



Question:
Why would a Rector want a Health Ministry?

Answers!

“Our parish nurse taught me how to take the ministry of pastoral care to the next level, by providing care from the moment we receive notice of an illness until the person is back in the pew.”

The Rev. Robin Myers, Sr. Associate Rector, St. Paul’s, Indianapolis, IN

“Parish nurses can get in to see people when clergy can’t. The elderly people in the congregation feel that if the rector comes to their home, they need to be dressed up, and offer tea or sherry. They know nurses have seen them in those ridiculous hospital gowns!...Simply, we’ve saved lives in our blood pressure clinic. No kidding! They went from the church to the E.R... Health ministry has become the locus of a whole group of lay ministers who build a pastoral team.... Also, she can talk about sex in any way and no one takes offense. If I do, they all run for the exits!”

The Rev. Dr. Howard Anderson, when Rector of St. Paul’s, Duluth, MN

“Before E. A. took on the role of Parish Nurse, I was the only person aware of the bigger picture regarding health needs. I was recently informed by my doctor that I needed to stay off my feet for the next ten days. Meanwhile, one church member has returned to the Intensive Care Unit. Another has cancer and is recovering from surgery.... There are many who are home-bound. Without the Parish Health Ministry program, I would be on my own right now to make sure that each of them was being attended. It is such a relief, to be on vacation or whatever, and know that people are still being seen. Thank God for our Health Ministry, and Parish Nurse. I’m not the only one paying attention!”

The Rev. Eric Duff, St. Alban’s Episcopal, Arcata, CA

“Health ministry allows the church to offer a unique service. People can have their health questions answered confidentially and with a real personal interest. When I make a call on parishioners, and they often have questions – maybe about getting home care, or maybe about their medicines. I can say, ‘I’ll have J.W., the parish nurse, give you a call.’” She has such a broad knowledge of the health care system.”

The Rev. James M. Sigler, Rector, Emanuel Episcopal Church, Grass Valley, CA

"Having worked with a Health Ministry, if I become a rector, the first person I will hire is a parish nurse. I don't see how really good pastoral care can happen without one!"

The Rev. Kathy Thomas, after 1 year as Associate Rector, St. Paul's, Indianapolis, IN

Since calling a parish nurse to join the staff, the gifts and ministries that have sprung forth through the synergy of clergy, our parish nurse and our lay pastoral care team have significantly deepened the whole range of pastoral ministry in our parish. Everyone benefits, young and old alike, those who are well and want to continue to be so, and those struggling with short-term or long-term illness. Perhaps the most crucial population that has benefited in deep ways has been those who are care-givers, and whose significant needs and challenges are often overlooked or forgotten in pastoral ministries. They too have been provided the needed wisdom, fellowship and support to sustain the loving care they provide day in and day out.

The Rev. John Price, Rector, St. Anne's Parish, Annapolis, MD

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