

Community Engagement in the time of COVID-19

Agenda

Prayer

Housekeeping

Introductions

Overview

Group Discussion

Housekeeping:

- Please use chat function to share notes, ideas or links; you can also email them to me
- This session will be recorded with the notes and posted on the www.episcopalmn.org/covid19-response page.
- This isn't about experts, but listening to each other, hearing the questions, and coming together to work for answers.

Overview:

- Community engagement is typically referring to faith communities engaging with their neighborhoods and communities.
 - Much of that direct service work has had to be put on hold while communities adapt to social distancing
 - Food and meal programs must comply with strict CDC and MDH restriction in order to keep operating (no sit down, sealed 'to go' containers, etc...)
- **Recommendations:**
 - Don't start anything new unless in partnership/consultation with local health entities and in guidelines of MDH
 - If you cannot do a ministry within the best practices of MDH/CDC consider halting for the time being
 - Halting a ministry? Consider an online fundraiser to an organization now taking on the work
 - Call representatives and make your voice heard, advocacy can be done from your home
- **Despite this shift:**
 - What CAN we still do?
 - How do we say 'no'

Best practices:

- St. Mark's, Minneapolis has a resource list with Mental Health service and crisis services, will post on website. Shared with pastoral care team. (Rena)
- Most vulnerable vs. parishioners – where is the overlap, what do we do?
 - Share info with all, utilize pastoral care team
- Listen and be in communication with partners (i.e. Groveland Food shelf partner- talk with them)

- How can you stay in touch?
 - collect phone numbers, Phone tree implementation
- Distribution outside – allows for physical distance
- Phone trees implemented at:
 - St. Paul's Duluth, St. Mark's Minneapolis: Tracking with sheet that allows for notes if items needed allows for central form/good sheet
 - St. John's St. Paul vestry called elders of the community
 - Holy Trinity St. Paul calling elders
- Church partnership with senior living center or group home
 - Cards/calls
- Youth engagement during: Zoom meeting
- Faith formation:
 - St. Paul's Duluth going on-line in a couple weeks; hosted facebook live
- St. Paul's Duluth:
 - Outside entrance (inner door closed); vestibule has BCPs and others have resources
 - Will be on-line every day, but short/long/present but not overwhelmed
 - Virtual Coffee Hour
 - **Sun:** worship/virtual coffee hour; **Mon:** message by rector; **Tue:** Bible Study **Wed:** AM Prayer **Thur:** Compline; **Fri:** St. Paul sings; **Sat:** Community Connections
 - Time is either 9am or 9pm
- Masks: sewing masks for local hospitals, check with local shops for fabrics; quilters guild;

What are the topic areas that are needed:

- Housing: Homes for All COVID-19 updates;
- Rides/transportation
- Resource list for community
- Advocacy

Questions from call:

- Mental health resources – what can you watch on-line
 - Major concern as it continues on

Answer: Call the number on the back of your health insurance card for in-network resources, many places are doing virtual sessions;

from National Alliance on Mental Illness-Minnesota (www.namimn.org)

NAMI Minnesota is very concerned about the mental health of the people we serve and the greater community. This is a very trying time. If you have questions about COVID-19, call the Department of Health at 651-201-3920 or 1-800-657-3903 from 7 am – 7 pm Monday through Friday.

If you are:

- Unsure about attending therapy sessions outside the home, especially people who are at higher risk, ask your health care provider about telemedicine or online mental health services.
- Worried about access to prescribed medications, you can ask your health care provider about getting 90-day supplies vs. a 60 or 30-day supply. If this is not possible, we encourage you to refill your medications as soon as they are allowed.

Worried about your mental health:

- Call the warm line at 651-288-0400 or text “Support” to 85511;
- Call the crisis team at **CRISIS or click here for the county numbers <https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/health-care/mental-health/resources/crisis-contacts.jsp>
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line is available for free, 24/7 by texting MN to 741741
- Call the SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990

- Kids connecting? Touring on-line? How can you engage a youth development organization?

Answer: Connect with sarah.b@episcopalmn.org for additional ideas; lots of youth groups are going virtual

- Virtual communication vs. “old school” communication
 - When is it too much communication/not enough?

Answer: More than a couple emails a day can become noise. Create care circles, small groups for check-in, or use a phone tree to help cut down on the email/virtual communication; hosting this regularly (i.e. every Monday AM priest message for the week; wed eve lentened prayer video...)

- Just getting “on-line” to work virtually for overall faith community, now getting to question, what can I do during this situation??
 - St. John’s, St. Paul – give to food agencies/Halley Q. Brown; What else is out there...
 - What do you do if you don’t have money; yet, many are older that need physical distance
- **Do you provide resources**/funding for faith community and/or community partner agencies, what is the process?
 - Discretionary funds
 - Agency referral
 - How do you keep it Equitable?
 - St. Mark’s Cathedral working on process
- Child care: site specific if open/closed for first responders/emergency personnel
 - **Question** on financial support and general assistances

Answer: Part of Aid package within MN is including subsidized support for child care via YMCA at \$40 a day for emergency workers and additional financial aid as needed. Call local YMCA to get more details.