

INSIDE:

Memorials to
Ms. Rosette T. Graham
*President,
Women In Service
Everywhere*
Pages 2 & 39

SPRING 2021

LCH
LOTT CAREY HERALD

9th
ANNIVERSARY
WOMEN'S
GLOBAL
PRAYER
GUIDE

31
DAYS OF
PRAYER
FOR WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT

TRIBUTE

Prayers for our sisters behind bars; goodbye to a special leader

Rev. Emmett L. Dunn

As a community of faith, we acknowledge that prayer is a crucial component of our Christian discipleship. Lott Carey's annual prayer issue is one way we seek to resource our churches and missional communities to strengthen their prayer support for our brothers and sisters around the world.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the leadership of our Women in Service Everywhere (WISE) for producing another excellent magazine. The prayers were written by our sisters and several women incarcerated at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility in Clinton, New Jersey, and we thank authorities for allowing such expressions.

The prayers will help us focus on the plight faced by so many housed in jails and prisons, and who are subjected to treatment that dehumanizes, devalues and demeans their existence. I encourage you to lend your voices and resources in championing the cause for justice and liberation while at the same time, contribute to the change that is needed to address societal ills that led to their imprisonment.

This edition of the Lott Carey Herald is dedicated to our dearly departed sister, Rosette Tabb Graham, President, Women in Service Everywhere, who transitioned this life on December 23, 2020. Sister Graham served the Lott Carey family with distinction and will be remembered as a lady of grace and love. Humble in spirit, committed in service, faithful to God's people and always available and accessible, Rosette personified the gospel of ministering to those living on the margins. Sister Graham will be forever missed, but her



Photo: Mike Tucker

legacy will live on in the hearts of the many lives she touched. Rest in eternal peace. (A special poem and pictures, page 39.)

Rev. Emmett L. Dunn is Publisher & Editor of Lott Carey Herald and Executive Secretary-Treasurer of Lott Carey.

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WISE words for a time such as this

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" — Matthew 25:40 NIV

By Rosette Graham

As we celebrate the 9th anniversary of 31 Days of Prayer for Women's Empowerment, Lott Carey's Women in Service Everywhere (WISE) explores issues fueling an increase in the mass incarceration of women and girls globally.

Mark your calendar and join us for the virtual service at 11 a.m. ET Saturday, February 27, 2021 at Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, New Jersey, as we kick off the 31 Days of Prayer for Women's Empowerment. The featured speaker will be Rev. Dr. Gina Stewart, Lott Carey 1st Vice President.

Stream the service at <http://facebook.com/LottCarey-Convention> or <https://www.youtube.com/LottCareyTV>.

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Lott Carey Photo

Touching lives with transforming love

"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." — Micah 6:8 NIV

By Angelita Clifton

Micah shows us what God requires by connecting our worship with our witness, our words with our deeds, and our talk with our walk. Interceding on behalf of our incarcerated sisters around the world requires self-examination.

Our understanding of justice in general (and criminal justice in particular) requires cross-examination: What does it mean for us to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with the incarcerated? Is justice about retribution, punishing perpetrators? Is justice about restoration, making victims whole? Or is justice about transformation, changing social systems? Does biblical justice require all three to be real, relevant and relational?

As you read through the prayer guide, ask yourself: "What does the Lord require of me?"

Pathways to prison are paved with economic deficits such as food insecurity, inadequate education, poor housing and insufficient social services. These man-made inequities, viewed as human inequities, label poor people as criminals instead of Christ-like. A culture of poverty, birthed by oppressive systems, disguises the real criminals. Discerning disciples must recognize what drives global mass incarceration. Exposing oppression hidden in plain sight unveils the "Nu-Jane Crow" segregating women anywhere racism, sexism and trauma intersect. Exploitation fueled by a culture of poverty, gender-based violence, and oppressive patriarchal structures violate God's living, written, and spoken word.

"Can I Push It?" is a thought-provoking Bible study at Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia. It intentionally stretches your thoughts about the things of God. As we engage in the 31 days of prayer and praise, Micah's inquiry encourages us to push beyond our implicit bias-

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Lott Carey Photo



Day 1 Australia: Habakkuk 1:2-4



Father of all justice, every day we cry our deep river of tears. We are weeping because our daughters and our mothers are filling our prisons again. We continue to live in miserable poverty and violence. Our children are taken from us by our government. You did not create us to suffer this type of poverty, family violence, abuse, and trauma in our own land. Our own leaders cry out for justice daily. But they are not heard. Like Habakkuk of old, we are asking you; *“God, how long do I have to cry out for help before you listen? How many times do I have to yell, “Help! Murder! Police!” before you come to the rescue? Why do you force me to look at evil, stare trouble in the face day after day? Anarchy and violence break out, quarrels and fights all over the place. Law and order fall to pieces. Justice is a joke!”*

Merciful Father, when will we be able to hear your voice? It seems so silent and distant. When will we see your strong arm defeat our

enemies? When will you hear our deep weeping and come and rescue us? How much longer will it be for us to pray and say with Habakkuk;

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. (3:17-18 KJV)

Father of all creation, please come quickly to rescue us. We plead for mercy in the name of your son Jesus. Amen.

Sharon Minniecon
Scarred Tree Ministries
Glebe, New South Wales
Australia



Day 2 Bahamas: Psalm 8:1-9

Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth. Your majesty, dear God, gives us courage to speak with you on behalf of incarcerated women in the Bahamas. I pray that you remember their plight during this difficult journey through incarceration. As they navigate the experience, I pray that you give them hope, courage, and tenacity to become successful inside and when they are released.

Because you are the God of both freedom and justice, I pray that you balance these forces that are so often seen as opposite ends of the spectrum. Free the women's hearts, minds, and spirits so that they can worship you and recognize real freedom that transcends the walls and the pain caused by their incarceration. Help them to grow through

their pain as you prepare them for their purpose. Because your name is majestic in the earth, you have the power to help the women see your goodness as they take their journey. Help them to see your work in them daily, preparing them for a future that you see so clearly. Your presence is always with your children, your hand is always with us, so I leave their future in your care and ask that you give them the future that is in line with the plans that you have for them — a future with you.

Let the women build healthy relationships inside and outside of the walls. I pray for their families who are in touch as well as families who are estranged. I pray for the spouses, mothers, grandmothers, children, grandchildren, nieces, aunts, and extended family; that everyone will survive the experience, emerging from it stronger than when they started this leg of the journey. We recognize the power of your forgiveness. Help the women and their families to embrace it right now, and to accept all that you are willing to give for their healing and restoration. Cause them to turn to your amazing grace that has been at work in their lives.

I pray for those who are responsible for the safe and secure workings of the institutions and those who have supportive roles within the system. Give them wisdom, patience, empathy, and all that they need to be effective in the lives of the women.

Thank you for answered prayer in Jesus' majestic name. Amen.

*Rev. Dr. Joy Lynch
Supervisor of Chaplaincy Services
Edna Mabian Correctional Facility for Women
Clinton, New Jersey*



Day 3 Bangladesh: John 16:33



To my sisters in Bangladesh who are locked away from the world in captivity. I pray that in the darkest moments you are able to see light. My wish is that the country realizes that women are the backbone of the nation and no life deserves to be in a cage.

I hope the world hears your silent cries to save you from the abuse of a patriarchal society that preys on your womanhood. You are divine sisters with divine insight. Your courage and resilience inspire me to keep fighting for your voices to be heard.

My prayer is that you see freedom soon. May God bless all of your children so that they can carry out your powerful legacy. Keep fighting my sisters. Do not succumb to your conditions. Let your voices be heard.

My prayer is that you receive salvation. May you return home to your community with open arms.

Lord, protect these women and allow them to live the lives they dreamed of living. Please Lord, let these sisters be the last sisters ever

put into the Bangladeshi prison system.

Protect them from their abusers and give them the courage they need to endure and return triumphant. My heart and my prayers are with you, my sisters.

Thinking of you. Free our Bangladeshi sisters now Lord. Amen!

*Dr. Liza Chowdhury
Assistant Professor
The Borough of Manhattan Community College
City University of New York*

*Co-Founder Reimagining Justice
Passaic, New Jersey*

*Founder of Healing Collectives
Paterson, New Jersey*



Day 4 *Brazil: Luke 4:18-19*

In Jesus Christ, our Lord, we place our faith. We beg for the lives of women who are imprisoned in Brazil, a country with the fourth-largest number of incarcerated women in the world.

Dear God, behind prison walls in Brazil are more than 45,000 women. We cry when we learn that the number of prisoners grew four times in the past two decades. Our hearts hurt even more when we remember that 45% of these women prisoners have not been judged in court.

We implore you to touch the stone hearts of the rulers in the justice system who have been negligent with these women's lives — rulers who do not provide or promote positive public policies for these thousands of women who remain far from home and are unable to provide for their children. The majority of these women are mothers, imprisoned for their involvement in drug trafficking. Many have fallen victim because they are married to drug dealers.

