

Congregational Care Committee

Spiritual care for each other is central to the work of the church ...

Parish members are committed to maintaining church finances, keeping the property in order, and supporting the work of the minister. But we sit as sideliners when it comes to giving and receiving spiritual leadership.

Now there are a small but growing number of congregations who are shifting emphasis concerning how the work of the church is done.

In communities that wish to have a church presence even though their finances are tight and their numbers are few, the members form small interdenominational groupings where they share their God-given gifts and thoughts with each other. Because their clergy person is responsible for a number of smaller communities, he/she has more of an educator and advisory role.

How might this be introduced into more traditional church settings? Could we work with the idea of a "Congregational Care Committee"? This committee would be made up of regular members who try to support and accept the responsibility of caring for a selected number of individuals and families. They could help them not only find their place in the church community, but also encourage them to see how God's spirit works in their lives.

There are so many spiritual needs that we currently over-look. Take members who are 60+, who are about to retire. For them it is like entering a whole new life, and there is little preparation for the questions, the changes we have to face, the way we have to move past our regrets and recognize the gifts that lie ahead. The components of our faith can help us celebrate the gifts God has given, even while we face the tragedies and pain that comes with getting older.

The concept of "Congregational Care Committees" opens windows that let God's Spirit blow through our lives and into the lives of others.

(written by Joyce Sasse, 2010)