

Caring for Those Who Care

*Inspirational stories about and resources for chaplains
to assist in supporting the staff in their organizations
during the*

COVID-19 Pandemic

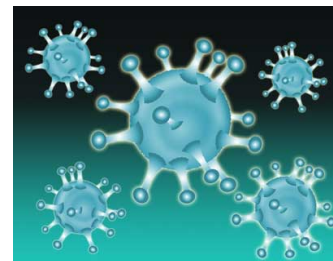


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Introduction

In these days of COVID-19, there are those among us who go every day to face the dangers of infection and yet still show up to care for those stricken by this pernicious disease. As chaplains, a significant part of our role in these times is not with patients or their families, but in supporting the care providers. While this has and will always remain a part of our role, it takes on a greater importance as social distancing, infection precautions and regulations prevent many of the interactions with patients and families that are a part of our “normal” day.



A Hidden Opportunity

One of the frequent topics of discussion in gatherings in “normal” times is getting chaplaincy departments the level of recognition they deserve. Some departments are at the leadership table and seen as important partners in organizational decision-making and action. Others strive for this level of recognition and organizational collaboration. What is the difference? There are many reasons, but one important reason is that the chaplaincy team took the opportunity and rose to the challenge of a difficult situation that taxed the organization, its staff and patients. A situation like COVID-19. The services delivered in these times are remembered and their impact valued, long after the crisis has passed.

With this in mind, we have prepared this eBook to provide you with ideas and resources to support you in caring for your colleagues, and in so doing, rising to what may be the most important challenge of our lifetimes.

To inspire you, we will start with some examples of what is being done in settings across the country. Then we’ll provide some ideas for specific other activities that you may want to undertake and then some resources to support those activities. Finally, we invite you to join us in looking ahead to the time when the restrictions associated with COVID-19 come to an end.

As always, we want to hear from you about what YOU are doing! Let us know what you have done, what’s worked, what you need help to try ... just drop us a line at CILResources1@gmail.com. This is a living document so we will add to it from the ideas and stories that you share with us. Download a copy now but don’t hesitate to come back in a few days and see what’s new!

In providing these resources, we also want to remind you that you cannot fill the cups of others if your own cup is empty. Please take the time to practice self-care. You are important to those you serve and to those you love. Recognize your boundaries. Take the time you need to breathe and restore yourself in the midst of the work, and take time away when you need it. If you need ideas for self-care, we are happy to make a few suggestions [here](#).

Thank you for the difficult but important work you do every day. We are here to support you and know we are in this together.

CHAPLAINCY INNOVATION LAB

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SOME INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

The stories that follow are but a few examples of the ways that chaplains across the country are helping their organizations address the challenges of COVID-19. In some instances, their organizations consider chaplains essential staff expected to be physically present along with health providers and in others, chaplains are expected to work from home. In all cases, as you will see, chaplains are rising to the challenge and bringing vitally needed spiritual and emotional support to their colleagues on the front lines.

HENNEPIN HEALTHCARE

Hennepin Healthcare is a public, safety net health system and Level One Adult and Pediatric Trauma Center in Hennepin County (Minneapolis) Minnesota.

According to Rev. David Hottinger, M.Div., BCC, the Manager of the Spiritual Care Department at Hennepin Healthcare, “the development and deployment of the staff support (and family blessings) was a fairly straightforward process.

As the COVID-19 crisis became “real” for our Spiritual Care team the week of March 9, one of our Staff Chaplains quickly authored a blessing for staff/caregivers and a second one for families who were being turned away from the hospital because of the new visitor restrictions. I was actually on vacation the first few days of the crisis, but upon my return, I sent both blessings to our Communications/PR team who quickly designed and “branded” them for cards we printed ourselves and began to distribute throughout the hospital. I then emailed [PDF's of both blessings](#) to our CEO and members of the Executive leadership team with a note of support for their extraordinary work.

Shortly after that, I received an invitation from our Chief Nursing Officer to read the staff support blessing, first in a Skype meeting of all Nursing leaders, and then during a system-wide weekly leadership huddle (also via Skype). At that point, the Communications office asked us to [video-record](#) both blessings for internal use on the newly-created COVID-19 Staff Support Resources web page and the external Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The “family” blessing now contains visitor guidelines on the back. Spiritual Care partnered with Patient Experience leaders to craft language for those guidelines. Those cards are now used widely at our front ED entrance as well as by our EMS personnel who carry them on their ambulances and give them to families of patients being transported to our hospital. We also have in hand a similar blessing card (with information on the back) for patients.