We ask for justice to be done, loving God, to stop the violations of these Brazilian women's rights. We petition you to help with the lack of access to hygiene products, such as sanitary pads and toilet paper in prisons. How much humiliation must your daughters suffer?

Spirit of Liberty, put your hands on the young women who are in the women's prisons in Brazil. The majority are under 30 and underserved. They suffer due to the lack of opportunities leading to a brighter future.

Merciful Lord, most women imprisoned in Brazil are Black — a reflection of the sin of structural racism that scars the history of this country where people should be able to live in harmony and equality. Forgive this sin.

Dear God, we thank you for raising up of men and women in politics, in courts, and in religious spaces who are filled with compassion and mercy for these suffering women. Please, sustain the strength of these people and allow their solidarity to be the source of inspiration and encouragement for all of us, on every continent, in the pilgrimage for justice and peace. Amen.

*Dr. Magali do Nascimento Cunha
Methodist Church
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*



Day 5 *Canada: 1 Timothy 1:15-17*



O God of limitless love and healing hope who stretches our concept of mercy and justice, we humbly come before you today. You are to be praised above all that we know and understand because you are more than we can ever comprehend.

Forgive us our small-mindedness in the midst of the vastness of your universe. We lift before you this day, the women, young and old, who are incarcerated in prisons and jails in every province and territory of this land. We judge them when we do not understand fully what they have endured — the debilitating abuse of mind and heart and soul.

We ignore and fear those who look or act differently from us: those with tattoos, piercings, ragged clothing, spiked hair, unkempt, cursing, addicts. We blame them for poor behavior when we see only what is in front of our faces and not what is behind the veil. We wound them out of our fear of losing what we believe we have or who we believe we are. But might we not be like these women? We cannot even contemplate such a thought! We must deepen, within us, our compassion for these women who are more like us than we want to admit.

Great Physician, pour your healing and your begin-again power upon them — resuscitating their minds, their bodies, their souls. They are separated from all that would give them comfort and hope by walls, fences, and razor wire; by fear, guilt, shame; by judgment, hatred, prejudice. Surprise us and

them with your empowering compassion so that we may love these women, our neighbors, as we love ourselves. Nudge and prod and push us to reach out to them with your wondrous generosity, warming comfort, and transforming grace.

Their children, parents, siblings, partners, loved ones, need your sustaining comfort as they, too, are separated from those they love and for whom they pine. They, too, often suffer rejection and oppression and marginalization for loving; for loving their imprisoned mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, granddaughters, grandmothers, friends. We pray for the courage to walk alongside these neighbors also; to welcome, to respect, to embrace.

We implore you, O God of limitless embrace, to grant to these incarcerated women throughout the land, the blessing and comfort of your everlasting arms; the liberating freedom to be who you have always desired them to be; the wondrous joy of knowing you and that they are your daughters. Keep us faithful, we pray, by the sustaining grace of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

*Rev. Wilma Janzen
Manager of Spiritual Services
Northeast Nova Scotia Correctional Facility
Priestville, Nova Scotia, Canada*



Day 6 Chile: Psalm 42:5

Omniscient God, we come to you on behalf of our sisters, mothers, and daughters in Chile. Your people, far and wide, are suffering amid multiple pandemics; racial, economic, and environmental injustice; unrelenting medical apartheid; and political and social upheaval of epic proportions. Your daughters are unprotected, unjustly detained, and incarcerated at increasingly alarming rates. They are desperately seeking to survive rape, sexual trauma, and all forms of gender-based violence.

In your presence, there should be fullness of joy. Yet, in recent times, the streets of Santiago — like in so many other parts of our aching world — have seen uprisings and civil unrest, sexual violence, and torture. We are in anguish at the massive number of civil and human rights violations and the thousands who have died or disappeared as a consequence of dictatorial leadership and systemic oppression. Sovereign God, have you not seen the afflictions of your people? Do you not feel the anguish of your daughters, and the rapidly increasing number of women and girls being criminalized and imprisoned as a direct result of economic disparities and financial hardships? Surely, you have not turned a deaf ear to the cries of the exiled and abused, particularly the women and girls forced to migrate due to abject poverty and grievous inequalities.

Show compassion on your daughters forced to live in detention centers with deplorable, unsanitary conditions and substandard medical services. Hear their cries, O God, and rescue them from physical

and psychological abuse. Free them from sexual exploitation and the stripping away of their human dignity. Too many Chilean women and girls are withering away in mind, body, and spirit because of the unconscionable levels of female incarceration. You have called us to be your hands and feet in the earth. Help us to develop models of justice rather than circles of charity. Help us establish Trauma Informed Ministries equipped with the health and wellness services specific to the needs of incarcerated women, girls, and their families. Bring restorative justice and release from unjust sentencing. Send trusted allies and humanitarian aid without hinderance from government or any foreign entity.

Mend the broken hearts and shattered dreams of all your daughters. Redeem their interrupted aspirations and give them the strength to become active participants in their own healing. May your hope and courage be their constant companions, and may every woman and girl come to know their own sacred worth through the unconditional and all-encompassing love that you so freely give to us all. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Rev. Dionne P. Boissière, Chaplain
Church Center for the United Nations
Associate Pastor
Mt. Aery Baptist Church,
Bridgeport, Connecticut*

For incarcerated women and girls: A prayer from the inside #1



A bba, we come before your throne with thankful hearts, to honor you and to say thank you, Lord, for another day of grace and mercy. Thank you for your love Father when we did not love ourselves. We thank you for your faithfulness and strength to endure.

Abba, we ask that you look upon the women of Edna Mahan Correctional Facility and our sisters all over the world; those who are physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually imprisoned. We ask that you pour your spirit throughout these prison walls like a mighty rushing wind.

Abba, please bind everything that is not of you. We come against spirits of depression, addiction, mental illness, low self-esteem, and break the cycles of abuse over our families in the name of Jesus.

Abba, we ask that you bind anything that prohibits women from being who you called us to be or tries to rob us of our purpose.

Abba, we thank you that all things work together for the good of those who love you and are called according to your purpose. Even imprisonment. You have ensconced us safely throughout the walls of confinement and we thank you. What was meant for our detriment you have turned into development for your children. Hallelujah! The

enemy continues to gloat over the incarceration, breakage, pain, turmoil and long suffering of your children. But you have orchestrated this darkness and transformed your daughters from broken women into powerful women of God.

Just as you called Lazarus from the grave you are resurrecting new doors for your children. You are calling your daughters forth from the rotting graves of imprisonment.

Abba, for those who enter these walls of confinement after us, turn their hearts toward you. Heal them. Forgive their sins. Allow them to seek you first and to find comfort in your Word. As we leave this place, we ask that you go before us and prepare the way. Open the eyes and soften the hearts of society. Allow society to see past the mistakes and bad choices we have made and see us for who we are today ... who we are in you, Abba. Let your light shine within us and lead our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*Lucretia J. Stone, SBI# 230269C
Edna Mahan Correctional Facility
Clinton, New Jersey*



Day 8 *Colombia: Hebrews 13:1-3*



Almighty God, we thank you for your love, for all that you teach us each day, and for the opportunity to collaborate in this project. Lord, we come together to pray for all the imprisoned women of the world. In particular, my petition today is for the approximately 7,500 women who are in prisons throughout Colombia. Continued gender inequalities, armed conflict, domestic violence, and poverty fuel the cycle in which most of these women find themselves — and that ultimately lands them in prison. Merciful God, we ask for your compassion and forgiveness for these women who have to endure unimaginable living conditions, separation from their family, and stigmatization once they are released.

Lord, we ask you to protect the people who work so hard for

the benefit of imprisoned women; people such as actress Johana Bahamon, who in 2013 started Fundación Acción Interna, or “Internal Action.” The foundation’s mission is to give imprisoned women a second chance by providing training and assistance during and after incarceration. Lord, let this foundation continue to thrive so that more women receive the help they deserve. Lord, give these women courage to overcome the obstacles that are before them; to find love and acceptance from their families; and to be productive members of society. Amen.

*Luz Escobar, Sergeant (R) Retired
Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office
Paterson, New Jersey*



Day 9 Croatia: 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22



Heavenly Father, at this hour I pray for the incarcerated women of Croatia. Break the spirit of anti-intellectualism in our churches that prevents so many capable women from seeing the needs of incarcerated women.

And break the spirit of fear and self-loathing in incarcerated women who have learned that they are never good enough. Let them know how valuable they are to you and show them your mercy. They need to be set free to see their talent and use their gifts. Grant them mentors who will walk alongside them for as long as needed, people who will recognize their gifts.

Father, please break the spirit of confusion that is watered and nourished by anti-intellectualism, indifference, carelessness, fear, and insecurity. Women succumbing to that false spirit are an easy prey to all kinds of charlatans and false teachers.

Fill our women with your Holy Spirit so that they can be strong and dedicated to you and to your Word. Help them find joy and their purpose.

Help us all to step up and see women in their struggles, both their needs that are evident and those that are hidden.

Help us all to step up and work alongside you in bringing good news to these circumstances.

