

PASTORAL CARE

A Handbook for Lake Church



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**“But God has put the
body together, giving
greater honor to the
parts that lacked it,
so that there should
be no division in the
body, but that its parts
should have equal
concern for each other.**

**If one part suffers,
every part suffers
with it; if one part is
honored, every part
rejoices with it.”**

I Corinthians 12:24-26

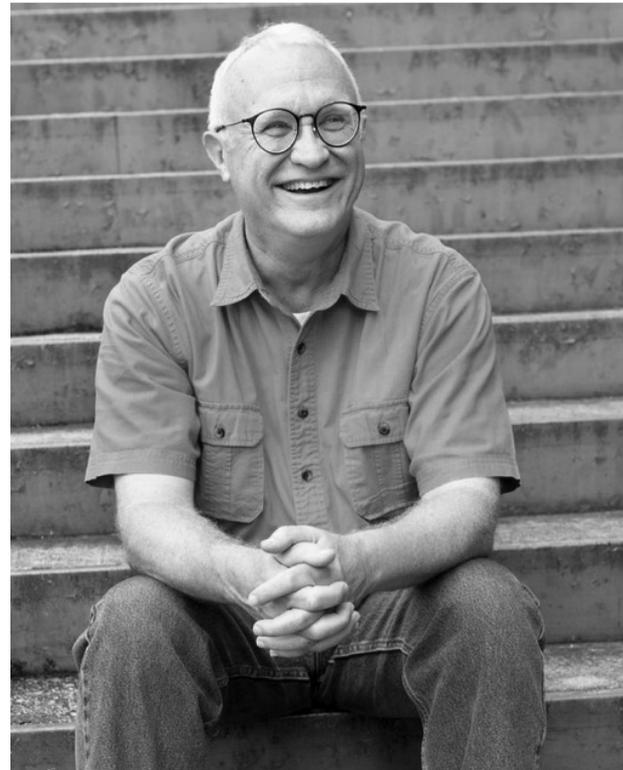
Thank you for being a vital partner of Lake Church and her many ministries.

Pastoral Care involves all of us, as the I Cor. 12:14-26 says. As a follower of Christ, you are the hands and feet,

the eyes and ears of Christ to others in your church family and those in your neighborhood. This manual is written to give practical insight and tips to help you care and love others well for Jesus. So, thank you again for being available to Him and your family at Lake Church.

David Jenkins,

Pastoral Care Pastor



Purpose

Our goal is to express comfort and encouragement in the name of Jesus Christ during times of crisis, difficulty, trauma, grief, loneliness, hurt, loss, and in other times of spiritual, emotional, and physical need.

Introduction

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Lake Church loves people. We are committed to serving and caring for our brothers and sisters in Christ and our neighbors who may not know Him yet. This book can be a resource for all areas of the church.

The information to follow will give insight on how to make personal home visits, what to say to those you are caring for, and proper hospital visitation etiquette.

Hospital visits or visiting others amid tragedy are not limited to just church staff. The larger the church is, the more impossible it becomes for one person to take care of all pastoral visits. The Body of Christ should be encouraged to care for others with joy and honor.

This ministry of encouragement is accomplished best through the efforts of men and women who are committed to serving our Lord by ministering to the needs of others. The

Body of Christ is a major resource to carry out these varied ministry opportunities.

Each member of our church can play a role in leading a group of people to reach out and minister to the mourner and their family.

Contact Staff – When you receive word of the hospitalization of a member, death or emergency situation contact one of our staff members as soon as possible. When staff receives word of a member in the hospital or a death, it is their practice to contact a Connection Group or other group to begin the ministry process.

Hospital Visits

Thank you for serving Jesus and his kingdom here at Lake Church and wherever you go. You are a vital member of His family. He has set each of us apart to minister as a royal priesthood to all in need. As you go to make hospital visits remember, your presence alone is a ministry to those in need.

Before the visit:

- Always pray asking the Holy Spirit to guide you. Pray before you make a visit.
- Your care and presence are more important than having the "right words".
- Meet family members with an accepting caring spirit that expresses compassion and concern.
- Don't take it personally. Due to stress or fear a patient or family member may respond short, in anger or other uncommon characteristics of them.
- Always yield to the medical personnel – the nurse, therapist or doctor.

During the visit:

- Knock before entering and announce who you are.
- Observe and follow all information signs outside room door. Such as: "Wear gloves, mask and robe", "Isolation", "Please Wash Hands", "Check with Nurse". They are there for your protection and theirs. When in doubt, go to the nurses' station.
- Be aware of your own reaction and avoid a "shocked" look.
- Be aware of your own body language. ICU & CCU patients may be connected to IV's, a ventilator, or other equipment. TIP: Maintain eye contact while you visit.
- Be sensitive to the other patient if a semi private room. Respect the privacy & rights of the other patient. Respect their "religious privacy". If you feel led to pray with the other

- patient, ask permission. Don't assume they want to hold your hand. Ask for permission.
- If you do not know the patient you are to visit, clarify who you are and what church you are from. Identify them to be sure you are with the right patient. Make a connection to help gain entrance: "I'm a friend of...", "I'm part of our church pastoral care team", "Your son is a member of our Connection Group".
 - Avoid medical equipment. Don't sit on the bed.
 - **BE CAREFUL** in making physical contact with the patient. They may not wish or need to be touched.
 - Don't hurry, but don't wear out your stay. 10-15 minutes is an average stay.
 - Initiate or suggest ways you or your group can minister to them and their family (pick up spouse, cut the grass, provide a few meals).
 - Remember, if they respond to you in a negative way, don't take it personal.
 - The hospital room is their "home" don't force unwanted conversations on them. The visit is to encourage and comfort them.
 - Allow them to talk. Listening is more important than giving advice. You want them to know you are thinking about them and praying God's best for them.
 - Stand where they can see you and make eye contact.



