

Love a Mother's Baby & Daddy Cares Ministry

A Resource Guide for Volunteers Serving
Incarcerated Parents and Their Children

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Love a Mother's Baby (L.A.M.B.) & Daddy Cares Ministry
A Resource Guide for Volunteers Serving Incarcerated Parents and Their Children

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Updated by the North American Division Adult Ministries Department
Prison Ministries Sub-Committee

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Originally developed and produced by Florida Prison Ministries

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We express great appreciation for the work and dedication of Frank Barton and his Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry team for their leadership in developing this program. They served many families and retained a sense of connection and value for each of them. After more than a decade of administrating L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares, the Bartons passed it on to the North American Division where it was revised and made available to the entire North American Division territory.

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“Early childhood is the most important period. Too much importance cannot be placed on the early training of children. The lessons that a child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming his character than all that it learns in future years.”

ELLEN G. WHITE, *CHILD GUIDANCE*, P. 193.1



Acknowledgement

It can be difficult to find love for those who are disenfranchised and ostracized by society. Chief among these are those who are trapped in the tentacles of the corrections system. This population is seemingly trapped in a black hole with no one to hear their woes and cries.

God, however, always hears His children when they cry out for liberty from captivity and oppression. He, in turn, calls on us to minister to the afflicted. Jeremiah 8:28 puts it like this: “Is there no balm in Gilead, Is there no physician there?” We might paraphrase this as: “Is there no servant messenger in the community to bring us the healing balm of liberty from captivity?”

In response to this cry God sent not one servant messenger, but two: Frank and Maxine Barton. This husband and wife team committed to the cause of God and the uplifting of those who have chosen a less manageable path. Frank has shared that in the late 1980s, while he was volunteering in a prison, he encountered a female inmate who was pregnant. He learned that the baby would be separated from its mother within 24 hours of birth.

Frank was impressed by the Lord that this was a terrible legacy. He heard the call of God and left a lucrative secular occupation to labor in the correctional vineyard, to minister to men and women trapped in the concrete jungles of our prisons.

The Barton's consecration and dedication to the betterment of prisoners, and by the power of the Holy Spirit would lead numerous detained citizens to a saving knowledge to Jesus Christ. Frank's commitment to Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry led the Florida Conference to extend a call for him to serve as the Director of Prison Ministries for the Florida Conference.

Frank and Maxine have conducted revivals and Bible studies in correctional facilities throughout the state of Florida. Through their ministry numerous Bibles and other Christian literature have been sent into prisons. They have encouraged many others working in this vineyard with special banquets, plaques, and certificates being given to volunteers and correctional staff.

Frank and Maxine also developed programming for volunteers to engage with those affected by incarceration. One is an exceptional pen pal ministry that has become a model for prison ministries throughout the North American Division. As a result, they have many stories to share:

- Of the church coming alongside aging grandparents to help supply the needs of the household while they cared for the children of their incarcerated daughter.
- Of a father caring for four children while their mother was incarcerated, and there was no furniture in the home.
- Of grandparents, children and parents being baptized because they experienced the love of God.

The content of this manual is also due to the direct impetus of Frank and Maxine Barton. The original Love A Mother's Baby (L.A.M.B.) Resource Guide was created in 2008 to provide a means for volunteers to minister to



