



Community Connection & Individual Visit Training

Outline how to conduct a "Community Connection" and an Individual Visit at an assisted living facility.

A Community Connection is the twice a month group gathering at the Assisted Living Facility

Celebrate Seniors - Team structure

- Teams consist of 3 to 5 members, with one person designated as the leader.
- Each person should perform one, or more, roles during the Community Connection.
- Overtime, the team should rotate who is performing different roles to provide experience for everyone. The team leader should coordinate the rotation.
- There is not a special formula as to how this rotation will take place. Since we only hold Community Connections twice a month, it is possible people could be in the same role for one to two months.

Understanding your Community (your assigned facility)

- A core part of the ministry is a desire for you to build relationships within your team and with the residents of your assigned facility.
- Understanding the needs of your residents will help you to prayerfully prepare for your Community Connection and can provide insight into your devotional.
- The best way to understand the needs is through spending time with the residents, prayer, and reliance on the Holy Spirit for insight and direction.
- Your residents will be a mix of people with great attention and focus, to those who might sleep through the hour, appear "lost" with the content, or have highly interruptive behavior. As such, they reflect most churches. We are there to represent Christ, to bring home, share truth and love.
- Is this a church service? Yes, and no. A Community connection is not a traditional church service but anytime you have a gathering of believers you have the making of a church gathering.
- Community Connections should be engaging and interactive. It's ok to ask questions, or better to ask if anyone has a question. It's ok to hit pause, and let a resident share a thought.
- We do not transport, pickup or perform physical tasks for the residents.

Individual Visits

- A great way to get to know the residents is to take a team member with you for individual resident visits.
- During your Community Connection, talk with the residents and ask them if it would be ok if you visit them.
- Write down their first and last name and room number. If they don't remember, check with the activity director.
- Bring a member of your team with you when you conduct individual visits. Follow the Listen-Touch-Pray model.

Listen-Touch-Pray Model

- Most of your time should be spent listening. Ask them questions about their life, their family. Ask them about their faith. Let them share their hope, feelings, and concerns.
- Consider bringing your Bible. Read a short passage and talk to them about the passage.
- Plan to spend about 10 to 15 minutes visiting. This is a guideline, and you might spend more time.
- Ask if you can hold their hand or place your hand on their shoulder.
- Pray with them and for them. Ask them if they would like to pray.

Community Connection - Core Elements

- Each team member should perform one or more roles.
- Community Connections will likely be held in an event room.
- Residents will bring themselves or facility personnel will bring the residents to you.
- It is safe to assume the facility will have no special technology to offer you (screens, mic's, wifi, ...).
- Be prepared to be self-sufficient but feel free to use the facilities tech stack if they set it up for you.

- Even if the facility offers you use of their technology (yes, you can use it as long as they set it up and break it down for you); be prepared for plan b, meaning the tech does not work.
- Community connections are only 1 hour in length. It is great to be social but be mindful of time and quickly transition to starting session.
- The guidelines below are meant as, well guidelines! Overtime, you will find what works best for your facility. However, try to incorporate each of the core elements.

Greeting (5 minutes)

- Once everyone has gathered, one team member should spend a few minutes saying hello, introducing the team members, telling them why we are gathered, who you represent (Celebrate Seniors, a ministry of Faith Dialogue), and opening with a prayer.
- I would not go around the room and try to have people say their name. This is a great activity for when you are done and meeting individually with everyone.

Bible Devotion (10 to 15 minutes)

- One team member should share a Bible devotional.
- My recommendation, pick a section of Scripture that you and the residents can relate to.
- At this time, it is not a goal to assign specific readings for each facility, or each month.
- Gospels and Psalms are great places to start.
- Stay away from heavy, or even divisive, theological topics.
- Select a piece of Scripture that is 10 to 20 verses in length, read the passage and prepare a devotional that is about 10 to 15 minutes in length.

Sing (10 minutes)

- One team member can download 2 or 3 songs and print lyrics.
- Pick hymns, or songs you feel they will know.
- [SpiritualElderCare](http://SpiritualElderCare.com) - has a list of songs that have been sung at a slightly slower pace and pitch. You can download songs to your phone and play them on a portable speaker.
- SpiritualElderCare also has the words to the songs.
- <https://www.lyrics.com> is a site where you can find lyrics
- <https://spiritualeldercare.com/portfolio/hymns-for-alzheimers-free-downloads/>

Closing Prayer or Benediction (5 minutes)

- Close the community connection with a prayer or benediction
- Sample benedictions: Numbers 6:24–26, Romans 15:13, Ephesians 3:20–21

Care (30 minutes)

- Spend the remainder of the time taking to and meeting the residents.
- Pray with the residents, get names and room numbers if you plan to visit.
- Be intentional about keeping your visit short to meet, talk, and pray with as many people as possible.
- Use the Listen-Touch-Pray framework

I find it helpful to know up front there will be times when you feel you are not up to the task or you are out of your "lane." It is good at a time like this, to hit pause, pray, and remember it is the Spirit in you who will give you remembrance, and brings peace and hope.

May 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' Numbers 6:24-26

Blessings and thank you for all you do,

Frank.