Even though we are a public, safety-net healthcare system, we have received tremendous support from our leadership for the development of these staff support materials. Recently, our VP for Human Resources asked that Spiritual Care offer some kind of structured initiative prayer/meditation for our

staff. As a result, we have recorded 5 three-minute blessing/prayer videos which are being pushed out through our system's Facebook and Twitter (used by many of our staff) and linked to the Spiritual Resources on our special COVID-19 Staff Support Resources page.

Finally, Spiritual Care is the lead “owner” of an initiative from our Foundation to deliver 220 meals three times per week to front-line staff. We are partnering with Psychology and our Employee Engagement Council to deliver the meals – and offer emotional and spiritual support while doing so.”

CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL LOS ANGELES

Children's Hospital Los Angeles is a nonprofit institution and the first pediatric hospital in Southern California. It provides care to a half a million patients a year with more than 350 pediatric specialty programs and services.

Staff support has always been an important part of the role of the Spiritual Care Services department at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA), says Dagmar Grefe PhD, ACPE, Manager, Spiritual Care and Clinical Pastoral Education. “From January to October of 2019, we spent more than 691 hours of time in staff support. But we have also adapted and expanded what we do in response to COVID-19.”

Community Resiliency – Teaching and Practice

Working in a pediatric hospital is gratifying, rewarding and challenging even in the best of times. In a move that today appears prescient, to support staff members, Rev. Grefe, Sung-Jin “Jeanie” Ju, MACCS, MPP, and Lucino Cruz-Peña, MDiv have been teaching lead nurses and RN residents about the [Community Resiliency Model® \(CRM\)](#).

This approach, which focuses on developing self-care skills to cope with trauma, trains people to help themselves—and to help others within their wider social network. The primary focus of the model is to educate individuals about the biology and neurophysiology of trauma, as well as some simple biologically-based wellness skills, which can help reset and stabilize the nervous system. Through CRM, individuals learn to read sensations connected to their own wellbeing, called the “Resiliency Zone.”

The goal is to help create “trauma-informed” and “resiliency-informed and focused” staff members who share a common understanding of the impact of trauma and chronic stress on the nervous system and how resiliency can be restored or increased using this skills-based approach.

Ironically, the onset of COVID-19 has limited the team’s ability to continue this training but they hope to produce a series of short videos to continue to make the work accessible and to support staff in these challenging times.

Tea for the Soul

One of the most popular services provided by the Spiritual Care Services team is Tea for the Soul. This is a care -for-the- caregiver program that provides moments of respite and calm for the clinical staff after experiencing stressful shifts, difficult cases, or patient deaths. Normally, a mobile cart is brought into a unit, warm tea is brewed, peaceful music plays and staff members sit together to talk about their days and process their experiences. Tea for the Soul gives staff members a way to communicate and share the emotional demands of work.

Tea for the Soul is also an opportunity for individuals who are experiencing challenges outside of work to seek spiritual support. It is a non-agenda time with a chaplain creating an environment where the staff can share about their work and what may be affecting them or where they can simply rest and receive care. Often charge nurses or nurse managers will reach out after stressful events to schedule a tea and the best format is agreed upon.

At times chaplains include a non-religious ritual, such as sharing memories after a patient death, or include a resiliency or mindfulness practice – if desired. Teas for night shift or after on-call situations are also facilitated when staff is distressed. Tea for the Soul is a donor funded program with the CHLA Spiritual Care Guild providing all supplies for the teas through their annual fundraising and in-kind donations.

