



## **ONELIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH NEIGHBORHOOD CARE GROUPS:**

OneLife Community Church Neighborhood Care Groups are groups that were created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In a city that already suffers from a poverty of community this pandemic and the restrictions and limitations that have become necessary to try and lower the impact of this virus made it necessary to form some new groups that would help members of OneLife Community Church connect to one another and be able to connect with those in need around them.

We mapped out where everyone who calls OneLife home lives and then broke that map up into smaller sections making groups that were comprised of people who lived closer to each other. We made 9 Neighborhood Care Groups and then selected a point person/s for each area to make sure that everyone was connecting and being able to experience community in a time of needed physical isolation.

These groups are simply a way to help the body of Christ remain connected and flourishing in community, when some of the main ways we do this are not available to us.

The rest of this document is a gathering of some of the ways the point person/s can use to try and help people connect. It will require time, prayer, and intentionality. But it will be one of the ways that we persevere through this time when many are scared, bored, and lonely.

### **CONNECTION:**

This will be the most important thing we can do during this time. Each area will have people who will need to be able to hear another person's voice, see a face, and know that they are not alone. You will all be getting a copy of the directory and information for people who are not in the directory.

### **Individuals and Families:**

We would ask that you try and connect with each individual, or family, in your area at least twice a week. It would be best to do this by phone so that the other person can hear your voice and inflections and all the good stuff that comes with more personal contact. And then follow up with emails or texts if possible.

Some of the things you can ask about when connecting with people (these are just suggestions, you all are very capable of having great conversations with people, so you be your wonderful selves!

1. How are you feeling?
2. Do you have people you are able to connect with?
3. Do you have all the supplies that you need?
4. Do you have any specific concerns about this time?
5. Are you able to work from home (if they are working)?
6. Do you have any ideas of things people can be doing to better stay connected during this time?
7. How can I be praying for you? (then pray for them)

### **Some resources for people if they are feeling stuck, bored, and lonely:**

NOTE: If you are talking with someone and you have the thought “this feels beyond my ability to walk with them through this specific situation.” Please pass them on to any of the staff or recommend they see a counselor. We are trying to connect with people but we also realize that in this time some people may need more than connection. Our best connection may be that we learned that someone needs something beyond what we can give them and we helped them move in that direction. And then follow up with them and help keep them attentive to their own needs and staying on track with pursuing the help they need.

If the people you are connecting with are more of the “our family is bored, and making each other crazy” kind of nature, here are a bunch of suggestions that people can try. This may be something you want to communicate to your whole group in a group email or something like that. Note: all of these will not be possible for some folks.

**Exercise** – keeping some kind of movement going is critical when in isolation.

- People can still go for runs, walks, hikes, they just need to make sure to maintain good social distancing. If people have phones one thing that people have been doing is walking with other people on a phone call. So both people are walking just in different places but connected via the phone.
- Some free online options for exercise include:
  - Down Dog Yoga – <https://www.downdogapp.com> all of their apps are free through April 1<sup>st</sup>. They have lots of different classes for different levels of yoga practice. Yoga can also be good for calming people down and releasing some tension.
  - Ekhart Yoga is also offering free classes during the COVID-19 time. This site will have some more talk about Chakras and some eastern philosophy so just know that some people may be sensitive about that. <https://relief.ekhart yoga.com/>
  - If the person is not able to do ballistic movement, or a standing or walking Sit and be Fit does seated workouts. Here is their YouTube channel <https://www.sitandbefit.org/watch/youtube/>
  - Even reminders to set alarms on watches and phones to get up and walk around every 45 minutes or so.
  - Also remind people that if they have not been working out don't just head into some big program, take it easy start with some basics and don't overdo it and cause injuries.

### **Watch a movie, documentary TV Series**

- There are tons of things available here whether subscriptions to Disney +, Hulu, Netflix, Amazon, cable TV, or YouTube, there are just lots of options
- Then if people want to have an online discussion about it that is a way to connect with people around it.

### **Call a friend or family member**

- I am trying to do this at least once a day. It is a great way to stay connected.

