

Since 1984: *Reconciling persons to God, families and society*

The Process for a “Hardship” Transfer

Some families of men and women in Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) experience extreme challenges when it comes to visiting loved ones. When released, most will be going to these families and/or primarily looking to them for support and encouragement. This underlines the need to keep families together and strengthen the bonds as much as possible during incarceration. This requires helping create constructive opportunities for communication between all family members. Families often lack time, road-worthy vehicles, and adequate funds for food, fuel, and in the case of some due to distance—overnight accommodations. Occasionally, the physical health of a family member becomes an added and more serious factor.

Listed below are the steps currently recommended for family members to follow if interested in having their loved one reassigned to a prison unit closer to the family.

- Measure the driving distance from your home to the prison unit your loved is at now. The distance must be over 200 miles. However, “distance” alone is not the only factor.
- You need to secure a letter from your physician on his or her professional letterhead stating that you are “unable to travel long distances due to your medical condition.”
- Send your personal letter about the driving distance exceeding 200 miles requesting a “hardship transfer” with the doctor’s letter addressed to the Assistant Director for Classification & Records, P. O. Box 99, Huntsville, Texas 77342-0099. You should receive a response in a timely manner.
- If your request is denied, you may appeal the decision in writing and address it to the Office of Professional Standards, P. O. Box 99, Huntsville, Texas 77342-0099.

How far is Corpus Christi from...

the Stiles Unit in Beaumont?

295
MILES

This process is subject to change at any time. In the meantime, prison ministries need to make intentional efforts to minister to families in every community. The family is likely to be interested in studying the same NLB lessons as the family member incarcerated (such as “Christian Marriage Skills” or “Parenting Matters.” Sunday Bible classes at the local congregation for the prisoner’s children and adults help establish a good pattern to follow after reuniting upon release.

50th National PM
Workshop



June 12-14
Corpus Christi
Texas

IN LOVING MEMORY ~ IN HONOR OF

Family Upreach expresses gratitude for remembering loved ones and honoring those cherished with gifts. With these remembrances, souls are being taught to transform their lives and discard destructive behaviors through the awesome power of Jesus.

Received from:

M/M Frank Maxey
M/M Bob Wachtel
M/M Buck Griffith
M/M Frank Degollado
M/M Dale Underwood
M/M Bob Wachtel
M/M Frank Maxey
M/M Buck Griffith

In loving memory of:

Joyce Maxwell
Joyce Maxwell
Joyce Maxwell
Dr. Joyce Freeman
Bettie Jo Kirkham
Bettie Jo Kirkham
Bettie Jo Kirkham
Betty Sue Swails

AMAZING BUT TRUE STORIES

After heated discussions for and against prison ministries, the leaders of a congregation decided by a slight majority to let a ministry leader visit to make a presentation there. The local preacher (who had opposed it) was assigned to “welcome” and introduce the speaker. The song leader for the evening had also been an outspoken critic against it. As you might imagine, the service started in a rather subdued, funeral home, manner. But nothing could diminish the passion of the speaker who had seen joy come into the faces of hardened criminals as they arose from the waters of baptism. The prison worker told of reclaiming the soul of the daughter of an elder in prison and that of a runaway kid from a Christian Children’s Home supported by the congregation. It was not what the church had expected to hear. When the invitation was extended, an elder and the local preacher repented publicly, admitted they had opposed the presentation and asked for the prayers of the church. The deacon that had led the singing—had to fight through his emotions—but made the same confession. There wasn’t a dry eye in the house. Much of the blame for opposition to this ministry is based in ignorance, the lack of brethren being properly educated. The best is yet to be.

The centurion confessed:



“Surely, this man is the Son of God!”

TWO ELDERS BAPTIZED IN PRISON

A fruitful ministry consistently reported to supporters a large number of baptisms, raising suspicion in the minds of certain church leaders. One elder went to visit the prison to see first-hand what was taught on baptism. The elder—having never entered a prison before—was a bit nervous. So, he invited a fellow elder from a sister congregation to go with him. The Sunday they attended was also the time set aside for a lot of baptisms.



The two elders sat behind the men being prepared. The baptistry was full. The prisoners had fresh jumpsuits and towels. They elders sat in silence and listened as the teacher rehearsed how God redeems fallen men. He then took their confessions and baptized them.

After the baptized men exited, the elders remarked how they never heard such an extensive yet simple presentation of the Gospel *with emphasis on repentance*. In fact, the *spying* elder admitted to doubts about **his** baptism at a very young age and asked if he could be baptized? The attending officer was asked for permission to baptize a visitor? The officer said it had never been done before but didn’t know why anyone should object. So, as the elder was coming up out of the water, the *other* elder voiced similar doubt about **his** baptism at an even earlier age. Since the officer no longer could say that it had not been done before, *this* elder was also immediately baptized!

CORRECTIONS OFFICER ALSO BAPTIZED!

Prison ministry volunteers baptized 513 men and women in the local county jail in 2023.

Worship is conducted every Sunday afternoon at a halfway house, and many have been baptized there.

One of the halfway house residents baptized, later had a *pass* to leave on Sunday. He took his wife to church. After the message, both came to the front. He told of his recent baptism at the halfway house, and she asked to be baptized that morning.

Recently, five more men at the same halfway house were baptized. After service, a *corrections officer* desired to be baptized. He met the volunteers and others at the church building later and put Christ on in baptism.



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