceptable; interpret what is modest, decent, and proper; and mediate, in conjunction with the director of the National Program Support Center, any disputes that may arise. Casual is the expected norm for ministry attire throughout the volunteer core (casual includes modest skirts and tops, casual pants and slacks, polo-style knit shirts, and casual shoes). Certain events, projects, and meetings will on occasion require professional dress (suits, ties, jackets and dress pants or skirts). Additionally, each state or federal Department of Corrections (DOC) has established a dress code for all volunteers. Each volunteer is responsible for becoming familiar with the pertinent DOC code and strictly adhering to it.

3. **Confidentiality**
Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves a staff member, volunteer, constituent, donor or other person, or involves overall PF business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer’s relationship with Prison Fellowship and/or other corrective action.

As an Angel Tree volunteer you must respect confidential information regarding programs, products and services provided to you to fulfill your responsibilities. This includes any personal data provided to you on reports for church recruitment and retention, volunteer recruitment and related data for program development. You will exercise caution and treat the data with the intent to honor privacy considerations of those associated with the Angel Tree program. See Appendix B.

M. **Conflict of Interest**
As an Angel Tree volunteer you accept the responsibility for yourself as you represent the Angel Tree program. You will agree to refrain from engaging in any activity (personal, professional or business) that positions you for actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest regarding the Angel Tree program.

N. **Recruitment**
Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, disability, age, or race. Volunteer recruitment shall focus on Christians with suitable skills, gifts and talents to perform a task on behalf of Angel Tree. Volunteers may be recruited from those who have indicated either an interest in specific functions or a general interest in volunteering that will later be matched with a specific function.

1. **Recruitment of Minors**
Volunteers who have not reached the age of 16 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian prior to volunteering. The volunteer services assigned to a minor should be performed in a non-hazardous environment and should comply with all appropriate requirements of child labor laws.

O. Certification and Assignment
Volunteer certification requires that all of the following steps be fulfilled:

- Volunteer views "Bringing Hope" online orientation video
- Volunteer completes and submits an application
- Volunteer signs the PF Statement of Faith
- Volunteer’s pastor submits a signed recommendation. The pastor’s recommendation is an important part of process. PF believes that ministry to any people group is an extension of the ministry of the local church; consequently, being anchored in the local church is a prerequisite.
- Please take a moment and read Appendix D: Why Church Membership Is Important.
- Volunteer acquires a personal character reference and submits to Angel Tree
- Volunteer completes role-specific training online
- Volunteer completes an interview with an AT Program Specialist
- Volunteer completes the Volunteer Agreement

1. Assignment
In placing a volunteer in a particular position, Angel Tree will give attention to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the volunteer position.

P. Staff Role
Each volunteer who completes certification and is assigned to a specific ministry role with Angel Tree will have a clearly identified staff specialist who is responsible for direct management and guidance of that volunteer. The specialist shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. Staff establishes a communication plan and timeline. Staff provides reporting tools and a reports schedule. Staff provide FAQs, talking points, geographic-specific tips, and contact list. Staff provides geographical reports and a historical account, as necessary, to accomplish the assigned task.

Q. Volunteers as Leaders
A volunteer may lead other volunteers, provided the volunteer has completed the appropriate training and is under the direct leadership of an Angel Tree staff person.

R. Lines of Communication
Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Accordingly, volunteers will be included in and have access to appropriate emails, materials, and meetings relevant to their work assignments. To facilitate the receipt of this information on a timely basis, volunteers should provide PF with an email address so they may be included on all
email distributions. Primary responsibility for ensuring the volunteer receives such information will rest with the direct supervisor of the volunteer, in cooperation with the Angel Tree Support Center.

S. Corrective Action
In some situations, corrective action may become necessary following an evaluation. Examples of corrective actions include: the requirement of additional training, reassignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or, as a last resort, dismissal from volunteer service.

