

**HIGHPOINT**  
*Stateville*

**VOLUNTEER GUIDE**

Highpoint Stateville shares the same vision and conviction of all other Highpoint locations — to help people believe in, belong to and become like Jesus. In 2020, God opened an unprecedented door in the state of Illinois, as Highpoint became the first church to ever be approved by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) to launch a fully functioning church inside a state prison, including weekend services, growth groups, leadership development, care and outreach opportunities and a dedicated pastor on our church staff (i.e. Pastor Rodney Massey).

**Highpoint Stateville officially launched as a location of Highpoint on Easter 2021!**

*We exist to help people believe in,  
belong to, and become like Jesus.*

To “make disciples” is the main imperative in Jesus’ words. The disciple-making process involves helping people ....

- **Believe through showing and sharing the Gospel** (John 1:12)
- **Belong in community to body of Christ** (Hebrews 10:24-25) - even within prison walls!
- **Become like Jesus in character and conduct** (Mark 10:45)

Our mission is not to be a disciple, but to make disciples. All Christians are disciples, but not all disciples are making disciples. Our mission at Highpoint Stateville is to help make disciples alongside incarcerated men.

*Why Plant a Church in a Prison?*

## 1. We are Compelled by \_\_\_\_\_

*Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to **remember those in prison** as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. - **Hebrew 13:1-3***

## 2. We are Convicted to \_\_\_\_\_

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” - Matthew 25:35-40*

## 3. We are Committed to PRAYER

*When the humble see it they will be glad; you who seek God, let your hearts revive. For the Lord hears the needy and does not despise his own people who are prisoners.*

- Psalm 69:32-33

Therefore...

**Our Goal is to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_** the incarcerated men of Stateville and the Stateville staff by building genuine relationships, engaging in spiritual conversations and deepening our dependence on Christ.

This happens through a \_\_\_\_\_ exchange of \_\_\_\_\_

- **We aren't there to have all the answers**
- **We aren't there to be a spiritual authority**
- **We aren't there to be the leaders or facilitators**
- **We ARE there to mutually growth as equals and brothers in Christ.**

## *How to Engage at Highpoint Stateville*

1. How to \_\_\_\_\_ in your growth group at Highpoint Stateville. These qualities needed to be modeled in your group.

- \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 9:36-38)
  - *Learning the lived experience and life of those in your group*
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Phillipians 2:3-4)
  - *Recognizing we are all equal at the foot of the cross*
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Colossians 1:28-29)
  - *Engaging with enthusiasm and joy*

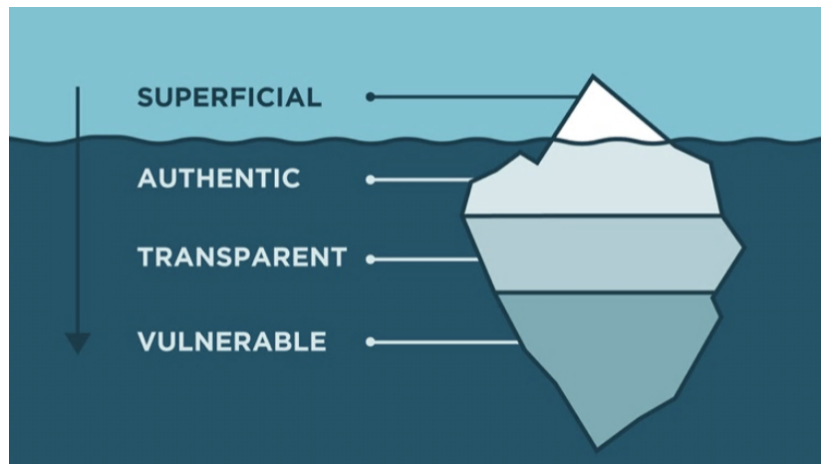
- \_\_\_\_\_ (James 1:19-20)  
- *Listening more than we're talking*

2. Utilize Highpoint's \_\_\_\_\_ in building relationship and trust

- **C** \_\_\_\_\_
- **A** \_\_\_\_\_
- **R** \_\_\_\_\_
- **E** \_\_\_\_\_

- Go the distance with sacrificial love (John 4:20-21)
- If you don't know how to respond, don't! Connect with Pastor Rodney for guidance.
- Don't commit to anything you can't make good on.