In the end, Father, I pray that you will aid and encourage those hardworking women who work alongside you. Often, they go unnoticed and invisible in small churches and unpopular settings — without pay or public recognition.

Please, Father, hug these lonely warriors and let them see a glimpse of your glory that their work brings to the world. Amen.

Dr. Ksenija Magda

Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology

University of Zagreb's Centre for Protestant Theology

Former President of Baptist World Alliance Women (2015-2020)

Baptist Church Zagreb Center

Zagreb, Croatia



Day 10 Cuba: Hebrews 13:1-3



God of our fathers and our mothers, we beseech you in solidarity and mutual love to hear our prayers on behalf of the women incarcerated in the nine correctional facilities in Cuba. These women, who are your beloved daughters, need your mercy and your grace. They need you to intervene on their behalf. Although I have not visited the prisons in La Habana or Camaguey or Matanzas, I know you have and your presence is there even now. For that, I thank you.

Dear Lamb of God, I am asking you to attend to every need of your daughters who do not have the freedom others take for granted. I am praying specifically for their mental, physical, emotional, social, and financial health and well-being. Please continue to oversee the pre- and post-natal care my sisters, mis hermanas, are receiving and ensure the safety of the hospitals, laboratories, and pharmacies that are caring for them and their babies.

Please continue to watch over the hygiene needs in the dormitories, the workplaces, visiting areas, conjugal visit areas, infirmaries, dining halls, los baños, and libraries. Please make sure my sisters have clean water for drinking and bathing. Please grant them outdoor recreation, adequate ventilation, and sound nutrition.

Holy Spirit, lead and guide the processes for the re-entry of your daughters, my sisters, back into their families and communities, sus familias y sus barrios. Please ensure that they are remunerated fairly

for their labor while imprisoned so that they can accumulate savings. May they learn life skills and marketable skills to sustain themselves and their families once they are released.

Protect your daughters, my sisters, who are political prisoners in Cuba. Please eliminate or ease pre-trial detentions and assure my sisters of competent legal assistance and fair trials. Touch the hearts of police officers and prison officers, and prevent physical and sexual abuse, and any other form of torture, whether by female officers in U.S. controlled Guantanamo prison or anywhere else on the La Perla del Caribe, the pearl of the Caribbean, Cuba. Please allow your daughters direct contact with their families and communities while they are yet behind the gates, so that they can maintain and rebuild family ties.

I am petitioning you, God, for the release of my sisters from bondage wherever feasible. The coronavirus pandemic has shown us that incarceration facilities are not safe for anyone, not for prisoners or staff. So, I beseech you to show us a better way to love your daughters, our sisters, in Cuba and everywhere, so that prisons become obsolete. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Min. Lynette Adrian Bickham
Fountain Baptist Church
Summit, New Jersey*



Day 11 *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Exodus 3:1-10*

Father God, you revealed yourself to Moses as “I am who I am.” You said back then that you heard the cries of your people and were concerned about their suffering. You remain the same, so we know you still hear the cries of your people. We ask you to step in and move on behalf of the women and girls incarcerated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thank you for the light that has been shed on the subhuman and unfair treatment of your daughters. Fear tactics are used to keep them quiet. God, we ask that you raise up those who will speak on behalf of those who have been violently silenced.

Our sisters are seen as having no value in society. We know something happens when you see the mistreatment and oppression of your children. You brought down a ruthless pharaoh in Egypt so that the children of Israel could make their exodus to freedom. God, we need you to move on behalf of these women and girls. Remove the targets from their backs. Keep them from being unjustly detained and imprisoned. We call for release of those who have been falsely and unjustly accused of wrongdoing.

Speak to the hearts of others who have the means. Let loose the resources needed for women and girls who are incarcerated and suffering from malnutrition and limited access to healthcare. Lord, let the right leaders infiltrate the system, going above and beyond for the vulnerable. Expose women and girls to the necessary training and rehabilitation to re-enter society and function effectively. We pray for broken spirits to be restored, renewed, and healed. You are our God who is continually being and doing even when we do not see it or feel it. Help us to hold onto this hope.

Your time is not our time, and it may take a while to see your blessings manifested for our sisters. God help us to be patient and remember what you did for your children in Egypt. Help us to remain steadfast in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. You are a God of justice, and we trust and believe you for a breakthrough for these women and girls. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

*Evangelist Tiqua S. Davis
Columbus, Ohio*



Day 12 *Ethiopia: 2 Kings 7:9*



Blessed Heavenly Father, we come before your throne this morning praying for our sisters in Ethiopia who are suffering from mass incarceration in some of the country's 126 prison facilities. We ask that you grant them peace in this struggle. Father, please protect them as they live in unsanitary conditions.

We ask that you place a special covering over the children from whom they are separated and upon those children they are forced to bring with them. Please keep their hearts hopeful and their minds constantly on you. Help them to feel our prayers so that they no longer feel left for dead. We ask for your divine protection while they live in conditions where they do not receive adequate healthcare and food. Rain down your justice in situations where our sisters are raped, tortured, and subjected to humiliating treatment. In your name, we ask you to bring an end to the activities that have led to more than double the number of our sisters incarcerated over the past twenty years.

God, please touch the hearts of those who are in charge of enforcing fair sentencing. Move the government of Ethiopia and its leaders to reform the bail system so that detainees can afford to post bail. The government needs to make changes to improve the lives of our sisters while in prison. Help them remember the good news of your grace and mercy. Once they are released, we pray that our sisters find communities that will embrace and foster their re-entry.

Finally, Father, prick our hearts so that we continuously keep our sisters in our prayers. While mass incarceration is also a problem here in America, we must not hold our peace regarding the strife that our Ethiopian sisters are facing. In the name of our savior Jesus the Christ, we do pray. Amen.

*Lisa Murray
St. Paul Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina*



Day 13 *Ghana: Psalm 27:5*



Heavenly Father, we come before you on behalf of our sisters in Ghana. We are so grateful for the opportunity to cast our concerns upon you, Lord. For we know, we trust, and we believe that with you all things are possible.

With this assurance, we pray for our incarcerated sisters in Ghana and their families. Women face multiple forms of violence such as rape, domestic violence, and female genital mutilation. These dire circumstances often lead to their imprisonment.

Father God, the women in Ghana face violence at all ages. Some young girls are victims of incestuous child sexual abuse; some are sold into ritual servitude. The gang-rape of women is also a major issue. Out of fear and shame, victims rarely report the assaults. In parts of Ghana, female genital mutilation is still prevalent. Most female genital mutilations are performed at puberty as a rite of passage, but this violent act can be performed as early as birth.

Domestic violence is widely accepted. Just as in the case of sexual assault, victims of domestic violence rarely report these offenses because of victim shaming and fear. As victims of such horrendous acts, our Ghanaian sisters — as a result of their trauma — sometimes are

lured into criminal activities, such as commercial sex work, and drug trafficking. Frequently, they end up incarcerated.

In prison, these women are further marginalized. They often lack access to basic needs, such as running water, feminine hygiene products, and underwear. While incarcerated, the women are separated from their children and their families. Care of their children is left in the hands of other family members. If no family steps up, the children are displaced.

Lord, we know that you are a gracious God who sees and knows all. We pray that you protect our incarcerated sisters. We pray that you cover them as they face the daily trials of life. We pray that you safeguard them from sexual assault. We pray that you shield them from the abuse of genital mutilation and domestic violence.

Lord, we thank you for being our savior, redeemer, and comforter. In your holy name, we ask these blessings. Amen.

*Tisa Murray
St. Paul Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina*

For incarcerated women and girls: A prayer from the inside #2

To my fellow sisters, I would like to thank God. As we read these passages, I ask that you open your eyes, mind and hearts. In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

My sisters, as we continue in this present world, we are forced into difficult times. However, if we persevere with patience, our hardships become stepping stones to new life experiences; we better understand our duties to our souls, and refrain from envious rivalry and the insolence that divides people today.

My sisters, while we have this season of religious freedom let us come together in harmonious social unity, adopting the realistic attitude that this freedom is not forever and is meant for trials. May this be a mutual understanding: You have your religion and I have mine, but together we can follow one and respect all.

I want to close this prayer with this scriptural definition of love, “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.” — 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT.

May you know this love from God and may your days be blessed. With love and respect always, from your sister.

*Jovanie Diaz, SBI# 516017E
Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women
Clinton, New Jersey*



Day 15 Guyana: Isaiah 58:5-10

Lord God, we appreciate this privilege of prayer; we are grateful that we can join with our Lott Carey sisters globally to pray for one another and for women throughout the global community. We come to you in prayer because we know that you are a God who hears and answers our prayers. Today we continue to pray for incarcerated women everywhere, especially in Guyana.

LET US CRY TO THE LORD: "IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER."

Righteous God, we know that you are a God of justice and righteousness; therefore, like the prophet Isaiah we beseech you to "loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke." We pray for the justice system in Guyana. Help our courts, legislators, law enforcement, church leaders, and community advocates work to end tyranny in our land and bring true justice and righteousness to our nation.

LET US CRY TO THE LORD: "IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER."

