A Light in the Darkness:
A Respite Care Journey of Faith, Hope and Love

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Dedicated to my Mother
Claire Matthews Huling
Objectives

• Provide examples of ways that faith communities are doing respite care.
• Reflect on the benefits of respite care within and as an extension of the faith community.
• Identify benefits of partnering with another faith community to offer respite care.
• Share best practices and other innovative ideas with one another.
A Nudge from God?
Exploring Options

• Start with your own congregation
• Learn from caregivers
• Consider extending current ministries to include a caregiving component.
• What are other groups doing? What are the unmet needs?
Drop-In Respite Care Programs
Caring at Home

Train volunteers to go into homes so that a care partner might be able to have some free time to run an errand, make an appointment or attend a special event.
Benefits to Faith-Based Respite Volunteers

• Volunteers report a deepening of their faith because of their experiences in providing care for neighbors in need.

• Faith-based respite care provides an opportunity for volunteers to live their faith in service and love without proselytizing.
Connecting with Other Faith Communities

Volunteers in faith-based respite care programs often forge connections with nearby neighbors of different faiths to work together on projects that benefit the community, and in doing so, build bridges of understanding.
Other Ways For Faith Communities To Get Involved …

Offer a space for a caregiver support group and provide care (on-site or in-home) so that caregivers can participate.
Host Educational Events

Invite speakers from the medical community, the Office on Aging, and other organizations to speak at your congregation to your community about their programs and services.
Start an Arts Ministry
What about a Memory Choir?
Provide a Social Activity
For Care Partners and/or Loved Ones
Provide a Transportation Ministry
Partner with other organizations

Participate in community activities that support Alzheimer’s programs and services
Provide Spiritual Care

Provide a dementia-friendly worship experience which is experiential, flexible and mindful of sensory issues that are often present in those living with Alzheimer’s or related dementias.
Prayer and Care

Worship should include familiar elements: hymns, readings, prayers, liturgical practices, but may need to be scaled down or scaled back.
Other Possibilities

- Benevolence Funding: Have special funds to pay for respite care services
- Adopt-a-family: matches volunteers to a specific family needing assistance
- Family Caregiver Cooperatives- trading hours of care
- Let’s Share ideas and best practices
Go In Peace
to Love and Serve the Lord

Thanks Be To God!