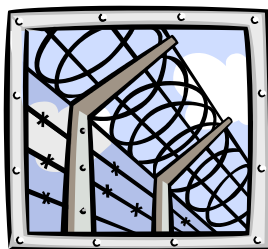
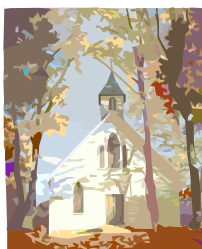


OUTREACH WORKER



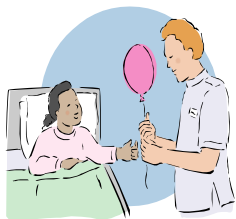
PRISON



CHURCH



HOSPITAL



NURSING HOME



RESIDENCE

HANDBOOK

*Written by Evangelist Leon C. Alexander, M. Ed.
To the regions beyond I must go...*

A Handbook For the outreach WORKER

Hebrews 13:2: Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

St. Matthew 25:37: Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

St. Matthew 25:39: Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

St. Matthew 25:44: Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

St. Matthew 26:11: For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

St. Luke 2:49: And he said unto them, how is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Romans 16:2: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

St. Mark 16:17: And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

St. Mark 16:18: They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

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PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

The handbook serves as guidelines for outreach workers when visiting the sick and afflicted and attending to other outreach needs. It is not intended to limit or quench the spirit, but rather provide a uniformed training that is consistent while serving as a resource for preparing workers for outreach. The handbook is not necessarily endorsed by a church, but based upon the author's viewpoints and field experiences to establish best practices for training purposes.

Section A. VISITING THE SICK/AFFLICTED IN A HOSPITAL SETTING

Prior to visiting a room of a sick resident it is wise to make contact with a staff member to verify any precautions. Proceed in the room quietly to minimize disruption. Although you are there to visit with the resident, please respect the resident if asleep or requests that you not visit with him/her at the particular moment.

Staff permitting, and if the resident is mobile, in some facilities there is a Chapel and the resident may be permitted by staff to attend the Chapel.

Section B. VISITING THE SICK/AFFLICTED IN NURSING HOME SETTING AND PRIVATE HOME

The same applies for visiting in a hospital, and may or may not have a Chapel on site. In this case the mobile resident may be permitted and escorted by staff to the Chapel or recreation/multi-purpose room.

When visiting a sick person in the privacy of his/her own home the outreach worker may have more freedom to conduct a service, with the sick person's permission.

Section C. VISITING PRISON THROUGH LETTER WRITING

You must follow all guidelines as prescribed by the prison facility. Regardless to how much you desire to be a light in the prison the rules must be honored. It is usually easier to get into a prison to visit a family member or relative. However, the outreach worker desires to meet with the general population to be a light in the prison. Again, you must adhere to the strict rules of visitation.

Several prisons participate in letter writing to inmates. The training in this section is specific to letter writing rather than a physical contact visit in a prison. The most publicized

agency in the area of prison letter writing is Prison Fellowship Ministries Pen-pal Program. In brief, the program offers training in what the expectations are and the do's and don'ts of the program and matches you up with pen pals to write letters to. *Contact information is Prison Fellowship Ministries Pen Pal Program P.O. Box 2205 Ashburn, VA 20146-2205.*
www.prisonfellowship.org.

It is recommended that a volunteer desiring to write letters to prisoners first secure a Post Office Box. It is not encouraged to use your residential mailing address. Prisoners have different rules as far as what is permitted to be mailed to a prisoner. The mailing of such things as birthday cards, stationery, spiritual literature and Bibles generally are permitted, however the prison rules and guidelines must be followed.

Keep in mind the 10 Tips for Writing a Pen Pal (by Phyllis, a volunteer).

