

Perhaps one of the most overlooked of ministries in which a local church can engage is ministries with those that are in prison.

I have to admit, that this has never been a priority in my ministry. I did not know where to start and, in some ways, it was a scary ministry to ponder. However, there are numerous groups that do engage in such ministries-Kairos being one of which I am aware. We are situated in a community with a prison. As a matter of fact, within easy driving distance, there are several prisons or regional jails.

Prisoners face the social stigma that comes from being incarcerated. For some, the love of Christ might be a distant memory—if they have ever encountered and experienced at all. Somehow, we must find ways to keep these men and women, not just in our prayers, but also in our active ministry zones.

As I ponder this mission field, I think we would do well to consider:

- While someone is incarcerated, there is a good chance that he or she has family, often times children, living in the community that might need or benefit from the ministries of the church. Could we find ways to help these families?
- Not all ministry needs to be face to face ministry. We can team up with groups and organizations, such as Kairos, that go into the prisons.
- Ministry to those in prison comes with certain restrictions. We would need to explore what is involved and what is allowed as we seek to minister to those in prison. This is where teaming up with an organization already involved in

# Disciple Life

The Wesleyan Way

**Week # 14**



Start the  
Conversation:  
Provoke One  
Another in Love

## **PROVOKING QUESTION:**

This week, you are encouraged to ask a church member the following:

**Have you ever visited with someone in prison? If so, what was it like and how did it make you feel?**

such a ministry could be beneficial.

- Not everyone is going to be cut out for ministry to and with those behind bars.
- Ministry for those in prison, could flow over to persons as they exit the prison system and move back into local communities. It is a time of transition for these individuals and a loving church family might just be the thing to make that transition go more smoothly.
- The Kairos teams (which do ministry with inmates) encourage people who are not comfortable inside a prison to bake cookies, pray or make cards in Sunday school classes with messages for the inmates.
- Helping inmates to stay dedicated to their faith once they're released is the focus of a program in Fort Lupton, Colo. The "Backpack Ministry for the Homeless" program gives a backpack filled with necessities to inmates leaving jail. The backpacks cost \$50 to \$100 each to put together.

**Carry the cross**  **and follow me.**  
Luke 14:27, NRSV