

RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVER SUNDAY

November 14, 2010

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



“Honor Your Gifts”

“Do not neglect the gift that is in you...”

1 Timothy 4: 14



CONTENTS



- **What Does Family Caregiving Mean?**
- **A Suggested Liturgy for Caregivers Sunday 2010**
- **Eagles In A Storm — sermon illustration**
- **Ideas for Honoring the Gifts of Family Caregivers**
- **Beatitudes for Caregivers**
- **Pastoral Care: Identifying At-Risk Caregivers**
- **Contacts For More Information**

WHAT DOES FAMILY CAREGIVING MEAN?



Family caregiving is the bedrock upon which this country's healthcare system depends. The services provided by family caregivers represent 80 percent of all home care services and are conservatively valued at \$257 billion a year, more than twice the amount spent on paid home care and nursing home services combined.

Family caregivers provide a vast array of emotional, financial, nursing, social, homemaking, and other services on a daily or intermittent basis.

The National Family Caregivers Association has developed this "Caregiving Is" list to give you an idea of just how varied and complex family caregiving can be.

1. Caregiving itself is a multidimensional puzzle. For some it means providing 24-hour care for someone who can't dress, feed, go to the bathroom, or think for himself or herself. For others caregiving is an emotional roller coaster because a diagnosed condition has not exhibited debilitating symptoms—yet.
2. Caregiving can go on for a few years or for a lifetime. It means re-evaluating finances, re-evaluating job opportunities, and making compromises.
3. Caregiving is learning how to work with doctors and other health care professionals so they treat you as an important member of your loved one's healthcare team.
4. Caregiving is worrying about what's wrong with Dad. Why is he not remembering things anymore? Why is he acting so strangely? And then when you hear the diagnosis, your immediate reaction is you wish you had never asked.
5. Caregiving includes learning about wheelchairs, lifts, and little gadgets that help you button a shirt.
6. Caregiving is wondering why no one ever asks how you are.
7. Caregiving is dreaming about being alone in your own house.
8. Caregiving involves learning about Medicare, Medicaid, social security, and other public programs.
9. Caregiving is learning what it means to die with dignity and making sure that your loved one's wishes will be honored.
10. Caregiving is the joy you feel when your child with mental retardation or a developmental disability learns a new skill.
11. Caregiving is the joy you feel when your spouse says he/she felt good today.
12. Caregiving is hard work. Caregiving is pain. Caregiving is loving and giving and sharing. Caregiving is accepting and learning new things and going on, and on, and on. Caregiving is lots of questions and very few answers. Caregiving is being out of the mainstream.

Caregiving is all these things and a whole lot more.

Originally published by the [National Family Caregivers Association \(NFCA\)](#). Reprinted with permission.

National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA) educates, supports, and speaks up for the more than 65 million Americans who care for loved ones with a chronic illness, disability or frailty. NFCA reaches across the boundaries of diagnoses, relationships and life stages to address the common needs and concerns of all family caregivers.

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A SUGGESTED LITURGY FOR CAREGIVERS SUNDAY November 14, 2010

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

“Honor Your Gifts”

“Do not neglect the gift that is in you...”
1 Timothy 4: 14

WORDS TO PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

The God who offers care to others—through Jesus Christ, through the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and through loving men, women, and children—now hears the prayers of others who offer care. God offers unconditional love to those who need care themselves. Let us give thanks for those who love and support us in our daily walks.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The one who cared about you before you were born, the one who loved you in your mother’s womb, and the one who persistently has never let you go is present with us now. Let us worship God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

SUGGESTED HYMN 487 Presbyterian Hymnal (PH), “When Morning Guilds the Skies”

CALL TO PRAYER

In our brokenness there are things that we want to say to God. Our world is in a state of brokenness that we want to acknowledge. Let us turn to God in prayer.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God who knows us best and from whom we cannot hide our inmost thoughts; your love for us is never ending and we thank you for the mercy and grace you extend to all of us. We acknowledge that there are times dear Lord, that we feel the heavy burden of caregiving and actually resent the loved one we care for. We complain of fatigue, weariness and often we feel harried. We confess that we turn away from you in our despair and often lament that you do not hear us on the days when we feel most broken. Lead us back to you once again in our brokenness and our vulnerability. Help us to remember that we are special gifts to our dependent loved ones and most especially, to you. You gather us up and love us in spite of our fears and inadequacies. We are grateful for all that you give us. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