FRANK AND MAXINE BARTON
FLORIDA CONFERENCE PRISON MINISTRIES

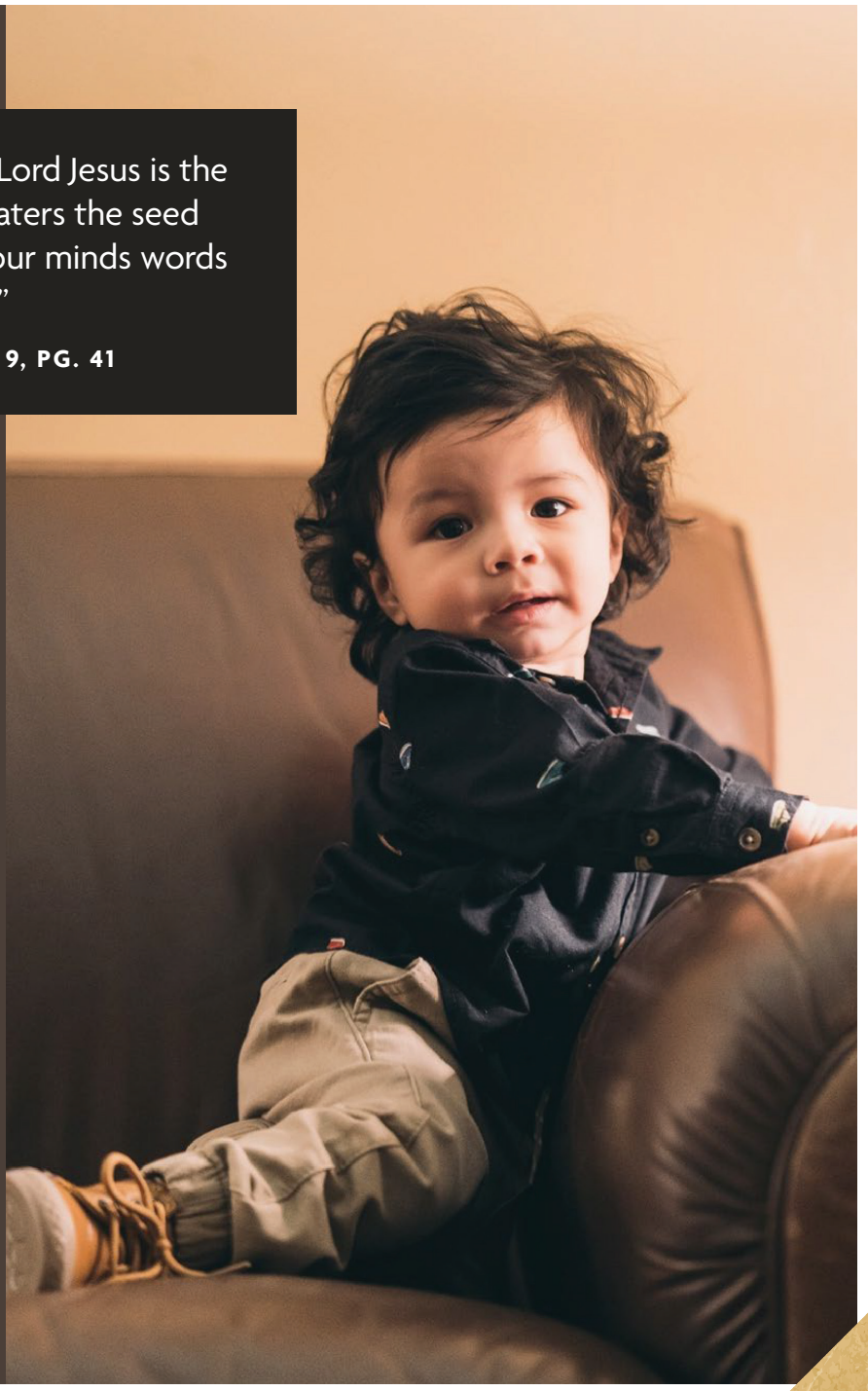
mothers who are pregnant when they enter correctional facilities. This program provides ministry of spiritual care and kindness to the mother and her children. We owe them a debt of gratitude and appreciation for creating the L.A.M.B. Program. The companion of this program was Daddy Cares, which ministers to incarcerated fathers and their children.

As the Bartons prepared to retire, it became their burden that these programs not be lost. They generously gifted them to the North American Division Adult Ministries who has amended them for the larger territory.

As you peruse this document you will be touched by the compassion, caring, courtesy and love that the Bartons had for men and women in our correctional facilities. It is their prayer that you will mobilize these programs in your church congregations and reach out to those families and prisoners who are feeling the pain of incarceration.

“Remember that the Lord Jesus is the Master Worker. He waters the seed sown. He puts into your minds words that will reach hearts.”

TESTIMONIES, VOLUME 9, PG. 41



1

The Need for Love a Mother's Baby (L.A.M.B.) & Daddy Cares Ministry

When newborns and children are taken away from their mothers because of incarceration, the consequences are traumatic for all involved. The important bonding that naturally occurs between a newborn and the mother does not occur. Toddlers and older children become confused, heartbroken and sometimes angry when separated from their parents. Caregivers may be overwhelmed with the awesome responsibility of caring and providing for these children. The parent naturally wants a nurturing, caring and safe home for her children, whether it will be temporary or permanent.

