

Prison Ministries Report for Conference Session 2025

Pastor Samuel Burgess

Mr. Chairman, Dr. Kern Tobias, President of the Caribbean Union, members of the Union Administration, representatives of the Inter-American Division, appointed delegates, delegates-at-large, and fellow members.

It is my privilege to present this report, outlining the activities of the Prison Ministries Department for the period January 2023 to December 2024.

Resumption of Prison Visitation

The year 2023 began with discussions between the committee and prison authorities regarding the resumption of prison visitations, which had been suspended since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- A formal request letter was sent to the prison on March 10, 2023.
- Approval was granted on June 19, 2023, under specific conditions.
- Once these conditions were met, visitations officially resumed on September 23, 2023.

Since then, visits have taken place twice monthly at both the men's and women's facilities. Prior to the pandemic, these visits were held every Sabbath.

Outreach to Churches

From January 2023 to December 2024, the Prison Ministries team engaged in several outreach activities. These included programmes at:

- Six Roads Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Blessed Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Massiah Street Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Venture Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Black Rock Seventh-day Adventist Church

A highlight occurred on May 25, 2024, when President Hall delivered a special presentation on the outreach work of Prison Ministries at Black Rock SDA Church's community event 'Church Without Walls', held at the Belfield Sports Pavilion, Black Rock, St. Michael.

Verdun House Ministry

Verdun House holds a special place in the heart of our ministry team. On the second Sabbath of each month, members conducted an Evangelistic Outreach Service for residents. Carefully selected Seventh-day Adventist presenters shared messages encouraging residents to follow the path that leads to Christ.

Throughout the review period, the team also hosted:

- Father's Day programmes

- Independence/Republic Day celebrations
- Christmas functions

On these occasions, refreshments were served to residents and guests. We also donated large print Bibles, Priority magazines, and inspirational literature, including special publications by Mark Finley and Alejandro Bullon.

Outreach to the Homeless

In collaboration with the Salvation Army's feeding programme, the Prison Ministries team participated in four outreach events for the homeless community.

- Each event served approximately 175 individuals, providing meals, drinks, and pastries.
- Religious materials were distributed to all attendees.

Spiritual Resources for Inmates

During this period, we sought to meet the spiritual needs of inmates by providing:

- Large print Bibles
- Seventh-day Adventist hymnals
- Priority magazines
- The Great Controversy
- Books of the Year — Hope in Troubled Times and The Final Hope

We pray these resources will inspire, instruct, and lead many to a deeper relationship with Christ.

Looking Ahead

The Prison Ministries Department remains committed, compassionate, and consistent in caring for those who need our love and support. Our goals include:

- Appointing a Prison Ministries coordinator in every church
- Sensitizing congregations to God's Great Commission (Isaiah 61:1–3; Luke 4:18)
- Encouraging greater acceptance of former inmates within the SDA congregations and the surrounding communities.
- Strengthening support for the re-integration programme at HMP Dodds to help reduce recidivism

Appreciation

I sincerely thank the churches visited and all other congregations for their continued support during this period. It is both an honour and a blessing to be part of this important work within the East Caribbean Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