Today, during the COVID-19 pandemic, CHLA Infection Control has approved the sharing of Tea for the Soul with individual nurses with the provision of individual cups of tea with a lid. Along with a cup of tea, we share the card below:

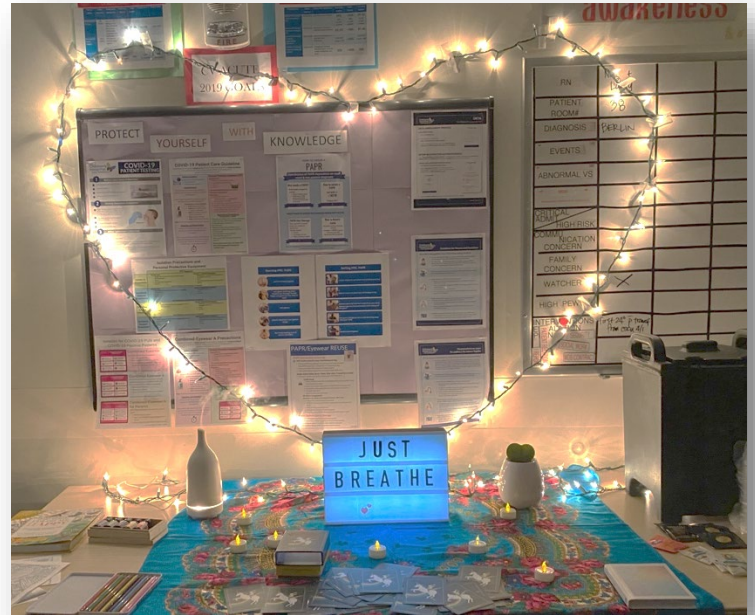


Temporary Zen Rooms

Another initiative to come out of the challenges of COVID-19 is the offering of temporary Zen Rooms. The goal of the project is to create a calm and relaxing environment for Body and Mind awareness.

The Spiritual Care Services team arranges for the temporary use of a relatively untrafficked space, such as a supply closet, in a particular area (i.e. ICU, ED) and sets it up with an essential oil diffuser, soft lighting, tea and encouraging note cards. There is also a three-minute recorded mindfulness meditation and it is staffed by one of the chaplains.

Once set up, individuals from that area can come in (one at a time due to social distancing rules) and take a break for 12-15 minutes. While one chaplain is participating in the Zen Room, typically another is recruiting and organizing the next participant(s).



To make all of this possible, the Spiritual Care Services Team have collaborated with Social Work and the Employee Assistance Program and have offered the Zen Rooms in LACH's ICUs and ED, and to Hospitalists during the day and night shifts.

Other forms of staff support that the Spiritual Services team are continuing to provide include:

- Offering virtual services for the religious holidays including a Good Friday meditation, an Easter Service and a Passover Greeting.
- Facilitating memorial services for teams/units or house-wide when a staff member has died. Sadly, this has been a reality in one instance, and the service involved a small group of participants who shared memories and a family member who attended. The service was recorded and could be viewed live by CHLA staff members at their PC.
- Offering staff a virtual meditation session with a Spiritual Services staff member.



Underlying the success of the Spiritual Services team is collaboration, both with frontline and senior leaders but also with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Manager. While the privacy of individual staff is protected, this collaboration enables the team to know where they might best provide a tea, a Zen Room or facilitate a debriefing. Especially during the COVID crisis, the EAP Manager as well as the physician and faculty support member and the Manager of the Spiritual Services team check in once a week to collaborate on staff support needs and opportunities.

CLEVELAND CLINIC

Located in Cleveland, Ohio, Cleveland Clinic is a nonprofit, multi-specialty academic medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. With nearly 1,300 beds on Cleveland Clinic main campus and 6,026 beds system-wide, it has over 60,000 employees worldwide.

Early on in the COVID-19 crisis, Amy Greene DMin., Director of the Center for Spiritual Care at the Cleveland Clinic, made an important but nonetheless difficult decision. She moved her staff to working remotely and as she says, “offering everything but *physical* presence.”

With presence (usually assumed to be mostly physical) being what patients, staff and chaplains had all come to see as being of greatest value, it has been the task of the Center for Spiritual Care’s 30-person team of chaplains, educators, residents and administrative staff to provide presence without being physically in the same room.

