



# HOPE is Healing, Opportunity, Presence and Empowerment

**Our Purpose:** To give hope through regular correspondence to people who are incarcerated. Our letters offer encouragement, non-judgmental companionship and a listening ear to a person imprisoned at state correctional institution.

**Our Process:** **HOPE Letters** ministry is both an individual and a group activity as we support one another in prayer, mentoring, and ministering. **HOPE Letters** groups of 4-8 people come together in a structured program of letter writing 1-2 times a month. We write letters to “inside mentees” who are separated from their local community and who are seeking a better future for themselves. Selected letter recipients are chosen based on specific criteria for participation. It is our hope that a new, healthy relationship will take root and grow before the mentee returns to the community so that “this time inside” will be their last time.

**Our Preparation:** **HOPE Letters** teams are trained in the dos and don'ts of corresponding with persons in prison, how to comply with the appropriate correctional agency's policies, and best practices for mentoring from afar. In addition, group members receive equipping for unique challenges specific to justice-involved persons.

**Our Partners:** **HOPE Letters**, originally developed at Grace UMC (Dayton), is an approved program between several faith groups, All In Community of the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Members of other churches are invited to join this project. You do not need to be a United Methodist. The more of us who come together for this challenge, the more people in prison we can impact for life change.

**First Step.** Attend a **HOPE Letters Information Session** to learn more. Your presence does not equal your commitment to anything other than learning what this ministry is all about. At the end of our time, you will have the choice to join/form a team, consider and pray on it further, or pass on participation.

***Hope is faith holding out its hand in the dark.***

— GEORGE ILES

**For more information, contact**

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