

GOSPEL COMMUNITY

LEARNING TO HELP OTHERS

Know what you can do, what you can't, and how the church comes together around those going through challenging situations.

THE CALL TO LOVE

The New Testament describes the church as a family united in Christ, with a biblical responsibility to love and care for one another. As Jesus' people we are devoted to embodying this identity and calling by living out "one another" practices, which includes bearing one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2), speaking His words (Col. 3:16), showing His love (John 13:34), and giving His grace (Eph. 4:2).

Practically, before we can help others, it can be helpful for us to first realize that:

- We all come in with hurts and disappointments
- We do not need to be an expert in everything that people are going through
- We do not need to have walked through the same experience to have compassion
- We do not need to solve other people's problems
- We are not each others' parents or counselors.

WHAT WE CAN DO WHEN HELPING OTHERS

- We can listen and pray. That is often enough.
- Promote healthy boundaries - meet with a person in need outside of our 90-minute designated GC time.
- Direct one another to ongoing resources for discipleship - refer to newsletter, resource page, events and classes
- Continue to grow in your love for God, and for his Word (come prepared each week)
- Continue to disciple and be disciplined
- Pray for one another
- As a GC you can prepare a meal for new parents or those in grief
- As a GC you can plan a baby or wedding shower for someone in your group
- Is someone in need of benevolence or pastoral care?
 - Direct them to fill out a **Care Request Form** [HERE](#).
- Is someone sick? Direct them to submit an **Elder Prayer Request Form** [HERE](#).

****Please Note:** Westside staff cannot respond to requests made on behalf of another person. All requests for Care must be submitted by the individual in need. Do not fill out a form for someone else.*

Regarding Abuse Scenarios

- In cases of any accusations of person-to-person abuse - the individual must file a police report.
- A police report is absolutely necessary in order for the police department to open a file for ongoing process and protection. The church does not investigate these

accusations as it must go through the proper channels within the police department in order for appropriate next steps.

Matters of Church Discipline

- With regard to church membership/discipline: If multiple accusations/reports have been made and are active and verified, leadership will take steps with regard to church discipline (Matt 18:15-20).

AN ADDITIONAL NOTE: *DIFFERENTIATION*

In order to promote unity and to live peaceably with all to the best of our ability (Rom 12:8) we need to be well-differentiated. Being well-differentiated means that we have the nerve and presence to stand firm in the midst of other people's emotional anxiety and reactivity - without losing ourselves. In other words, being present while maintaining our own peace and presence, separate from while remaining in tune with another.

Putting childish ways behind us (1 Cor 13: 11; Eph 4:4-5) is an important part of our discipleship and requires that each of us take responsibility to be well-differentiated as we live in gospel community with others. Here is what it looks like to be well-differentiated:

- A well-differentiated individual doesn't react to other people's reactions; he or she is a calm, steady presence.
- A well-differentiated individual has a strong sense of self and can effectively separate while remaining connected.
- A well-differentiated individual takes responsibility for him/herself and leads others to do the same.
- A well-differentiated individual realizes that true long-term change requires discomfort, and he or she is willing to lead others through discomfort toward change.
- A well-differentiated individual takes decisive stands at the risk of displeasing others.

Please keep these things in mind as you love and care for one another in your Gospel Communities.

LOOKING FOR FURTHER RESOURCES?

For help with having hard conversations, tools for studying the Bible, and so much more you can always head over to wchurch.ca/gcresources. And if you still can't find what you're looking for, reach out to community@wchurch.ca.