And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works. Hebrews 10:24

**CARE CONNECTORS** is a UUCC ministry where members serve one another during times of need. The emphasis is to serve those experiencing transitions or crisis situations and receive short-term assistance through one or several of the ministries described below.* A few examples, but certainly not all, include job loss or transition, divorce or separation, serious illness, caregiving, personal issues, overwhelming life change. The ministry is offered in addition to the pastoral care already provided by our staff.

**How does one receive care?**

Care may be initiated in several ways. The person experiencing the difficulty may contact the designated Care Connectors Referral Coordinator, pastor, program staff or the office. One of several professionally trained volunteers serving as Referral Coordinators will talk further with the individual to learn about the situation and perceived needs. Options available within the Care Connectors appropriate for the person will be offered, as well as referrals to any other community services. The Referral Coordinator will help make the initial connections so that care begins as quickly as possible.

A congregation member, peer, or friend may also share a concern with a Referral Coordinator, who will then reach out to the individual out of concern and offer services. This would occur only by sharing the name of the referring person, not anonymously, and the individual in crisis may refuse this conversation, but any outreach will be done in love and concern.

**What kind of care is provided?**

![Care Connectors Diagram](Image)
Meals – A meals coordinator will inquire about any dietary needs and will then reach out to others serving as volunteer meal preparers and provide meals on a short-term basis. Examples: for a few days following a serious accident within a family or following an unexpected death within a family with no immediate family in the area.

Transportation – A transportation coordinator will coordinate rides from a pool of volunteers who are willing to drive members to appointments on a short-term basis. Drivers will have their driver’s license and auto insurance on file at the church.

* The Listening Room – Several trained volunteers are available to listen to individuals, using skills of deep listening without judgment or any intention of problem-solving. * One need not be in a crisis or life-transitional situation to choose to talk with a listener. Individuals may meet with a listener for up to 3 sessions, and then a community referral may be made, if desired. The Listening Room has been set up in Fellowship Hall and appointments are scheduled through the Listening Room Coordinator at listening.room@urbucc.org

Crisis Support – The Referral Coordinator may determine that the individual desiring care has needs that match a UUCC volunteer who is experienced with that issue, such that the volunteer can serve as a resource person. Examples: A person dealing with a loved one’s diagnosis of Alzheimer’s may be overwhelmed by many fears and feelings about this disease might be offered a volunteer resource person who has personal or professional Alzheimer’s experiences. The same may be true for other areas, such as job loss, identity struggles, handling children’s needs during a divorce, etc.

Bereavement Support – Volunteers will reach out by phone, email, a written note or in person to other members at a couple key intervals over the course of the first year following the loss of a loved one, extending support and connection.

New Babies and Parents Support – A coordinator will ensure that new parents/babies are welcomed and supported following birth, adoption, or foster care placement with help of volunteers. Parenting concerns will also be supported by volunteers.

* Caregivers to the Homebound – This Caregivers team has been active for many years, serving members needing an ongoing monthly contact due to declining health and inability to regularly attend church. Referrals are matched with volunteers by the coordinator, and cards are regularly sent to those being served. Caregiver volunteers meet monthly.

* Prayer Circle – All callers will be offered inclusion in the Prayer Circle but will be added to this circle by the Referral Coordinator only if they so choose.

Prayer Shawls – The Referral Coordinator will contact the Prayer Shawl coordinator to offer prayer shawls to members in need, including giving a shawl without any explanation as to why, should the caller not want their situation divulged.

Other Care Needs Yet to Be Defined – There are blank areas on our graphic, just as “God hath yet more light and truth to break forth from God’s Holy Word,” (John Robinson), we are open to responding to new needs within our congregation as they arise.

*Indicates a care component that serves people facing ongoing or longer-term challenges.

CARE CONNECTORS VOLUNTEER FORM care.connectors@urbucc.org
How do I volunteer?

We hope you will consider becoming involved with one or more components of the Care Connectors. List your skills and any knowledge base that might be helpful to others in crisis. All volunteers will be asked to attend an orientation, and some tasks may involve safety training, etc. Volunteers for Caregivers to Homebound, Prayer Circle or Prayer Shawls are not required to attend, although are welcome. Expect that this work ebbs and flows, according to the lives we all face. Volunteers may have no assignments for what seems like a long time, and then have several opportunities in one month. Having volunteers willing to be flexible is important. When considering volunteering, understand that it would be helpful to have an initial commitment for a year and allow you to re-commit or back out if life circumstances change.

NAME ________________________________   Phone __________________

Email Address _________________________________________________________

I would like to volunteer in the following area(s):

___ Meal Preparation

___ Transportation

___ Bereavement Support

___ New Babies and Parents Supports

___ Crisis Support. Please list the area(s) where you have knowledge/experience that might be helpful to another.

_____________________________________________________________________

___ Caregivers to the Homebound (Contact Rachel Siegel with questions)

___ Prayer Circle

___ Prayer Shawl

For questions, you may contact one of the Care Connector Planning Group members: Elaine Lundstrom, Maryellen Knowles, Jennifer Gardner, or Teressa Clark. Or email using the address appearing below. Or check here: Please call me ____

Please return this form to the Box on the Narthex Table, or hand to one of the Planning Group members listed above, or email the form to care.connectors@urbucc.org