

## Introduction of the a new Ministry



**Pastor Peter Haas speaking:** Friends let us wake up, let us be roused by a new vision by the gift of the Holy Spirit that is called the **iCare Net Ministry that we can learn how to care for one another better.** That we can improve our delivery of care. I'm so grateful for this team of volunteers who have given of themselves in the last week. Why don't you stand up.

Peter calls forward Louise Redding to share the vision, I give thanks for you, your efforts and time.

### **Louise Redding speaking:**

I am very excited this morning to have the opportunity to introduce to you our new caring program here at WHPC called *iCare Net*. It is important that everyone knows how it works for several reasons. **The first is that we want to know if you or a member of your family has a care or concern.** So, whether you have had an accident or are going to have surgery or have an ongoing medical issue, we has your faith family want to walk beside you and be there for you.

The other reason why it is important for you to know about iCare Net is so that **you can volunteer to help frequent visitors and fellow members who are going through tough times.** When we help others we allow God to work through us to be a blessing to someone with the gifts that he has blessed us with.

The vision for this ministry comes from 2Corinthians 1:3-4 and I'd like to share them with you now. Louise read from The Message Bible:

### ***2 Corinthians 1:3-4 The Rescue***

*All praise to the God and Father of our Master, Jesus the Messiah! Father of all mercy! God of all healing counsel! He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us.*

And that is what we intend iCare to be about. So you may be asking yourselves how does it work? Well the first thing that has to happen is that **we need to be made aware of your situation.** We cannot help unless we know there is a need. So **call the church and ask for the Care Office or Margaret Moser** who is in charge of gathering this information and sharing it with the proper people. **She is going to tell Peter Haas** who is our pastor for all things community related and **he or one of the other pastors will contact you and along with one of the deacons assess whether or not your situation would best be handled by the iCare Net Ministry.** If it is you will be assigned an **iCare coordinator.**

Now an **iCare coordinator is a special volunteer who makes a one year commitment** to handle care situations one at a time from beginning to end. There are going to be twelve coordinators and they are going to be willing to be trained on the ins and outs of email and other various tools that will be an integral part of iCare.

In addition, the iCare coordinators will possess strong administrative skills. They will be the ones responsible for executing, following up and following through with each care situation that they are assigned until it has been resolved. But by far the most important characteristic an iCare coordinator will possess is a strong calling from God to care for others. We anticipate that these coordinators will each handled one to two situations a year; however, it is our hope that as this ministry becomes more visible and valuable within our church community we will begin to serve the unserved – those who currently aren't aware that we have care system in place or who would feel uncomfortable asking for help. We want to provide care for everyone who is going through a difficult time and the beauty of iCare is that we can add more coordinators if we need to.

**So let's imagine you are in need of care.** The iCare coordinator is going to contact you or a close family member to assess your specific needs and determine how these needs can best be met. Whether that means you and your family need a few meals brought to your home a couple of times a week for the next few weeks or you need some rides back and forth to your doctor's office or you need someone to run errands for you – those are all things that can be taken care of through the iCare Net Ministry.

Once the iCare coordinator has all that information, he or she is then going to share it with the iCare volunteers. **The iCare volunteers are men, women and youth of our congregation who will respond to God's call to care for those in need of help.** They are truly the foundation of this ministry and really where more of you can get involved. It is our hope that there will be a very large pool of volunteers who are called to show compassion by turning their empathy into action.

It is one thing to feel bad about someone's situation and it is another to actually do something about it and that is what compassion is. **iCare volunteers will attend a one hour training session.** The length of a Sunday School class where they will be taught about the tools of iCare; there will be information shared on how to practice good listening skills; we will learn how to pray with someone in a delicate care situation; and there will be tips on how best to serve a person in need.

**The most important aspects of being an iCare volunteer are that you are willing to respond to a request for help and follow through with the requested action and that you are willing to be missional in your response.** In other words, this is not just about serving people that you already know, because frankly we assume that you are going to do that anyway. This is about stepping out and serving someone that you may not know, that may not live in your neighborhood. But if you've ever had an experience where you've been care for or served by someone that you didn't know, you know what an incredible blessing that is and that is what we are trying to accomplish here. We're asking you to open yourselves up to God so that He can use you to be a blessing for someone else.

**The iCare Net Ministry is an invitation for all of us to live into our church value of courageously caring for one another. Spreading the needs of our congregation over a large number of volunteers in an organized way allows us to provide extraordinary care to those experiencing difficult times and be the true hands and feet of our Lord, Jesus Christ – and really that is what we are all called to do.**