



Helping repentant hearts return to the fold in rural communities

CHRISTIAN NEIGHBOR HOST FAMILIES GUIDELINES

"Be hospitable to one another..." (1 Peter 4:9)

The Rural Restart Ministry post-prison model of ministry places a high emphasis on mentoring the Christian Neighbor through exposure to the dynamics of a Christian Family home. Studies indicate that approximately 80% of those incarcerated came from broken or non-existent homes. To assist in this mentoring, RRM likes to see the Christian Neighbor spend Sundays with host families, interacting with them and taking part as a "family member" for the day. In order to assist you and your family in hosting the Christian Neighbor adopted by your church, a few guidelines are provided:

1. Be a friend. Love the Christian Neighbor as Christ loves you.
2. Treat the Christian Neighbor as you would any other member of your family. He/she is not to be treated as a celebrity nor as a project but simply as you would anyone else, with dignity and respect. He/she is a participating member of your family for the day, so share meals and kitchen responsibilities with him/her and make him/her feel a part of the family.
3. If you have a special activity planned, share it with him/her. Don't operate completely out of your normal routine for the day but include the Christian Neighbor in the normal routine.
4. Be a living example of what it means to be a Christian.
5. Be sensitive. The Christian Neighbor needs to build trust and friendship gradually. For instance, as addressed in point #14, do not ask questions that may make him/her uncomfortable, such as why they went to prison, unless they open the door for that type of conversation.
6. Pray together and pray for the Christian Neighbor when he/she is not with you.
7. Call the Christian Neighbor by Friday to advise him/her of the time you will pick him/her up on Sunday. Attendance at both worship and adult education is encouraged.
8. Try to not keep the Christian neighbor out past 10:00pm, unless previously arranged with his Primary Mentor.

9. Trips out of the local area (such as to Kansas City) must first be cleared with the Christian Neighbor's Primary Mentor. Call the Primary Mentor prior to making any arrangements. Leaving the state is a parole violation.

10. Do not, *under any circumstances*, give money to the Christian Neighbor. The Christian Neighbor has a financial mentor and is in the process of learning to make wise and responsible financial decisions. This is a discipline that must be learned. If you wish to give money to help him/her, do so through his/her Primary Mentor or financial mentor.

11. Do not, *under any circumstances*, purchase a car for the Christian Neighbor. The Christian Neighbor is in a discipleship program that requires a high level of accountability and, as such, does not need the level of freedom a car will provide. This level of freedom must be earned and be controlled by his Primary Mentor. If they already have one, they may use it with transparency from their Primary Mentor.

11. Contact with others beyond your local church and the Christian Neighbor's post-prison ministry team is to be monitored for his/her benefit. Should the Christian Neighbor ask to make a telephone call while with your family, encourage him to wait until he is home or with his Primary Mentor. Long Distance calls should not be permitted under any circumstances.

12. Do not agree to mail letters or deliver anything on behalf of the Christian Neighbor.

13. Rural Restart Ministry believes an example of abstinence from alcohol is best for the Christian Neighbor. Therefore, please do not offer or provide alcohol to the Christian Neighbor and please abstain from alcohol consumption yourself while he/she is with you. Your cooperation in this is vital and very much appreciated.

14. Do not ask, "Why did you go to prison?" Allow the Christian Neighbor to share this information, and other personal information, with you if he wishes.

If you have any questions or are in doubt about any issues, please call the Christian Neighbor's Primary Mentor or his/her church liaison. ENJOY your time with the Christian Neighbor and God bless you for your commitment to this ministry. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Christian Neighbor to observe the functioning of Christian families at church, at home and in the community.

Church Liaison: _____ Phone: _____

Spiritual Mentor: _____ Phone: _____

Financial Mentor: _____ Phone: _____