How have they done this? First of all, as a team they are only 90% remote. There is a chaplain on duty 24/7 to the entire system. At the Clinic’s 1400 bed main campus, and at some of the regional hospitals on a case-by-case basis, someone is physically on site for specific purposes. The rest of the team is remote and make their presence felt in the following ways:

- Amy has participated in podcasts for the Cleveland Clinic staff including
 - [A New Type of Grief: Coping with Coronavirus](#)
 - [We All Cry Salt Water and Bleed Red: Spiritual Care in Times of Crisis](#)
- The Center provides a 24 hour hotline, Grief and Relief, that is available to all patients, their families, and the 65,000 employees in Northeast Ohio and Florida. This support line is staffed by a chaplain who is on a regular work shift.
- Chaplains working remotely
 - Call patient rooms where appropriate,
 - Proactively reach out to family members,
 - Check in with Nursing Managers to assess both patient and staff needs
- The Center staff regularly tweets messages of support to staff so that they know the chaplaincy team is there to support them.

“The staff is very grateful for our support,” says Amy. “We know that these times are hard for them so we try to be there without being an added burden. My observation is that everyone on staff is having a

hard time, facing changes and crises both at home and at work. Yet in that space they are also afraid to rest ... afraid that by taking time to rest they will falter one place or the other.

While we can't be physically there, we can offer our listening presence and be attentive when they need us to attest to them and their needs. Everyone feels helpless in the face of this pandemic, we have to help them (and ourselves) validate that feeling of helplessness and learn to tolerate it. Finding rest in the midst of the crisis, both emotionally and spiritually so that they can find it physically.

If we can do that, we are protecting everyone by not being in the building but letting them know we are there in spirit. And we are just a phone call away if they need to hear a friendly voice.”

SEATTLE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Seattle Children's Hospital strives to deliver superior patient care, advance new discoveries and treatments through pediatric research while serving as the pediatric and adolescent academic medical center for Washington, Alaska, Montana and Idaho



Thanks to Abby Brockman, MDiv, Chaplain at Seattle Children's Hospital, we learned that their chaplaincy team set up a space for their PICU staff with self-guided exercises designed to both bring a sense of calm, peace, and groundedness as well as offering staff concrete tools for deeper processing.

“Our goal was two-fold: to create something that would invite staff into moments of peace and reflection, as well as equipping them with tangible tools for deeper emotional processing.

We were inspired to create it after PICU nurses approached our PICU chaplain expressing a need for spiritual support during this time of anxiety and grief. Using a beautiful set of stations created once at Boston University by Alicia Vélez Stewart as inspiration, we came up with this set of self-guided stations and exercises. It received such positive feedback from nurses, physicians, and hospital leadership that we've since expanded it hospital-wide.”

The team has provided PDFs of all the resources for others to use or customize. These include:

- **Station signs**
- **[Self-care cards \(blank\)](#)**
- **[Self-care cards \(examples\)](#)**
- Information on an **Emotional substitution activity**
- Information on **Processing through Overwhelm**
- A hand **Labyrinth**



SWEDISH MEDICAL CENTER

Swedish is the largest nonprofit health care provider in the greater Seattle area with five hospital campuses, two ambulatory care centers, and a network of more than 100 primary care and specialty clinics throughout the greater Puget Sound area.

Mara Forster-Smith, a chaplain at Swedish Medical Center, shared that their department has been assembling "Spiritual Care Packages" and distributing them to their healthcare providers working on the front lines of this Covid-19 pandemic.

"I have found these packages to be a meaningful, tangible, (and hygienic) way of supporting Caregivers through a simple gesture of acknowledgement" says Mara. "In many cases, when I've handed a Caregiver one of these packages it has opened up a more in-depth conversation and opportunity to offer compassionate listening support."

The packages include:

- Breathing meditation and stone
- "Pop-Open" compendium card
- Tea bag
- Cookie
- Chocolate



They were able to purchase many of these supplies online, and the packages have been well-received.

BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Boston Children's Hospital is the primary pediatric teaching hospital for Harvard Medical School and treats more children with rare diseases and complex conditions than any other hospital.

At Boston Children's Hospital, Yulia Kazakova, MTS, Chaplain, has been sending care emails Boston Children's staff every Friday since March 19. These care e-mails or "mindful moments", as I call them, are complete with art, poetry, music, meditation, and



occasionally, humor. “They are intentionally brief as hospital employees are inundated with many e-communications and tend to scroll through anything long” says Yulia.

“I have been sharing them with the hospital staff and my chaplains friends-colleagues at institutions that are hard hit by the pandemic. So far the response has been very positive and I received a lot of gratitude for these emails.”

