

UUFA Committee/Group Charter – UUFA Care Program

- 1. Name of Committee or Group:** UUFA Care Program - Care Rings and Pastoral Care Team
- 2. General Purpose:** The UUFA is committed to being a caring, supportive spiritual community. The Care Rings enhance the caring ministry of the UUFA and encourage friendships and support systems among members living in close proximity. They provide meals for those in need, having gatherings so that members can get to know one another, and welcome new members. The Pastoral Care Team provides a ministry of caring, support, and hope so that no member of our congregation need be alone. The PCT supports the minister by calling or visiting members who are experiencing crisis or chronic needs.
- 3. Membership:** Specify the size (number of members). How is the committee/group formed (e.g. elected or appointed, and if so, by whom?). What are the requirements for committee membership? What is length of a committee member's service (e.g., can members serve only a set number of years)? How are vacancies filled? Is the minister, or other staff, or other leaders, involved in the committee/group (e.g., as *ex officio* members)? Can non-members of UUFA be members of the committee/group? Is there a fixed and/or maximum number of committee members? What is the selection process if more people are interested than there are slots available?

The Care Rings consist of eight neighborhood groups led by one, but preferably two coordinators. At present there are twelve coordinators. All members of the UUFA are placed in a Care Ring when they join; friends of the Fellowship who are willing to participate are welcome. The Care Rings have been on-going since 1995. The CR Coordinators are chosen by the Care Program Coordinator/Minister for their caring skills, organizational ability, and reliability; anyone who expresses a desire to serve would be considered, and there is no set term.

At present the Pastoral Care Team consists of seven members who are led by a Coordinator. Members are chosen by the Coordinator/Minister for their talents, experience, and training which enables them to skillfully respond to fellow members in need (non-members could serve as long as they are qualified). There is no set length of service, just a continued willingness to give one's time and energy. There is no fixed or maximum number of members; when people leave and new members are needed to keep up with the work load, then qualified people will be asked to serve. The minister attends all the meetings, as well as the community minister, Dr. Don Randall, a psychologist.

- 4. Leadership:** What are the leadership roles in the committee/group? E.g., chair, secretary, others? How is/are the leader(s) chosen? What are the responsibilities of the leader(s)?

The Care Ring Coordinators are chosen by the Care Program Coordinator with the advice of the minister. The CR Coordinators: 1. Set up meals for those recovering from sickness, surgery, or accidents or new parents. 2. Plan social gatherings so members can get to know one another. 3. Welcome new members. 4. Keep the membership list up to date. 5. Let members know if someone would appreciate cards or notes.

The Coordinator of the Care Program is chosen by the minister and is responsible for:

1. Coordinating the Care Rings by sharing information with the CR Coordinators and asking them to be responsible for certain care needs, i.e. planning meals for those in need, welcoming new members, and asking the members to send cards and notes of concern or congratulation.
2. Leading the Pastoral Care Team by facilitating the monthly meeting, keeping up with care needs in the Fellowship, asking members to be responsible for particular care needs, and keeping in touch with the minister.
3. Writes the Care Ring Sharing that goes in the monthly Tapestry.
4. Coordinates the Card Program which consists of sympathy and congratulatory cards and birthday cards sent to anyone over 75.

5. Meetings:

How often does the committee/group meet?

How, when and where are committee meetings announced and to whom, e.g., Board, Leadership Council, Congregation?

How are committee meetings run, insuring that they are effective, creative, and community-building? How are decisions made (e.g. majority vote or consensus)? Are committee meetings open?

The Care Ring Coordinators might meet once or twice a year for discussion of how the program is operating.

The Pastoral Care Team meets once a month and is led by the Pastoral Care Team Coordinator ; the minister and the community minister also offer leadership and information. The meetings usually take place on the 2nd Wednesday at noon; if the Coordinator or the minister can't attend, then the meeting might be changed to another Wednesday. During the meeting information about current care needs is shared by the members and there is general discussion. These meetings are closed because of confidentiality.

6. List the specific duties and responsibilities of the committee/group:

See #4

7. Annual Goals, Objectives: (State how and when the committee will develop a set of goals for itself. Will the committee annually review its functions and duties?)

The goals/objectives of the Care Rings and Pastoral Care Team have remained the same, though occasionally there are events that require additional effort. i.e. when there was an interim minister for two years. (The Pastoral Care Team, created in 2001, was formed in response to our growing congregation and the minister no longer being able to keep up with all the care needs). On an informal basis, the minister and the community minister have been asked to assess the job that the PCT is doing, but there should be a more formal yearly review.

8. Accountability: (To whom is the committee or group accountable or answerable? The congregation, the Board, another committee, or perhaps the committee's/group's members only?)

The Care Rings and the Pastoral Care Team are accountable directly to the Care Program Coordinator and the minister, though they serve the entire Fellowship.

9. Reporting requirements (e.g., To whom does the committee/group provide reports? How often does it report?):

There is usually an annual report that is written by the Care Program Coordinator and sent to the Board.

10. Relationship to professional staff and other committees/groups of UUFA: (State the explicit relationship of the committee/group to each member of the professional staff, and to any other committees/groups with which it has an important relationship.)

The Care Program Coordinator lets the Congregational Administrator know who is on the Pastoral Care Team and who coordinates the Care Rings and when members might be away on vacation so the Administrator knows whom to contact if there is a care need. Similarly, the Administrator might contact the Care Program Coordinator about a care need that has come through the office.

The Care Program Coordinator lets the minister know about any more serious care needs, especially those that might require a hospital visit or more professional care.

11. Communications: List in what ways the committee/group communicates regularly with other committees/groups, the congregation, and the wider Athens community. State what presence the committee/group has or would like to have on the Fellowship's web site.

A notice is placed in the weekly e-mail and sometimes the Care Ring Sharing in Tapestry reminding members about the availability of the Pastoral Care Team for calls or visits; this should be mentioned on the Fellowship's web site.

12. What decision-making authority does the committee/group have? (e.g., communicate with groups outside UUFA, represent UUFA outside, create policies, etc.)

None.

13. Spending authorities: Does the committee/group have to request approval for any expenditures within its budget? Who will be authorized to sign for committee/group expenditures against the budget?

The Care Program Coordinator does not have to request approval for expenditures within its budget. The budget of \$100 goes for stamps and cards for the Card Program.

Proposed charter submitted by (name and title): Susan Ponsoldt

Date: December 16, 2010