

**First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville
Policy and Procedures**

Section: General & Administrative

Adopted: December 2014

PRISON MINISTRY LETTER EXCHANGE PROGRAM POLICY

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville (FUUN) sponsors a prison ministry that serves residents incarcerated at Riverbend Maximum Security Institution (RMSI). This ministry includes monthly worship services, new member classes, adult religious education classes and personal mentoring between FUUN members and residents. Through this ministry several residents at RMSI have completed the new member class and have become members of FUUN. FUUN has decided to establish a letter exchange program (the Program) pursuant to which FUUN members and friends (Participants) may exchange correspondence with residents at RMSI and at other institutions (collectively referred to as Residents).

Mission

The mission of the Program is to provide a means by which Participants can encourage Residents and help them understand and live by UU Principles, particularly the third Principle: "Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations." To protect the integrity of the Program, and of the Participants and the Residents, FUUN has established the guidelines and parameters set out below.

Policy

It is the policy of FUUN that all Participants and Residents participating in the Program will adhere to the follow:

1. Members and friends of FUUN who wish to become Participates in the Program will complete training established by FUUN before corresponding with Residents.
2. Personal addresses of Participants will not be used. All correspondence will be sent to and from the church address: Letter Exchange Program, 1808 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, TN 37215.
3. Personal contact information of Participants such as telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and home addresses will not be shared with Residents. Sharing of last names is optional for Participants.
4. Money and other items prohibited by Tennessee Department of Correction policy will not be sent to Residents.
5. Participants will not make deposits into Residents' trust accounts.
6. Participants will communicate with Residents only by written correspondence.
7. Participants will not communicate with Residents' family or friends.
8. All correspondence, (outgoing and incoming), may at the option of the Participant be read by another member of the prison ministry team designated by the Lead Minister or another staff member designated by the Lead Minister (a Second Reader).
9. Incoming correspondence that is of concern to the Second Reader will be discussed with the Lead Minister or another staff member designated by the Lead Minister and appropriate action will be taken if deemed necessary.
10. Correspondence exchanged in the Program is not privileged or confidential.
11. Participants will not become badged volunteers while participating in the Program.
12. Participants will not visit the Resident(s) with whom they are corresponding while

participating in the Program.

13. The training referred to above will include but not be limited to a discussion of this Policy and Tennessee Department of Correction Policies 115.01, 302.05, 502.06, 305.03 and Part II of the Volunteer Services Training Manual. Policy 305.03, VI, I will be discussed specifically.

Future Policies

It is anticipated that before any Residents are released from prison, additional guidelines will be adopted by FUUN. These guidelines, will set out the manner in which FUUN members and friends will support these Residents with regard to financial needs, housing, transportation, jobs and similar needs. Until these guidelines are in place, Participants and other members of FUUN are encouraged not to individually assist released Residents in these areas.