To download a copy of these Mindful Moments, [click here](#).



STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING STAFF

The examples on the previous pages provide some ideas of ways that chaplains can support the frontline staff in their organization. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab has been asking for and collecting ideas for supporting staff. What follows are the additional ideas that we have received through our Resource Center to date.

We realize that the rules and culture in organizations vary so before implementing one of these ideas, make sure it is in accordance with both the restrictions in your organization as well as what staff needs.

We intend this to be a “living” document, i.e. one that we constantly keep updated as new ideas arrive. **If you have a strategy that you would like to share**, please email us the information at CILResource1@gmail.com

- If your health care providers may want to help in providing spiritual care to their patients, [click here for a tool you can customize](#)
- Consider offering one-on-one check-ins with staff from each area of the hospital.
- One team created a new email publication every other week for staff with prayers/ meditations and reflections.
- Maggie Sebastian, MA, MDiv, BCC Staff Chaplain at Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center in Tualatin, OR shared that “Another thing that we are doing is offering quilted finger labyrinths to staff. We have an outdoor labyrinth but staff are too swamped to go outside. As I listen to staff, I sometimes offer a finger labyrinth, explaining what it is, talking about different ways to approach it, and then giving a brochure we have for the outdoor labyrinth which has more information. This often leads to others overhearing our conversation on the labyrinth and wanting a finger labyrinth

of their own.” This can also be done with a paper labyrinth (click [here](#) to download a paper labyrinth and [here](#) for ideas on its use.)

- Create messages of support on colorful backgrounds and posted them in areas accessible to staff or distribute them electronically. [Download samples here.](#)
- Most chaplains, if they are on-site are making rounds on the units and checking in with staff, or if they are remote, are checking in with managers and staff by phone.
- Some chaplaincy departments are sending out self-care tips periodically to staff.
- From Chaplain Becky Capps at the VA we learned of her strategy of handing out hearts and tags. “I’ve been making hearts and tags for six years. Using a variety of words and styles, these simple tokens have brightened up the moments in staff and people in surprising ways.” [Download samples here.](#)
- For those who are on-site, rounding at team huddles offers a good opportunity to connect with staff
- Consider developing and distributing stress management resources for staff.
- Cassidy Wohlfarth MDiv., Chaplain at Dallas Children’s Hospital shared “We have found great success in using resources designed for children with our staff. For example, rounding on staff with a “Blob Tree” (www.blobtree.com) offering a few moments for staff to practice an emotional/spiritual self check-in.”

“I have a laminated one that I use during staff rounds and simply ask ‘I wonder which blob you are today?’” says Cassidy. “It is a simple and playful way to help staff pause and reflect on their emotions and opens up conversation about how I can support them as their chaplain.”
- Sending out a unit specific chaplain newsletter with reflections, pet photos, and ways to reach out for support to our staff.



- Working with our in-hospital TV network to offer spiritual rituals via TV/radio.
- Setting up some DIY options in the chapel so people can come and go one at a time. For example, stations of the cross. Small tables with an image, scripture, reading, LED candle.
- From Rev Marie Siroky, Staff Chaplain at Beacon Memorial in South Bend Indiana we learned that “We have a dropbox out in our front drive for people to send cards to staff and or patients. Cards are regularly emptied and sealed for a few days before delivery. (Guidelines for cards include no envelopes, glitter, etc.) We also set up an email for local kids to send cards and we print them out and deliver them.”

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR PLANS

If your plans involve such things as sending a daily text or Tweet, writing a weekly newsletter or even resourcing a staff breakroom with ideas for stress reduction, it can be challenging to always have something fresh or new to share.

With that in mind, here is a list of resources, broken out into groups by type, to stimulate your thinking and creativity. And, as always, if you have suggestions that you would like to contribute, please do! Send them to CILResources1@gmail.com

