

Caring for Others During the Pandemic

Have you noticed the days seem easier when the sun is shining? One church started a project called, "Sunshine for Seniors" where people of all ages created pictures, cards, and took photos. These were collected and mailed or delivered to the older adults in the community.

From a pastor: A phone call or group chat may seem like a poor replacement for an in-person church service, but these forms of outreach can make a huge difference for people feeling lonely or isolated

From a continuing care facility: We have developed a guide for virtual visitation, and our communities have found ways to make dining solo fun (origami anyone?), despite physical distancing. They have experienced meaningful interaction, and joy, even while missing each other.

From a social worker: How can we maintain important exchanges between generations that feed the souls of our young and old without jeopardizing someone's health?

Share Facts Not Fiction - it's a frightening, uncertain time for people of all ages and it's easy to be vulnerable to misinformation.

Share Stories and Pictures - all intergenerational program participants, especially those in art and culture programs, can share pictures of their art or activities and stories from their daily lives through the mail or by text or phone. Check in on Each Other-a simple phone call can go a long way when someone is feeling alone.

Keep a To-Share List - it can be tough to get started again after a cold stop so write down feelings, stories, jokes and other tidbits that can be shared between older and younger people.

From a hospital chaplain: Chaplaincy is different in these times than when many of us did our CPE. We are called to do "virtual" chaplaincy by connecting patients with absent families via I-Pads, phones, whatever we have. Connections are often made over the phone...chaplain to patient, chaplain to family. Accurate and timely communication with families is really important, too. They are waiting to hear anything from anyone and we are often the first phone call they get.

I am available for virtual classes or seminars on topics you feel are most needed by your members or community. Don't forget to go to our Mid-America Older Adults web page: <http://www.mid-america-disciples.org/older-adult-ministries> Scroll down to see the many resource links that are offered.

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