1. Dismissal of a Volunteer
Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of Prison Fellowship and Angel Tree or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignments may be subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be relieved of his or her responsibilities until that volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with supervisory staff. Prior to dismissal of a volunteer, staff should seek the consultation and assistance of the Angel Tree National Director. Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of Prison Fellowship/Angel Tree equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of constituents or co-volunteers, failure to abide by Prison Fellowship/Angel Tree policies and procedures, failure to comply with policies and procedures of the DOC, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties even after remedial action has been attempted.

T. Concerns and Grievances
If a volunteer separates service from Prison Fellowship, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, or is reassigned to a new position, it is the responsibility of the Angel Tree Support Center to inform the affected staff, volunteer leaders, and ministry partners or collaborators that the volunteer is no longer assigned to ministry. In cases of dismissal for cause, this notification should be given in writing and should clearly indicate that any further contact with the volunteer is outside any scope of relationship with Prison Fellowship.

Prison Fellowship and Angel Tree are grateful for the wonderful relationships it has enjoyed with its volunteers. Nevertheless, we recognize that conflicts or disputes may occasionally arise. In recognition of the biblical calling to live at peace with one another, this agreement commits us both to mutually agree to resolve any dispute in a biblical manner, according to the principles stated in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 18:15-20, and other pertinent Scripture.

If any dispute cannot be resolved in private meetings between you and Prison Fellowship/Angel Tree, by this agreement we mutually agree to enter mediation and, if mediation is unsuccessful, arbitration, under the auspices of the Institute for Christian Conciliation or similar entity that is mutually acceptable. We also mutually agree that no dispute will be submitted to the civil courts unless it involves intentional wrongdoing that has substantially injured you or Prison Fellowship.

U. Resignation
Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with PF at any time. Volunteers who intend to resign are asked to provide 2 weeks advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision. Resignation will be officially recognized in a letter and affected staff will be notified.

V. Reimbursement of Expenses
Under Prison Fellowship’s financial policy, expenses incurred by volunteers in their work for PF shall not be reimbursed.
W. Recognition
Listed below are ways to thank volunteers you may be responsible for managing.

- Send your volunteers a thank-you note by mail or email
- Share about the exemplary effort undertaken by volunteers at http://www.angeltree.org/at-stories/share-your-angeltree-story – your story may be included in the monthly Angel Tree e-newsletter or may be highlighted in a Prison Fellowship publication
- Nominate your exceptional volunteer for special volunteer recognition events
- Send a birthday card
- Send a personal note during National Volunteer Appreciation Week

VII. Volunteer Opportunities
All volunteers new to Angel Tree complete an online information session, which provides them with an overview of PF and AT as well as volunteer ministry opportunities. Following the information session, volunteers select from the following list of opportunities (based on availability, skills, interests, and commitment level) and attend the corresponding training.

- In-Prison Coordinator (1-year commitment)
- Area Coordinator (2-year commitment)

VIII. Volunteer Resources

- Angel Tree Coordinator Newsletter (available through your Angel Tree specialist)
- www.angeltree.org
- www.prisonfellowship.org
- www.prisonfellowship.org/get-involved

IX. Growth Opportunities

- Expand ministry reach in your area by transitioning your Angel Tree Christmas churches into year-round ministry churches
- Increase the number of children served by your churches in your areas
- Disciple church coordinators and other church volunteers in their respective volunteer roles
X. Outcomes of Your Commitment

- Incarcerated parents are comforted by your acts of kindness and service
- Incarcerated parent feels empowered to positively influence their family
- Positive impact on Department of Corrections officers, chaplains and staff
- Encouragement to caregivers that “we understand”
- Your efforts to communicate the love of an earthly parent also help a child understand the love of his or her Heavenly Father

XI. APPENDICES

Appendix A – A Biblical Perspective of Ministry
Appendix B – Agreement for Volunteers
Appendix C – Confidential Information and Financial Solicitation
Appendix D – Why Church Membership Is Important
Appendix E – Church Contact Management Log
Appendix F – Correctional Facility Contact Management Log
A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE on MINISTRY

Scripture sets forth the following perspective that is intended to guide our interaction with the people God has called to this ministry.

