

Being a Caring Church

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We are members one of another...
(Romans 12:5)

Hurts will happen in our lives and in the lives of those in our church family:
Expected and unexpected losses.
Welcome and unwelcome transitions.
Challenges faced which need growth or overcoming.

How do we engage in a loving and helpful manner as a church family?

Five Keys to Being a Caring Church



1 Develop a Helpful Mindset

Sprint vs. Marathon mentality:

- Sprint – this acute/crisis support is highest right after an incident (death, accident, illness) and slopes downward over time.
- Marathon – this long-term support engages at a sustainable pace over time.
 - Many losses, transitions, chronic situations wax and wane over time.
- The type and pace of help is different for each situation.

Public vs Private Dilemma:

- Individuals have different levels of comfort with disclosure with personal situations.
- Seek to be sensitive while not assuming.

Engage in the ministry of presence:

- Lean toward others
- Offer, don't demand

2 Understand our Role

We are vessels not solutions:

- Walking with others
- Telling vs leading
- Remember the power of prayer

Give permission for others to have complex, mixed emotions about a situation.

- Growth mindset vs. perfection mindset.

Avoid a "should" way of supporting:

- Be careful to not project your experience on another
- Because I experienced...You should experience.
- Because X helped me...it should help you.

3 Know our Limits

Both the supporter and those supported have roles.

- We don't have to take away the other person's pain or sorrow.
- Relieve yourself of the pressure of needing to find "just the right thing to say." Many times...say less.

We are responsible "to" each other and "for" ourselves.

- Mentoring and accountability relationships
- Proactive vs Reactive Accountability

Do you know when to elevate a situation? Who do you elevate it to? What resources are at your disposal?

- It is OK to say, "I can help in X way, but not in Y way."

4

Overcome our Fears

Do not get stuck on certainty:

- What am I going to say?
- I don't know how to fix it.
- What if they don't want to talk?
- What if they want to talk?
- How do I help if I've never been through that?

Love casts out fear (*1 John 4:18*)

- Be willing to engage despite our fears (*2 Timothy 1:7*).
- We want others to know that we have them in our hearts.

5

Walk in Love Together

Be able to maintain privacy.

- Treat others as you wish to have been treated.
- Do not let trust be harmed by "innocent" prayer requests.

Be willing to reach out for help for yourself when you need it.

- We are "*members one of another*".
- No one person has all the answers all the time.

God Redeems Our Hurts

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." 2 Cor. 1:3-6