

Pastoral Care Team Annual Report 2017-18

Team Members: Karen Campbell, Joan Connacher, Eileen Herring, Deede Loffler, Gail McMorrow Donahue, Barbara Spitz

The purpose of the Pastoral Care Team is to extend the reach of the minister in providing pastoral presence and care to members and friends of the congregation and to support the congregants in their joys and sorrows. The team meets regularly with Rev. Allison Palm and has been active since September 2012.

Once again this year, the Team started off with a training to ground us in the work of listening and caring, and to talk about some of the joys and challenges of pastoral care. We continued this training throughout the year in our meetings by taking pastoral care scenarios and discussing how we would handle each one.

The Pastoral Care Team lights candles during the “Caring Candles” time in our worship service, and follows up as needed with those who submit a card. Throughout the year, members of the team offered care by staying in touch with those who can no longer attend church services regularly, listening to and holding space for those who needed someone to talk to, sending cards, reaching out by telephone and email, and visiting as appropriate. We also organized members of the congregation to provide meals and rides for short periods of time for members who were in need. One member of the Team, Barbara Spitz, worked on putting together an extensive list of community resources so that Rev. Allison and members of the Team are able to offer referrals as needed.

One new initiative this year was a monthly drop-in Grief Group, led by Karen Campbell. Karen is a Pastoral Care Team member and works professionally with hospice in Massachusetts. A number of members have taken advantage of this space, and we are glad to be able to point people to this resource.

Eileen Herring will be leaving the Pastoral Care Team at the end of this year, after serving on the team since it’s beginning in 2012. We are grateful for all the time and energy she has given to caring for others in the congregation!

The Pastoral Care Team is always considering how best to serve the needs of the congregation. If you have ideas, feel free to reach out to Rev. Allison or a member of the team.