

Spiritual Care



WHAT IS SPIRITUAL CARE?

Spiritual care is when an appointed leader (or a "pastor," "shepherd," "priest" or "care minister") guides people in meeting their spiritual needs in Christ. It is high-quality, confidential care and support for people experiencing many forms of life difficulties.

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

The objective of Spiritual care is to restore hope, faith and love in the hearts of others. In Spiritual care ministry, the minister/leader helps to connect believers to God, others, and their communities. It is geared toward bringing compassion to people in emotional, mental, physical, or spiritual need as well as helping others to recognize value and hope.

Examples of care include visiting the sick and providing support to people experiencing crisis, grief, divorce, cancer, job loss, loneliness, disability, relocation or other life difficulties.

WHY IS SPIRITUAL CARE IMPORTANT?

According to Christian beliefs, we are created in three-part: **Spirit** (1 Thess 5:23), **soul** (mind/emotions), and **body** (the physical). The Spirit of a person influences every part of life, and our Spirit must be nurtured to keep it healthy and flourishing.

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Community Care



WHAT IS A COMMUNITY CAREGIVER?

A trained caregiver is someone equipped and matched to meet with a person in need for about an hour a week to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care and support. A trained team cares for people inside and outside the congregation, developing caring relationships that last for as long as the person needs this level of care.

WHO DO THEY HELP?

Trained caregivers can help any adult who is going through any number of challenges including: divorce, separation, empty nest transition, hospitalization, loneliness, loss, major change in family (birth/adoption, marriage/ re- marriage), relationship crisis/conflict, relocation, retirement, illness, Spiritual struggles and unresolved faith questions, stressful life situations, unemployment or any other situation that is difficult causing stress, crisis, or transition.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Trained caregivers are open and willing to talk about spiritual issues but are sensitive to avoid imposing on others. They can be supervised lay members -- not problem-solvers, counselors, therapists, physicians, or drop-by visitors. They are compassionate people, many who have gone through difficult times themselves and recognize the value of having a consistent, caring, and nonjudgmental, confidential listener who can provide support and encouragement to others in time of need.

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High-Quality Care



WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A CAREGIVER?

Thank you for wanting to find out more about training relating to a Community Care Program. The following information provides some potential prerequisites for establishing trained caregivers. It is my hope that all understand the expectations of this servant role to help better discern if God has been preparing your heart, your congregation and/or team(s) toward the possibility for training.

Expectations may include:

- Being a member of a vibrant congregation.
- Participation in 50+ hours of training with others.
- Be commissioned and willing to serve a minimum of one year.
- Make time to meet with your assigned care receiver once each week for about 1 hour and provide additional support by telephone when needed.
- Use learned skills to reflectively and actively listen, encourage and support your care receiver to recognize, express, and accept his/her feelings, share Christian resources (prayer, scripture, blessings) with the care-receiver's permission, remain process oriented by focusing on care giving and avoid attempts to resolve the care-receiver's problems, and maintain boundaries to help the care receiver persevere.
- Be absolutely committed to ensure that all personal information regarding each care receiver and caring relationship is kept confidential at all times.
- Participate with your team of caregivers in continuing educational and resource-development sessions and receive and participate in small group, peer supervision whether or not in an active caring relationship.

Training Overview



The Acts in Action Care Program Rationale

A Community Care Program is based on the conviction that all human beings are engaged at some level in a journey in life that can be named as “spiritual.” We all make some meaning of our experiences of life. This can be quite tentative and provisional, even barely conscious. It can also be very highly charged and to the fore of awareness, as we face new and demanding experiences which challenge our previous attempts at making meaning of life. Trained caregivers are equipped through specialized training to walk alongside those experiencing life's difficulties. Some specialized training includes:

- Intro to Care-giving & Companionship
- The Importance of Confidentiality
- Nurturing the Caring Relationship
- Engagement of the Spiritual & Sacred
- The Art of Listening Communication
- The Art of Open-Ended Questioning
- Spiritual Care in Practice
- Visitation: Our Stories, Journeys, & Spirituality
- Cultural Competency & Barriers
- Maintaining Boundaries in Care-giving
- Observing, Documenting & Reporting
- Stress & Time Management Techniques
- Helping others find coping strategies
- Self-Care for the Care-Giver & When to Refer
- Bringing the Caring Relationship to a Close

Life Questions for care-giving include reflection upon: “Who am I?” “Who do I belong with?”, “Where am I going?”, “What does it all mean?”