

June 30, 2022

**Food, Rides, Visits, and \$ – plus Cards
#3 in the Series, “How We Care”**

Congregational Care Committee
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“Tis more blessed to give than to receive. And a hell of a lot easier.”
Rev. David Wayland, pastoral counselor & Episcopal priest

Our culture is steeped in self-reliance. For many of us, it can be so hard to let others know when we suffer, let alone ask for help. But whether you're ill, depressed, lonely, panicky about bills, escaping a bad situation, in transition, or facing any other challenge, we encourage you talk to us. Don't think your need is too little – or too big. As a community, we have resources beyond any that we each have alone.

Whatever the situation, RUC has “thoughts and prayers” covered. Also, we aim to help as we can; while respecting your autonomy; working with your family when they're nearby (and if that's helpful); and sharing our resources fairly across the congregation. Often people ask for help in the categories below. This doesn't cover all of what you may need, nor does it include all the kinds of help we've provided in the past. Again, please talk to us.

Too sick to cook? Too sad to get out of bed?

If you'd like one meal or a dozen, we can oblige. Sign Up Genius lets us organize volunteers to make or buy meals and get them to you. Usually, we offer at least one generous entree per day, for up to two weeks. That's renewable, if needed. Special diets are accommodated, if possible. Other options: we'll shop and add ready-to-eat items to your pantry or tuck fix-in's in your fridge.

Stuck at home – or somewhere else? Want to see a friendly face?

Our volunteers also provide one-time rides: to church, to doctors, to physical therapy, to hospitals, etc. Less often, we give rides for recurring appointments. Ask – and we'll negotiate. Covid upended pastoral visits, except those by Rev. Jennifer and her famous travelling lawn chair. Now we can do more. Committee members, as well as Revs. Scott and Jennifer, are visiting some hospitals and homes. Like to see us? Please ask.

Running short? Daunting decisions ahead?

Our pastors are used to hearing money woes. Don't hesitate to reach out if you're worried about basic needs – like food, housing, and utilities – or other financial concerns. As part of our ministry, RUC's budget lets us make small, confidential grants. Also, we set aside money specifically for a consultant to advise seniors making life-care decisions. Our pastors can make referrals for that -- or for other assistance and professional services. We do this with care for your offerings and pledges. For example, we require at least two approvals from among our two pastors and the Elder for Congregational Care to offer financial help.

If you'd like more: people "in-care"

Sometimes you might need a little more. With your permission, we'll add you to our short, rotating list of people "in-care." Each is assigned a pastor and a Committee representative who keep in touch more often. We review the in-care list regularly and will ask your permission when you may not need this level of support. You are always welcome to self-refer yourself to one of our pastors or the Committee for more care.

Cards – hundreds of cards.

We send an array of cards from RUC: for sympathy, illnesses, "thinking of you", on the first anniversary of a death, etc. The cards we send are multiplied by ones sent from others in the congregation. (Just like our Committee is multiplied by those who help out in so many ways.) For two years, we've mailed you Valentines, picturing an elephant dreaming in hearts. For those who worried but didn't ask: that was the RUC elephant, not the RNC elephant. She's remembering us all with love and – maybe – on her way to help erect our tents. Someone noted recently, though, that she'd seen no elephant tracks on our lawn....