

Spiritual Care Groups

at Community Presbyterian Church



Spiritual Care Groups provide spiritual support for those dealing with the challenges of life. By offering a loving, supportive and confidential meeting place, held regularly and sponsored by our faith community, those facing challenges – and/or their family members and friends – can share and hear how faith and reliance on God can be helpful when coping.

Why offer Spiritual Care Groups?

1. **Life is filled with challenges:** job loss, divorce, death of loved ones, physical changes, and many other transitions that can affect our mental wellness and spiritual needs. In addition to these kinds of trials are other mental health issues.

One out of every four people in every faith community is affected by a mental health disorder. This percentage is based on research by the National Institute on Mental Health (NIMH.). This means 25% of our congregation is affected directly, in addition to family and friends who may need help coping with their loved one's concerns. Mental health is a broad category that may involve:

- Children's Mental Health, such as developmental delays, autism, emotional struggles, and other behavioral issues
- Senior adults and their families coping with memory loss and failing minds
- Anxiety and trauma
- Substance use and abuse
- Serious mental illness, such as depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia

2. **Being a faith community automatically means being a compassionate presence** and offering a spiritual support group is an outgrowth of this: a safe place where people can meet and share how their spiritual life and faith can help with their struggles.
3. **Spiritual support groups affirm that each person does not have to be alone on his or her journey.** Speaking about our life experiences in a safe, non-judgmental place can be a liberating and welcome break in the silence that often surrounds mental health issues and life transitions. Hearing each other's stories allows isolation to dissipate, burdens to be lifted, and community to be created.
4. **Sharing the strategies and disciplines that have helped one person may help others in the group.** In a sharing environment, participants learn that writing in a journal, praying and reading devotional material, going to groups for support, exercising, deep breathing practices, and paying attention to good nutrition, among other strategies, can make a substantial difference.
5. **Some who live with mental health issues, substance abuse, divorce, etc. have had a negative experience with a faith community.** Not everyone in the faith community understands or empathizes with certain issues, causing some to feel avoided or shunned by fellow congregants. Sharing these negative experiences with a community who can empathize can help restore faith.

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Cancer Support Group – For those currently or previously dealing with a cancer diagnosis and/or family members and loved ones.

Grief Support Group – For those who have recently experienced the death of a loved one or another loss that you are grieving.

CAREgiving Support Group – For those who are currently or have previously cared for a loved one, nearby or from afar, dealing with the challenges associated with advancing age and care.

Parent Support Group – For parents or guardians of children and youth with special needs, developmental delays, substance use issues, or any other issues of childhood and teenage years.

Moving-On Support Group – For those are experiencing a transition in life, such as a divorce, death of a loved one, job loss or change, physical change, or other life transition – and/or for family members and loved ones dealing with the changes.

Mental Health Support Group – For those experiencing a mental health concern (depression, anxiety, PTSD, substance use, bipolar disorder...) and/or family members and loved ones who may have concerns.