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**Your Ministry as an Elder** You as an elder in the tradition of the Disciples of Christ are honored to represent a full expression of the priesthood of all believers. Yours is a pastoral ministry. You are a shepherd who embodies the compassion of Christ. Yours is a priestly ministry. You are a host for Christ who invites all to His table.

## Getting Ready

-  Prepare your own heart through prayer.
-  Call ahead. Many shut-ins will enjoy the anticipation of your visit.
-  See that you have everything you need.
  - A communion set. Check to see that it has communion wine and bread. (The sets are kept in the communion room across from the baptistry.)
  - The name, address and phone number of the person you will serve.
  - Your Bible.
  - This guide for the service (attached).

## Tips for Your Visit

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|  Listening is more important than speaking.  |  Do not correct a dementia patient. Try to “live within his/her world” for the moment.  |
|  Remember it’s not about you, but about the person you are visiting.                                 |  Do not stay too long.   |
|  Ask, “How are you feeling today?” “How is the family doing?”                                      |  During the visit make a connection with their friends at church. Make sure they are receiving church publications.                                       |
|  Remember you represent God and the church of God to that individual. Let that guide what you say. |  If there is a complaint about the church, do not argue or explain. Simply paraphrase what you have heard so that the shut-in knows they have been heard. |
|  Talk loud enough for the individual to hear.  |  Encourage their prayers for the church.  |
|  Ask, “What is it you need?”   |  Never sit on the bed of the patient.   |
|  Watch as well as listen: body language and tone of voice.   |  Sometimes a gentle human touch is appropriate.   |
|  Welcome the silences.   |  Include others in the room in your conversation  |
|  Ask, “Is there something you specifically want me to pray for?”                                   |  Invite others to share the Lord’s Supper   |
|  Let your prayer be spontaneous and reflect Christ’s care for the one you are visiting.            |  |
|  After prayer, allow for a period of reflection.   |  |

**Continuing Your Ministry** Soon after you leave, write yourself a note regarding follow-up procedures, such as: 1) information to be shared with the pastoral staff and 2) notes you may wish to send those you visited.

Your pastoral/priestly ministry is to continue by praying for the person you visited by name each day for the next week.

## An Elder's Reflection on the Lord's Supper

*Christians generally agree that participation in the Lord's Supper is an important element in the Christian faith. We understand this strengthens us spiritually.*

*In the old covenant, people could approach God only through the priest and sacrificial offerings. Jesus' death on the cross allowed the entrance of the new covenant or agreement between God and His sheep (us). Now all people can personally approach God and communicate with Him. As we eat the bread and drink the cup, Christ is present with us. As we remember Christ's death for us, we renew our commitment to serve Him. —Warren Brooks*



### The Lord's Supper

**An Invitation** In your own words offer Christ's invitation to the table. You may say, *Jesus promised, "When two or three are gathered in my name, I am with them." We are gathered in His name to commune with our Lord.*

**Reverently Set the Table** This is not busy work to simply get done. Your actions create visual interest and build anticipation for receiving the bread and wine.

**A Scripture Reading** You may read a favorite passage of the person you are visiting. If none is suggested, read a text you have in mind. [Scriptures that work well are: Luke 24:28-32 or John 15:1-5.]

**Great Thanksgiving Prayer** Offer a brief prayer of thanksgiving which remembers Jesus' Life and ministry and calls upon God's spirit to transform our lives.

**Words of Institution** *The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, he took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this whenever you drink it in remembrance of me. "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

### Sharing of Bread and Wine

**Closing Prayer** *Grace and Peace to you from God who is, and who was, and who is to come. Unite us in faith and hope through the Holy Spirit, so that we may continue to be guided by your word and will, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, now and forever more. Amen*