MATERIALS TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT

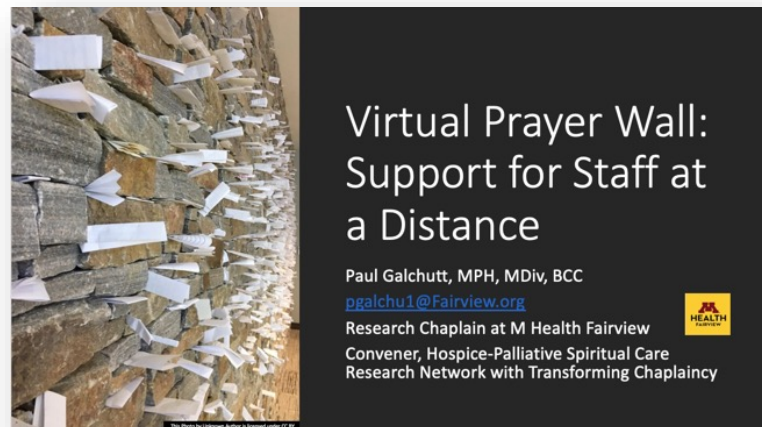
These can be used as ideas for practices, handouts or messages to staff:

Rituals

- “At IU Health, the Blessing of Hands ritual is offered to hospital staff in times of appreciation, celebration and support; we offer it in appreciation for nurses each year during Nurse’s Week.

We offer it during times of celebration when team members have completed a group training or graduate from a special program,” says Chaplain Josh Coolman. “We also offer it at various times to acknowledge and support team members for the unique work they do and the compassionate care they provide for others.” To learn more, [click here](#); to see an article, click [here](#).

- Paul Galchutt, Research Staff Chaplain at the University of Minnesota Medical Center suggests considering a Virtual Prayer Wall. “A virtual prayer wall is a way to offer either a meditation or prayer, anonymously and confidentially. It uses data collection/survey software to assure that anonymity. There is also a promised assurance that a chaplain will attend to these concerns or hopes for the manner in which it was requested.



Typing out these requests is primarily an act of prayer or meditatively submitting a request to be heard. But it also is a form of expressive writing. As such, it provides the writer with a space to center and perhaps gain perspective with stressful concerns during traumatic times.” For more information, [click here](#).

- From Catherine Chang, Director of On Demand Spiritual Care we learned “As a way to address spiritual and emotional needs, Ascension has deployed Ascension On Demand Spiritual Care to all associates. Ascension chaplains are providing anytime, anywhere spiritual care using the Ascension Online Care, a virtual urgent care platform.

This online care offering is staffed by experienced Ascension chaplains who are committed to listening to and supporting our associates as they sort out complex feelings related to all that is happening. Ascension associates login to Ascension Online Care, enter a service key, and can immediately be connected to a chaplain for a two-way video call 24/7/365.

- Wherever you are working (or simply living) here is a wonderful way to say hello or goodbye that was offered by “Nettie Writes” in the CIL Chaplain Facebook page:

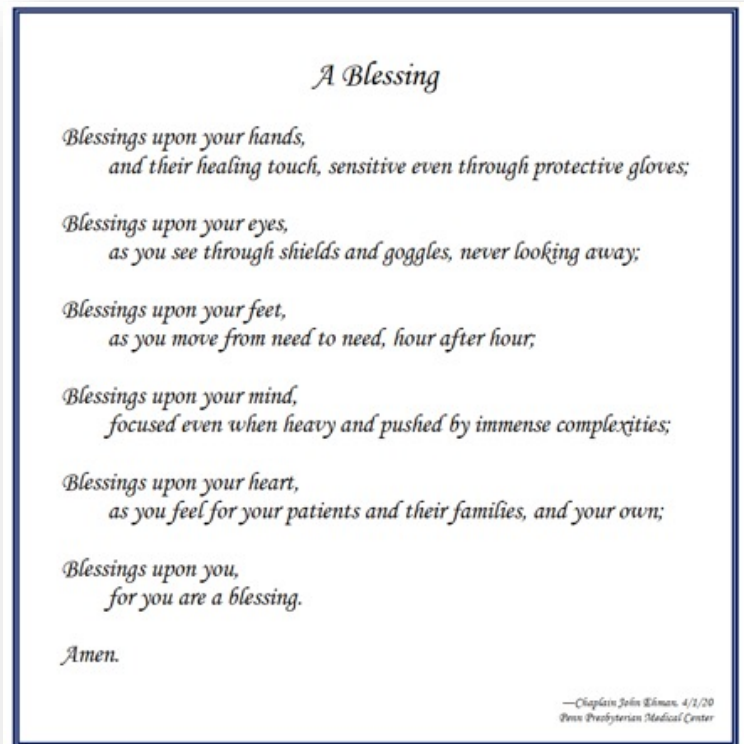
*“Heart Beats instead of Handshakes” for us to say goodbye.
We each stood apart at the end of the visit and I asked them to place their hands on their heart,
as I did on mine, and we held a moment of silence together.
It was amazing how much deeper this felt than a handshake in the times we are in.
When we do this we are taking moments of silence to honor the core of our being by placing our hand
on our heart to feel our heartbeat and to be aware that the Heart of Benevolence is also beating
inside us.
It is the same heart that beats in all creation.
After a moment of silence I say, “This touching of the heart connects us all – hand to chest – heart to
heart with love, peace and comfort to all.*

