

Pastoral Care

"Pastoral Care Principles and Practice: Episcopal Church of the Holy Communion" was adopted by the Vestry in 2017. This document discusses the theological basis for pastoral care, its historical evolution and the many ways it might be engaged by the Holy Communion laity and clergy. Subsequently, these principles have been used to structure and guide the care of the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of our members, as well as the larger community.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic has required significant changes in the pastoral care of our parishioners. Nevertheless, the faithful commitment of lay volunteers, as well as clergy, and the creative use of technology have enabled a robust response to those in need of care.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers

For the past five years, trained Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) have been sent bi-monthly from the 10:30 AM Sunday worship service to deliver communion to those who are homebound or in nursing homes or hospitals. This past year, however, weekly telephone contacts by the LEMs were substituted for in-person visits. Although the ability to share the Eucharist was precluded, the opportunities for conversation and prayer were treasured. Importantly, these visits complement (but do not substitute for) the regular calls from the clergy. If you are interested in serving in this vital ministry, please contact The Rev. Marc Smith at msmith@holycommunion.net.

Flower Ministry

Typically, each Sunday that flowers adorn the altar, vases are prepared from them and delivered to two people on the pastoral care list – those who are homebound, recently bereaved or experiencing significant stress. Flowers also are used to mark notable birthdays and life events. At Christmas and Easter, flowers are sent to all who are homebound or grieving the death of a loved one. The absence of in-person worship precluded this ministry. However, poinsettias were delivered during the week following Christmas.

Meal Ministry

Members of Holy Communion are available on a limited basis to cook meals for those who are sick or homebound. We have been able to maintain this ministry on a limited basis during the pandemic. To request meals or volunteer to assist in their preparation or delivery, please contact Cheyanne Lovellette at office@holycommunion.net.

Clergy Pastoral Care

Central to the ministry of Holy Communion is the clergy's oversight of and personal involvement in pastoral care, including member visits and communion, short-term counseling and community engagement. Although in-person activities have been limited (except under extraordinary circumstances), the clergy have made use of various electronic platforms, "walk 'n talks" and selected opportunities for parishioners to visit the church sanctuary, listen to the new organ and receive communion. One clergy person is always "on call" and available to respond to emergencies by contacting the parish office.

Submitted by The Rev. Marc Smith
Priest Associate