



February 2024 Worship Team Training

-Any questions that arise during today's training, please email them to contact@tjmi.org. We want to be respectful of everyone's time, and we also know that the questions you have are likely questions that other groups will have. After the training sessions are finished, we'll put together a Q&A email to everyone.

-Open with prayer for:

- Sheriff & staff
- Incarcerated and their loved ones
- Your congregations
- TJM
- Favor during this meeting and as we serve

What We Do: Jail Ministry

What are the differences between jail and prison ministry?

Jail	Prison
Temporary Housing	Destination
Few privileges	More privileges
Almost no personal items	More personal items
Few, if any, programs	More programs
Unknown outcome	Known sentence

How we do it: Prepare, Show Up On Time, and Be Gracious

Prepare:

-Pray for those you'll be worshipping with before you even get there.

-If you're the person bringing the message, give the same time to preparing it you'd give to a message in your local congregation.

-Those who attend will come from different backgrounds, with different motivations, and with different levels of Biblical understanding. Be sure you aren't leaving anyone out.



-If you're planning on using the same message as in your congregation, pay special attention that nothing in your message would offend someone facing incarceration, and that everything in your message is relevant to someone facing incarceration.

-If you're involved in the musical portion of worship, have a plan for what you'll do if you can't bring in your instruments or boombox. An a cappella service with simple, repeated lyrics is almost always better than giving up and skipping the musical portion of your service if/when your first plan doesn't work out.

-Make sure you've got appropriate, modest clothes to wear.

-All Worship Team leaders should have access to an email address they'll check. If last-minute changes occur (a lockdown or quarantine, for example), we'll let you know by email as we won't be able to call each Worship Team. If there's no one on your team that uses email, you can designate someone to serve as a liaison for your team who does use email, so they can contact the rest of your team.

Show Up On Time:

-When you're scheduled to be serving on a Sunday, do your best to be there. If you're a team member scheduled to serve, and you can't make it for some reason, please let your team leader know ASAP. If you're a team leader and your entire team can't be there on a week you're scheduled to serve, please let us know ASAP so we can have another team serve in your place.

-Members of a Worship Team must be at their assigned location no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled worship time. Teams that are late may be refused entrance. If you are refused entrance by officers for any reason, don't escalate the situation and turn one week's refused entrance into a permanent ban.

-For some of the incarcerated men and women, you may be the highlight of their week. Please don't take that for granted.



Be Gracious:

-Do not enter a facility with the thought that you are “bringing God into the jail.” God has been there long before any of us were there and He will be there long after we’re gone.

-Worshipping in correctional facilities is not something we do *for* the men and women incarcerated there, but something we do *with* them.

-In your words, actions, and heart, avoid an us/them separation between yourself and the incarcerated men and women you’re worshipping with (Philippians 2:1-7).

-The incarcerated men and women you’re worshipping with hear more than enough about “getting what they deserve.” Use your opportunity with them to point toward the One who offers them far better than anyone deserves.

-When talking with incarcerated men and women, avoid phrases such as:

- “At least...” (ex. “At least you’ll probably get to go home soon.”)
- “You should...” or “you ought...”
- “I’m just like you.”

-Again, remember those who attend will come from different backgrounds, with different motivations, and with different levels of Biblical understanding.

-Never criticize different faiths or denominations. Don’t focus on minor doctrinal differences, whether in sermons or in conversations.

-No matter the attitude the officers show you, your attitude towards them needs to be one of respect. That goes for both talking with them and if the situation arises when an incarcerated man or woman wants to talk with you *about* them. If an officer gives you a direction, obey it respectfully without complaint.

-If you witness an officer being abusive to an incarcerated individual, let us know and we’ll be sure to tell the appropriate authorities.

-Pray for those you’re worshipping with while you’re there. If possible, pray *with* those you’re worshipping with, but even if that opportunity doesn’t arise, be praying for them. Consider praying the B.L.E.S.S. prayer.

-Body -Labor -Emotions -Social -Spiritual



-Your measure of success as Worship Team members is not if you lead someone to Christ, your measure of success is not if you said the right thing to get someone's life back on track. Your measure of success as Worship Team members is **faithfulness** (1 Corinthians 3:6-9).

-Continue to pray for those you worship with even after you leave the facility. Many you'll worship with are our brothers and sisters in Christ and all were made in the image of God.

Some Logistics

-All Worship Team members need to provide a state-issued ID. You do not need to necessarily have a badge at the Talbert House facilities (including Reading Road) or River City.

-All facilities require you to be on the list of approved volunteers. You're on the list if you've been notified that all your paperwork is complete, approved, and up-to-date.

-Teams are limited to a minimum of two and a maximum of four at a time.

-Each Worship Team needs to be checked in at the same time. When you arrive at a facility, wait until all members are present before getting in line to enter the secure part of the facility.

-After you arrive at your facility and let the facility know your entire team is there, at the appropriate time an officer will lead your team to the location where you'll be worshipping.

-You'll normally have an hour for your service; the structure is ultimately up to your Worship Team.

-The facilities have the right to allow/disallow whatever instruments and equipment they desire. This may change at each facility's discretion.

-You may bring in one piece of paper, printed front and back with religious content (Scriptures, hymns or other worship songs, etc.) to hand out that the incarcerated men and women can keep.

-Worship Teams are not permitted to distribute Bibles. If you're talking with an incarcerated individual who needs a Bible, let them know they can make an inmate



request and the chaplains will get them one. (For the new Talbert House facilities, if Bibles are needed and not available, let us know at the office and we'll make sure some are delivered.)

Safe Boundaries

-Do not give your home address or personal contact information.