Grief Care

Our intent in ministering to those in mourning is to bring comfort and support. The loss of a loved one is rarely easy, and the depths of pain being experienced can be difficult to express. The reality is, at times when we are ministering to those in grief, we too are experiencing some type of loss. We have the honor of coming along side others in the name of Jesus to be present, listen, and pray together. It's important that **one or two people are assigned to coordinate** the efforts to help the mourner.

Guidelines: (Alan, Wolfelt, Death and Grief: A Guide for Clergy)

- **Listening.** Empathetic listening is essential. Listening effectively means the caregiver does not have all the answers and needs the communication of the mourner as a guide to know how to respond in helpful ways. The mourner feels validated when he or she is heard.
- **Understanding.** Means being familiar with the thoughts, feelings and behaviors common to the experience of grief. Learn how to communicate this understanding back to the bereaved in helpful ways. Allow them to "teach you" about their experience.
- **Educating.** What they are feeling and experiencing is normal, particularly when they have had no prior experience with loss in their lives. For example, knowing that pain is something to be expected often allows the mourner to enter more fully into the experience rather than avoid it.
- **Supporting.** Accompanying mourners on the journey through their grieving process. Having a sense of support outside themselves allows mourners to survive the pain of the loss.
- **Advocating.** The one helping may provide trusted resources to assist the mourner with funeral arrangements, financial planning, social security needs, legal matters. Also, it can mean providing a "safe place" where someone can come, not be judged but accepted in the grieving process.
- **Encouraging.** This relates to movement toward reconciliation. Encouraging can be a process of helping the mourner restore a sense of self, helping them establish relationships and activities to go on living while still acknowledging a significant loss has occurred.

- **Referring.** Appropriate referral means you must be aware of your own level of counseling skills, knowing when to skillfully

refer and transfer care to a qualified helper. You don't want the mourner to feel "dumped" by a caregiver.

Ideas of What You Can Say & Do:

- Pray for comfort (ask for requests)
- Say "I'm sorry..."
- Respect their feelings (non-judgmental)
- Be there to listen, listen, listen.
- Good eye contact
- Cry and laugh with them
- Send frequent notes
- Say **"I/We would like to help you with..."**
(be specific, like meals, transportation, lodging of guests, laundry, make calls, house/yard work, errands, time with children)
- Encouraging words about heaven
- Offer choices; do not make decisions for them

What NOT to Say or Do:

- Don't offer reasons "why"
- Don't say "I know how you feel"
- Don't say "It's ok. They're in heaven."
- Don't say "Have faith."
- Don't say "There must be sin somewhere that God is punishing."
- Don't say "God must be getting someone's attention."
- Don't say "Let me know if there's something I/we can do." Remember to say "I/We would like to help with...".
- Don't say "It's time to put this behind you."
- Don't spiritualize everything.
- Don't try to be their counselor. Be there friend!
- Don't tell a similar story unless it may offer hope of healing comfort.
- Don't avoid them, the subject, or the person's name.

Needs of those in Grief

Encouraged to mourn the loss of their loved one. Opportunity to express feelings. If necessary, be told what kind of feelings and experiences they are likely to have during this period and that it is normal. Allowed to talk about the circumstances surrounding the death, including the funeral.

To talk about the deceased's life. May be told that forms of physical ailments or emotional

instability can come normally with grief. It's part of the process, not a state.

Recommend the **grief recovery group** we have at Lake Church: They can call Impact Counseling at 817-457-6728 for dates and time.

Illness at Home/Homebound Care

Sometimes members or their loved ones are dealing with illness due to age or handicap and are limited to their home. When planning to visit in the home please use some of the same protocol and tips listed under Hospital Visits. Members can work together on a shared or rotating schedule when visiting or experiencing care for homebound members.

A few tips and reminders

- Call ahead before making a home visit.
- When a visit is not possible cards, texts, or a brief phone call can be encouraging.
- If you are feeling under the weather or have a cold do not visit, call instead.
- A Connection Group can provide a few meals or offer to mow the lawn or clean the house.
- Always listen when they can talk and pray with them before leaving.
- Spend time with their care giver.

Passages for Pastoral Care

Psalm 119:50	"My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life."	I Thess. 2:7	"But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children."
Proverbs 17:21	"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up bones."	James 5:14	"Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord."
Psalm 6:2	"Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony."	James 5:16	"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."
Psalm 107:20	"He sent forth His word and healed them; He rescued them from the grave."	I Peter 5:7	"Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you"
Matthew 6:34	"So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."	1 John 4:19	"We love, because He first loved us."
Matthew 22:36-40	Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."		

Principles to Help:

- Psalm 139:1-10. Affirms God's love for you and that He pays attention to you. Be still and allow Him to speak into your heart.
- I Cor. 12:14-26. You benefit not only from the help of others but in helping others.
- John 13:1, 4-5. Can you allow Jesus or someone else to wash your feet, give you that service and refreshment?
- Luke 10:38-43. Like Martha, caregivers often wonder, "If I don't then who will?" Think about the permission Jesus gave her to say "no" to over commitment.



GLORIFY GOD. PURSUE PEOPLE.

 **LAKE CHURCH**