

ANGEL TREE® QUICKSTART GUIDE



PHASE 1 | Preparation and Recruitment

STEP 1 – PREPARE FOR THE PROGRAM

- Plan for enough volunteers and time to carry out the responsibilities based on the number of children you signed up to serve.
- Schedule time to get familiar with the materials in your kit as well as the additional resources available online at prisonfellowship.org/resources/angel-tree/churchcoordinatormaterials.

STEP 2 – RECRUIT YOUR TEAM ****Assignment of children will begin in October.****

Identify people from your church or organization who will enjoy helping you carry out your Angel Tree Christmas program.

You need to properly screen the volunteers on your team. Vigilance in volunteer selection helps ensure safety.

Volunteer job opportunities:

- Contacting families
- Buying gifts
- Send a Christmas card to the incarcerated parent (*optional*)
- Sharing the Gospel
- Wrapping gifts
- Purchase a gift for the caregiver from the church (*optional*)
- Prayer team
- Delivering gifts

STEP 3 – TRAIN YOUR TEAM

Remember to make the volunteers aware of the various guidelines available, as well as the online training provided at prisonfellowship.org/resources/angel-tree/churchcoordinatormaterials/angel-tree-online-training.

STEP 4 – CONTACT THE CAREGIVERS

It can be challenging to get in touch with each child's caregiver, but you will need to secure their approval, get their up-to-date information, and confirm gift requests. Reach out as early as possible to ensure success.

- **Contact the caregiver by mail** using the Gift Request Letter (available online) or variation.
- **Contact the caregiver by phone** using the Phone Interview Script (available online) or variation.

STEP 5 – PROMOTE ANGEL TREE TO YOUR CONGREGATION

Holding an Angel Tree Sunday event is an ideal way to promote participation in this ministry throughout your church.

- Prepare the Angel Tree tags
- Prepare tracking cards
- Set up tree
- Collect and store gifts
- Wrap gifts

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

1. Each child receives a **minimum of one gift valued at approximately \$20.**
2. Gifts are delivered on behalf of the parent in prison.
3. When the gifts are delivered, a Gospel presentation is made.
4. Gifts are typically presented to children at a church Christmas party or delivered to their homes.
5. Each Angel Tree household is eligible to receive a **FREE Adventure Bible.**

QUESTIONS?

1.800.55.ANGEL (26435)
Angel_Tree@pfm.org
angeltree.org
facebook.com/AngelTree

PHASE 2 | Gift Delivery and Evangelism

DELIVERING THE GIFTS

Home Delivery Guidelines

- **Keep a record** of who will deliver to each family.
- **Obtain clear driving and parking directions** before heading out for deliveries.
- **Delivery volunteers should go in groups** of two or more with at least one adult.
- **Call the caregiver** to let him or her know when the gifts will be delivered.
- **Try to schedule the family visit during a one- or two-hour time slot** to ensure the family is present to receive the gifts.

Church Party Tips

- **Contact families** as soon as you receive your list of Angel Tree families. Make sure you require a quick RSVP.
- While most churches will make arrangements to deliver gifts to families not able to make it to the party, **make it clear on the initial invitation that the party is how the gifts will be distributed and don't give the families the option of not coming.**
- **Have transportation available** for families unable to make it to the church on their own.
- **Send a ticket to each family** with their Family Number on it to make gift distribution easier. Have them present their ticket at a gift table to receive the proper bag of gifts.
- **Advertise your party to the church.** List the volunteer opportunities available.
- **Keep refreshments or meals simple.**
- **No alcoholic beverages.**
- **Have counselors and follow-up materials** available for the Gospel presentation during your party.
- **Always plan for more people** and provide for extra family members who show up.
- **Take photos** of the child with their gift to send to the parent in prison.
- **Have volunteers available to deliver gifts** to families that did not attend.
- **Tell the child and caregiver that the gift is from the incarcerated parent,** not the church or Santa Claus.
- **Keep the program upbeat and happy**—not preachy!
- **Let the families know** that each household is eligible to request a **FREE Adventure Bible.**

SHARING THE GOSPEL

- **Prepare delivery teams in advance** to share the Gospel with the families. Gospel Presentation Cards, a useful aid to help volunteers share the free gift of Jesus Christ, are available by request by calling 1-800-55-ANGEL (2-6435).
- **Each child is to receive an age-appropriate Bible** or other evangelism resource.
- If a family is not open to receiving the Gospel; don't force it. "Sow the seed" by being gracious and nonjudgmental, and offer to pray with families if the opportunity arises.

PHASE 3 | Going Beyond Christmas

Angel Tree doesn't have to end with Christmas. For you and your church, that first Christmas connection can be the beginning of a rewarding, ongoing relationship with these children and their families.

WAYS TO EXTEND YOUR MINISTRY:

- **Existing Church Ministries** (Vacation Bible School, children's ministry, youth group, or adult ministries, etc.)
- **Back-to-School Event**
- **Caregivers' (Moms') Night Out**
- **Letter Writing Club**
- **Helping kids visit their parent in Prison**
- **Angel Tree Camping**
- **Mentoring**
- **Family Embraced Training Toolkit**

The *Family Embraced* Toolkit is a great resource for finding ways to reach out effectively to the Angel Tree Families you meet at Christmas.

FEEDBACK

Please submit the following forms located online by **February 1st:**

- **Children Not Served Forms**
- **End of Year Report Form**