Since we all are children of God, it is imperative that we do what we can to assure that these children have an opportunity to adapt to their changed life by experiencing the joy of becoming acquainted with Jesus. The Love a Mother's Baby (L.A.M.B.) & Daddy Cares Ministry was created to fulfill this urgent need. We believe that by providing the child with the opportunity to develop social-emotionally, physically and spiritually, not only will the child's life be enhanced but the lives of the caregiver, family members, and parent will be enhanced/changed as well.

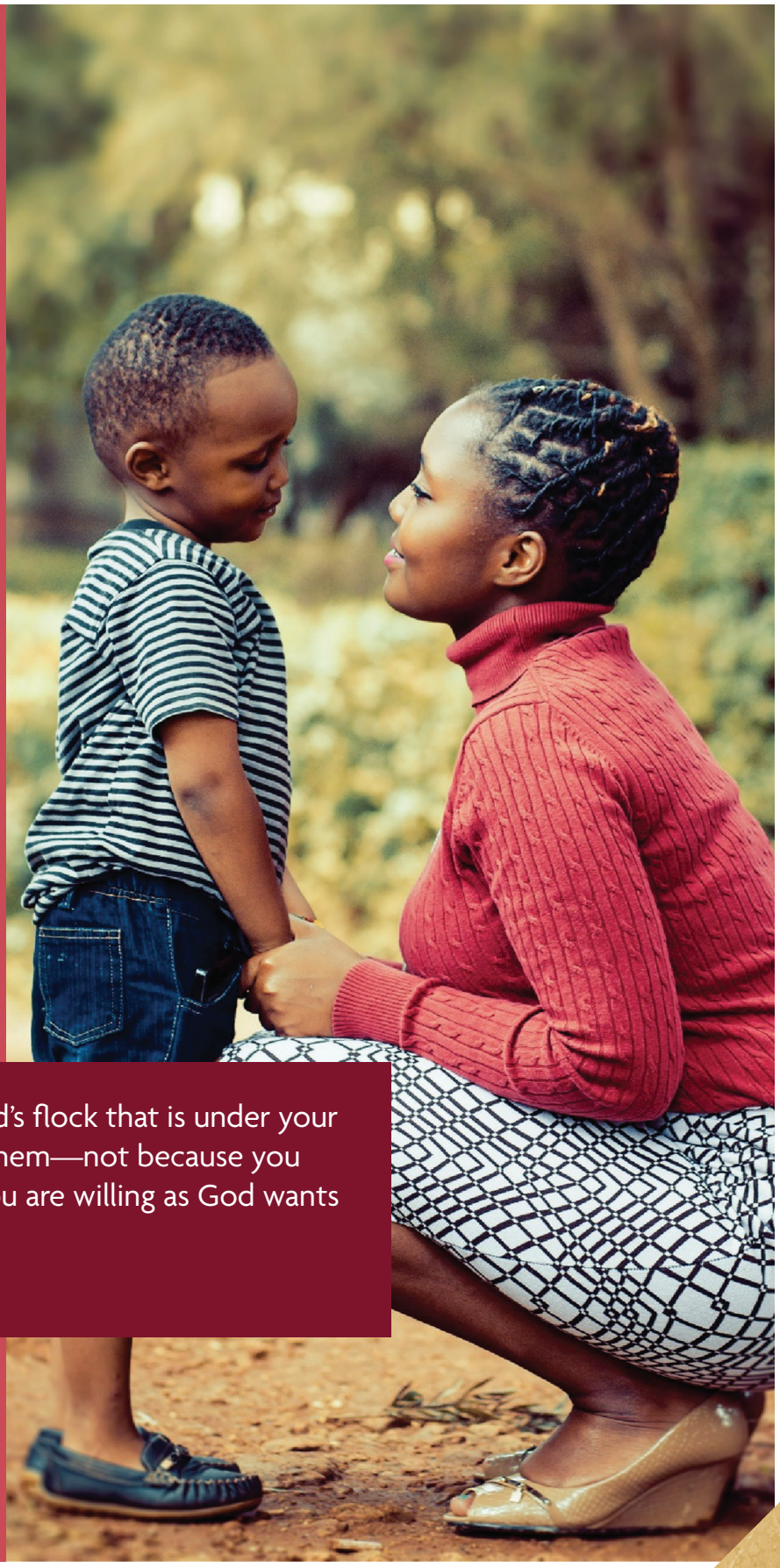
Even though the parents are physically separated from their children, they generally continue to be emotionally attached and don't want their children to forget them nor think they have been forgotten. However, because of their situation, these parents cannot purchase gifts nor basic necessities for their children. In desperation, they will often barter in their prison environment to obtain small items that their children need. This demonstrates their desire to provide for their children and be a part of their lives.

