



# Called to Care

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**POCKET HANDBOOK  
FOR CAREGIVERS**



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opportunity for all Christians, not just those who have acquired a certain type of professional expertise. Caregiving is an opportunity to love others because God first loved us.

## 4

As you go forth to be a caregiver in the name of Jesus Christ, remember that the original disciples were sent into the world in a spirit of sincerity and simplicity. Christians need to offer a receptive heart and an openness to let God's Spirit work through them.

Your attitude conveys your faith and hope. Acknowledge that God can actively work through you in any visit or relationship. Have a commitment to honor the life experience of those with whom you make contact. Provide the assurance of God's presence, healing, and peace in the midst of any life situation.

### **PREPARING FOR A VISIT**

In a caregiving visit, Christians offer respect for others by saying, through words and actions, "You are important to me. I put myself at your disposal. I want to understand and serve you."

Bible study and prayer help caregivers prepare for making contact. Reading a psalm or the lectionary text for the day is a way to focus or center yourself for caregiving.



Allow yourself to be filled with a vision of caregiving that takes you beyond yourself. The best servants of Christ are not the most technically skilled, but those who are able to empty themselves, take the form of a servant, and become instruments of Christ's peace. Bible study before ministry helps you take on this spiritual perspective.

You may wish to use a prayer like the following, adapted from that attributed to St. Francis of Assisi:

*O Christ, grant that my mind may be likened unto your mind and my spirit in harmony with your own spirit. Make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me show love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is conflict, bring union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that I may seek not so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are forgiven; and it is in dying to sin that we are born to eternal life. Amen.*

As you prepare for a visit or other contact, also remember some skills you have learned about caregiving.

1. Find out pertinent information about the person to be contacted from the pastor(s) or caregiving program coordinator(s).
2. Read the appropriate carecards.



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3. Call and make an appointment for the visit, if appropriate.
4. Think about the person to be contacted. Consider the kinds of things that person may be thinking or feeling.
5. Listen acceptingly to the person.
6. Use open-ended questions.
7. Be aware of the feelings present.
8. Avoid the temptation to solve someone else's problem.
9. Do not debate or invalidate the feelings of the person.

## **SCRIPTURE**

Remember to:

1. Offer to read scripture during your pastoral visit and respect the response.
2. Use a Bible translation that is comfortable for you and meaningful to the person you are contacting.
3. Choose verses that meet the spiritual needs of the one whom you are contacting.
4. Bear in mind that the purpose of your contact is to offer a blessing to others. Share scripture that offers a healing and renewing possibility.
5. Consider offering a prayer after the scripture reading.



The following biblical texts and themes may be useful in your caregiving ministry:

### ***Psalm 23, The Divine Shepherd***

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;  
he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
my whole life long.



## ***Psalm 23, Addressing God***

Holy One, you are my shepherd,  
I shall not want;  
you make me lie down in green pastures.  
You lead me beside still waters;  
you restore my soul.  
You lead me in paths of righteousness  
for your name's sake.  
Even though I walk through  
the valley of the shadow of death,  
I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil,  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy  
shall follow me all the days of my life;  
and I shall dwell in your house for ever.

—*Book of Worship United Church of Christ*



## ***Assurance of God's Protection***

I lift up my eyes to the hills.  
From where does my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth.

God will not let your foot be moved,  
the One who keeps you will not slumber.  
God who keeps Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper;  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.  
The sun shall not strike you by day,  
nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil;  
God will keep your life.  
The Lord will keep  
your going out and your coming in  
from this time on and forevermore.

*—Psalm 121, adapted*



## ***Thanksgiving for God's Goodness***

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me,  
bless God's holy name!  
Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all God's benefits—  
who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the Pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good as long as you live  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

God does not deal with us  
according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to our iniquities.  
For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is God's steadfast love  
toward those who fear God;  
as far as the east is from the west,  
so far God removes our transgressions from us.  
As a father has compassion for his children,  
so the Lord has compassion  
for those who fear God.  
For God knows how we were made;  
God remembers that we are dust.



As for mortals, their days are like grass;  
they flourish like a flower of the field;  
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,  
and its place knows it no more.  
But the steadfast love of the Lord is  
    from everlasting to everlasting  
on those who fear God,  
and God's righteousness to children's children,  
to those who keep God's covenant  
and remember to do God's commandments.