Websites

- The Supportive Care Coalition has a wonderful website of resources for use in these challenging times, click [here](#)
- **Calm's** free resources, with meditations, stories, music, talks and more to support mental and emotional wellness, click [here](#)
- **The Zen Caregiving Project**

Poems, Prayers and Written Materials

- **“An invitation to brave space”** by Micky Scott Bey Jones. The poem as it appears in the link above is shown on cards that can be printed out and shared.
- A Meditation by Lori Haynes Niles, Chaplain, Community Regional Medical Center and Sojourn Hospice and Palliative Care, [“Pause to Remember.”](#)
- **A compilation of Spiritual and Literary Resources for Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic** prepared by Rev. Rachel G. Breyer, M.Div. of Emory University. [click here](#)
- Prayers for the days of COVID-19 created by Cincinnati Children’s Hospital chaplains ([available here](#)).
- The prayer that Chaplain John Ehman is circulating to staff at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center ([available here](#)).
- A [one page tool](#) on providing spiritual care for health care providers that Chaplain Allison Kestenbaum and the team at UC San Diego developed and that can be customized to your setting.



- For supporting colleagues without touch, read: *Healing touch: Chaplains offer blessing of the hands to healthcare heroes* [here](#)
- Use this [Prayer to Remember](#), provided by Mount Sinai Hospital, as a way to gather staff at the end of shift
- A wonderful tool to be handed out is Alex Kern's "**Caring for Self and Others in Times of Trouble**"
- If you are in need of gentle words for gathering together in mourning or other prayer ideas and liturgies, look at Enfleshed.com's free liturgy library and resources, click [here](#)

Visuals



- Prayer cards created by Steven Altarescu that are available for downloading and use ([click here](#)).

Videos

- The [videocast of a prayer](#) that Chaplains David Hottinger and Maia Twedt from Hennepin Healthcare created to support healthcare providers ([also available as a PDF here](#)) could be a template for making your own.

Resources for Reducing Stress and Enhancing Resilience

- View an interesting tool that the Providence Health System has brought up for their staff (available [here](#))

- Invite staff to explore using online tools like Vennly. Vennly is an app that offers a safe, inclusive place for people to explore themes related to spirituality and everyday life through the perspectives of respected spiritual and community leaders across different backgrounds and traditions.
- Adapt this Mindfulness Moment for Providers in end of life care ([available here](#))
- Print out and share the Stress management tips from [Sojourn Chaplaincy](#)
- **Participate** in the International Buddhist Chaplains Foundation's **Project Metta** by submitting videos, artwork, messages, song, music, poems, etc. as a way to amplify hope, beauty, inspiration, and goodwill during this time.

AFTER COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

We know that at some point the crisis of COVID-19 will pass and restrictions will be lifted, perhaps gradually or more swiftly. While right now we don't know exactly how this will look, we do know that it is unlikely that the demand for spiritual care and support from chaplains will lessen. In fact, it is most likely to increase. As you look to the future, we want to share two important messages:

Live in the New Reality

it is vital that we all recognize that the “new reality” of our lives is not going to change back to the “old reality” and that we need to rise to the challenge of innovation.

As the organizations we work for struggle to deal with the demands of COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 world, it is unrealistic to expect that the impact of these struggles will not affect chaplaincy departments. Now is the time to set aside from expecting (or demanding) a return to what was before and to turn to the opportunity for innovation that faces us today. This is the time to look for new and better ways to enhance our value to our organizations.

