

Who may become a Care Pastor?

The opportunity to become a Care Pastor is available to every member of our congregation. Not all people are called to provide care to others, and we understand that – they have spiritual gifts in other areas. However, the most significant number of believers in any church, have the giftedness and inner desire to connect with other people and see their needs met. Even the Apostles in Acts 6:1-4 found this to be true.

We extend the invitation to all our members to attend a *Care Pastors Training Conference*. We usually present this event over a Friday evening and most of Saturday and will periodically announce the meeting for all to know. Interested members should sign-up ahead of time to prepare for the conference. After having attended such a conference, members will have the opportunity to apply to become an authorized Care Pastor. Not all who attend will of necessity receive approval. As can be understood, there will be a scrutiny process before we can appoint anyone. There are no qualifications to participate in a conference, but there are standards for acceptance to serve as a Care Pastor.

In closing, please know: your church needs you, your pastor needs you, but most of all, the Lord needs you. There is no better way to please Him than to be involved in His Mission. Make yourself available today. Talk to your pastor or one of the church leaders and make yourself known as an interested candidate for ministry and sign up at the appropriate time. We will thoroughly train and equip you and never leave you on your own.

“ . . . The members should have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:25-26) (WEB)

CARE REVOLUTION

A Proven New Paradigm for Pastoral Care

Introducing the

 **CARE MINISTRY**
NETWORK

Our church has become known as a friendly church, and for that, we are most grateful. We desire to remain known as a welcoming church. However, the truth is that today people are not as much looking for a friendly church, as they are looking for friends. People are craving love and searching for genuine relationships.

We have always tried to be a church of fellowship and interaction and customarily ask people to greet each other during our regular services. It remains to be a delight for many, and we plan to continue doing this. What we have found, however, is that we cannot build genuine relationships that way. *Fellowship-time* on Sundays should not be the only way we connect with our church family.

We realize that it's not so much what happens on Sundays that matters; it's what takes place between Sundays that makes a difference. If all we do is merely shaking someone's hand during fellowship time and patting those we know on the back, we are not essentially building real relationships. Our desire is to have all who are part of our congregation to know we care, that they matter, and that they belong. We want to be there for every member during the good times as well as the tough times.

Our team has tried in the past to be as available and accessible as possible but have finally concluded that at best we are only providing *crisis care* and not adequate *pastoral care*. It's only when someone faces a crisis that people receive the necessary attention. However, when the crisis is over, so is the care. That is no longer good enough for us.

In fact, one person, or even a handful of staff, cannot sufficiently provide the care we believe our members deserve. As your pastor I would love to be with you everywhere and on every occasion, but that is just not possible. However, we all recognize, the pastor cannot do it alone – and should not. Not only is it impossible, it's also unscriptural.

For that reason, our leadership has decided to modify our church's mode of congregational care by enlarging our ministry-workforce through including church members to assist us in caring for our congregation-at-large. I will continue to function exactly as in the past but hopefully be more effective. Those involved are not going to replace me, they will merely represent me.

Adapting this fresh way in pastoral care means that someone will always be available to you, making sure you are not struggling on your own. One of their greatest assignments will be to *pray for you and your family on a regular basis*. We believe that if prayer is all the pastoring people get, it's already more than most of them are getting now.

For us to accomplish our goal, we are going to establish a Care Ministry Net-

work in our congregation. This ministry will take some work and dedication from our side, but we know it's going to be enormously beneficial to our church. Very soon we will be announcing a Training Conference and invite all of our church members, who sense a calling to care for other people, to participate. The purpose of this conference will be to thoroughly train and equip you to adequately care for other members of the congregation. Some already know they have this calling, others may not, but no-one should feel excluded. The essential gift for pastoring is mercy. Please listen carefully for more information regarding this training conference.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE VALUES

According to Ephesians 4:11-16 it is the pastor's responsibility to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry." By not doing so, the church will never come to a place of spiritual maturity. Ministry should never be done by the pastors alone, but by all who belong to Christ. According to the Bible, every believer has received at least one spiritual gift, and they need to use these gifts in the body of Christ. Statistics show that most Christians have received the gift of mercy and are therefore able to provide care to their fellow church family.

The Care Ministry Network

Someone may ask, **what is the Care Ministry Network?** Our answer is:

The Care Ministry Network is an authentic and proven congregational care system that enables God's people to care for one another.

We cannot just take a group of people, give them the names and addresses of some people, and then ask them to go out and connect with them. That will be foolish and will certainly hurt more than it will help. Instead, we are going to develop and prepare church members to serve as *Care Pastors (this title may change)* and provide them with in-depth training. They will be commissioned and then publicly authorized to serve alongside the pastors and other leaders.

What will the Care Pastors primarily do?

The Care Pastors will mainly do four things.

To simplify this, we will use the acronym CARE to explain their functions:

- C** – CONTACT each family on a regular basis.
- A** – Be AVAILABLE to those families assigned to them.
- R** – REACH out in PRAYER on behalf of each family.
- E** – EXEMPLIFY a Christian lifestyle.