### **Breathing Exercises**

- We often talk at OneLife how each breath is a gift from God and an act of worship to God. Here are a couple of resources for breathing exercises. These can help reduce stress and anxiety.
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/breathing-exercises-for-anxiety>
- <https://greatist.com/happiness/breathing-exercises-relax#5.-4-7-8-Breathing-or-relaxing-breath>

### **Cook**

- Try some new recipes; these all have some good vegan, gluten free options also.
  - <https://www.paleoplan.com/recipes/>
  - <https://www.foodnetwork.com/>
  - <https://www.allrecipes.com/>

### **Get those house projects, chores, and yardwork done**

### **Take naps**

### **Listen to podcasts**

- There are lots of good ones out there. Be aware that not everyone will know how to search for podcast or listen to them so it may require a little bit of coaching too.

### **Read Books, Magazines, etc**

- Even though the Libraries are physically closed their ebooks, magazines, movies, and tv shows etc are all still available <https://www.spl.org/>

### **Bible Reading, study, and prayer**

- Bible gateway has some great reading and devotional plans, and some study tools <https://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/>, <https://www.biblegateway.com/devotionals/>
- Blue letter bible has some other great tools such as Greek and Hebrew translations. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
- Explore faith has some great prayer and meditation guides to explore <http://www.explorefaith.org/prayer/index.php>

## **Finding ways to serve and care**

- One of the most challenging things for people will be to feel like they are not able to help or serve. For some of our friends and family they will be losing one of the main ways they are able to be independent and have some level of control in their lives. So, finding ways to help people know that they are still able to serve if they want to and are able. You may find that someone in your area has some space and time to take on one aspect of this ministry of connecting people. Or maybe they have some creative way to help people connect. Also just letting them know that it is good for you to be able to talk with someone and they have been a blessing to you is important.
  - People can call each other
  - Write letters or cards of encouragement
  - Ask them to pray for the other people in the group

## **THE WHOLE GROUP**

There are various ways that a group of people can connect remotely. We would like to ask you to facilitate some kind of connection for the whole group once a week., and then respond to follow up of that initial movement. Here are some examples:

- You could host a video conference for everyone. This allows everyone to see each other's faces which can be really important. You can do this through
  - Skype <https://www.skype.com/en/>
  - Facetime <https://ifacetimeapp.com/>
  - Zoom <https://zoom.us/> zoom offers free service and unlimited time for 1-1 meetings, but also has 40 minutes for groups between 3-100. This is a good option because it gives everyone a little bit of time but also has the 40 minute limit.
- It could be that you all do an online Bible study together, read a book, read an article, listen to a podcast, etc and you facilitate some follow up questions or discussion via email
- Facebook is a great way to post something and then it can be commented on in real time. You could set up a Facebook group for your neighborhood care group.
- Even a group text or email just saying "hi," sending an encouraging scripture verse or devotional thought, or a prayer request can be another great way to keep the group engaged and connected.
- Catching the OneLife service via our YouTube channel on Sundays and following up with people on our connection card questions at the end of the sermon.
- You can also communicate all the stuff happening at OneLife and any materials or remote events we publish. Send people to:
  - the OneLife website at [www.onelifeseattle.org](http://www.onelifeseattle.org), we also have links here to many of our other social media locations including twitter, Instagram, and Facebook
- Swap recipes and share other ideas for working through this time.
- You could also be a connection for people in terms of information. One of the things I have noticed is that some of us are gorging on information. We just keep devouring it and not really listening to it or giving anything time to set in. So helping folks think about their pace regarding their news and information intake especially regarding

COVID-19 could be a really helpful thing. Some of the helpful resources in terms of information have been:

- CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- King County Health has lots of good local information <https://www.kingcounty.gov/>

## **LAST THINGS**

With that I want to thank you all again for being willing to be a support and help to people in our community as we all walk together and lean on each other through this challenging time. In doing so we are the body of Christ. Jesus came so that all people could be reconciled, restored in a relationship with God. The things you are doing to help people connect and be supported and able to be a support are one of the ways this gets lived out. We are the tangible connective tissues of the body of Christ. When we all work together to help things move forward we are living out Jesus' presence in this world.

Let us know if there is anything else we can do to help you in what you all are doing to help and serve others.

Many blessings