

THE AREN  
PAGAN PRISON MINISTRY PROGRAM  
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## What is the Pagan Prison Ministry Program?

The Pagan Prison Ministry Program is a needed project within our community to aid the incarcerated Pagans to create change from within themselves and our society.

As our society and world changes, many people including Pagans of all walks of life are becoming incarcerated or are changing their belief systems once they become incarcerated.

Many of these individuals have never experienced or have known unconditional love, acceptance and trust in their lives. Many of the male individuals that are incarcerated do not know their father or they have not been in their lives for many years or they themselves are the individual's partners in crime.

For any incarcerated Pagan to exercise their religion, most facilities require an outside volunteer to come in and administer the religious services and this is where this program comes into affect, we look for volunteers of all sorts to aid in this service through out the United States.

We not only need individuals for specific facilities, but also materials such as altar tools, books, candles, tarot cards and other items that may be useful for working within the correctional facilities.

This program is one that is challenging and rewarding. You will discover a side of life that you have never been experienced to and one that may even be startling at first, but once you begin to uncover the individual that is locked inside the incarcerated Pagan, you may be surprised at what you find. Many of these individuals have been incarcerated since childhood and have only lived a life that they have learned from their parents and society. This is your opportunity to show them that a different world does exist and that they can be that individual that they truly desire to be.

Our society has become a throwaway society when it comes to our children. Many of these incarcerated Pagans has never had a chance due to the fact that they are poor and live in poor areas that are over run with drugs and violence. You will find that many of these individuals have seen at least one, if not more and all of their family members killed due to drugs, gangs or other crimes. Children live what they learn and this is what we all need to keep in mind when visiting the incarcerated Pagan.

While not all of our incarcerated Pagans are children or have been in prison since their childhood, you will find that some may actually deserve to be in prison while others

have done very minor crimes, but are doing hard time. There are many reasons for our system and this is neither the time nor the place to get into all of these aspects.

When going into a facility one must put aside all of their own personal fears of these individuals, learn patience because it takes an inmate time to trust and open up to you, be strong and in control of your time at the facility, do not judge an inmate for the crime that they have committed and most of all, be willing to heal the individual from within so that they can be the individual that they truly desire. I can honestly say, that I have not met one individual within the DOC system that doesn't dream of being someone good and special in some manner.

You will learn that working within a facility and with the incarcerated Pagan that they are extremely different than that of a coven on the outside or even if you are a solitary the needs of the incarcerated Pagan will be very different than what you are accustomed to. An example is the tarot cards. They are the most important tool for the incarcerated Pagan and that is because it is something that they can hold, meditate with, and actually visualize change and they need this tool to practice their religion. While many or most of us believe that tools are not necessary to practice our religion, it is not so inside a facility or for the incarcerated Pagan and it is because they are not balanced and have not learned that tools are just that, tools. They need things to grasp, to hold and to aid them in their religion.

This program works in a three-fold manner. It not only helps the incarcerated Pagan, but it educates the DOC facility staff and it helps our society. This is our ultimate goal and the purpose of this program.

We sincerely hope that you will participate within this program and we look forward to working with you. Once the volunteer training manual is complete, we will also be distributing AREN training cards and certificates of completion for this program.