The L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry enables you, the volunteer, to help bridge this gap! By sending the children Christmas and birthday presents, and age appropriate spiritual materials on behalf of and in the parent's name, they will have a connection to their parent.

Your participation in the L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry may create the only bond the parent may have with the child/children while incarcerated. What joy they will feel knowing the child is receiving a gift from them! Then imagine the joy this will bring to the child/children; it would tell all. It really doesn't matter what they receive; it will be from "Mama/Daddy."

Another important aspect of the L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry is that the parent will receive the same spiritual materials as their children. The goal is to create consistency between the lessons the children are reading at home and what the parent is reading. If impressed with the spiritual lessons being read/studied, they will be anxious to see that the caregiver is providing the same lessons to the little ones. God is able to create great results from the seeds we plant.

By becoming a L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares volunteer, you will have endless opportunities to live and share God's love and, in the process, to bridge the separation/gap between the parent and their children! It is our hope that as you touch the life of a parent's child with His divine love, all those involved will also be forever changed!



“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing as God wants you to be”

1 PETER 5:2-3

2

Getting the Ministry Started

Thank you for your interest in beginning a L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry in your area. Starting a L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry requires following some simple, basic steps. This will keep you in sync with essential protocols and rules necessary for ministry to those that you will serve.

Connect with Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministries

The L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry is a part of Adventist Prison Ministries (APM) and each local ministry needs to connect and coordinate with other Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry teams.

- Determine who the Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry Coordinator is in your local conference. A connection with them is key to making sure you're following church guidelines and to avoid duplication. This will be an ongoing relationship.
- If there is an existing APM program ministering at the facility you would like to serve, meet with them. They will normally be the ones to approach the institution to get the program approved. In addition, you'll work closely together to coordinate communications regarding L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares with the facility and parents.
- Read through the L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Resource Guide and the requirements to become a L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares volunteer.

Connect with Corrections Facility

Your next step will be to present the L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry to your local corrections facility. More information on this process can be found in the chapter **Working with Corrections Facilities on page 13**.

Once the program is approved by the correctional facility, applications can be made available to the residents. Talk with your contact at the facility to determine how this can best be done. The following are some options:

- Where there is an active Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry team serving the institution, they should promote the L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry to those they serve.
- Make applications available to the facility's volunteer coordinators and/or counselors who will share them with parents who meet the program criteria.
- Seek permission for applications to be placed in the material that all residents receive when arriving at the institution, or if they can be left in the chapel, library, or other common areas.

Recruit Parent Participation

Begin by determining how many children you can accept into the program. These boundaries are needed to ensure that the overall program does not become overtaxed and ineffective. Remember that some of the children in a family may live outside of the immediate L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares team. Do you have the ability to recruit and train volunteers outside of your area?

You can increase your capacity by reaching out to partner organizations. Suggestions include:

- Other ministries in the local congregation such as: Women's Ministries, Community Services, Men's Ministries, Children's Ministries, etc.
- Neighboring churches
- Local Conference, Union and North American Division Prison Ministries Network

Each ministry team, in partnership with the institution they're working with, must create the system for identifying eligible parents, processing applications and matching sponsors with children. Here is a standard procedure that will serve as a foundation for your process.

- Set a ceiling on the number of correctional residents and children that you will serve at any given time. If you're working with a women's facility, mothers who enter the prison pregnant should have first priority.
- Parents complete and submit an application which are reviewed by a ministry board, rather than a single person. See a sample application in Appendix C and a Welcome Letter to parents in Appendix D.
- If the parent/child is accepted in the program, then the ministry recruits a suitable sponsor(s) for the child(ren).
- Pave the way for the volunteer by contacting the caregiver and confirming their openness to being part of L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry. If the caretaker doesn't have a phone, you may have to write a letter. Below is a sample of what you might say. Please call the caregiver by name; make certain you address them as "Mr." or "Ms."

SAMPLE SCRIPT:

Good morning, Ms./Mr. <Caregiver's Name>. This is <your name>, with the L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry.

<child's name>'s mom/dad signed up to have a L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares volunteer assigned to <child's name> to help with the nurturing of his/her little ones. <Describe the program>

Are you aware of this?

