

Congregational Care Ministers

The ministry of Congregational Care is designed to connect the church with people during their difficult times and through challenging life circumstances. Congregational Care Ministers (CCMs) are called by God and equipped by the church to care for people, working alongside the pastors, and to meet the care needs of our church family. Congregational Care Ministers will meet regularly as a team with a Pastor for supervision and assignments. Assignments include but are not limited to hospital calls, calling on persons in need of contact or prayer follow up, meeting one-on-one with persons needing a listening ear for prayer and encouragement, nursing home visits, offering support to grieving families, and proactively seeking to encourage and care for persons within the congregation and community. This partnership between lay and clergy will help us provide an additional level of care for our church family.

If you are interested in becoming a Congregational Care Minister, please complete and return this application to the church office or e-mail application to: joy@arborlawnumc.org. The training requirements and additional studies are detailed on this application, please read it thoroughly. **Applications are due Wednesday, January 15, 2020.** Interviews for new CCMs will take place with the pastors and a few existing CCMs in January and February 2020.

REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION

1. **Biblical and theological requirements:**

Because Congregational Care Ministers will be partnering with pastors to offer some of the care previously done only by our pastors, it is important to have a basic United Methodist theological, and a basic Biblical understanding. Congregational Care Ministers must be actively growing in their discipleship by participating in a Bible study, Sunday school, or small group.

2. **Required Training:**

All Congregational Care Ministers will be required to complete the ***Congregational Care Ministers Training Course***. This course covers information on Sacred Spaces, Methodism, Hospital Visits, Boundaries, Counseling, Prayer, and other ministries. The required training will be **9:00 AM -5:00 PM on Saturday, February 29, 2020**. All materials, books, and meals are provided.

3. **Other Requirements:**

Congregational Care Ministers must have been active members of the Arborlawn United Methodist Church for at least three years. They must be fulfilling their membership vows to the church through their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Congregational Care Ministers will be required to be certified through *Ministry Safe*.

Congregational Care Ministers will be required to attend monthly meetings and participate in new learning opportunities; they will also need to complete weekly follow up documentation for each point of contact.

Congregational Care Ministers will be required to agree to and sign a leader covenant (see attached). As leaders, we set the tone and pace for the entire congregation. We shape the heart, character and life of this Christian community. For this reason, it is vital that we walk the Christian walk. Spiritually healthy leaders will produce a spiritually healthy church. With this in mind, the following covenant was developed to guide our life together as leaders. We use these standards to hold ourselves accountable to pursuing the Christian life. And in so doing, we recognize that it is God's grace which calls forth our faithful response and it is God's grace which brings such transformation in our lives. Congregational Care Ministers will be expected to commit at least **three hours** per week to this ministry.

Please contact Rev. Joy Dister-Dominguez with any questions regarding this ministry at joy@arborlawnumc.org.



Applicant Contact and Membership Information:

Date: _____

Name _____ Birthday, Day/Month _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone, Home _____ Cell _____

Date of Membership* _____ Date of *Ministry Safe** *Dates to be confirmed with church database

Areas of Involvement at Arborlawn United Methodist Church:

PRESENT INVOLVEMENTS:

PAST INVOLVEMENTS:

Areas of involvement in a previous church, profession, or volunteer capacity:

PREVIOUS CHURCH:

PROFESSION:

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER:

Please respond to the following:

1. Why do you want to become a Congregational Care Minister?

2. What does it mean to be a devoted follower of Jesus Christ?

3. In what ways are you bearing the fruit of Relationship, Connection, Loving, Giving, and Multiplication?

4. Explain your understanding of grace.

5. Write a one-page spiritual (or faith) autobiography:

Our lay leaders, along with our staff, fulfill the biblical roles of elders and deacons, shepherds and teachers. Throughout the New Testament, leaders are called to be examples to the rest of the church. As leaders, they are held to higher standards than other members. Paul sets forth lists of attributes of elders and deacons in his letters to the early church. Leaders should be “above reproach” and “not be puffed up with conceit” among other things. Peter, likewise, challenges leaders to be “examples to the flock” and to exercise leadership with a willing heart. Because leaders are held to a higher standard, James says, “not many of you should become teachers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.”

As leaders, we set the tone and pace for the entire congregation. We model the Christian faith, the Christian life, and the attitude and heart of a Christian for our congregation. We shape the heart, character and life of this Christian community. For this reason, it is vital that we walk the Christian walk. Spiritually healthy leaders will produce a spiritually healthy church. Likewise, leaders who fail to walk with Christ will have devastating consequences.

