

United Methodist Hospitals Ministry
BULLETIN BITS

Parents and Children

There are many mothers and fathers who lives go “on hold” when they have a sick child. They sit endless hours by the child’s bedside, knowing that there are other children at home, that jobs have been put on hold, and no matter where that parent is, they need to be someplace else. When the United Methodist Hospitals Ministry chaplain takes a few minutes to talk with a mom or dad, it gives them a chance to list off their many worries, their deepest hurts and fears, their love for their child and their family, and their appreciation for the doctors and nurses who are doing everything possible to help make their child better. One pastor called the UMHM chaplain and said, “Will you stop by and give a Mom a big hug.....she really needs that right now.”

Waiting. . . .for “The Call” - Organ Transplantation

For many US veterans living in the western half of the United States, Madison is one of the closest locations for organ transplant. When their health dictates the need to be close to the hospital for “The Call,” veterans move to an extended stay hotel in Madison to wait. Some wait two weeks, some two months, some over a year for “The Call” that a donor organ has been located. They are a long way from home. A conversation with the United Methodist Hospitals Ministry chaplain about their United Methodist church back home gives them an opportunity to talk about their church family, the prayer chains that are supporting them, their life in their congregation. It is an important time for them to tell how they are part of a church family and the importance of that church family in their life.

Hospital Humor

Hospital Humor from the United Methodist Hospitals Ministry chaplain: A patient who spent almost all of October and November at Meriter Hospital relayed she knew when it was the end of the third quarter at the Badger home football games. “When they start *Jump Around*,” she told the chaplain, “my bed begins to vibrate.”

Rev. Jane Follmer Zekoff, Chaplain United Methodist Hospitals Ministry (2011)

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Getting Reconnected?

About 50 percent of the contacts by the United Methodist Hospitals Ministry chaplain who serves St. Mary’s, Meriter and UW Hospitals in Madison, are persons who continue their relationship with God, but have discontinued their relationship with the church. Many have not been to church for 5 – 30 years, yet, they still feel a United Methodist connection. They are eager to have the chaplain pray with them and for them. There is still a small flame of faith burning inside. We should never assume these folks don’t want a chance to once again be invited to church. The United Methodist Hospitals Ministry helps to begin a new connection.

My Pastor Makes a Big Difference!

A cancer patient, who recently moved out of state, shared with the United Methodist Hospitals Ministry chaplain that since leaving her Wisconsin church home she did not have the stamina needed to find a new church home. She had made it to a few neighboring UM churches, but her weakened condition finally kept her at home. She missed her Wisconsin church family, where she still had her membership. With her permission, the chaplain contacted the patient’s Wisconsin pastor. A day later, after her pastor came to visit, she shared with the chaplain, when he walked into the room I began to cry. It was a wonderful visit.” These connections are priceless.

Seeing Wonder Close Up!

For the United Methodist chaplain who visits in Madison hospitals as part of the United Methodist Hospitals Ministry, there is always the wonder of what happens when a patient is discharged from the hospital. Sharing conversation and prayer, listening to hope for new life and energy, meeting family members, and exchanging warm handshakes can be a powerful experience. It is not an out-of-sight-out-of-mind ministry, but a circle of prayer for new health, new energy, and new life for those who have left the hospital.

Rev. Jane Follmer Zekoff, Chaplain United Methodist Hospitals Ministry (2011)