-Limit and eliminate information that could be used to extort you, harm you, or harm others around you: this includes information that may seem harmless (i.e., I have "x" number of kids; I did "x"; I live in " _____"; etc.).

-Limit physical contact with inmates:

-Never hug an inmate; it makes you vulnerable and unsafe.

-If an inmate hugs you, end the hug quickly without being rude.

-Relationships with Inmates

-Do not put yourself in a financial relationship with an inmate.

-Never become intimate with an inmate.

-Do not expose yourself to potential legal issues (most men and women you'll be with are there because they want to worship Jesus just like you; a few may be there to try and manipulate you).

-Do not do for them, what they can do for themselves (it is unhelpful when it comes to behavioral changes that need to be made).

-If you happen to overhear when an inmate will be released, NEVER share that information with the inmate or anyone else.

Worship Team Policies and Procedures

All the guidelines constructed for our Worship Teams are designed to maintain the integrity of the program and ensure safety and security within the jail facilities and among our volunteers. A signed copy of the Worship Team Policies and Procedures, a successful Request for Security Clearance, and a completed and signed TJM/HCSO Waiver, Release and Indemnification Agreement--for each person on the team--must be on file with TJM before a Worship Team member can participate in the Worship Team ministry. Additionally, when the Sheriff's Department reopens the Justice Center for Worship Teams, they may require that each team member visiting a facility secured by the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department attend a PowerPoint slideshow presentation.



To enter the secure areas of a jail facility, a Worship Team member must be at least 21 years of age. No one may enter a secure area of a jail facility if he/she has been incarcerated anywhere within the previous 12 months.

1. All Worship Team (WT) members must complete and sign the Request for Security Clearance form. This gives permission for a background check to be conducted by the Sheriff's office. The Sheriff's office will review all applications and determine a person's viability to participate in the Worship Team Ministry.
2. Each Worship Team will receive at least one identification badge. This badge is the property of the Hamilton County's Sheriff's office and may be revoked at any time by either the Sheriff or TJM. A complete set of paperwork must be submitted to TJM, and the background check approved, for Worship Team badges to be renewed. Each WT will create a list of "approved team members" and that list is maintained on the Sheriff's intranet. There must be at least one badged member present with each WT to ensure access. A picture ID will be required to verify your identity.
3. Worship Teams may consist of any number of people. However, the number of team members who can enter a jail facility for worship is limited. [For example, 4 team members may be on a unit at River City Correctional Facility; five members on any unit at the Hamilton County Justice Center.]
4. No one may go to a unit where a family member is incarcerated. If someone goes to a unit and discovers that a family member is housed there, he/she must leave immediately. ["Family member" includes extended relatives: cousins, aunts, uncles, step relatives, etc.]
5. Members of a Worship Team must be at their assigned location no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled worship time. Teams that are late may be refused entrance. Teams should be leaving the unit one hour after the scheduled worship time.
6. All team members must always be courteous. There are times when Corrections personnel may ask the team to do something without explanation. Worship Teams must comply with all directions set forth by Corrections personnel. Neither TJM's Board, staff, nor volunteers have the authority to override an order of any Corrections staff.
7. Worship Teams should take as little as possible into a jail facility. Purses and bags should be left in the trunk of the car. Nothing can be transported in or out for an incarcerated individual.
 - o Acceptable items - Boom boxes (no detachable speakers); acoustic guitars (no cases); song sheets as long as they are on single sheets of paper. Bibles may be taken into the facility for your use only and then must be taken back out with you.
 - o Unacceptable items -- cameras, cell phones, or other electronics (i.e., Tablets, MP3 players, etc.), weapons (including pocketknives & penknives), and staples, paperclips, rubber bands, etc.
8. Worship Teams may not make phone calls on behalf of any incarcerated individual.
9. All members of a Worship Team must adhere to the dress code. A general guideline is: modest, business attire or business casual clothing. Any clothing that could be interpreted as gang identification should be avoided. Good hygiene is expected. More specifically:
 - o No shorts
 - o Dresses, shirts, or blouses may not be sleeveless, midriff bearing, or tight-fitting
 - o Pants/shirts must be free of holes
 - o No exposed cleavage
 - o No jeans



- No baseball hats, scarves, or Du Rags.
- 10. It is the Worship Team Leader's responsibility to notify Transforming Jail Ministries if they will be unable to provide worship on an assigned day. If this occurs on the assigned morning, the team leader should notify the facility to which they are assigned as soon as possible.
- 11. Worship Team Leaders are responsible for confirming their scheduled location on TJM's website; due to the nature of our work, we reserve the right to change the schedule at any time. Thus, it is a good idea to confirm your team's location one day prior.
- 12. Worship Teams must review and update their rosters once each year, as requested.
- 13. Each Worship Team Member is required to attend no fewer than four Sundays per year.
- 14. Unless otherwise noted, Worship Teams are required to have a minimum of two team members present to be eligible to enter each facility.
- 15. Federal law prohibits the disclosure of the identity of any person held in a jail/treatment facility. Any Chaplain or Worship Team member who discloses the identity of any inmate in a jail/treatment facility in which that individual serves through TJM to anyone outside of the facility without the inmate's written consent shall be immediately terminated as a Chaplain/Worship Team member and shall in addition be personally liable for any and all penalties, fines, or damages which may result from such disclosure.
- 16. A Worship Team or individual member may be denied access to the jail facilities temporarily or permanently at the discretion of the Sheriff, Corrections personnel, or Transforming Jail Ministries.

-Thank you for being here!

-Consider supporting TJM financially.

-Close in prayer