With this in mind, the following covenant was developed to guide our life together as leaders. We use these standards to hold ourselves accountable to pursuing the Christian life. And in so doing, we recognize that it is God’s grace which calls forth our faithful response, and it is God’s grace which brings such transformation in our lives.

I. THE GOAL OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: SANCTIFICATION

Jesus summarized the goal of the Christian life with two commandments: love the Lord our God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and love your neighbor as yourselves. John Wesley spoke of this goal as sanctification, Christian perfection, or holiness. In our Methodist tradition, three **General Rules** were designed to help Christians pursue this goal. As leaders we pursue these “rules” as we grow in faith and service together.

A. Avoid those things which are inconsistent with the life of faith, separate us from God, and bring harm to others, such as:

1. Self-destructive behavior (addictive behavior, poor self-care)
2. Moral compromise (sexual misconduct, greed, dishonesty)
3. Self-centeredness and pride
4. Malice (harboring resentment, acting in anger, backbiting)
5. Wasting of resources (the church’s, or personal resources of time, talent, finance)

B. Do good of every possible sort, such as:

1. Live a life of love
2. Share our faith inside and outside of Resurrection
3. Care for our families
4. Build others up
5. Be engaged with those in need, both inside the church and out

C. Pursue growth in our spiritual lives, such as:

1. Attend worship each weekend, except when sick or out of town
2. Engage in close Christian friendships for spiritual growth and accountability in a small group
3. Serve God with our time and talents
4. Give in proportion to our income, with the tithe being the goal
5. Spend time in prayer and the personal study of scripture

II. THE HEART AND ATTITUDE OF A LEADER AT ARBORLAWN

A. What is the heart and attitude of a Resurrection leader?

1. Humble (servanthood)
2. Positive
3. Joyful
4. Committed to Christ
5. Devoted to the purpose and vision of the Arborlawn

B. How will Resurrection leaders live toward one another?

1. Demonstrating respect and grace
2. Accepting differences
3. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality
4. Publicly supporting other volunteer leaders, pastors and staff members
5. Going directly to the individual whenever a problem arises

III. THE FAITH AND CHARACTER OF A UNITED METHODIST

Arborlawn is a United Methodist Church. We expect our leaders to honor our denominational heritage and to pursue ministry in keeping with our tradition.

United Methodists are people who seek to love and serve God with our head, our heart and our hands. They are orthodox in faith, liberal in spirit, passionate and deeply devoted to Christ, and desire to be wholly surrendered to God. They bring together both the evangelical and social gospel – inviting people to a life-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ, and then equipping and challenging them to live their faith in the public sphere, being engaged in the issues of our time and seeking to shape a world that looks more like the Kingdom of God. Methodists have been known as “reasonable enthusiasts” – valuing both a personal, passionate faith and one that is intellectually informed. Methodists are constantly looking to connect our faith to the world in meaningful, relevant ways. Methodists value spiritual disciplines and a “methodical” approach to growing in the faith. They strive for both personal holiness and social holiness.

United Methodists are not afraid to ask difficult questions, to take on tough subjects, and to admit that they do not always understand the answers. They are “people of the Book” - holding the Bible to be the inspired Word from God and encouraging people to read, study and live by its words. “While we acknowledge the primacy of Scripture in theological reflection, our attempts to grasp its meaning always involve experience, tradition and reason. Like Scripture, these become creative vehicles of the Holy Spirit as they function within the church.”¹ Methodists also believe the Bible came to us through people who heard God’s Word in the light of their own cultural and historical circumstances. And hence, they study the scriptures carefully, making use of scholarship and asking critical questions. And, as Methodists encounter theological differences amongst Christians, they bear in mind John Wesley’s approach, “in essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”²

Methodists are people who love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and love their neighbors. They pursue acts of piety toward God and acts of mercy toward others. They value passionate worship, relevant preaching, and small groups to hold Christians accountable to one another. They recognize the need to address the social issues of our time, and the need to be a people whose faith is firmly rooted in and built upon the scriptures. Methodists value the full participation of women and men, people of all races, classes and backgrounds in all facets of fellowship and leadership within the church and society.

This is our heritage, and it continues to shape Arborlawn in every area of our ministry.

COVENANT:

I have read the above and am committed to living my life and pursuing ministry in a way that is consistent with these expectations, and desire to do so at Arborlawn United Methodist Church as a Congregational Care Minister.

Name _____ Date _____

¹ 2012 *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, ¶ 105.

² ¶ 103.