

Prominent prison ministry fires 72, citing economy

by [Adelle M. Banks](#) in the [September 6, 2011](#) issue

Prison Fellowship, a prominent evangelical ministry to inmates, has laid off dozens of employees, citing the faltering economy.

A total of 72 staffers were let go as part of a restructuring that included new leaders as of July 18. Jim Liske, a former pastor in Michigan, is now the ministry's CEO, and Garland Hunt, a former Atlanta pastor, is now its president.

"Like many nonprofits in the wake of this economy, Prison Fellowship has had to deal with shrinking resources and rising costs," said Frank Lofaro, executive vice president of the ministry. The ministry was founded in 1976 by ex-convict and Nixon aide Chuck Colson.

Lofaro declined to disclose the current total number of Prison Fellowship staffers. "Prison Fellowship is not focusing on its recent staff reductions but rather on the new season it is embarking on for the ministry," Lofaro said in a statement.

The ministry, which turned 35 in August, has worked with about 8,500 churches and 14,000 volunteers to support prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families. —RNS