Loving God, your love is great and immeasurable. You see all the women who are imprisoned countrywide. We pray for your protection and healing upon their lives during this COVID-19 pandemic. Shield their mental health also as they face increased isolation from their families and the outside world.

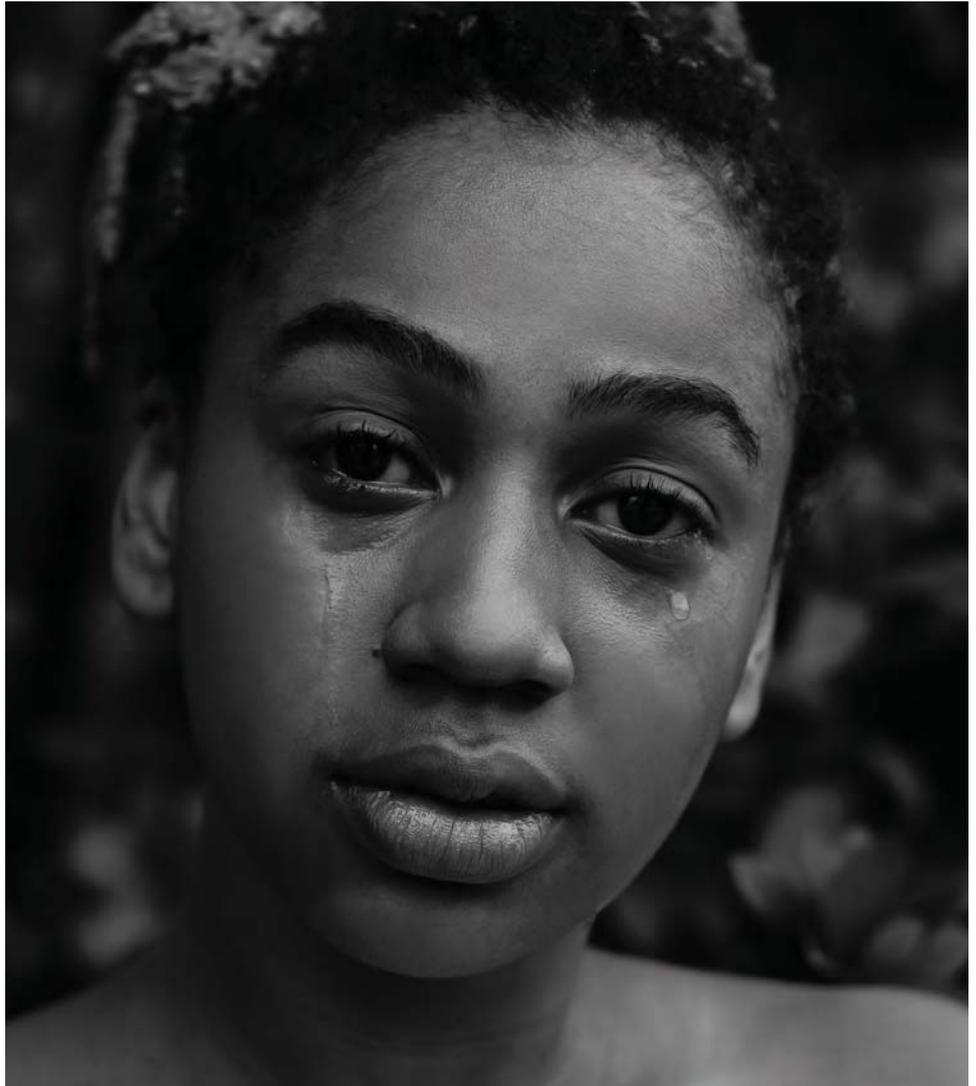
LET US CRY TO THE LORD: "IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER."

Providing God, we praise you for your daily providence. We are grateful that you promised to supply all our needs according to your riches in glory. Grant Your beloved daughters in our prisons the relief they need; provide them with enough food, sleep, and rations to sustain them. We ask that You be merciful to them and help them find comfort, contentment, and peace even in these difficult circumstances.

LET US CRY TO THE LORD: "IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER."

Lord, you know that some of our sisters that are behind bars are not criminals. Some are suffering in Guyana's prisons because of their political and religious convictions. Lord, we ask you to strengthen their faith and help them to remain faithful to their witness of truth and justice. Use their situation for good and holy purposes so that they will make a positive impact domestically and globally. We ask you to use their time of imprisonment and of isolation to transform and lead other inmates to your kingdom.

LET US CRY TO THE LORD: "IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR



PRAYER."

Sending God, help your church to hear and heed your call. Bless all churches in our nation and the world to respond with compassion to the needs of incarcerated women. We ask your special blessing upon Guyana Missionary Baptist Church-Lott Carey churches across Guyana; show us that each inmate was created in Your image and that You love them immensely. Teach us to respond with compassion to their needs and grant us the needed courage and wisdom to be advocates, teachers, counselors and loving sisters to this vulnerable population.

LET US CRY TO THE LORD: "IN YOUR MERCY HEAR OUR PRAYER AND ANSWER SWIFTLY."

*Rev. Brenda Kirton Harewood
President & Superintendent and Pastor
Guyana Missionary Baptist Church-Lott Carey
Georgetown, Guyana*



Day 16 *Haiti: Proverbs 31:25-26*

Almighty Father, we thank you for your goodness and mercy always. We come to you to place the people of Haiti under your divine intervention, especially the vulnerable women and children who need your protection, light and wisdom. The women of Haiti are the pillars of our society. Nevertheless, they are treated as second-class citizens. They are the last to be educated and often their education is interrupted. Those with less education are often hired out as low-wage servants to the well-to-do. As servants, they are not treated with dignity, and their lot in life imprisons them mentally.

“She is worth more than Rubies.” Proverbs 31:10

We call on you, Father, to bring your shield to cover this beautiful country and its people with your loving grace. Stand with our women who are often the ones who imbue their children with the highest expectation to achieve. They are often the hardest workers in the society as entrepreneurs (Madan Sara) who work long hours, six days a week; walking long distances to the market to make a living to support their families. They also have pushed for equal rights and constitutional protection against inequality. Although they are often undereducated, their faith in God guides their children to success.

“God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.” Psalm 46:5

In spite of their difficulties, Haitian women continue to strive for survival and for a better future. Father God, we continue to pray that you will provide them the strength to persevere. As the pillars of the society, the future is in their hands and with your help their future can be brighter. God, we pray for spiritual wisdom and healing. Keep the people of Haiti safe from the coronavirus. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

*Aline Lauture
Executive Director
Haitian Congress
Evanston, Illinois*



Day 17 India: Psalm 139



Loving God, who has fearfully and wonderfully made humankind in your image, we bring before you the incarcerated women and children of India. They desperately need an extra measure of your grace; may your light and love shine on the captives and touch them with a special healing.

God of Mercy, we pray that the words of the Honorable Supreme Court will be honored and abided by, that “a prisoner is required to be treated as a human being entitled to all the basic human rights, human dignity and human sympathy.” May those in power live into their vision that prisons be a place for reformation and reforming. Soften their hearts and hone their minds. Help them to see the needs and address them bravely.

We pray these women and children making up 5% of incarcerated people in India will find themselves in safe, sanitary conditions. Most of them are in general population prisons, leaving them vulnerable in many ways. For some this is compounded by having their children with them; innocent children growing up in this environment. Inspire in them a fresh desire to change the course of their lives.

We call upon your Holy Spirit to mobilize systemic transformation, for we know incarcerated women are treated worse than men and in many cases, not given equal rights. Lord, raise up godly lead-

ers who will protect them from further exploitation and violence at the hands of other inmates and authorities.

God of Justice, we beseech you to bring healing and unity to the system, spreading into the community, and for the women themselves. Lord, we pray that as your healing light shines through that these women understand you are with them always; that you know them intimately, even before they were formed in their mothers’ wombs. May they feel comfort and hope as they embrace your love for them.

O loving, merciful and healing God, we pray for our precious sisters and their children incarcerated in India; that they will feel your holy, divine presence, even in their midst. Lord, thank you for loving us and for making us all in Your image. We praise and thank you for this opportunity to join our hearts with those in need across the world.

In the mighty name of Jesus and in the movement of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

*Rev. Elizabeth Testa
Women’s Transformation and Leadership
Reformed Church in America
New Brunswick, New Jersey*



Day 18 *Italy: Psalm 82:4*

God our protector, your daughters come to you bowing humbly before you. We thank and praise you for the gift of salvation and the privilege of prayer. Thank you for being Elohim Shomri. Please forgive us of our sins, faults, shortcomings and failures. Fix us, Lord, where we are broken. Bless us to be more like you each day; seeking justice, correcting oppression, opening our mouths for all who are destitute.

We confess the times when we have failed to protect others and kept quiet instead of demanding justice for our sisters who we've witnessed suffering. We seek your forgiveness. Bless us to be more like you each day; correcting oppression, opening our mouths for all who are destitute and fighting on behalf of the victimized. We pray for the women and girls in bondage throughout the world, especially those incarcerated in Italy.