—*Psalm 103:1-5, 10-18, adapted*



## ***God Is Our Refuge***

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear,  
though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

“Be still and know that I am God!  
I am exalted among the nations,  
I am exalted in the earth.”  
The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

—*Psalm 46:1-3, 10-11*





## ***Suggested Scripture Passages***

**14**

Psalm 19:1-4, 14	Speak of God
Psalm 24	God is the Creator of all
Psalm 84:1-4	The house of God is lovely
Psalm 107:1-9	God's love offers healing
Psalm 146	God can be trusted to heal
Matthew 5:3-11	The Beatitudes
Matthew 6:25-34	Do not worry
Mark 8:1-10	Jesus feeds our hunger
Mark 12:28-31	The great commandment
Luke 8:43-48	Jesus heals a woman
1 Corinthians 13	God's love
2 Corinthians 3:17	The Spirit gives freedom
Philippians 4:4-9	God's peace sustains us
Colossians 3:12-17	Do everything in Jesus' name

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## PRAYERS

The following prayers may be useful in your caregiving ministry.

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us *our trespasses/our debts*,  
As we forgive *those who trespass*  
*against us/our debtors*.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever *and ever*. Amen.



## ***For Healing***

Healing God,  
we know that you care about the well-being  
of every creature.

We trust that your desire is for health  
in body and in mind.

Give to your servant, *name*, the gift of abundant life.

In your mercy, offer to *ber/bim* the gift of health.

In all things, we trust you to work for good;  
through Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.



## ***For Rest***

O God, come to us  
when we are weary with restlessness.  
Help us to be still.  
Make us at peace in heart and mind  
and heal our muscles of their tension.  
Fill us with the well-being  
that comes with the knowledge  
that as we rest in bed,  
we are resting in you and are being supported  
by your desire for health.  
In your peace,  
we would live all the days of life.  
In your house,  
we would surrender to a sweet sleep  
as a guest rests after a weary journey.  
Refresh us with rest, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within us. Amen.



## ***For Relief from Pain***

Eternal God, your days are without end  
and you practice compassion with every creature  
who is weary and heavy-laden.

We cast our pain upon you  
and pray that you will be with us  
to make our burden lighter.

Your servant, *name*, suffers from pain this day,  
O loving God, give *him/her* sweet release.

Give *name* strength to endure  
by making *her/his* mind rest in you.

In this time of struggle,  
give us a sign that you are near  
and that your peace  
will overcome the suffering of the moment.

You are the water of life;  
whoever drinks of you shall not thirst.

Grant that we may drink deeply of your peace  
this day and rest in the coolness of your presence.  
In the name of Christ. Amen.



### ***For One Who Is Seriously Ill***

God, our Eternal Savior,  
you have promised your holy presence  
with us through every time of life.

Bless with your saving grace  
this precious servant.

Grant, O God, the serenity  
that comes from knowing  
that nothing in life or death,  
in the world or in eternity,  
can separate *name* from your love  
and the power of the resurrection  
in Christ Jesus; in whose name we pray.  
Amen.



## ***For One Who Is Depressed***

Christ, who brings new life into the midst of death,  
turn our mourning into dancing.

In our lives it is so easy to become  
discouraged and depressed.

There are times when we believe  
life will never be joyful again.

There are times when we feel defeated  
by the pains and betrayals of life.

Today, we pray for *name*.

Do for *her/him* what *she/he* cannot at the present  
moment do for *herself/himself*.

Give *him/her* the courage and patience to wait  
for your liberating action,  
knowing that every minute will bring  
new strength and that new possibilities  
will come in their season.

Help *name* to know  
that *he/she* is not alone in *his/her* struggle.

Fill *her/bis* mind with memories of friends  
who care for *her/him*

and *her/bis* heart with a knowledge  
that you are with *her/him* and

surround *her/him* with love and acceptance.

Give now the peace

that passes all understanding

and the courage not to give up;

through Jesus Christ, who endured the cross,

we pray. Amen.



## ***For Those Who Wish to Confess***

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry,  
too real to hide, and too deep to undo.  
Forgive what our lips tremble to name,  
what our hearts can no longer bear,  
and what has become for us  
a consuming fire of judgment.  
Set us free from a past that we cannot change;  
open to us a future  
in which we can be changed;  
and grant us grace to grow more and more  
in your likeness and image;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

*—Book of Worship United Church of Christ*



*For your own notes and prayers*



*For your own notes and prayers*



*For your own notes and prayers*

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