

Holy Spirit Parish Christian Service Commission

Bereavement Planning Meeting

Tuesday, March 6 2018, 6:00 pm at Sts. Peter & Paul

*Blessed are they who mourn, for they
will be comforted.* Matthew 5:4

The Mission of the Bereavement Ministry Team is to:

*Provide comfort and support in the time of
sorrow and grief of loved ones*

Present: Maureen Balyeat, Chris Christiaens, Theresa Hopkins, Rosann Johnson, Kathy Nyman-Wendt, Juanita McGregor, Pete and Jo Ann Thornburg, Karen Corda

Pastoral Council Representatives: None, this meeting was held during the Pastoral Council Meeting

Staff: Cindy Eultgen

Guest: Rick Ferry, Great Falls Vet Center

We opened with a prayer titled *Make Me a Gentle Breeze* (reflection on 1 Kings 19:9-12), from the book Prayers for Care Givers by Patti Normile

Rick was introduced and then he spoke about his work and the resources that the VC provides.... there is a lot of 1:1 counseling, some small groups, and one larger group. There are lots of ways for them to get involved and socialize. They will take any vet no matter how long it has been since they have served. They will walk with the vet until they find all the resources needed.

Many questions were asked...

When asked what advice he has for us he said:

1. Listen to the people, be curious, ask questions, know the resources
2. Learn *how* to identify when a person is in crisis, and *what* to do when a person is in crisis
3. Ask a person if they are feeling suicidal, utilize 911
4. Don't take on too much (taking on the person's problems), nor allow yourself to be perceived as something you are not, for example a counselor.

He invited us to tour the facility and to their potluck the 2nd Saturday of the month (this Sat. March 10 from 12-1:30 pm) Building Hours: 7-5 pm Monday – Friday and 8-2 pm Saturday

He gave each of us business cards and left around 7 pm

We talked further about the following details, and finished about 7:30 pm

We came up with the mission statement to *“comfort and support those in time of sorrow and grief”* This affirms our response to the parish mission statement *“to minister with compassion and hope”*. It also is rooted from our living the Second Beatitude in the Gospel of Mark 5:2 *“Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.”*

Support Group, consistency is essential, we will mark the 4th Tuesday of every month for the group, we will start April 24th, we will need to have at least 3 people scheduled to be present with roles and jobs for each meeting, other team members may be present as well to help get conversations started

We will need a script to say at each meeting how this is a safe place and confidentiality is to be respected. We also will need to say that we are obligated to work with someone further in detail if they talk about harming themselves or another person. Perhaps Kelly Keilman would have a script. Cindy will get the resources from Kelly Keilman before she comes to talk with us.

We don't want people leaving in a “difficult space”. We need to be sure that we are present and attend to folks (in the sense of their mood from the discussion) and make sure that they are dealing with their issues before they leave the support group.

Debriefing (care for caregivers) will be needed. We should still meet every 2 weeks to follow up with the issues that are triggered for the team as we assist others and facilitate meetings.

Besides using the bulletin to advertise with a flier etc., we talked about using a specialized parish note card, some would like to send personal cards to those who have lost loved ones in the past year, inviting them to utilize our services. Karen Corda will follow up the personal cards with a phone call.

Our next trainings:

March 20 – Mary Ann Dubay, Fr. Doug,

April 10 - Audrey Sabol, Retired Hospice, “Boundaries, facilitator ok to sharing some of story, ‘we do with people, not to people’”

April 17- Kelly Keilman, Hospice Community Resource, “Risk Factors, identification of complicated grief and depression, knowing when to refer out and resources in our community”

Work by the next meeting:

Juanita will call Jeri from O'Connor Funeral Home

Chris will invite Mary Ann Dubay to the next meeting, receive the resources from Rick, and share what would be appropriate

Cindy will get the resources from Kelly Keilman before April 17, and work on specialized cards