Jehovah Jireh, we come on behalf of our sisters in Italy, many of whom have braved the sea on boats, ferries and rafts dreaming of new lives in Italy but have found themselves behind bars. Lord, we know that Africans make up approximately 50% of the Italian prison population due in part to the discriminatory laws. Please show us how to bring about justice for the African women and girls in the Italian penal system.

We bind the practices of hatred, racism and trafficking that are rampant and impact our African sisters in Italy. We bind the enemy's attempts to delay or destroy the good plan you have for the lives of our sisters. Please deliver our sisters in Italy from the hand of the wicked and unjust incarceration.

Lord Jesus, we await your return and promise until that day, to follow your example of caring for others — remembering those in prison as if we too are suffering and trusting you to hear our prayers. We pray this prayer in your mighty name, Jesus, with thanksgiving and total praise. Amen.

*Dr. Ellyn Jo Waller,
First Lady
Enon Tabernacle
Baptist Church
Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania*



Day 19 Jamaica: Proverbs 6:30-31

O God, who knows sacrificial love, we thank you for seeing our young sisters who are incarcerated because of their love for someone else.

We thank you for being with them as they sit with the reality of their breaking of the law to accommodate the needs of their parents, or partners or children.

Providing God, we ask that you would send provision to the places that are crushed by the weight of their absence.

We ask that you would hide the children left behind from those who would do them harm. Send capable and love filled arms to hold space for them, O God. Holy Spirit, we ask that you will send comfort and joy to these our sisters.

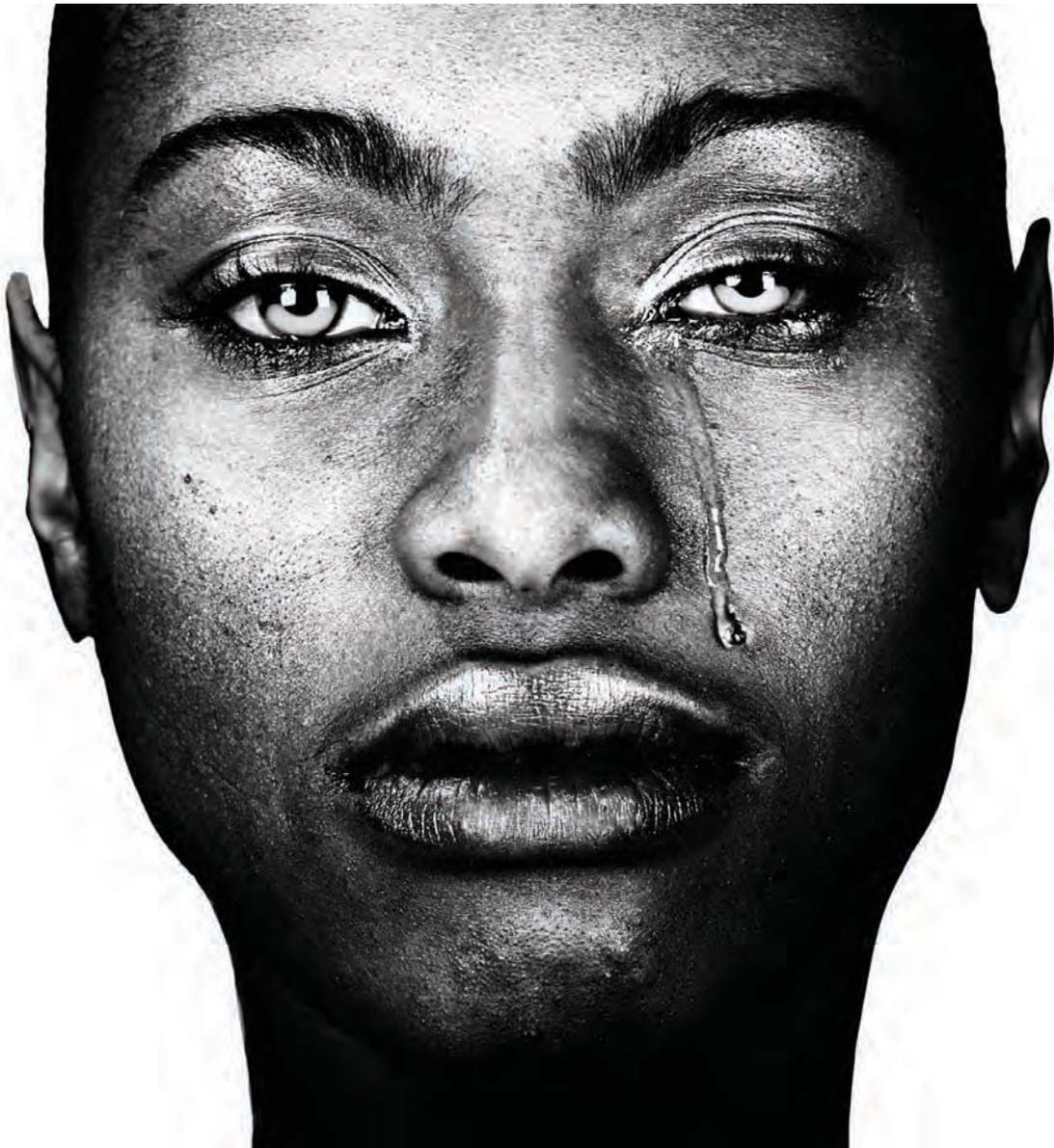
Place other incarcerated women and staff in their space, people who will pour healing oil on the wounds our sisters carry, so that they

might return to their communities with wholeness in every hidden place and bring the light of your redeeming presence as they reenter the physical lives of their loved ones.

In the name of our brother Jesus, friend of sinners, we pray, Amen.

*Khadija Garrison Adams
New Salem Baptist Church
Columbus, Ohio*

*Founder of On the Neutral Ground
Holy Space for Hard Conversations*





Day 20 Kenya: Psalm 42:5

Dear Lord, we pray for those in prisons of different kinds:
We pray for those who are physically bound; for crimes they committed because of situations that they were in.

We pray for those who are physically bound; for crimes they didn't commit, but are held because of situations that they were in.

We pray for those who are emotionally bound; because of situations that they were or still are in.

We pray for those who are spiritually bound; because of situations that they were or still are in.

Lord, we all need your grace ... when the pain lingers, and the situation does not change ... when the wounds deteriorate and the situation is unbearable ... when the wounds continue to bleed and there seems to be no end.

I will still walk by faith, not by sight.
I will still be at peace. God will strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.
I will still know God is love.

I pray for our disabled incarcerated sisters whose disability is compounded by a prison sentence.
I pray for our disabled incarcerated sisters being abused by prison officers and other prisoners.
I pray for our disabled incarcerated sisters who do not have access to special accommodations.

I seek God's hand for our blind sisters trying to navigate prison life.
I seek God's hand for our sisters confined without their crutches.
I seek God's hand for our albino sisters suffering in the sun, without sun-screen as a safeguard.

I beseech Thee, touch the heads of those making the laws.
I beseech Thee, touch the hearts of those interpreting the laws.
I beseech Thee, touch the hands of those who mete out the laws.

Our Father and our God help the policymakers do no harm.
Help them be conscious of the needs of our disabled incarcerated sisters.
Help them to be cognizant of the special care our disabled incarcerated sisters require.
In Jesus' name we lift this prayer before the Lord. Amen.

Rev. Dawn Gikandi
Church Minister Presbyterian Church of East Africa
Nairobi, Kenya

For incarcerated women and girls: A prayer from the inside #3



Sh'ma Yisroel Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echod.
Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.
Dear Hashem, my heavenly Father, I lift my voice in prayer
for my sisters of Jerusalem:

I pray, my sisters, for the families and friends that you are separated
from, especially during High Holy Days.

I pray that your Shabbat brings you peace during this time of tribulation
and separation while incarcerated.

I pray you turn to Adonai, knowing He is your only solace.

I pray that you come to trust in the Lord your God with all your heart.

I pray you do not lean on your own understanding, but in all your
ways acknowledge Adonai so He will direct your path.

I pray that you go to the Lord your God with your eyes and ears wide
open and your heart receptive.

I pray you come to know God as your refuge and your fortress.

I pray God's angels keep charge over you and your families.

I pray that you walk in the love and kindness of God and you learn
that God loves you.

I pray you come to know that you are redeemed, that God will deliver
you from all pain and show you his salvation.

I pray that you come to know that God, as Yeshua, was pierced for our
rebellion and crushed for our sins.

I pray that you come to know that God, as Yeshua, was whipped and
beaten so that we could be healed.

I pray for your wholeness as a complete Jew, depending on God and
His Holy Spirit to teach you to live a life of victory in the name of
Yeshua, God's precious Son and our Messiah. Amen and Amen.

*Ronda Slovin, SBI# 818988A – NH
Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women
Clinton, New Jersey*



Day 22 Liberia: Psalm 125:1-2



Gracious and everlasting God, you are indeed our refuge and strong tower in whom we find safety. Thank you for just being God during this deadly Covid-19 pandemic that is causing the world to cry out in pain. We are grateful for life and for your goodness.

