

# We Value Caring



## Core Value

### *We value caring.*

We value the relationship we share in Christ, and so we care for one another in times of joy and sorrow. As the scriptures say, “Be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other.”

*... and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32)*

## Introduction

One of the more essential elements of the family of faith is her ability to care. Care is expressed in many ways at LABC. WE care by sharing with others during times of sorrow. Our crisis ministry team provides meals for families following a funeral and at other times of crises. Many of our Sunday School classes visit in nursing homes or provide meals for their members during times of need. One class has an annual dinner for a group of elderly in a housing neighborhood.

Care is expressed as deacons take communion to homebound and shut-ins. We have offered a monthly “touch Ministry” on Wednesdays in which we send cards or make visits. Care is expressed through giving that allows us to share with other agencies like the Childrens Home or Salvation Army. Through our giving we provide much needed financial assistance.

Sometimes we express care by attending activities of children and youth in sports, music, art, just to name a few areas or by taking the time to have lunch with college students.

WE often ask each other “How are you?” I really believe that we are sincere in our asking. The term care, as you can begin to see, covers a lot of areas. To say that we value caring is to acknowledge that on some level at some time we have sensed and experienced God’s care for us and we want to not only share our care with others but create an opportunity for others to experience God’s care as we have.

## Bible Study

This passage in the letter to the Ephesians is couched in a section in which Paul encourages the Ephesians in their relationship to each other. I would suggest reading Ephesians 4:25-5:2, to get a broader picture and understanding of what caring means and why it is so important a value to us. In this broader context you can almost sense Paul saying in your relationship with each other do these things—Quit stealing, don't talk bad of others, don't sin, speak truthfully.

What is important to see is that in all of these, our actions are to be directed not to ourselves but to others and to God. Our actions, for good or for bad really do affect others. If we are aware of our actions and their impact on others then we may begin to change how we act toward others. Remember that Jesus said, '*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.*' Luke 10:27

Jesus emphasized that in this world we are in fellowship with one another. WE don't take one another for granted or treat others poorly. Rather, we see one another even as God sees us. And we care for one another even as God has cared for us.

You may have seen a small book titled "Kid's Random Acts of Kindness." It is a collection of letters by children of ways in which others have expressed kindness and care to them.. A fourth grader wrote, *I give cookies and other food to friends during lunch if they are having a bad day.* (*Kid's Random Acts of Kindness*, p. 31) I'm sure those friends felt a little bit better knowing someone care for them.

Truth is, we all feel better just knowing someone cares. Our circumstance may not change, but our attitude does change and our hope is increased, just knowing someone cares.

Why do we care? Verse 32 reminds us that the model is God forgiving us through his son Jesus. God is the one who is showing us the better way in terms of relating to each other. God is the one who took the first step in fellowship with others. Even though we are undeserving God in Christ chose to shower us with his love.

We are encouraged then to "be imitators of God." Years ago Charles Sheldon wrote the book, "In His Steps." This book asked the question "What Would Jesus Do?" It's popularity re-emerged a few years ago and the slogan "WWJD" began appearing on bracelets, bumper stickers, posters and T-shirts. In relation to our study the answer to the question, "What would Jesus do?" is simply this—Jesus would care and we are to care as well.

I'm glad that that are so many opportunities in our church, our communities, and our families to show our care for one another. I'm glad as well that this is a core value for us because it expresses so beautifully our desire to let God be our model for living in relationship with each other.

## LABC Core Values

There are three sections of the core value that stick out. The first is the first phrase *We value the relationship we share in Christ* . . . At the center of this core value is our relationship in Christ. It is important to us. That relationship is something we constantly work on. But the relationship doesn't just involve me and Christ. This core value recognizes that we as a community of faith share in that relationship. In other words, Christ is *my* Savior and Christ is

*our* Savior. Each Sunday we gather as a community of faith, not merely as individuals. We walk in this journey through life together.

Second, . . . *and so we care for one another* . . . As a result of our common relationship in Christ and as a result of God's great care for us, we care for one another. I've told the story many times and it has become one of my favorite. A little girl was late coming home from school one day. Her mother asked what had taken her so long and where she had been, expressing both her worry and frustration. The little girl responded, "I'm late because I saw another little girl sitting on her front porch crying." Her mother wanting to know more asked, "What did you do?" And the little girl said, "I didn't know what to do, so I sat down and cried with her."

There are many times we don't know what to do. But we offer our presence to others, just as Christ offered himself to us.

Finally, . . . *As the scriptures say*, The Bible instructs us. It is our guide. Our core values are not just something we come up with because they sound good or look good on paper. We are not trying to impress someone with them. Rather, it is the Bible, interpreted through the creative lens of the Holy Spirit that guides us in expressing our core values.

## **Conclusion**

Caring is not always easy. It is sometimes demanding. Yet caring always brings a sense of meaning to our lives and to the lives of those who have been cared for. Caring is but one way we as a community of faith express our love for God.