AN EXPRESSION OF GOD’S IMAGE
Both the Old and New Testaments indicate that human beings are created in God’s image and likeness. Because we are made in God’s image, we are distinctive in all of creation and each of us has eternal value.

GIFTS AND GROWTH POTENTIAL
Scripture uses the analogy of a body to describe the inter-relatedness among believers. Each believer is both an integral and essential part of the whole. God in His wisdom has given gifts to each believer for the purpose of building up and completing the body and for accomplishing ministry. These gifts are diverse and shared by many people. The failure of any one believer to exercise his or her gift(s) affects the entire body and its ability to serve others.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS
Through the work of Christ, the Old Testament concept of the exclusivity of the priesthood has been exchanged for the inclusive priesthood of all believers. Each believer has direct access to God through Christ, and all believers are involved in the task of ministry.

MINISTRY TO OTHERS
All believers are commanded to minister to others. Even a casual reading of Scripture reveals God’s intention for the believer to be a conduit through which He can share His love and grace with the world. We often try to convince God that He should want something different from us, but His demands are clear. He wants doers of the Word, not just hearers. He loves mercy, justice, kindness, righteousness, and relief for the oppressed, not ritual church attendance or superficial sacrifices. That is, in fact, the model that Christ demonstrated for us during His incarnation. If, as the Son of God, He came to serve rather than to be served; if He could humble Himself to wash the disciples’ feet; if He could devote Himself to feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and giving sight to the blind; then as His disciples and followers, we should do the same. The Christian faith demands nothing less.

THE TASK OF CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP
Being overwhelmed by the burdens of ministry is not new. Even Moses reached the point where he could give no more on his own. As he discovered, one of the tasks of Christian leadership is to provide for the involvement of others in the ministry. This includes developing the gifts of others, using organizational structures that include rather than exclude, making choices about which people should serve in which capacities, and making room for others to express their own gifts.

SERVICE AS WORSHIP
As believers, we are required to offer ourselves as a sacrifice, which is our spiritual service of worship. Christ claimed that we are ministering to Him when we minister to the “least of these.” From these passages, we understand acts of service to others to be acts of worship to the Lord.

MOTIVATION FOR SERVICE
The only sustaining motivation for being involved in ministry is love for our brothers and sisters
and gratitude to the Lord for what He has done for us. We love God because He first loved us, and we are instructed to love others as He has loved us. In fact, our love for others is proof of our love for God. Christ’s love for us led to His giving His life in sacrifice for us. Likewise, our love for others results in our giving of self on behalf of others. Freely we have received, so freely we are to give.

CHRIST’S WORK THROUGH US
In God’s design it is He, through the work of the Holy Spirit, who accomplishes the results of our ministry efforts. Our task is to be faithful to the role He has given us. His task is to bring forth the fruit. Nothing is impossible for those who have faith in God.
AGREEMENT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Over the years Prison Fellowship (PF) has been blessed with faithful volunteers who have ministered alongside Prison Fellowship’s paid staff bringing the peace of Christ to the chaos of crime. We have found that relationships work best when all parties have a clear understanding of expectations. Therefore, we ask that you read this agreement carefully. If you understand and are willing to accept the mutual commitments outlined here, please sign the agreement to formally acknowledge your understanding. A Prison Fellowship representative will also sign.

1. Your relationship with Prison Fellowship is strictly as a volunteer and not as an employee. Your responsibilities are not intended to lead to future employment with Prison Fellowship. As a volunteer, you will receive no current or future compensation or benefits of any kind in return for your volunteer services. You and PF are each free to end this relationship at any time; the needs of the ministry and common courtesy call for advance notice when possible.