I come to you today on behalf of mothers and sisters — some of whom are incarcerated for acts that they have committed and some because of allegations made against them. You are the voice for the voiceless; the defender of the defenseless; you are the Supreme Judge of the courtroom who does not show partiality in rendering judgment. You are a just God.

My God, as I come seeking your face, I pray that you visit your daughters who have committed crimes. I pray that your Holy Spirit touches and convicts them of their wrongs. I pray for transformation of their minds even behind bars. I pray for a divine encounter with you. I pray that they will experience inner peace and freedom in you, O God — the kind this world cannot give.

I pray that you will vindicate your daughters who have been incarcerated for months, sometimes years, because of allegations that are yet to be judged. I pray for those daughters who are behind bars because of envy and jealousy and not because they committed crimes. God of jus-

tice and fairness, please defend them. Touch the hearts of the lawyers and those who have accused them. Protect them and provide for them. Keep their families safe as they await the day of release and reunion. Keep your hand of protection on their children who are growing up without motherly love. For those daughters incarcerated outside of Liberia, I pray that You will intervene in their situations as well.

Scripture says that those who trust in you shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed but stands forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people. I pray that you will surround your children and keep them safe under your protective wings even behind bars. I pray that you will build a hedge of protection around them and that you will give them testimonies even in the incarceration centers. May you, O God, continue to be with us as we go through this journey of life during tough days. May your Holy Spirit renew our strength for the days ahead in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Rev. Monen J. Duoe
Associate Pastor
Effort Baptist Church
Paynesville, Liberia*



Day 23 *Mexico: Matthew 19:14*



Almighty God, full of love and mercy, you said, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Yet today we pray for those whose childhoods have been stolen. We pray today for those who are marginalized and dispossessed by violence and injustice. Loving God, we ask you to especially have mercy on the incarcerated mothers who are raising their offspring inside prisons in Mexico.

In a country where violence against women and girls is ubiquitous, their suffering is exacerbated and often passed on to their descendants. We pray for these mothers, most of them indigenous women — uneducated and victimized by the patriarchal Mexican culture since birth. Heavenly Father, give these women strength and fill their hearts with your unconditional love that transforms all evil. Your love knows no boundaries; there is no task that cannot be accomplished with your blessing. Where there was abuse and pain, let there be love and redemption. Where there was loneliness and hopelessness, let there be faith and hope for a better future. May your Holy Spirit give them peace and, with the blessing of motherhood, the courage to overcome their shortcomings. May the love for their children set their feet in the straight and narrow path of everlasting life.

Bless their children too — incarcerated with their mothers — so they can break free of these cycles of marginalization. Let their struggles not be in vain. You are the creator, the provider, the protector. Everything

occurs according to your will. God of justice, we ask you to nurture the spirits of these children, so they can learn to put their whole trust in the restorative power of your grace. May they find moments of beauty in their distress. May they find compassion and kindness from those around them. May they have faith and hope. Above all, Divine Father, bless their hearts with your unbounded love, your love that never fails, so they can rejoice — as only children can rejoice — in the little things.

We pray also to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of the Americas. Please intercede for these incarcerated mothers and their children with your son. Loving Mother, you that know the pain of surrendering your only son, console these mothers as they await the surrender of their children to foster families. Hear the cries of those who are already afflicted, vulnerable, and fearful; wipe away their tears and give them fortitude. May they find love and peace. Pray for us, Immaculate Mother, and grant to our sisters who are fighting injustice the resilience and protection to keep doing the necessary work to start redeeming our beloved Mexico. Shelter us under your mantle and help us all to always trust in the love of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Dr. Paolo Acosta
Summit Interfaith Council
Anti-Racism Committee
Summit, New Jersey*



Day 24 Mozambique: Isaiah 43:2-3

Heavenly Father, this is the day that you have made, and we rejoice in the brand-new mercies you allowed us to see. We love you and honor you because you have been good to us. Lord, we lift up the women and children in prison in Mozambique today. You know the opposition and heartache they face daily. They are a vulnerable population. Although there are laws in place to protect them, their human rights are often violated and neglected.

Lord, you said in your Word when we pass through the waters, you will be with us. The waters can be calm, or brisk, or tumultuous. So, Lord, we pray today — as these women and children go through the waters of deplorable conditions with inadequate access to food, drinking water, and sanitation — that you continue to supply their every need. Comfort them in knowing that they are only passing through. Help them realize the place they are in is not their final destination.

You said in your Word that they will walk through fire. Fire can be life-threatening, life-taking, life-altering. The women and children face the fire daily: They are often subjected to sexual abuse and violation by male officers. They are denied access to healthcare and legal representation. Those whose children are with them in prison are denied enough to provide for them. We call on you today because you are sovereign, mighty, and just. Send a legion of angels to protect them.

Govern their minds, guard their hearts, and guide their footsteps. Send daily reminders that you are with them. No matter how hot the fire gets, it will not overtake them. This fire will refine them, reshape them, purify them into precious jewels. They will live to see their exodus because your Word says the flames will not set them ablaze. Lord, give them the strength to stand, to fight, and know that victory is inevitable for them because you have never lost a battle.

We thank you right now for restoring their strength. We thank you for stepping into every confrontation. We thank you for being the rock, sword, and shield for these women and children. In the name of Jesus, I seal this prayer. Amen.

*Rev. M. Queeni Green
Senior Pastor
Rivers of Life
Freehold & Burlington County, New Jersey*

*CEO, Connected Hands, Inc.
Freehold, New Jersey*





Day 25 Nigeria: Deuteronomy 31:8

Gracious Father, we thank you for this ministry, for this opportunity to serve, for this community, and for allowing us to come together and in one voice lift up to you the plight of our incarcerated sisters in Nigeria. Lord, it all seems hopeless because so many are arbitrarily swept off the streets without being charged, given a trial date, or provided legal counsel — and with no funds available for bail. Yet you, Lord, are present even in the overcrowded jails where our sisters have no access to healthcare, good nutrition, fresh air, clean water. Our sisters are sexually exploited by the prison wardens and other inmates. Some are in those terrible jails with their young children. Our sisters are often abandoned by their husbands and families. Often, they lose hope, believing that they are worthless and that no one cares. Even the recent EndSars protests against police brutality resulted in several of our sisters being unjustly imprisoned. Some families have been separated from their loved ones and don't know where to find their mothers, daughters, sisters.

Yet, O Lord, you know every hair on our heads. You know the plight of our sisters, you see their despair, you hear their cries. Lord, please hear our prayers for a just system where women are not unjustly imprisoned; where their children are not thrown into overcrowded jails for years; where they do not languish for years without legal counsel to defend their cases. Help administrators focus on the plight of our sisters, and provide them with adequate healthcare and nutrition, and sanitary conditions. Finally, Father, I ask that even in these jails you remind our sisters that you have not forsaken them, that you keep them in the small of your hand. Let them feel your presence even in these jails. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Bola Lawrence, Attorney
Christ Church
Summit, New Jersey*





Day 26 *Palestine: 2 Corinthians 4:7-9*



O Lord Most High, God of our refuge and strength, our ever-present help in trouble, draw nearer to the women of Palestine. May your grace and mercy continue to cover them daily as they face challenging times.

We pray for our sisters who are being held in prison for crimes they did not commit other than being born a woman of Palestinian descent. We ask for healing for those that have endured horrific sexual abuse and torture at the hands of prison officials. We lift up our sisters that experienced degrading treatment and received inadequate medical care when seeking help for their basic needs. We cry out for the women who are mercilessly killed while being held in prison. We bind up the oppressive nature of corrupt officials that continue to separate women from their families.

We know that you are a God that hates injustice, so we lift up this

prayer on behalf of our sisters who have been unjustly incarcerated. Help them experience wholeness in you. Please heal their minds from the trauma they have experienced. God, in your mercy, provide comfort for the families that are experiencing the absence of their loved ones. Help to minimize the feeling of powerlessness. Create a space for hope and reconciliation in the families when reunification occurs.

Please hear us, we pray in the matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

*Rev. LaKeeyna Cooper
Vice President of Networking
Leadership Development, and Mentoring
Baptist Women of North America
Moseley, Virginia*



Day 27 South Africa: Titus 2:3-5

God has created women to play a significant role in families and in society. Titus encourages women to teach one another in order to fulfill their God-given responsibility. When women step into position their gifts and talents can make this world a better place. The adversary's attack on women is severe and we need to show the transformational love of Christ so they may have a relationship with Him.

South Africa has over 43,500 females who are incarcerated, mostly for gang affiliation with drug-related offenses. Because of the high unemployment rate, women and girls are forced to sell their bodies in order to support their habit. Sixty percent are imprisoned due to self-defense.

Our key prayer requests are healing and relief from:

- Gender-based violence.
- An oppressive criminal justice system.
- The mental and emotional impact on children, including witnessing parents' arrest.
- The financial impact on families.
- Gender-based inequities in court systems.
- The lack of services to reintegrate former prisoners.