## **Reference**

- *Kid's Random Acts of Kindness* (California: Conari Press, 1994)





## Daily Devotionals: Caring



### **Monday: *Life is Unpredictable*, by Greg & Donna Schepman**

#### **Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:32**

Life is unpredictable and hard. It seems we have experienced a roller coaster ride of emotions during the past several months. Beginning in April, Nathan, though not at fault, was involved in a serious automobile accident that claimed the lives of two people. God was watching over him and spared his life. Shortly after, a tumor was found in his lung. Months of testing followed eventually resulting in major surgery. We were told that he had lymphoma on a Monday after surgery. Prayers from our church family and our own family brought about a change in diagnosis on the Thursday of that week. He was diagnosed with Castleman's disease. One week after being released from the hospital, he and his wife, Shana, had their first child – William Nathaniel. On the Sunday that they were to be released, they were told that Nathaniel would have to stay. His Bella Ruben count was climbing. For the next few days, he had to be on IV's and under a light. Finally, with more prayer, God worked through the doctors so that he improved and was able to be released. Tommy and Dave provided us comfort, hope and support – not from a distance; but they were holding our hands and praying with us in the hallways of the hospitals. Our church family sent cards, left messages on our answering machine and prayed for us during all these events. Without our pastor, church staff and church family, we would not be enjoying the blessings that we have today. Our son is recovering and our grandson is precious and healthy. God is good. Our pastor, Tommy, is good. Dave is good. We are so blessed to be a part of this great, caring church. Life – for now – is good, too.

### **Tuesday: *Do You Really Care?*, by Eloise Roberts**

#### **Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 5:7**

It was early in the 1970's when I was working in the College Department of the LABC Sunday School. Dr. John Baird was our director and teachers - E.R. Purdom, Dr. Ray Hammond, and Mark Dexter. Each taught at different times through several years. Irene Rawlings and I provided a motherly touch and orange juice with a muffin or donut. These were gobbled down quickly, because students would come without breakfast from Centre College.

One of these students was Molly, normally very quiet. To engage her in conversation, I asked, "Molly, what is your favorite hymn?" The pastor had asked us as a church to choose our ten favorite hymns. Without hesitation, Molly replied with emphasis on YOU, "Do YOU Really Care?" I was able to answer, "Of course I care. We will certainly sing your choice in our opening session of the department today."

That concluded our conversation that day, but memory of the incident has lingered. Occasionally, I recall it and ask myself: Is there some doubt in anyone's mind that I really care? What more could I do to show that I care?

How can I show people that I really do care about them? I care about them when they have sorrows; I care about them in their joys; and I care in all emotions in between. However, as much as I care, I know someone who cares even more. His name is Jesus. Cast all your cares upon Him for He cares for you.

**Wednesday: LABC, A caring Place, by Jolene Hutchinson**

**Scripture Reading: Proverbs 17:17; Philippians 1:3**

*A friend loveth at all times (Proverbs 17:17)*

Dan Rather (TV news anchorman) once said, “When you live in a small town, people know when you are sick, and they care when you die.” These words apply to our community as well as the church family of LABC.

My parents moved to Danville in 1936 and soon became active members of LABC. For more than 70 years LABC has shared our joys as well as our sorrows.

June 27, 1996, our daughter, Anne, and little grandson, Paxston, died in a car accident. You surrounded us with love, and kindness by your visits, phone calls, food, cards, hugs, and prayers. And you were there by our sides as we buried these precious members of our family.

Once I got to the place where I could pray, I repeatedly asked God to help me feel that something good could come from the tragedy we had experienced. God provided a way for this to take place. Three years later I retired from banking and was employed at Stith Funeral Home as After Care Coordinator. I truly felt that I was where God wanted me and doing what He wanted me to do at that time.

Even though I am no longer employed at Stith Funeral Home, my prayer is that God will continue to use me here at LABC in helping others in their life journey. Thank you for being the wonderful, caring, compassionate church family that you are.

*I thank my God every time I remember you. (Philippians 1:3)*

**Thursday: God Cares, by Tommy Valentine**

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:25-34**

On my back porch a mother robin meticulously built her nest in a secluded corner. Sheltered from the wind, rain, sun, and intruders, she sits there day after day keeping the four tiny greenish blue eggs protected and warm.

My dog recently became aware of that nest. He can't get to it but is quiet interested and somewhat disturbed that this bird has put down roots in his turf. If he gets too close mother robin voices her displeasure and sounds her warning, at times flying off the nest and swooping down on my dog's unsuspecting head. It will be quite the interaction to watch over the next few weeks.

Many times, God protects us just like a mother bird protects her young. Surrounding us in arms of love and grace, enveloping us in God's care. There is something special to know that God loves us enough to take care of us each day. Today, let yourself feel the caring presence of God in your life.

**Friday: Anyone Can Make a Difference, by Philip Wysong**

**Scripture Reading: James 5:13-15**

I am Philip Wysong. I am a junior at Campbellsville College majoring in Accounting. Many people don't realize the opportunity and ability they have to make a difference in the lives of others. It doesn't take extraordinary actions to make a difference. All it takes is simple ordinary acts of kindness to others. Visiting a sick friend or just extending a kind word to someone in need is all it really takes.

Many such actions of this church and the community have greatly influenced my faith, from Tim Noel coming to Baltimore to pray with my family during my second brain surgery and the many cards and prayers I received from this church, to the teachers at Boyle County High School giving up their sick days so that my mom would have enough sick days so that she could stay in Baltimore while I was sick.

All these actions made a great difference in my life. They not only helped me through one of the most difficult times in my life but have continued to encourage and inspire my faith, throughout my life especially as I have gone on to college at Campbellsville University.

So anyone can make a true difference in the lives of others even if it's done through such everyday actions like visiting a sick friend or sending notes of encouragement and prayer such as those sent by the Women On Mission group or the prayer cards sent by the church on Wednesday nights. All these actions and others like them can and do make a difference.