2. As a volunteer, you will be performing some or all of the following services, under the direction of your supervisor: ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
For the protection of yourself and Prison Fellowship Ministries, your activities should be limited to those listed above and additional activities that we agree upon in the future. Apart from any authority specifically granted to you in these activities, you are not authorized to act as Prison Fellowship’s representative or to commit Prison Fellowship financially, legally, or in any other way.

3. You agree to waive any claim against Prison Fellowship for any injury you might suffer in the course of your volunteer activities that is not due to the direct, material negligence of Prison Fellowship. Since you are not an employee, you must rely on personal insurance to cover any injury or damage sustained in the course of your volunteer activities.

4. Prison Fellowship is grateful for the wonderful relationships it has enjoyed with its volunteers. Nevertheless, we recognize that conflicts or disputes may occasionally arise. In recognition of the biblical calling to live at peace with one another, this agreement commits us both to mutually agree to resolve any dispute in a biblical manner, according to the principles stated in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 18:15-20, and other pertinent Scripture.
   If any dispute cannot be resolved in private meetings between you and Prison Fellowship, by this agreement we mutually agree to enter mediation and, if mediation is unsuccessful, arbitration, under the auspices of the Institute for Christian Conciliation or similar entity that is mutually acceptable. We also mutually agree that no dispute will be submitted to the civil courts unless it involves intentional wrongdoing that has substantially injured you or Prison Fellowship.

5. Because of the sensitive nature of our ministry, we ask you, as a volunteer, to make specific commitments:
   a. to agree to appropriate background investigation, as and if appropriate for the services you will perform as a volunteer. Such investigation will particularly be necessary in the following situations, among others: having responsibility for handling funds or other Prison Fellowship assets, operating an automobile, or working with children;
   b. to keep confidential all nonpublic documents and information of or about Prison Fellowship to which you have access.

In signing this agreement, you reaffirm that the information provided in the volunteer application (or elsewhere in the application process) is correct, and that you have read the Statement of Faith.

Signature of Volunteer ____________________________________________ Date___________
Printed Name of Volunteer____________________________________________________________
Signature of PF Representative___________________________________________ Date____________
AGREEMENT TO PRESERVE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND TO REFRAIN FROM UNAUTHORIZED FINANCIAL SOLICITATION OF CONSTITUENTS

Prison Fellowship has a commitment to its employees, volunteers, and constituents to do all it can to maintain confidentiality of proprietary and confidential information, including ministry records, employee records, and financial gifts to the ministry. Prison Fellowship also stewards relationships with constituents and will supervise individuals' contact with constituent information and will require their prior agreement to the same confidentiality of information after their departure from active service to the ministry. Therefore, be it resolved that:

During active employment or volunteer service authorized individuals will adhere to the following:

Confidentiality: Authorized individuals will maintain the confidentiality of constituent listings, including, but not limited to, donor giving history, volunteer information, prisoner and family information, employer records and employee records, and will protect their confidentiality through all means necessary. Authorized individuals will respect the proprietary rights of Prison Fellowship materials and not distribute or copy to unauthorized individuals.

Solicitation: Authorized individuals will not solicit any contributions, including time or money, from Prison Fellowship donors without authorization by the management through position description or other explicit means, and will not in any case solicit Prison Fellowship donors for personal benefit or for any purpose not explicitly assigned or approved by management.

After employment or volunteer service ends:

Confidentiality: Authorized individuals agree to continue to maintain the confidentiality of Prison Fellowship proprietary information, including, but not limited to, donor giving history, volunteer information, prisoner and family information, employer records, and employee records after ending volunteer service with Prison Fellowship. Authorized individuals agree not to take from the Prison Fellowship premises any printed or electronic lists of any of the aforementioned information when they end their active service with Prison Fellowship and further agree not to reconstruct this detailed information for their personal or professional use, or for the use of others, for any purpose.

Solicitation: Authorized individuals agree that when their service with Prison Fellowship ends they will not represent themselves as Prison Fellowship volunteers or agents, for fundraising or other purposes. Former employees may not solicit funds for Prison Fellowship, either from Prison Fellowship donors or others, without the explicit written consent of Prison Fellowship senior management.

