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Avanti Ministries
A Ministry
For the Care of Both Current and Ex-Offenders

Dear

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

I am writing to you on behalf of **Avanti Ministries** *a Christian organisation committed to communicating the Gospel in a relevant way and to making disciples of all nations.*

Avanti Ministries' emphasis is communicating the Gospel Message to local and diverse communities. My personal calling is within the Prison Ministry and I am currently in the process of setting up communications between Prison Chaplains and Churches local to prisons.

My aim is to see Churches actively involved in making contact with newly converted convicts within prisons in their community.

The song by Christian worship band 'Casting Crowns' has the following lyrics:

"If we are the body why aren't our words teaching, why aren't our hands healing, why aren't our feet going, why is our love not showing if Jesus is the way?"

The aim of the Prison Ministry is to set up a database containing names of Christians who live near to, and attend Churches local to prisons, who feel they would like to become actively involved in bringing the Good News of Jesus to those in prison, as well as caring for them when they are released back into society. This is an amazing opportunity to demonstrate the love of God which he has for all whom He has made in a very real and practical way. An important part of the Prison ministry is to help integrate ex-offenders into the Church and to disciple them as they become part of the Church family.

The aim of the Ministry is three-fold:

- 1) We have a number of Evangelists who visit prisons throughout the whole of the U.K in order to share the Gospel message; this allows a first point of contact with prisoners. Information about Avanti Ministries is disseminated to those attending the talk and the personal details of those who have made a commitment to Christ are taken.

- 2) The second step is to involve local Churches and there are a number of ways in which you as a Church can be involved:
 - a) As a Church you can arrange for a visit from any one of Avanti Ministries' Evangelists, please see enclosures. You might like to tailor an event around the particular evangelist you choose.
 - b) As an Individual You might become a prison writer and Avanti can provide training in letter writing for those in your congregation who wish to help out in this vital ministry, which can be a good way of building up a trusting relationship which will be helpful when the prisoner is released from prison, allowing them to integrate more easily into the Church.
 - c) As an Individual You might like to consider prison visiting which is a valuable way of meeting and helping to disciple newly converted Christians in prison. Prison visits can form the basis of Church contact for those in prison to hold onto once they are released. I am currently setting up a database of names of prisoners who would like to be visited by Church members on a regular basis and would be glad to pass on details if you would like to be involved in this. Again Avanti can provide relevant training for this.

- 3) The third step is to involve Churches in the after-care of ex-offenders. We are currently looking for Churches who would be willing to help integrate ex-offenders into their Church community. This will require some training which Avanti are prepared to provide to counselling/pastoral teams, child protection teams and leadership teams.

I would be grateful if you could make an appointment with me to discuss the issues raised in this letter more fully, and you can contact me through the Head Office of Avanti Ministries at the above address or directly, see details below. I am also available to speak to your Church congregation during Sunday morning services or to small groups by agreed appointment.

If for some reason it would be impractical for your Church to become actively involved in this, I still feel it would be valuable for you to be aware of what we are doing within the prison in your local community and, as such, would appreciate it if we could meet up for further discussion. Being unable to become actively involved in this ministry does not preclude you from supporting Avanti Ministries, we always welcome prayer and have a prayer letter which is distributed on line to our very many prayer partners throughout the world or you might like to consider supporting Avanti Ministries financially. This too would be very much appreciated as the Avanti Ministries' staff live by faith and are either full time volunteers or work part time so that the ministry functions effectively, reaching the lost. As a Ministry we also freely provide a substantial amount of Christian literature to prisons and we are only able to do this through the generous gifts we receive.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and very much look forward to hearing from you,

Blessings,

Rob Ansell
Prison Ministry Co-ordinator

*"Remember those who are in prison,
as though you were in prison with them"*
Hebrews 13:3

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