



# Caring:

the difference  
between heaven and  
hell?





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# Caring

In an ancient story, a person asks God to show her heaven and hell. God first leads the way to a large room with a pot containing a delicious stew. A crowd of people sit around, each dipping a long-handled spoon into the stew. Their spoons are so long that no one can reach their mouths. “This,” says God, is hell.” Then God leads the way to a room that looks exactly the same. In this room, the people are feeding each other. ...“Ah, heaven!”

## What Caring Means

We live in a culture that applauds self-sufficiency. In truth, we all depend on others all of our lives. What we eat and wear, where we live, how we get from one place to another each day—and more—depends on other people, most of whom we will never know. Humans are relational beings, meant to know others and be known. We need each other to survive. We are stronger and more fully ourselves together. At ORUUC, we are intentional about caring for one another.

When you join this community, you have opportunities to both give and receive care. We walk with one another through good times, challenges, and loss, all of which are part of life. No one at ORUUC walks alone.





# How We Care for One Another

First, each person joins a Circle of Trust or Shared Ministry Group. While most small groups focus on either learning, serving, or caring, all groups engage in all three. All groups care for one another. In small groups, we share what is going on in our lives. We bring each other meals and check in when we haven't seen someone in awhile. We listen. We say, by our very presence, "we care." In small groups, we know others and are known.



What about people who are chronically ill and not be able to be involved in a small group?

The ORUUC Caring Coordinators arrange support for members of the church whose needs cannot be met within their small group. Coordinators send cards, help with transportation, provide meals, and generally make sure that no one goes without church support.



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care.

We also have a team of Pastoral Care Associates who each commit to a sustained relationship with an individual who is experiencing chronic and stressful life-challenges.

## What about times of great loss and grief?

While small groups are our primary caring circles, and the Caring Coordinators and Pastoral Care Associates attend to needs beyond small groups, the ministers step in when crises occur, such as severe trauma or death. One or the other minister is always on call, and can be reached in emergencies by calling the church.

## What about self-care?

Good question. At ORUUC, we say, “Rooted in love, growing together.” Jesus did not say, “Love your neighbors.” He said, “Love your neighbors as yourself.” Our shared journey at ORUUC involves helping each other develop spiritual practices and health habits that enable each person to take care and to ground their lives in love, day to day