A signed commitment to this agreement is mandatory upon employment for all Prison Fellowship volunteers. Failure to follow this policy will result in disciplinary measures, including possible termination of volunteer service and prosecution.

Agreement of Authorized Individual: Print Name ________________________________________________
I have read the above policy statement, understand its application, and agree to abide by its provisions.

Signature of Authorized Individual Position or Role_________________________________________ Date______________

Signature of Supervisor Position or Role_________________________________________ Date______________
WHY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT

According to Scripture, why should every Christian join a church?

Every Christian should join a church because Scripture requires it. Granted, there is no direct command in Scripture that says, “Every Christian must join a local church,” but two factors in Scripture indicate that every Christian should be a member of a local church.

1. Jesus established the church to be a public, earthly institution that would mark out, affirm, and oversee those who profess to believe in him (Matt. 16:18-19, 18:15-20). Jesus established the church to publicly declare those who belong to him in order to give the world a display of the good news about himself (John 17:21, 23; see also Eph. 3:10). Jesus wants the world to know who belongs to him and who doesn’t. And how is the world to know who belongs to him and who doesn’t? They are to see which people publicly identify themselves with his people in the visible, public institution he established for this very purpose. They’re to look at the members of his church. And if some people claim to be part of the universal church even though they belong to no local church, they reject Jesus’ plan for them and his church. Jesus intends for his people to be marked out as a visible, public group, which means joining together in local churches.

2. Scripture repeatedly commands Christians to submit to their leaders (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13). The only way to do that is by publicly committing to be members of their flock, and saying in effect, “I commit to listening to your teaching, following your direction, and to submitting to your leadership.” There’s no way to obey the scriptural commands to submit to your leaders if you never actually submit to them by joining a local church.

Where do we see church membership in the New Testament?

1. Matthew 18:15-17: “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault . . . if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you . . . If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” The ability to exclude someone from “the church” presupposes that it’s known who belongs to “the church” as a member in the first place.

2. Acts 5:12-13: “Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem.” So, people faced the decision of whether or not they would join the church in Jerusalem. This joining is more public and definite than an informal association.

3. In 1 Timothy 5:9-12, Paul gives Timothy instructions for enrolling widows on the list of those receiving support from the church. He writes, “Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works . . .” While this isn’t conclusive evidence for formal church membership, it’s tough to imagine that the church in Ephesus would have kept a list of widows but not have any formal means of identifying everyone who belonged to the church.

4. 1 Corinthians 5:12-13: “For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside.” Paul called upon the Corinthian church to judge those who were inside the church, not those who were outside. They were responsible for the testimony of those who belonged to the church, not those who didn’t. This passage makes no sense if the Corinthian church didn’t have some public, formal means by which people identified themselves with the church.
5. 2 Corinthians 2:6: Paul writes concerning a man the Corinthian church had excommunicated, “For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.” This man’s exclusion from the church was a punishment by the majority. You can’t have a majority unless you have a definite set of people from which a majority is constituted.

What are some other reasons to join a church?

In addition to the New Testament’s teaching that every Christian should submit to a local church and its leaders (see Matt. 18:15-20, Heb. 13:17), there are many other good reasons to join a church:

1. Assure yourself. Membership is the church’s way of affirming the validity of someone’s profession of faith (Matt. 16:19, 18:18). The church looks at a person’s life, hears their explanation of the Gospel and how they came to believe it, and says, “You look like a Christian to us. So join us. Watch over our lives and we’ll watch over yours.” So, while membership in a church doesn’t guarantee that someone is a Christian, it should assure believers of the genuineness of their faith.

2. Evangelize the world. We can preach the Gospel to our community and the world much better together than we can apart. Not only that, but as we covenant with other Christians to love, encourage and admonish one another, we display a living, breathing image of the Gospel to the world.