- 1. Offer encouragement. Let him know there is such a thing as a new beginning. Jesus forgives everyone of every sin.**
- 2. Try to understand the prisoner's situation and feelings.**
- 3. Acknowledge that his pain is real. Using words like "I imagine you must have felt..." help to validate feelings.**
- 4. Speak God's Word, but don't preach.**
- 5. Don't violate prison or Prison Fellowship rules. Many prisoners have a history of violating rules. They need to see someone follow a standard.**
- 6. Prisoners have experienced rejection. Relate this to Jesus' rejection by family, friends and the world.**
- 7. Romantic overtures are common. Let the prisoner know immediately that Prison Fellowship rules prohibit romantic involvement and that you will stop writing if a friendship can't be maintained.**
- 8. Never betray your pen pal's trust. Most prisoners have very few friends to rely on.**
- 9. Humor helps.**
- 10. Don't ask what your pen pal did to end up in prison. If he wants to share, let him know you accept him and see him as God does: through the eyes of salvation.**

METHODS OF VISITATION

The following are methods of visitation and are not necessarily listed in any order of importance.

I. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Speak slowly, clearly and with the appropriate voice level – loudly enough so the resident can hear you, but not so loudly that it can disturb another resident (particularly if two residents share a room). Your visitation may not be just for church members, but may include residents who do not attend your church or any church. For these residents, don't be afraid to ask if they would like to be included in your devotions.

If a resident responds negatively to your devotions, kindly refrain and depart if necessary. You are a visitor and must be welcomed by the resident and if for any reason the resident does not want visitors you must respect their wishes. Visiting a resident in a private room can permit more freedoms for both visitors and the resident.

II. SCRIPTURE READINGS

Scripture readings may occur once or throughout the duration of the visit to encourage, edify and strengthen the resident you are reading to and for. When reading to a resident who has not been saved it is strongly recommended that scriptures of salvation be read to the resident (i.e., St. John 3:5; St. John 9:31; Acts 2:38). According to the knowledge of the reader, a brother may give explanation and rightly divide the word of truth to the resident. Remember that you are to shine as a light to those in darkness for the glory of God.

In the case of a sister reading to a male, it is recommended that she only read the scriptures without the intent of teaching the male, but may clarify what was read (Acts 18:26: And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly).

III. SHARING TESTIMONIES AND SINGING SONGS

These services are recommended as a means to give glory to God for what has been done in your life and to edify the resident to gain hope. This also is good for the visitor to be uplifted by testimonies of the resident.

Sisters are encouraged to solicit a brother to accompany her in visiting the sick that he may render assistance to her (Romans 16:2: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also).

IV. PRAYER AND VISITATION OF AND FOR THE SICK

Oftentimes while visiting a sick resident, he/she will ask for prayer. It is recommended that prayer be offered in this case. The prayer may be rendered verbally or inwardly. Use discretion based upon conditions of the room (private verses shared; believer verses non-believer) and decide on a verbal or inward prayer. The verbal prayer may be with moving of the lips, of a soft audible voice or a normal tone of voice. God hears and answers the unheard prayer.

If a sick resident does not ask for prayer, it is acceptable for the outreach worker to suggest having a word of prayer. If the resident shares the room with another, it is encouraged to ask the neighboring resident if he/she would like to be included in the prayer. If so, an audible verbal prayer is recommended and appropriate. If not, the soft spoken, lip moving or inward prayer is recommended.

Praying for the sick in places other than the private home requires the visitor to be governed by needs of the caretaker staff. Oftentimes staff comes in to take vital readings of the resident. It is recommended that the outreach worker's length of stay not exceed 30 minutes for a hospital or nursing home resident. Not knowing when the caretaker staff will arrive for vital readings, it is recommended that prayer be rendered early on into the visit since prayer is needed most.

There are differences of opinions regarding anointing with oil and laying on of the hands while administering prayer for the sick. For purposes of the handbook it is recommended that holy anointing oil be used by the brethren in a case where the resident calls for the prayer (James 5:14: Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord) (James 5:15: And the prayer of faith

shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him).

If the brethren suggest the prayer it is recommended not to anoint with oil. Concerning the laying on of hands upon the sick, again for purposes of the handbook, it is recommended that brethren lay hands on the sick (St. Mark 16:17: And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;) (St. Mark 16:18: They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover). If sisters are present at time of prayer the brethren may ask the sisters to join hands while the brethren administer prayer, and they may pray softly. If only sisters are present it is recommended they pray, laying hands on the sick.