My next step is to match <child's name> with a volunteer. Once this happens they will call you to arrange a visit.

- Be sure to ask if there are other children in residence with the caregiver. Take note of the sex, age and birthdate of each child.

Do you have any questions? Is there anything else I should be aware of?

Thank you for your time, it was good to meet you. You should hear from <volunteer's name> soon.

Recruit Volunteer Participation

Recruit church members from local churches to serve as L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares volunteers. Announcements in church and distributing flyers can be helpful. But also solicit referrals from the pastor and other ministry leaders. Is there another ministry that would like to partner with L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares? See the section the **L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry Team** for ideas.

Because of the nature of the corrections system, you may find parents who have been transferred to a location away from their children's community and need volunteers from other areas. As you find need, reach out to churches in the children's location to see if there are appropriate volunteers who can be part of your team. Be aware that it will be more difficult to oversee their work and spot potential problems. You'll want to work with local church leadership to help you.

All volunteers need to complete an application process, including a background check and signing a Volunteer Pledge. Sample materials are available in Appendix A and B. This process should be overseen by a small recruitment committee rather than a single person. You and your leadership team should go through the same process as you ask your volunteers to do.

Be sure all volunteers are properly screened and are appropriate for the ministry. As the ministry leader, you and your administrative team are responsible to make sure volunteers are equipped to serve in this sensitive ministry.

L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry may be the only Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry offered to that facility, or it may be offered in conjunction with worship services and Bible study that other Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry volunteers offer. A volunteer is not able to participate in both activities.

You're encouraged to provide continuing education opportunities for your volunteers. Learning about the effects of incarceration on individuals and families as well as deepening their self-understanding, will increase volunteer empathy and effectiveness in the ministry.

Background Screening

Children are the most valuable and most important asset of our church and community.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church places a high priority on the safety of children.

The Church Manual states "Everyone involved with children who are minors must meet all Church and legal standards and requirements. In order to safeguard our children, churches are encouraged to adopt policies that would provide measures of safety and protections for children." Church Manual, 19th Edition, pp 174-175.

The North American Division background screening and training is *Seventh-day Adventist Screening Verification*. This is the program used by many conferences in North America. The Canadian government has mandated The Vulnerable Sector Screening for all religious organizations and their ministries. A new background check must be done at least every three years. Check with your conference prison ministries director for the proper procedure for your conference.

There may also be additional background screening and/or training requirements for the facility/institution you serve and/or the area in which you live. If you live in one area and are serving in another area be sure you check on both sets of requirements.

Remember that you must meet the requirements of both your conference and the government.

A Word on Finances

L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares volunteers frequently work with families with limited resources and can feel pressure to spend too much of their own resources in helping a family.

In prison, mothers and fathers cannot purchase gifts or needed materials to give to their children. In some cases, women have been known to barter in the prison environment just to get a few tubes of toothpaste to send their children for birthday or Christmas presents.

One volunteer recalls that she chuckled when local church groups brought in gifts of soap and toothpaste for the parents. How trivial, she thought, until she noticed the reactions of the women who were mothers. They traded and hoarded the toiletries to give to their children on Christmas visiting day. "Most children wouldn't think much of such small gifts," said the volunteer, "but in prison there was such joy in the faces. It really didn't matter what they got; it was from Mama."

Confidentiality

You and your team must take care not to overstep bounds of confidentiality. There are multiple facets to this critical component of L.A.M.B./Daddy Cares Ministry.

- When soliciting resources or sharing about the ministry, you must protect the names and circumstances of everyone involved. You should guard their privacy and the sensitivity of the situation with integrity. Sharing names and details of the situations you encounter could cause harm and slander if shared. You must hold their confidence as precious.
- Within the family it is not a volunteer's place to share information about one family member with another. You do not want to appear to take sides with one person or another or become entangled in negative relationship dynamics.
- You must be aware that sometimes information is withheld from the parent, child or caregiver about each other for the protection of all. Even with the caregiver, you are never to give a non-resident parent's name in any written or oral communication. The child and/or the caregiver may not be aware of the parent's circumstances. And there may be information about the home which the parent is not privy to.

You may not be aware of all the boundaries so you must keep all rules of confidentiality both within the family as well as with others outside of the family.

The exception is if there is a life threatening or abusive situation. In this case you are *required* to report to the appropriate agency. You do not want to become an accomplice in this situation.



“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, does not welcome me, but the One who sent me.”

MARK 9:37