3. Expose false gospels. As the members of a church support and submit to its teaching, they collectively say, “This is the truth! World, pay attention!” and their unity in doing so works to expose corruptions and imitations of the true Gospel.

4. Edify the church. When we join a local church we let the pastors and other members of that church know that we intend to attend regularly, give faithfully, pray for the church, and serve the church as we have opportunity. We allow fellow believers to have greater expectations of us in these areas, and we hold them responsible in these ways as well. So join a church in order to build it up (Eph. 4:11-16). You can do far more to build up the church as a committed member than as a detached, autonomous attender. And it will do good to your own soul as well.

5. Glorify God. Jesus told his disciples, “A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34-35,NIV). We testify to the world about what God is like by how we love one another—and a committed, persevering, accountable love is a far greater picture of God’s love than a picky-and-choosy, I’ll-only-be-involved-with-the-people-I-want kind of “love.” By committing to one another as members of the same church we display the glory of God’s love – a committed, persevering, transforming love – as we image it in ourlives together, and so bring him glory.

What should I look for in a church?

1. Expositional preaching. Does the pastor preach God’s Word, or his own ideas? Does he allow Scripture to set his preaching agenda, or does he pick topics by some other criteria?

2. Biblical theology. Does the church openly confess key biblical doctrines? Do the leaders consistently teach sound doctrine?

3. A biblical understanding of the Gospel. Does the church clearly proclaim the Good News about what Jesus Christ accomplished for sinners in his death and resurrection? Consistently?

4. A biblical understanding of conversion. Does the church teach that people must be born again in order to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:1-8)? Does the church teach that in order
to become a Christian, a person must repent of sin and trust in Christ, both of which are ultimately gifts of God?

5. A biblical understanding of evangelism. Does the church preach the Gospel to non-Christians and encourage its members to do the same? Does it understand that it’s our responsibility to preach the message of salvation yet God is the only one who can do the saving?

6. Biblical church membership. Does the church take membership seriously by seeking to ensure that its members faithfully attend? Does it encourage members to fulfill the biblical “one-anothers” with each other?

7. Biblical church discipline. Does the church lovingly, patiently practice church discipline?

8. Biblical discipleship and growth. Does the church expect and equip its members to grow spiritually? Does the church encourage its members to disciple one another? Growing as a Christian should be normal, not exceptional.

9. Biblical church leadership. Is the church led by godly, qualified men? Does the church look to Scripture to determine its leadership structure?

I don’t feel like there are opportunities for me to get involved in my church. What should I do?

Sometimes we get so fixated on programs and official positions in the church that it’s easy to miss opportunities right in front of our eyes. To help remedy that potential near-sightedness, here are few ways that you can always get involved in any church.

1. Find needs to meet. No church, even the best-staffed and best-served, has absolutely all of its needs met. There are always children to watch, meals to cook, rooms to clean, members in times of special need, and much more. So pray that God would enable you to find others’ needs and meet them in a spirit of humble service, even if they aren’t particularly glamorous.

2. Find Christians to disciple. All Christians this side of heaven are works in progress, and God wants all Christians to build up the church to maturity by speaking the truth in love (see Eph. 4:11-16, Col. 3:16-17). So find people whom you can speak the truth in love to, and who can do the same for you. Ask a couple of new members over to your home for dinner and get to know the state of their souls. Find a younger Christian and begin reading Scripture and praying together.

3. Extend the ministry of your church outside the walls. There are a number of ministry organizations that need competent volunteers who are anchored in the local church. You may have a passion for the homeless, prisoners, unwed mothers, etc . . . Seek out opportunities to extend your church’s impact in the community. Serving in the church is not something we should need a special invitation to do. In every church there will be needs to meet and Christians to disciple. So taking the initiative and finding ways to do others spiritual good is God honoring.

(Much of this material has been adapted from Michael McKinley’s article, “Church Membership and the NCLHGA.”) (Some of this material has been adapted from Nine Marks of a Healthy Church by Mark Dever, pages 151-159 & pages 161-163.)