Heavenly Father, I bring all incarcerated women from around the world before you. Father, I know you have a perfect plan for their lives according to Jeremiah 29:11. These are my sisters, and they are beautifully created in your image. Yes, they have scars, but their scars are meant to remind them of how they made it over.

Help them to see themselves the way you see them. Help them to love again, to forgive and to trust you. Protect their children that they will not fall prey to any schemes of the devil. I pray for their marriages that they will be reunited with their families.

I pray for special grace upon my sisters. Bring them into a relationship with you.

I thank you for their lives and what you are about to do, in Jesus' name. Amen.

*Rev. Erica Nomdoe, Pastor
Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church
Cape Town, South Africa*

‘... infuse them with boldness and courage’

Sovereign Lord and Supreme Judge: We give you thanks that you preside over the affairs of humanity and that you execute justice for all who are oppressed. We lift our voices for lawmakers and policymakers who have been given the power to craft and enact legislation that shapes our lives, particularly those of incarcerated women and girls.

We pray that you would give the lawmakers and public defenders hearts of compassion to seek out meaningful alternatives to imprisonment — drug programs, mental health services and other intervention methods that will lead to better lives for their clients. We pray for judges so they will listen objectively and that they will demand transparency in reporting that will lead to informed, impartial and fair decisions.

We pray for women and girls around the world who are being incarcerated at alarming rates for minor and nonviolent crimes. We remember the 714,000 women and girls who are imprisoned around the world, including the 212,000 imprisoned in the USA. We intercede on behalf of young women who face unprecedented pressures in education and work, including migration from rural areas and poor countries for jobs, while trying to care for their families and children.

We pray that you would protect them from gender-based violence, domestic abuse, sex trafficking and rape. We pray for doors of opportunity to open wide and provide access to a quality education, economic opportunities and social support that will help to improve the quality of their lives. We ask that you heal the issues of sexism, misogyny, gender bias, racism, racial segregation and poverty that contribute to the



marginalization and oppression of women and girls. We pray for their liberation and restoration so that they might lead independent and self-sufficient lives.

Open the eyes and the hearts of the lawmakers, policymakers and judges to the injustice. Sharpen their vision so that they may recognize how to hold individuals and institutions accountable that perpetuate injustice. May they hear your call to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. Give them a passion and a special grace to advocate for women and girls. Embolden them with a fresh resolve to be your agents of change and give them the chutzpah and courage to resist evil. Stir their hearts and inspire them to live toward a vision that reflects your desire for all human beings, particularly women and girls; a vision that rejects and uproots oppression, marginalization and dehumanization.

Breathe on them and send a release of divine energy that will infuse them with boldness and courage to take up the mantle of doing this sacred work of challenging the powers that be to help create a better world. For the realization of this vision and your reign

to be established in the earth, we pray this prayer in the name of our creator, sustainer, emancipator and liberating Lord whose name is Jesus. Amen.

*Rev. Dr. Gina M. Stewart, Senior Pastor
Christ Missionary Baptist Church
Memphis, Tennessee*

First Vice President, Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention



Day 29 *Switzerland: Colossians 3:15*

Dear God,
I have done many things wrong in my life. Please forgive me.
As I consider my mistakes, the ways I have sinned against you and others, my heart breaks to see my actions in the mirror of my conscience, and I feel lost.

Give me courage and faith to believe in you; guide me and give me strength.

Give me a vision for what freedom looks like.

Your only Son loved me enough to come to earth and experience the worst pain, so I pray for forgiveness. I have done wrong. I am a sinner.

Your mercy flows to me in spite of my faults and failures.

You teach us to let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

When I forgive in words, allow your Holy Spirit to fill my heart with peace.

Help me demonstrate unconditional love today, even to those who I have hurt and hurt me.

Let me go forward out into the world, shining with the light of your forgiveness to speak to those who are trapped in darkness. God of life lead me to justice and peace. Amen.

*Marianne Ejdersten
Director of Communication
World Council of Churches
Geneva, Switzerland*



Day 30 USA: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10



We pray today for women and girls who are incarcerated in penal institutions and whose liberty has been taken. We lift up those in physical captivity, but also those in mental, spiritual and emotional bondage.

We pray for those who have been used, abused, deceived, falsely accused and convicted, discarded and left for dead. We intercede on behalf of those women and girls who, by the very nature of their incarceration, are shouldering the impossible weight of their own offense compounded by violent and inhumane treatment, abuse, discrimination, lack of needed resources, loss of communication, loss of relationship, uncertainty and the inability to properly mother their children or contribute to their family.

O God, make plain your concern for your daughters all over the world. We look to you, O God, to provide your strength in the place of their weakness. We look to you, O God, to create a system where basic human decency is practiced and basic human rights are guaranteed. We pray that these authorities will be sensitive and responsive to the levels of trauma that many of these women and girls have encountered. And in response, we pray that they will provide the necessary medical supports and resources, such as regular professional counseling, appropriate medications, sensitive and supportive professional personnel programs addressing the unique challenges these women and girls face. We pray that mothers who are incarcerated have the same

opportunity to nurture their children through regular visitation and other forms of contact.

We pray for peace and justice. We pray for overall compassionate care and consideration with an eye toward rehabilitation and reentry into society. Lord, let their sentence in the penal institution not constitute a loss of life and dignity, but let it serve as a time of reflection and preparation for a productive future.

We pray that your strength and your power will carry each woman and girl to a brighter day. And we pray for laws and policies that favor the sanctity of life and that respect who these women and girls are in you. For we are all fearfully and wonderfully made, and your grace is sufficient for us all. In the precious and healing name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

*Rev. Dr. LeQuita H. Porter
Trauma Healing Group Facilitator
American Bible Society Trauma Healing Institute
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

*Founder and Facilitator
Empowering God's Women
Plant City, Florida*



Day 31 *Zimbabwe: Proverbs 18:10*



Father, we thank you for the gift of life and our daily bread. It is not because of our strength or wisdom but it is because of your mighty power. Your love and mercy overflow in our lives. We believe in your holy Word because it is a living word. We believe that you are our refuge.

Father, we pray for our incarcerated sisters living in the harsh environment of the prisons.

We know there is food insecurity, the lack of feminine hygiene and gender specific health care for those incarcerated and their children. As the women of Zimbabwe, we run to you and seek refuge in these hard times. We have seen women, girls and young children abused in society; they are raped, tortured and murdered. There are innocent children being deprived of life.

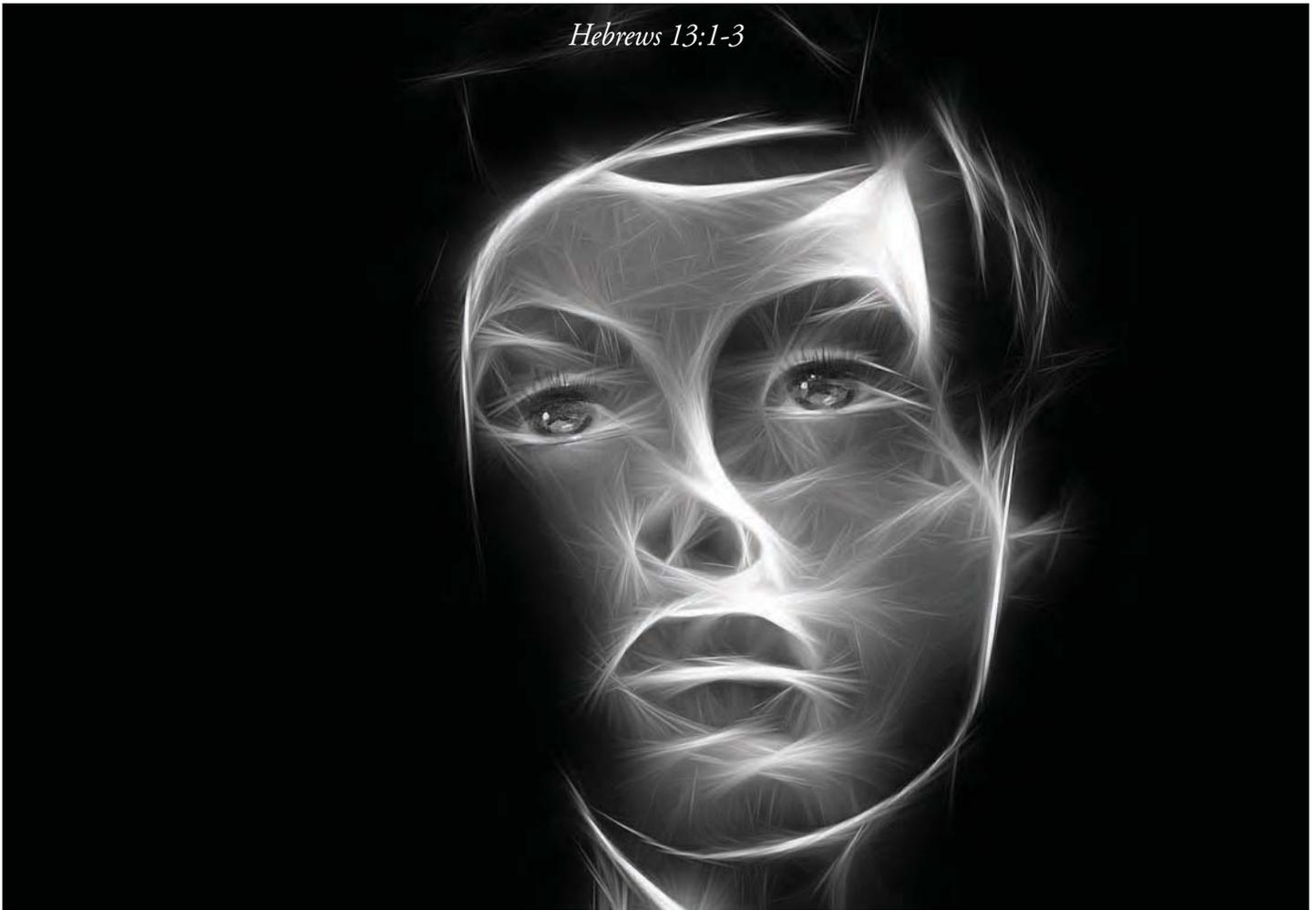
Father, I present to you all the incarcerated women and children in

