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Every church has [or should have] a growth strategy. As church leaders and believers in Christ, we are called to spread the love of Jesus everywhere and to everyone. One of the ways we can reach people is by consistent outreach. By meeting the needs within our communities, we display God's love and offer up an invitation to get to know Him better through our churches.

Our Church of God International Offices Division of Care offers some incredible opportunities for local churches. The Care Division is a bridge from the Church of God to a hurting world. One of the most powerful ministries within this division is the Chaplains Commission. They offer specialized training that is a great way for local churches to reach out to the community. Here is one that is available to both laity and clergy.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAPLAINCY

Community Service Chaplains are men and women who are dedicated to the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of the employees, residents, patients, or inmates, of the institution or agency wherein they provide ministry. A chaplain may be professional clergy or a layperson dedicated to serve outside the four walls of a church, most often in a volunteer capacity.

The Church of God Chaplains Commission Community Service Chaplaincy program purposes to build a spiritual bridge between the local church and the community through concern that evokes compassion and manifests in care. Their mantra is to offer CONCERN / COMPASSION / and CARE.

This commission offers a teaching course with certification as a recognized *Community Care Chaplain*. Up front, interested and/or potential candidates should know that this is NOT training for specialized evangelism.

The term "chaplain" seems synonymous with the word "pastor" to those who don't understand the difference, which is subtle, but significant and profound. Pastors are called to teach, preach, and promote the gospel, minister to the hurting and in their own faith community. They are to reach lost people of all faiths and that is their ultimate goal and purpose.

Chaplains are called to be with persons of ALL faith traditions, and those of no faith, in a way that is respectful and supportive to them in their time of need. Community Chaplains provide emotional and spiritual support to people of all religions and beliefs, often working outside of a traditional church setting. The work of chaplaincy requires learning to operate and serve in a pluralistic and diverse context. As spiritual caretakers, the call to serve and minister to a wide range of people includes those outside of their own faith traditions. In this way, chaplaincy is distinct from the congregational (or traditional) model of ministry. Understanding the responsibilities and working conditions of a chaplain may help a person to decide if this is the right career for them.

Briefly described, the role of a community chaplain is to:

- Provide spiritual care, guidance, and support.
- Give a “listening ear” to people who may be in distress or who may need counsel.
- Engage in community events, especially those with a religious theme.
- Teach, manage, and preach.
- Oversee the management of the ministry in their local church (if possible).
- Support effective, efficient, and ethical use of institutional resources and serve as institutional liaisons to community spiritual and faith groups.
- Coordinate spirituality care plan with the care plans of the other members of the interdisciplinary team to ensure that unified rather than fragmented care is provided.

Does this sound interesting to you? Would you like to know more about how you can be trained to become a Community Service Chaplain? The Church of God Chaplains Commission is committed to training volunteer chaplains in areas that enhance compassionate outreach. The Commission offers training classes to equip clergy and lay persons to operate as a Community Service Chaplain. The training includes general overviews in the areas of spiritual guidance, peer to peer counseling, stress management, grief, critical incident management, ministry in a pluralistic setting, guidance in the workplace, as well as thorough training on the history and theology of chaplaincy.

To get all the details and begin the process of training just click the link below:

<https://www.cogchaplains.org/csc>