How can we do this? First by recognizing that our attitude and approach defines us. Assume an attitude of acceptance of what is “now” and an openness to what is possible if we embrace the changing and the new. What this looks like will vary by organization but an example to consider is to reach out to those organizations and communities outside your hospital or facility and create a network of spiritual care and support that embraces the needs of your larger community.

If done while not diminishing the accomplishing of your job, this will enhance your value not only to your organization but to your community. When coupled with attention to self-care, this can also enhance your own feelings of accomplishment and value.

For those who are leading chaplaincy departments, here are a few resources that may assist in moving forward:

- One of the simplest and best resources on understanding and managing the process of change is *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes* by William Bridges. New and used versions are available on [Amazon](#).
- Another good resource on the change process is John Kotter's [8 step change process](#) and his book on *Leading Change* also on [Amazon](#)
- Although not specific to the COVID-19 crisis or to chaplaincy, this article from [INC Magazine](#) provides some important tips to keep in mind.

Be prepared for the Trauma Pandemic

While there will be long postponed opportunities for connection and celebration as restrictions are eased, the pent up grief and losses that continue into the future may at times feel like a tsunami that threatens to engulf us. Staff who have labored long and hard in challenging conditions may now need the support that they have been unwilling to name and accept.

Liz Stokes, director of the American Nurses Association's Center for Ethics and Human Rights was interviewed recently on MSNBC and spoke about the challenges US medical workers face amid the battle against the coronavirus pandemic. "One of the things I'm thinking about is [that] the psychological toll is going to be the next pandemic, the psychological toll on the health care workers who are witnessing massive amounts of death, massive amounts of grief... and we're expecting that many nurses are going to suffer from PTSD, moral distress and burnout," Stokes said.

Literatures in trauma, particularly vicarious trauma (or secondary trauma), may be helpful to name what you and your staff are or may experience.

“Vicarious trauma is the experience of bearing witness to the atrocities committed against another. It is the result of absorbing the sight, smell, sound, touch and feel of the stories told in detail by victims searching for a way to release their own pain.”¹

Moral distress and **moral injury** also name the impact of the pandemic on you and your staff. Different from trauma, these terms address your working environment and the extreme and unprecedented circumstances in which you are carrying out your work.

¹ Richardson, J. I., & National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (Canada). (2001). *Guidebook on vicarious trauma: Recommended solutions for anti-violence workers*. Ottawa: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence. Available at: https://vtt.ovc.ojp.gov/ojpasset/Documents/OS_Vicarious_Trauma_Guidebook-508.pdf

You may be providing care in a climate of limited resources. You may be working remotely while other members of your staff are physically on the front lines. You may be responding to demands from higher levels of administration that counter your deepest commitments about the care that you provide. All of these present moral dilemmas that can lead to moral injury.

It is important to note that these moral dimensions are already present in our work and of even greater importance is that you think about the impact of these dimensions on your staff as you move forward.

Finally, you know best what support you need as you think of moving to the future. The Chaplaincy Innovation Lab wants to support you in not only being prepared but also in honoring your own awareness of what will be most helpful.

We invite you to share with us your thoughts on what you need and what might be helpful, whether it's on caring for yourself or caring for others. If there is something that you would like us to have available to support you as we all move forward, take a moment and let us know by [clicking here](#).

And for when you have a weekend ... or take time to rest ...

(with a thank you to Nettie Writes and everyone at the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab's Facebook page for Chaplains) ...

For This Weekend – n. Reynolds

Let us take rest from Zooming.

Let us leave our inboxes sacredly full.

Let us step away from the noises of keyboard clicks and step into the backyard to feel the raindrops instead.

Let us hear the sparrow song,

Instead of the work phone ring.

Let us stand in front of a picture of our loved ones near and far,

Unmasked, ungloved and bare our love and concern for them.

Let us be lifted by joyous table games of scrabble, dominoes and cards.

For this weekend, let us all have a monopoly of laughter together.

Let us remember the sun will rise in the morning.

Let us know it is ok for us not to rise with it, and instead feel the soft weight of our blankets and pillows in the morning.

Let us take joy in how deeply we care for others, and rejoice in giving ourselves this same care.

For this weekend, let us recognize the power of our “being” amidst all we are doing.

Let us together take a deep breath of gratefulness for our hearts and hands that hold the power of healing.



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