



Ideas for Establishing a Card Ministry

Paper cards sent through snail-mail are not as common today as they once were, but cards are still a valuable resource for anybody in ministry with older members in their church. Even though most people now communicate through email and text, some seniors do not have this capability, nor do they want it. Besides personal cards with notes sent through the mail are valued and appreciated. The following are some ideas for reaching out with a paper card.

Who to involve:

- Work through the appropriate church committee and staff person to set up a card ministry.
- Recruit several people who would be interested in sending cards. These may be people from a congregational care team, church lay leaders, and other older adults.
- Consider finding ways to include children and youth intentionally in sending creative cards several times a year, perhaps for Valentine's Day or Christmas.

Gathering the Cards:

- Create cards specific to your church community.
 - a. The front of the card can be the church logo, a picture of the church taken from the ground or a drone, or a drawing that may be special to your specific church such as a stained-glass window in the building.
 - b. The interior of the card can be left blank or can contain a message such as *"Thinking of you from someone who cares very much about you"* or *"Sometimes we just need to know others are thinking about us. I just wanted to let you know you are on my mind."* Custom messages can also be created.
 - c. On the back of the card include the name of the church and contact information.
 - d. Cards can be ordered for print through various websites or can be printed by the church or individuals on cardstock with accompanying envelopes. You can even ask for donations for printing costs if there is no budget available.
- Another option is to make it known that donated cards that others are not using can be donated to the card ministry. In the collection you may want any combination of the following types of cards: birthday cards, get well cards, thinking of you cards, sympathy cards, anniversary cards, thank you cards, blank cards, Christmas cards, Easter cards and possibly other holiday cards.
- Remember to plan for postage.

When to reach out:

- Acknowledge prayer requests with an appropriate card.
- Send a thank-you card to whomever provided the flowers for church or the refreshments for coffee hour each Sunday if applicable.
- Create a list of all the people in your church who will be turning 85 during the year or are over that age. Organize a list beginning with January 1st so that you can go right through the year acknowledging each birthday with a card.
- Create a list of couples in the church who have been married 50 years or more so a card can be sent.
- Share the list of birthdays and anniversaries with the minister and board of deacons or elders so they can also celebrate birthdays and anniversaries if so desired.
- Create a list of Older Adults in the worshipping community to communicate with regularly who are no longer able to participate in person regularly.
- Develop a system to keep track of who cards have been sent to, when, and by whom, so that no one falls through the cracks.

Paper cards sent by mail can be a very effective intentional care ministry and appreciated as a way to stay in contact with the older adults in your congregation reminding them God is present and they are seen.

Writer: Linda Rauenbuehler, Dir. of Congregational Care at Green Valley Presbyterian Church, Henderson, NV.

POAMN: www.poamn.org

Office of Christian Formation: www.pcusa.org/formation

2024



Presbyterian Mission
Office of Christian
Formation

POAMN
Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network