Reprinted by permission from www.9marks.org
# Church Contact Management Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Name:</th>
<th>Church Contact Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Address:</td>
<td>Work Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Phone:</td>
<td>Church Fax:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Name:</th>
<th>Church Contact Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Address:</td>
<td>Work Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Phone:</td>
<td>Church Fax:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Name:</th>
<th>Church Contact Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Address:</td>
<td>Work Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Phone:</td>
<td>Church Fax:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Correctional Facility Contact Management Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correctional Facility Name:</th>
<th>Chaplain/Program Coordinator Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility Shipping Address:</td>
<td>Contact Mailing Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Phone:</td>
<td>Contact Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td>Contact Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact Fax:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correctional Facility Name:</th>
<th>Chaplain/Program Coordinator Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility Shipping Address:</td>
<td>Contact Mailing Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Phone:</td>
<td>Contact Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td>Contact Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact Fax:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correctional Facility Name:</th>
<th>Chaplain/Program Coordinator Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facility Shipping Address:</td>
<td>Contact Mailing Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Phone:</td>
<td>Contact Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td>Contact Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact Fax:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANGEL TREE CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Angel Tree Specialist_________________________________________________________

Phone Number ___________________________Fax Number _______________________________

Email Address ______________________________________________________________________

Name of Angel Tree Area Coordinator _________________________________________________

Areas of Assignment

* ___________________________________________________________________________________

* ___________________________________________________________________________________

* ___________________________________________________________________________________

* ___________________________________________________________________________________
“I’ve talked with hundreds of Prison Fellowship volunteers, often trying to determine why they selflessly toil in prisons. There is no glory, no fame for them there. Though their words may vary, their answer is always essentially the same. They see their service as the only possible response to God’s grace. For it is out of gratitude to God for His grace and mercy that the Christian is moved to serve Christ in this sick world.

We share the Good News, feed the hungry, visit the imprisoned, seek justice for the oppressed and care for the widows and orphans, not because we are do-gooders or taken in by a social gospel, but out of appreciation for what God has done in our lives. When Christians by the millions practice this kind of obedience in all walks of life, we will see the culture profoundly impacted; for the strongholds of Satan cannot stand against that kind of holy power.”

— Chuck Colson, “Who Speaks for GOD, Chapter 38, Can Revival Save America? Part III”

“I was worried about what my children would do during the holidays, without their father and now their grandparents, it brought me to tears when I got the Angel Tree form, I thought all was lost, you have really restored some hope, faith and reassurance that my children could and would have smiles this year for the holidays. I am so grateful and thankful”. — Leo Smith, Jr., NV, prisoner

“Thank you for sponsoring my dad. I’m sure he will appreciate it and I know we do! It’s a wonderful thing you are doing and God will bless you for that! Again, thank you so very much”.

— Maci, LA, Angel Tree child

“I’m writing today to thank you for going out of your way to buy gifts for my children this year, my children loved their gifts very much! I also have found my faith in the Lord and I’ve been working on building a strong relationship with Him, to help me and guide me for the rest of my life”. — Mindy, IN, prisoner

“You are such a blessing this time of year. You made two little girls feel so loved and cherished at a time when their father is in jail. Words can’t express the joy you brought them Christmas morning as we celebrated Christ’s birth.” — Sherrie, CA, Angel Tree caregiver

“Running late to deliver gifts on Saturday before Christmas, as we arrived to the first family’s home. Grandma and two children (5 and 3 years of age) greeted us with the children squealing; “Daddy’s presents, daddy’s presents!” At the same time the mother was on the telephone with the prisoner! We were able to hear the children talk to their daddy and experience generations of happiness in one room. We believe the Angel Tree program and our church were successful in bringing God’s love to the families and children of prisoners.” — Rebecca, AZ, Angel Tree church coordinator

Angel Tree® is a registered trademark of Prison Fellowship Ministries®.