3. Relationships move at the \_\_\_\_\_



- Superficial - *avoids personal disclosure*
- Authentic - *sharing personal thoughts and feelings*
- Transparent - *being honest when asked*
- Vulnerable - *initiating honest disclosure*

- Trust is the currency of Stateville. Do not try to dive deeper until a real relationship is formed.
- While it will take time, the more you share your story and experience, the higher the likelihood you can move conversation from superficial to vulnerable.

# What Does it Look Like?

## 1. Schedule for Sunday Services @ Stateville

### - Arrive at Highpoint Romeoville at 11:00 on the Sunday you are serving

- Highpoint Romeoville is 15 minutes from Stateville and is the meeting place for a morning brief, prayer and short time of connection with all volunteers prior to serving at Stateville that Sunday.

### - Travel together to Stateville, arriving at 11:30 a.m.

- Must have your state ID
- No wallets, cell phones or smart watches/technology are allowed inside
- Bring your Bible, pen and notebook to take any notes
- Dress casually

### - Gain access to Stateville through the Visitor Center around 11:45 a.m.

- Remember, you are a representative of Highpoint and Christianity at large.
- Always engage with guards and CO's with love and respect. We're entering their house (and their jobs are very difficult!)
- Give your state ID to the CO behind the glass wall
- You'll get a visitor badge. Wear this at all times and be sure never to lose it. **A lost visitor badge means immediate lockdown of the whole prison.**
- You'll be patted down by a CO. Follow their instructions.
- Stay together as a group and present your ID as you pass through 2 security check points

## SERVICES:

### 12:00-12:10 p.m.

- **Welcome and Connect** with the men as they enter the theater
- Just like all other Highpoint locations, engage like you're a host team leader/greeter

### 12:10-1:00 p.m.

- Worship (*will eventually be integrated*)
- Testimony (*occasionally*)
- Host Section/Announcements (*Facilitated by an inmate leader of Highpoint Stateville*)
- Message from Pastor Rodney or another Highpoint Pastor
- Most often, Highpoint- Stateville is in the same sermon series as our other locations.
- Prayer Close

**1:00-2:00 p.m.**

- Break out into Growth Groups
- Currently there are 8 Growth Groups actively meeting w/ inmate facilitators
- The Growth Guide is written each week by the inmate leadership group that meets each Wednesday morning. Many of these men are currently pursuing their Mdiv.

**2:00 p.m.**

- Escorted as a group by a CO back outside the prison

- Arrive back at Highpoint Romeoville by 2:30 p.m.

**NOTE: Each Sunday, send an email to your team (cc'ing Pastor Rodney and Elder, Steve Madawick) with a summary of your time, any insights, updates from the men in your group and prayer requests so your team stays connected with your group.**

**2. DO's & DON'Ts**

**DO:** Address CO's as sir, ma'am or officer or by their rank (sergeant, lieutenant, major). Lieutenants and Majors wear white shirts.

**DO:** Treat all inmates as an equal. We're all equal in the eyes of Christ. Be yourself, shake hands or a brief hug.

**DO:** Learn the names of all the guys in your group

**DO:** It's okay to ask questions like, "how long have you been in," "Do you have kids/grandkids" or "What's new?"

**DO:** Understand their needs and prayer requests of the men in your group

**DON'T:** Ask questions like "How are you doing?" Reality is, it's a very difficult place to be. Try to steer topics toward joyful and life-giving conversations, not a reminder of where they are.

**DON'T:** Ask what they are in for. If they reveal why they were incarcerated in your growth group, that is their decision to disclose but not yours to ask.

**DON'T:** Take over facilitating conversation from the inmate Growth Group leader. Let them lead.

**DON'T:** Have all the answers spiritually. Many of these men have a deep faith, are grounded in the Word and some (Wednesday group leaders) are pursuing a master's degree in theology. Your primary goal is relational and spiritual connection for mutual discipleship.



# Qualities and Characteristics

1. Passionate and focused disciple of Jesus
2. Highpoint Partner or willingness to become a Highpoint Partner by attending Growth Track.
3. Compassionate and empathic man with a genuine interest to build authentic relationships.
4. Be a man of character and conduct that honors the Lord.
5. Model a life of humility and genuine care for those in need.
6. Willingness to commit the time and be a consistent presence at Highpoint Stateville (*it is very common for volunteers to come and go at Stateville. Are you willing to be a consistent presence over a long period of time?*)

## Additional Training

- **Growth Track** (Become a Highpoint Partner)
- **Lead Others** (Growth Group leader training)
- **Care + Counsel** (Advanced leader training)

