



# SUGGESTIONS FOR DISTRIBUTION AND USE OF *HEAR MY VOICE*

This prayer book has been created for those in prisons and other correctional facilities. Through written prayers, devotions, and visual art, it will accompany them in prayer, trusting in God's abiding presence in all times and circumstances.

Getting this book to those "on the inside" can be challenging; each correctional facility or center, jail or detention center, has different rules and policies on the use and distribution of printed material. Please note the guidance for distribution below.

## GUIDANCE FOR DISTRIBUTION

- Please know that correctional facilities have various policies regarding receiving publications by mail or in person. For the Federal Bureau of Prisons, visit: <https://www.bop.gov/inmates/communications.jsp>.
- For state and local facilities, **you must check with the specific institution for their policies. Even within a state or county, policies can vary.** Know that a majority of prisons and jails only receive publications directly from Amazon or a publisher and must include a gift receipt.
- This resource will also be available from local and national retailers like Amazon and Barnes and Noble. To purchase books and receive a quantity discount, please order from Augsburg Fortress. If you or your congregation wishes to purchase bulk orders for a correctional facility, working directly with a chaplain connected to that facility would be essential. You could contact your local synod office to find out what chaplain(s) might be serving there.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

Anyone is encouraged to use this book to remember and pray with those who are in jail or prison. Below is more specific guidance on how you or others might effectively use and distribute to those who are incarcerated.

- **If you are a friend or family member of someone who is incarcerated:**
  - Find out the local policies for receiving printed material of your loved one and see that they receive a copy.
  - If there is a chaplain that visits your loved one, let them know about the resource so that they may share with others in prison.

- **If you are a member of a congregation:**
  - Use this book to pray with those in prison, whether in person, as prayer friends separated by walls and distance, or simply in spirit. Your personal experience will give you the words to tell prison chaplains and staff about the power of the book to change lives.
  - Contact your pastor or synod office to find out what prison ministries already exist in your area. If there are none, reach out to existing ministries that could provide encouragement and support.
- **If you are a chaplain:**
  - Share the book with those you serve. Be aware that different facilities have various ways that books can be distributed; you'll want to be clear on those regulations prior to purchase and distribution.
  - Since this resource is primarily for individual use, a service of Holy Communion is not contained within the resource. Chaplains and pastors will want to bring the sacrament and contextualize as is needed. Those incarcerated could use the resource for praying the Lord's Prayer, reciting psalms, or offering prayers for specific situations as part of a communion service led by a chaplain or pastor.
  - Use this book as a resource for leading group prayer experiences. In addition to individual prayer, portions of this book lend themselves to group worship. See especially "A Liturgy of Healing and Hope," "Commendation of the Dying," and "Group and Individual Bible Study." "A Litany for Reconciliation and Welcome" is a prayer service intended to be led by those returning to the community after serving time.
- **If you are a pastor:**
  - Find out from local facilities how you could get this resource to those in your congregation who are in prison. This is a tangible way to do ministry with those you pray for, visit, and support in other ways.
  - Provide copies for your church library and staff members. This book could be a starting point for those new to ministry with those in prison or a devotional tool and resource for those currently engaged in these ministries. Yet even when available on church shelves for those "on the outside," know that the ultimate goal is that this book reaches those "on the inside."
  - Share with ecumenical leaders in your area to form partnerships for prison ministry.