

Jail BINGO

A Call to Faith Communities for Action

Background:

Quietly but consistently, over 12 years, one faith community and the New Leaf – New Life therapeutic justice charity have brought weekly joy into the Monroe County Jail. This volunteer-led program brings prizes and the game of BINGO into the jail's cell blocks and shows the inmates and the guards that people in the community care about those that are in our jail. The program is non-religious, but many volunteers are motivated to participate by their faith.

Now its founder and leader has retired and the program is going through a transition. In restarting it, the commitment of multiple faith communities to provide volunteer BINGO game leaders and other key support is needed to provide sustainability.

The Need:

1. A program champion in your faith community that will help recruit volunteers and represent the program to your members;
2. Volunteers that will lead BINGO games in the jail on a single fixed night during the week (a 2-hour commitment);
3. Financial support to cover a share of the prizes and game materials. We ask for a recurring contribution of \$1,000 per year (overall program costs are \$5,000 per year).

Background:

A five-minute video on the jail BINGO program (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIN4ZHgkSbM>) was prepared as an IU project a few years ago (and is available for viewing at the preceding link). Since that time, our jail has become more and more crowded, an opioid addiction crisis rages and homelessness has soared in our community. Most of those in the jail are there because they are too poor to post bond. The percentage of African Americans in our jail is **five times greater** than the percent in the outside community. The need for compassion for our brothers and sisters in jail has never been greater. The need for understanding of our justice system and the effect that it has on the lives of those incarcerated has also never been greater.

Please respond to Dave Meyer of New Leaf – New Life at dwm@davemeyer.org or directly at (812) 345-2322 for more program details and next steps.