Zimbabwe. Bless them and guide them to know your Word so that they do not sin against you; be with them all the days of their lives. In sickness, you provide well-being and healing mercies. With you nothing is impossible because you are the healer. In poverty, you give us our daily bread. Those hungry in spirit are made full in your name. Father, you are our sanctuary, our refuge and source of protection. Guide us all the days of our lives. We pray in the mighty name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Amen.

*Rev. Revai Chinodakufa
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Editor's Note: In Numbers 6:24-26, God provides a template for a Threefold Blessing filled with promise, power and His presence. As our concert of prayer concludes, hear the following benedictions written on the hearts of three wise women. In your sacred space take a moment and reflect on each, then ask yourself: "What does the Lord require of me?"

Hebrews 13:1-3



Gracious and Merciful God: We come before you as we pray on behalf of our sisters who are incarcerated in an unjust prison system, victimized by social inequities and implicit bias. Those who are mentally worn down and physically exhausted and are experiencing the pain of isolation and confinement. As we pray for them, we join hands, heads and hearts because they are us and we are them. They too dream about being loved and of having families and comfortable housing. They too have dreams about being a wife, a mother and a sister beloved.

We pray for our sisters who are victimized by a society that only sees our faults. Yet you, O Lord, look beyond our faults and you see our needs. Let us not see the identification number stamped on all of my sister's possessions but let us see her, let us say her name, hear her story and know that she too is your beloved child. Lord, teach those of us who minister in your name not to see our incarcerated sisters through the lens of the past but for who they are in you — fearfully and wonderfully created.

Our sister is not a prostitute by design. She is a victim betrayed by a person that took her in, promised love and then turned her out. There, but for the grace of God, go I.

Our sister is not a drug dealer, not a murderer. She is a victim of human relationships that mishandled her and beat her until she could

not take it anymore. There, but for the grace of God, go I.

Our sister is a child who spoke truth, but adults did not believe her as she uttered words she could not understand at her young age. And when her own child was in danger, she dared not allow another generation to be abused by a relative. There, but for the grace of God, go I.

Our sister is not a thief, just a child who wanted to provide food for her siblings or a mother who needed food for her hungry children. There, but for the grace of God, go I.

We pray for their release from prison. We pray for restorative justice. We pray for social equity, economic justice and affordable healthcare. O God of compassion and righteousness, teach us how to do ministry that releases the manifestation of your presence and transforms lives so that our sisters will find hope and healing in you. Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.

*Rev. Dr. Marilyn Monroe Harris, Pastor
First Baptist Church of Teaneck
Teaneck, New Jersey*

*President, United Missionary Baptist Convention
State of New Jersey*



Sovereign God, please hear this prayer on behalf of women and girls everywhere who are devastatingly impacted by mass incarceration. We pray for Black, Brown and poor women who are disproportionately separated from their children because of inequitable incarceration and penalization, and their inability to raise money for bail or adequate legal representation.

We pray that intergenerational separation, violence and poverty be broken and removed from present and future generations. Gracious God, we recognize that non-violent and property offenses could and should be best handled in a more just and compassionate manner through community service and vocational training. We pray for the establishment of vocational and educational resources to provide knowledge, training and skills for women and girls to develop the means to reverse and break the ongoing cycle of poverty that leads to many women and girls turning to low-level crimes to provide for their children and families. We pray that communal systems of support — educational, economic, psychological and social — be put in place to help eliminate recidivism.

We know it is not your will that the ongoing cycle of intergenerational incarceration that destroys families, homes and communities continue. We know it is not your will for mothers to be separated from their children and for children to be separated from their families. We know it is not your will for children to be institutionalized and sent to foster families or juvenile facilities.

We pray for mothers who have been separated from children and children who have been separated from their primary source of nurturing, instruction and care. We pray that mothers be reunited with their children. We pray for wholeness in the family and that you supply every resource needed for healthy lives, mature development and productive relationships.

Because you have been our help throughout all generations, because you are from everlasting to everlasting, we know you are concerned about our needs in this present age. Hear our prayer. You care and are concerned about mothers and their children (Matthew 15:21). Hear our prayer. We know that you are a God who is able to renew, restore, reestablish and reunite any and every relationship no matter the length or the cause of fracture, rupture or division. We pray that you will rebuild all that has been broken through incarceration.

Finally, we pray that those who make impactful decisions over the lives of women and girls do so equitably. We pray for the end of systemic racism that is ingrained into the judicial and correctional systems. Sovereign God, it is because of your Son, Jesus Christ, we ask that you hear our prayer. Amen.

*Rev. Dr. Carolyn Ann Knight
Saint Philip AME Church
Atlanta, Georgia*



To you, Lord, I lift up my soul. My God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me. Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. Make me to know your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you, I wait all day long.

Mother God, Sister God, gracious God of love and justice, we petition the One who inhabits our being, greeting us before dawn and sitting in vigil long after our eyes are closed to this world. We give thanks for your enduring presence and the light that you have gifted us from within. We praise the manifestations of your love and justice in our world as the courage to claim our worth and dignity, as the determination to move toward that Promised Land and as the trust to lean into one another toward collective liberation.

Holy One, we petition your intercession most especially for women and girls who are imprisoned this moment, living in situations of poverty, racism and gender bias. We pray for mothers and daughters

whose very identities are weaponized against them. God of justice, we pray for a release from this injustice upon sacred bodies.

We know you are a God who resides with the widow and the orphan, so we pray for the awareness of your presence in bodies who are cast with the falsehood of shame. Where systems have spoken lies, let there be your light of truth. Where the treacherous tread with evil woven around their hearts, let your salvation rise up from our people. And where the stories tell of particular pain born of systems that fight the poor, embattle the sacred feminine and maligned melanin. Let your power inhabit the people to shake off shackles of shame and to rise up to shatter sinful policies that punish our people.

We pray in the name of your love and liberation, winging from jail cell and detention center, in the conviction of your freedom, gracious One. Amen.

*Rev. Dr. Robin Tanner, Co-Minister
Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Summit, New Jersey*

Rosette Tabb Graham, president of Women In Service Everywhere, died in office December 23, 2020, leaving a legacy of service, a passion for missions and unlimited love for Jesus. Her daughter, Angela Liggans, pays tribute with this poem written by an unknown author.

Welcome Home



When I am gone, release me, let me go,
I have so many things to see and do.
You mustn't tie yourself to me with tears,
Be happy that we had so many years.

I gave you my love, you can only guess,
How much you gave me in happiness.
I thank you for the love you each have shown,
But now it's time I travel on alone.

So, grieve a while for me if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
So, keep the memories within your heart.
I won't be far away, for life goes on.
So, if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I'll be near,
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear,
All of my love around you soft and clear.
And then when you must come this way alone,
I will greet you with a smile and say,
"Welcome Home."





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A Kickoff to 31 Days of Praying for Incarcerated Women and Girls

Mark your calendar and join us for the virtual service at 11 a.m. ET Saturday, February 27, 2021 at Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, New Jersey, as we kick off the 31 Days of Prayer for Women's Empowerment. The featured speaker will be Rev. Dr. Gina Stewart, Pastor, Christ Missionary Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee; First Vice President, Lott Carey.

Stream the service at <http://facebook.com/LottCarey-Convention> or <https://www.youtube.com/LottCareyTV>.

Also, join us each morning during March at 6 a.m. ET in prayer for incarcerated women and girls around the world. The dial-in number is 712-770-4010, Access Code: 172051. Please consider donating **\$31, \$131, \$331** or **\$1,031** to support this project.

Mark your calendar for these events:

- Resurrection Monday, April 5, 2021.
- Spring Missions Conference, April 22-23, 2021.
- 67th Annual Youth Seminar, TBD.
- 124th Lott Carey Annual Session, August 9-13, 2021.

Check LottCarey.org for details.

