

Why My Congregation Is Better For Having a Parish Nurse

Pastor Eric, Richmond VA: “I am convinced that **the pastoral care of this congregation has improved since we introduced a parish nurse**. As the only pastor in a medium sized church, I found myself moving from one crisis to another with little time for much significant follow-up. With a parish nurse in place, we are better able to offer expanded pastoral care, as together we share ideas, offer support to each other, do the "tag-team," and provide much better on- going care of our members. I look forward to this being expanded and also to the next step, that of having trained members involvement through Stephen Ministry.”

Rev. Caroline, Mechanicsville VA: “Judy has been a real blessing to our congregation. Here are just a few of the ways in which she has been a help to us:

- ♥ She has done a great many educational programs and helped make us aware of various health issues. She teaches us both through programs and through the church newsletter. She has also been available to answer our questions and guide us to the best resources. As a pastor, I have found her invaluable. If I have a concern or question about someone in the congregation, I can turn to her.
- ♥ Judy has provided each family in the church with a book in which they can keep a record of medicines and doctors visits, etc. This has been very helpful, especially when a hospitalization has been necessary.
- ♥ Each month Judy takes blood pressures. A number of our members have found this helpful. It also provides a relatively private space in which they can ask questions. It enables Judy to encourage them to see a doctor if necessary and this has, at times, been very important for that person.
- ♥ Judy has been an interpreter. When members haven't known what to ask the doctor or have needed special care from a physician, Judy has been able to ask the questions or alert the physician and together they have been able to help families.
- ♥ Judy is able to develop a level of trust and caring with our members which is unique to who she is and her position as our parish nurse. One of our members needed to be admitted to the hospital but was very fearful. Judy spent long hours with her and in the end, when she agreed to go to the hospital, it was only because Judy went with her. Judy provided that kind of support to her.

On an ongoing basis, Judy's love and care for our congregation go far beyond what I understood as the duties of a parish nurse. She continues

to be a vital part, and sometimes the most important part, of our congregation's care for its members.

I don't know how to tell you what Judy's ministry has meant to me and to our congregation.”

Rev. Donna, Matoaca VA: “My congregation is more health oriented because of our Parish Nurse. Rachel continually to educate our congregation on health issues through the monthly newsletter and by posting information around the church. Rachel continues to monitor the health of our people through blood pressure checks and organizes special programs, such as Breast and Prostate Cancer Awareness. Part of Rachel's responsibility is organizing rides for members so they can get to their physician appointments, labs, and Chemo or Physical Therapy treatments. Rachel also arranges for sitters in the home to provide respite for families. **A Parish Nurse is essential in the life of the church and is the right hand of any pastor.”**