It is through God's grace that we have the opportunity for wholeness. It is through God's love for us that we discover our strengths and gifts. God's love is everlasting. Know that your sins are forgiven and that as God extends peace of mind, body, spirit to you, you may in turn, offer it to others.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE 172 PH Verse 1 only
"My Shepherd Will Supply My Need"

(OPTIONAL PASSING OF THE PEACE)

SCRIPTURES: OPEN TO SELECTION BY MINISTERS

HYMN 189 PH "As Deer Long for the Streams"

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH Psalm 46: 1-3, 14

"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."
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION AND THANKSGIVING

God of the wounded: we know that there are many broken people among us who weigh heavily on our minds. Some have been hurt by insensitive remarks, others by emptiness in their souls. We pray for people who have been physically hurt in car accidents, in military service, and still others, in workplace accidents. Some have limited sight or no sight at all. Some hear well, while others have hearing that is rapidly failing. Some have arms or legs that no longer work adequately for them. Some have minds that do not work well or may have no memory left at all. Some people struggle daily with addiction or mental illness.

Today we pray for all wounded people. We pray that through interventions from prayers to exercise, from changes in diet to proper prescriptions, from surgery to tincture of time that you give us wisdom to know how to move towards wholeness and healing.

We also pray for those who offer care to the wounded and broken. We pray for the staff of care facilities—from doctors, nurses, and technicians to the people who deliver meals and clean the floors. We pray for the gift of patience for new parents who soothe a colicky baby, and the gift of peace for a frightened mother who sits with her child in an emergency room. We pray for perseverance for a father as he searches for his child who has schizophrenia and

has run away from home. We pray for the gift of grace for adult children who have become their parents' companions as they help them deal with declining health. We pray for the gift of serenity for spouses, parents and friends who support and encourage sobriety by making difficult decisions each day to keep from enabling a loved one's drug or alcohol dependency.

Open our eyes to all the caregivers around us and help us acknowledge the gifts they offer their loved ones through their care. Help us to remember that caregiving is not always a simple task but one that requires time, energy, attention and sensitivity. Remind us that those offering the gift of care need to be cared for as well. Sometimes a listening ear and prayer is what is needed most. Lead us to seek out those who offer care quietly and without complaint, but who are surely weary. We thank you for your son Jesus who healed and we give thanks for the gift of your Spirit who comforts and counsels. May you dance over us on our best days, and cry with us on our worst ones. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN 540 PH God Be with You Till We Meet Again

(Some prefer this tune, RANDOLPH, but others may prefer the tune from the 1955 Presbyterian Hymnbook, GOD BE WITH YOU.)

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

And now, go from this place of worship with grateful hearts, looking for ways to share the gift of care and the love of Christ. As you go may Creator God sustain and comfort you now and in the days ahead. Amen.

Other Hymns: (PH) The Presbyterian Hymnal

476 O Worship the King - verses 1-4
476 verse 5: use as response
366 Jesus Thou Boundless Love to Me
404 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
540 God Be with You Till We Meet Again

OTHER HYMNS MAY BE FOUND IN:

- SING THE FAITH, Geneva Press, 2003.
- THE PRESBYTERIAN HYMNAL: COMPLETE CONCORDANCE AND INDEXES—By Judith L. Muck, Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

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Resources for Caregiver Sunday 2010

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Eagles in a Storm

Did you know that an eagle knows when a storm is approaching long before it breaks? The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm hits, the eagle sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm. While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above it. The eagle does not escape the storm. It simply uses the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm.