While visiting with the residents you have a responsibility naturally to report to the staff any disturbing comments made by a resident. Suicide threats should be taken seriously and reported to staff immediately. You as the visitor should try to engage the resident in sharing his/her feelings of depression or worthlessness. You need to verbalize in words or actions that you care for the resident and that he/she is a worthy and needed person.

Outreach workers may be asked by residents to move them or assist in some other type of physical maneuver. It is recommended that staff workers be summoned to assist the residents. Outreach workers are not trained and/or authorized to assist in this manner and doing so can put the resident, self and institution at risk.

V. SPENDING TIME

If unable to stay as long as preferred, spending a little time with a resident is also encouraging and requires nothing more than a little time. A resident who is in the recreation or activity room may benefit by you just being there with him/her. The resident could desire to have you to help write a letter to a loved one or a grandchild. If your schedule permits only a visit for a few minutes you should do so. Spreading a little sunshine in the life of one shut in can go a long way.

VI. GOSPEL TRACTS DISTRIBUTION

It is recommended that gospel tracts be left with the resident and/or in common areas of the facility for others to read. Remember a gospel tract can get the word of God across without verbally speaking it, and can be accomplished by brethren and sisters.

When distributing tracts and literature in the field, remember anyone wishing not to receive it has a right to do so. You must respect this rejection and depart from the company of the individual with no further discussion.

VII. RENDERING PROGRAMS AT NURSING HOMES AND REHABILITATION CENTERS

Many such facilities are staffed with Activities Directors who are responsible for arranging for outside volunteers to render services to the residents. Outreach workers wishing to render a program to the residents at large should make contact with the Activities Director so that the outreach workers can be scheduled.

Usually, a song service that is rendered with the residents can be accomplished in a time period not to exceed forty-five minutes.

After the program is rendered it may be acceptable to distribute gifts to the residents with prior approval from the staff. It is recommended that all outreach workers wishing to leave gifts ask the staff what small items residents may be able to accept (i.e., toothpaste, combs, brushes, etc.). At times residents will ask visitors to bring food items to them. Once again, it is recommended that no outreach worker give any food items to a resident without obtaining permission from the staff. It is not unusual for some residents to be on a strict dietary menu, and giving foods other than what is prescribed can cause pain and discomfort for the residents.

VIII. RENDERING SERVICES IN THE FIELD

Outreach workers may be witnessing in the fields rendering services to the unsaved. It is recommended that at least a group of two witnesses go in the fields together (2 Corinthians 13:1: ... In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.)

The outreach worker's purpose should be to shine a light to world. "Don't be like the world, but light the world" (Ica) with the spirit of God – (Ecclesiastes 9:10: Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest).

It is recommended that gospel tracts be made available for distribution to those who will accept. When those we witness to may forget what we said, they won't forget our appearance and how we treated them. It's not the outward appearance of garments so much as the Christ-like caring attitude. People are reading you before you open your mouth. Remember how we conduct ourselves in the presence of the world as we should strive only to let Christ shine through us (2 Corinthians 3:2: Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men). Strict adherence must be applied to prison rules when physically visiting prisoners. It is wise not to ask a prisoner why he is in prison, share private personal information or come in personal contact with prisoners.

VIX. DISTRIBUTION OF FOODS TO THE NEEDY

It is recommended that when non-perishable foods are distributed to the needy discretion is used in what types of foods to provide. If you are aware of the physical and health issues of the needy the foods you provide should not agitate the physical or health of the needy.

The foods distributed should be eatable and fit for human consumption, and of good quality. Remember you are still a light for the world in all works you do, and the foods you distribute will be a reflection of your character. Although, you are distributing natural foods it is encouraged that you distribute spiritual food as well, by placing a salvation tract into one of the bags to share the spiritual unspoken word.

X. MISSION BOARD

For purposes of the Code of Order a missionary is defined as one trained and sent to perform specific outreach missions to and for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The purpose for the mission board is to unify as an organized group of faithful worriers of the faith that have been delegated, trained and charged to perform specific services and duties for which they are sent both locally and abroad.

Board members shall be prayed over with the laying on of hands by an Apostolic faith ordained official, and given the charge of missionary, and shall be officially credentialed as a missionary.

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