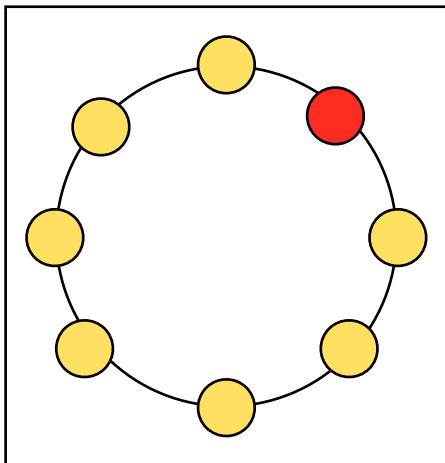


Introduction - Pastoral Care is something which every Church is called to offer to its members, those who are part of the wider Church Community and those who may turn to the Church looking for help in times of challenge, difficulty or crisis. A healthy Christian community is one in which people know that they are loved, visitors are welcome and young and old alike are valued and feel safe. The care that we offer, both at times of crisis and in everyday life is an active proclamation of God's love in Christ and for all the world.¹ All good pastoral care is rooted in prayer.

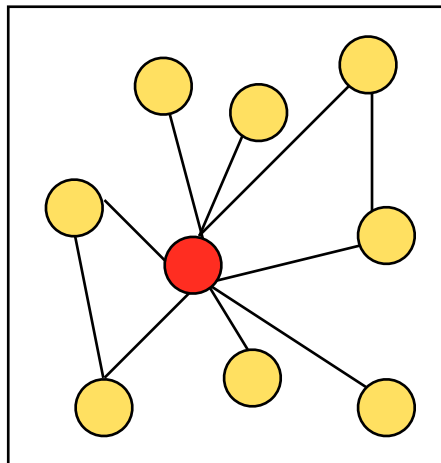
Offering Pastoral Care at Trinity - If pastoral care is an active proclamation of God's love in Christ it is something which we should offer in the way that Christ models to us in the Gospels and in a way which the whole Church can be involved. It is something which we should all share in not something which a select few should 'do to' the rest of the Church, whilst recognising there are those within the Church community who because of particular needs e.g. being housebound, need to be cared for in a particular way. At its heart pastoral care is to 'love one another as I have loved you'² and to weep with with one another as *Jesus wept*.³

Within Trinity pastoral care could be offered in three ways:

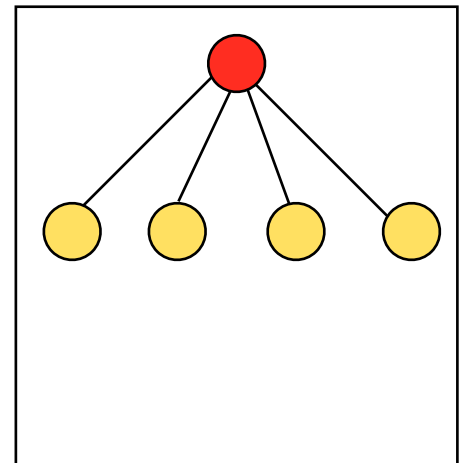
Within Small Groups



In Connect Groups



Through Pastoral Visitors



Supporting this - the three models of offering pastoral care will be supported in the following ways:

As a Church we will encourage everyone to be part of a small group (e.g. House Group, Study Group, Craft Group) where the group will offer care to each other. In each group there will be an appointed **Pastoral Link Person** who may or may not be the small group leader. The pastoral link person will be responsible for ensuring mutual care is taking place and linking matters of concern, celebration, challenge or crisis to the Minister as appropriate.

Those who choose not to be part of a small group will be grouped into **Connect Groups** of similar or connected people (e.g. geography, come to coffee morning). Each group will have a **Pastoral Carer** who will keep in touch with those in their group when they see them and offer pastoral care as appropriate. They will be the person who shares matters of concern, celebration, challenge or crisis to the Minister as appropriate and may gather the group together on an adhoc basis. The group may offer some care to one another depending on specific relationships within the group or when the group meets.

Those who are unable to attend worship regularly either because they are housebound, live in a nursing home or because of a particular situation e.g. they are a primary carer for others, will be grouped into **Pastoral Groups** and cared for by a **Pastoral Visitor** who will visit those in their group on a regular basis (quarterly) and keep them informed of Church news and information. They will be the person who shares matters of concern, celebration, challenge or crisis to the Minister as appropriate.

¹ <http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/pastoral-care>, last accessed 11th December 2014.

² John 13:34-5

³ John 11:35

- The Minister will:
 - receive news of concerns, celebrations, challenges and crises from the Pastoral Link People, Pastoral Carers and Pastoral Visitors and respond appropriately.
 - visit or meet with anyone who requests to see them and encourage this on the front page of Trinity Times each week.
 - visit those who they know are having a challenging time or who the Holy Spirit prompts them to.
 - be available to support the Pastoral Link People, Pastoral Carers and Pastoral Visitors.
- Two Pastoral Secretaries will be appointed by the Church Council to:
 - administrate the Pastoral Care system in liaison with the Church Office and the Minister.
 - arrange for the Pastoral Link People, Pastoral Carers and Pastoral Visitors to meet twice a year as the Pastoral Committee to:
 - support each other,
 - review the Church Membership and Community Rolls
 - oversee the Pastoral Care System
 - ensure opportunities to explore membership are available each year
 - to prepare agendas and take minutes at the Pastoral Committee Meetings.
 - facilitate Pastoral Care training for the whole Church.
 - one of them to be a member of the Church Council and report regularly to the Church Council on pastoral issues and changes to the church's membership and community rolls, encouraging the council to develop good pastoral care programmes for the life of the church.
- External Agencies - it is crucial in Pastoral Care that it is recognised that no one can do everything and the Minister and Church Office will be able to signpost those who need more specialist care to appropriate agencies.