When the storms of life come upon us – and all of us will experience them – we can rise above them by setting our minds and our belief toward God. The storms do not have to overcome us. We can allow God's power to lift us above them. God enables us to ride the winds of the storm that bring sickness, tragedy, failure, and disappointment in our lives. We can soar above the storm. Remember, it is not the burdens of life that weigh us down, it is how we handle them. The Bible says, "Those who hope in the Ever Present God will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles." (Isaiah 40:31)

Author Unknown

As seen on:

<http://huc.edu/kalsman/articles/Service%20Honoring%20Caregivers%20by%20Rabbi%20Paul%20Kipnes.pdf>

Ideas for Honoring the Gifts of Family Caregivers



- Include a brief **moment of recognition** in a worship service during November to thank family caregivers for their service to their loved ones. Give each caregiver a flower or other small gift to honor them and to let them know they are loved.
- Hold a **reception/coffee break after worship services** one Sunday during November to simply say, "Thank you!" to the family caregivers in your congregation.
- Create a **Care Basket** for the family caregivers in your congregation containing items a caregiver might want or need and appreciate. The Care Basket communicates that the person offering care is remembered, is cared about and has permission to take a bit of time for herself/himself. Often caregivers do not have many opportunities to "pamper" themselves, or may even feel guilty if they focus even briefly on their own needs. A Care Basket assembled and delivered by members from the congregation would be a wonderful reminder that they are remembered and loved. This small act of kindness could make a crucial difference in a caregiver's life. Ideas for the basket are unlimited. To get you started, here are some items you might want to include:
 - Special mug
 - Favorite tea or coffee
 - Small candle with a note saying, "You hold the Christ-light for (insert name of the person being cared for.)"
 - Packet of handmade cards
 - Stamps
 - Nice writing pen
 - Small, healthy snack packets
 - Fruit
 - Devotional book for caregivers
 - Pocket cross or angel
 - Lifesavers with note saying, "You are a lifesaver!"
- Establish a **family caregiver buddy system**. Introduce caregivers in the congregation to one another. Provide them with the opportunity to support and learn from each other by putting together a caregiver phone or email list or online discussion forum. Provide a trained leader or a pastoral counselor to resource the caregivers.
- Sponsor a **health equipment "closet"** — a healthcare equipment loan program. Home care equipment can be expensive and is not always covered by insurance. Some members may have canes, walkers, wheelchairs or other equipment they no longer need and will be happy to lend or donate to others. Publish a list of available equipment and who to contact in order to get it.

- Honor your family caregivers with an event that recognizes their contributions and provides them with the opportunity to have some fun — a **special dinner, an outing**, etc. and be sure to include **respite care** as part of the event for those who need it.
- Invite a church school class or other small group in the congregation to send family caregivers **monthly notes or cards of encouragement**.

Beatitudes for Caregivers



**Blessed are those who care and who are not afraid to show it —
they will let people know they are loved.**

**Blessed are those who are gentle and patient —
they will help people to grow as the sun helps the buds
to open and blossom.**

**Blessed are those who have the ability to listen —
they will lighten many a burden.**

**Blessed are those who know how and when to let go —
they will have the joy of seeing people find themselves.**

**Blessed are those who, when nothing can be done or said,
do not walk away,
but remain to provide a comforting and supportive presence —
they will help the sufferer to bear the unbearable.**

**Blessed are those who recognize their own need to receive,
and who receive with graciousness —
they will be able to give all the better.**

**Blessed are those who give without hope of return —
they will give people an experience of God.**

Author unknown

as seen on www.marciabilyk.com/2008/12/beatitudes-for-caregivers.html

Pastoral Care:

Identifying At-Risk Caregivers in Your Congregation



Pastors and Parish Nurses, a caregiver at-risk for burnout may come to your office, catch you after Sunday service, or give you a call. Here are some signs of caregiver stress that are good to know, from: www.womenshealth.gov.

“How can I tell if caregiving is putting too much stress on me?”

Caregiving may be putting too much stress on you if you have any of the following symptoms:

- feeling overwhelmed
- sleeping too much or too little
- gaining or losing a lot of weight
- feeling tired most of the time
- loss of interest in activities you used to enjoy
- becoming easily irritated or angered
- feeling constantly worried
- often feeling sad
- frequent headaches, bodily pain, or other physical problems
- abuse of alcohol or drugs, including prescription drugs

Talk to a counselor, psychologist, or other mental health professional right away if your stress leads you to physically or emotionally harm the person you are caring for.”

For more information on caregiving: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/faq/caregiver-stress.cfm?from=newsletter11#e>

**For More Information about Ministries with Caregivers and Their Loved Ones
Feel Free to Contact the Presbyterian Health Network (PHN)**

www.pcusa.org/phn

“Sowing Seeds of Wellness in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”



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