

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

**Holy Spirit Parish Bereavement Team Meetings**

Tuesday, November 20, 2018, 6:00 pm

The Mission of the Bereavement Ministry Team is to:  
*Provide comfort and support in the time of sorrow and grief of loved ones*

**Present:** Kathy Nyman Wendt, Chris Christiaens, Jim Capp, Rosann Johnson, Karen Corda, Sharon Dalen

**Cindy led the opening prayer**

**Old Business**

1. Karen shared her survey to be given out at next week's support group.
2. Karen also talked about the small group that she has invited to have lunch together. They discussed their comments about the support group and needs:
  - a. Would like speakers on things such as
    - i. senior services, taxes, strength & balance exercises
  - b. Would prefer to meet in the main church building
  - c. The support group is too big
  - d. Please put deaths in the bulletin
  - e. Would have liked immediate contact and continued contact; someone sitting beside you and letting you talk. Especially once the family went home after the funeral.
  - f. A couple of them would like house visits.
3. There were copies of the contact card distributed.
4. We talked about the support group being too big for meaningful discussion. Sometimes one person monopolizes the time whereas others do not have the time to express themselves. We need to get into small groups.
5. Juanita will facilitate next week's support group, both at 4 and 7 pm on the theme of getting through the holidays.

**New Business**

1. It was noted that December's support group will need to be a week earlier due to Christmas being on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday.
2. We discussed the need to put sympathy notes in the bulletin for approximately 3 weeks so that people would know, especially if they missed the week that the death was announced.
3. Jim offered to do a presentation on the topic of Social Security related paperwork and financial challenges.
4. Cindy said that Sr. Rita called her to offer a retreat on Care for the Caregivers in the 2019 year. She will update us when details are worked out.
5. Do we need to start a group for men? Several have attended, but only once.

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**Holy Spirit Parish Bereavement Team Meetings**

Tuesday, December 11, 2018, 6:00 pm

The Mission of the Bereavement Ministry Team is to:  
*Provide comfort and support in the time of sorrow and grief of loved ones*

**Present:** Karen Corda, Theresa Hopkins, Pam Seidlitz, Juanita McGregor, Jim Capp, Kathy Nyman-Wendt, and Cindy Eultgen

**Cindy led the opening prayer**

**Old Business**

1. Now that we have been meeting for a year and have started this ministry, team members have shown superb involvement: facilitating the support group, calling the bereaved, sending cards, inviting small groups to lunch, supporting in presence and discussion, and suggesting and finding resources. All are excited about this new ministry and realize that we are still in the beginnings of our developing and implementing our goals and vision. Cindy has been chairing and taking notes in our infancy, but members now need to pick up these responsibilities. In January we would like to have some individuals take over as Chairperson and Secretary. Cindy described the roles and discussion led to tabling this conversation until January. People are encouraged to attend the January meeting and all are invited to pray about how they see this ministry evolving and the roles one can practice. Co-chairpersons are also a possibility.
2. Cindy will send out the names and phone numbers of the people on the team.
3. There were 6 questionnaires that were returned last month. The results were read. We agreed to continue asking people if their needs are being met.
4. A card was read aloud and sent around from Alice Guilbert. Even though she won't be returning, she was very appreciative of our resources and learned a lot (she had attended 4-5 times).
5. Pam reported that Rosann will facilitate both Support Groups, at 4 pm & 7pm, next week. She will provide more time for people to talk as it seems this is a need.
6. Jim will lead a presentation on "Navigating the Challenges Involved in the death of a loved one beginning with Social Security" on January 22 for both times of support groups.

**New Business**

1. There was a lot of conversation on several topics:
  - a. Members appreciated our style of conversation as we can talk about the spiritual side.
  - b. It was mentioned that First Alliance has a Scripture type of Bereavement Group
  - c. Some people mentioned that we need a variety of methods in this ministry. Some of these methods may not work for the support group times, but they could be added into

the programming for the year. Some things are already started such as small lunch groups, which were initiated by a team member.

- i. Person to person contact / interaction, invitations, phone calls, and coffee etc.
  - ii. Smaller support groups so that people feel comfortable to talk
  - iii. Presentations
  - iv. Videos
  - v. Meeting for lunch at the church.
    1. It was mentioned that the Fellowship Lunch is offered every month on the first Tuesday. Even though some people like to 'always' sit together there are several other tables and lots of other people that regularly attend as well as some that attend now and then. This event could be announced at the support group and people could be personally invited by team members.
    2. It has been called Senior Lunch in the past. We like the idea of calling it a Fellowship Lunch instead, as many people don't consider themselves 'seniors' and would choose not to attend based on the name.
  - vi. We also realized that there might be a wider issue and need of socialization for single people.
- d. Several agreed that we could use more training.
- i. Maybe we need to prep differently for the support group as in "educating ourselves."
  - ii. It was mentioned that Sr. Rita will be doing a Care for the Caregiver retreat sometime in the next year.
  - iii. We could schedule a professional to come and speak.
  - iv. We could use hospice again as they have a thorough training for their volunteers
  - v. We need training on 'how to reign people in' if they monopolize the conversation at a group session.
- e. We need a system to follow up with people. Pam hasn't received names to send the initial "sorry for your loss" card from the Bereavement Team.
2. As we talk and discuss, there seems to be a need for us as a team, to do more of this rather than meeting to accomplish certain tasks and move on quickly. Maybe we meet twice a month as we did in the beginning? We are still new and formulating our identity. Planning meetings and education times could be scheduled.

**Cindy Closed in Prayer**