

But what can I do?

Loving a convict is so hard they say.
Loving her is the price you have to pay.
It's loving her with no one to hold.
It's being young and feeling old.
It's letting her whisper her love to you,
you whispering back that you love her too.
Then comes a kiss and a promise to wait
knowing that probation holds her fate.
It's extremely painful letting her go,
while dying inside from needing her so.
Watching her leave with eyes full of tears;
standing alone with her hopes, dreams and fears.
Although you're near, but so far away,
her love for you grows with each passing day.
Loving a convict isn't much fun.
But it's worth the wait when her time is done.
Remember she's lonely and sad from being away,
and she's thinking of you every single day.
So love her, miss her and please tell her so
It's better this way, than not to know.

- Written by an inmate



www.azdiocese.org/prison-ministry

Prison Worship Services





Did you know that the Episcopal Diocese of AZ has a prison worship service ministry program? Five times a week a team of worship leaders from Episcopal churches in the area heads to the Perryville Women's Prison in Goodyear. At this time, our team is holding services on 4 of the 7 units in the Perryville Complex.

When we began holding worship services on December 7, 2012, no one at the prison was familiar with Episcopalians, a fact that our team hopes to change at all prisons! We started off with only 3 to 5 ladies attending each week. Now we average about 120 ladies between all services. Our services include music, scripture readings, a participatory reflection, Eucharist from reserved sacrament, and healing prayers.

We've had numerous baptisms and seen countless tears converted to hope. Our team has been so blessed by the experience of ministering to these women. It is our hope to expand the prison worship service ministry to include a service on every yard in every prison and detention facility in Arizona. But **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

What is required to start a prison worship service? The first step is to submit a written request to the Chaplain at a prison near your church. Although it isn't required by the prisons, it does help to have an ordained clergy member as part of your team and to act as liaison between the team and the prison Chaplain. The request should indicate the name and contact information for the group, type of activity, proposed date and time of the activity (if you are limited), and materials/equipment to be used.

Who can participate? No special training is required! Honestly, the only thing you need to possess is a genuine desire to bring the message of God's love and forgiveness to these broken individuals. We encourage churches to work together to build worship teams that can support multiple services at a nearby prison. The prison, however, does require that all volunteers must be at least 18 years old and submit to a background check. In addition, every year volunteers will be required to complete an online training program and pass a TB test administered by the prison health services. Because metal detectors are used to gain entry to the prison, it may be difficult for those who use a wheelchair to participate in services on-site.



If you are interested in learning more about prison worship services or starting a service at a prison near your church, please contact:
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"When those doors closed behind us, we felt that the world locked us away and then forgot about us. Please don't forget us!"

- Comment from an inmate

