

**Job Title:** Prayer Vigil Coordinator  
**Reports to:** Sponsoring Organization

**Statement of position/position summary:** **The Prayer Vigil Coordinator serves as the principal representative for the sponsoring organization in ministering to families of recent victims of homicide within Marion County.**

**Funding:** **Unless funds are otherwise available, the Coordinator is a volunteer of the sponsoring organization.**

- If funding is available, a monthly stipend and mileage reimbursement related to planning and conducting services may be provided.
- Liability and personal insurance is provided by the sponsoring organization in accordance with coverage ordinarily available to volunteers.
- A Clergy Badge will be provided without cost to allow ease of access to hospitals, identify individual to families, etc.
- Business cards are the responsibility of the Coordinator (can produce own or pay to have them printed); any cost must be covered by donations or absorbed by the volunteer

#### **The Coordinator's Tasks:**

- Arranges individual prayer vigil services for the family at the scene of homicides or at alternate locations as requested by the family
- Aids the family in their time of bereavement, providing referrals primarily to the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department—Victim Assistance Unit
- Interacts as feasible with neighbors of the family to help them to join the Prayer Vigil (as directed by the families)
- Cares for storage of the Prayer Pole
- Works with representatives from the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Legacy House, and others to arrange two annual community services to remember homicide victims from the previous twelve months:
  - The spring service (Light the Night) is focused on the wider community, incorporating political/community leaders along with encouraging a media presence.
  - The fall candlelight service is focused on the victims' families and is held on September 25<sup>th</sup> of each year in a local host church as part of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims.
  - All costs for these functions must be covered by in-kind donations or funds raised by the Coordinator from local concerned churches or individuals
  - Coordinates storage of candles and other resources for the services
- Areas covered by the IMPD will be the primary focus of this position; in consultation with the Prayer Vigil Committee, may determine specific ZIP codes to serve depending on Coordinator's available time.

#### **Qualifications for Coordinator**

- Comfortable with varying faith expressions and traditions during times of grief, generally and specifically the violent death of loved ones
- Be an excellent communicator to grieving families, police, clergy, and victim's support agencies
- Be respectful of family needs and confidentiality given any pending police investigations and court proceedings
- Has own vehicle
- Be available and able to visit homicide scenes to assess needs of the affected family
- Must have a fully functioning cell phone
- Have skills in using telephone, text messaging, and e-mail to provide clear directions to families and prayer vigil volunteers
- Must have access to email, and have sufficient skills to set up, maintain, and use mail groups or in other ways provide for mass emails
- Have training or certification in bereavement support (helpful)
- Have or be able to establish a working relationship with IMPD Chaplain or his designee
- In consultation with the Prayer Vigil Committee, may develop network of mentors to assist families and/or help with setting up vigils.

**Suggested Prayer Vigil Process**

- 1) Request contact information from IMPD Chaplain or his designee which would include name of homicide victim, next of kin, telephone number
- 2) Identify location of crime, date and cause (this is determined by IMPD or other police agencies)
- 3) Any important considerations given the particulars of the crime, family, neighborhood, traffic or safety situation
- 4) Calls family contact to offer a prayer vigil service and make arrangements for a time that is most convenient with the family
- 5) In the event that the family does not desire the prayer service or no family contact is available, the coordinator will arrange a public vigil at a time set in consultation with the Prayer Vigil Committee
- 6) Conducts a site visit to evaluate the location, confirm address and prepare directions for the family and prayer vigil volunteers
- 7) Prepares and sends written invitation with vigil information for the wider prayer list
- 8) Advises volunteers of any important considerations of the crime, family or location
- 9) Develops written liturgy for use at the vigil
- 10) Arrives 15 minutes before the scheduled vigil
- 11) Greets the family and others, offer sympathy and explain the liturgy's content
- 12) Determines if clergy are present and invites one to lead an opening prayer
- 13) Places the self-standing Prayer Pole at the location as directed by family, respecting private property, traffic and the safety of participants
- 14) Distributes previously prepared prayer vigil service sheets to participants
- 15) Leads the order of the service encouraging family and others to offer personal prayers as provided in the liturgy

## At the conclusion of the service:

- offers referral information to the Legacy House
- explains the next annual community remembrance service
- provides opportunity for others present to share email information for future notification
- return Prayer Pole and stand to storage location