

EPISCOPAL HEALTH MINISTRIES

The new activity for the diocesan Episcopal Health Ministries (EHM) in 2018 centered on the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry exploration workshop, held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on February 3, 2018. Eleven people attended with six churches represented – three Episcopal parishes and three of other faith traditions. This event was publicized in *Grace Happens* as well as *Faith Connection*, the newsletter of the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry.

Faith community nurses fulfill various responsibilities in congregations. Among them are participation on lay pastoral care teams in capacities such as lending a listening ear; establishing support groups, such as Grief Share; personal health counseling; referrals for social needs, such as Meals on Wheels; providing necessary resources for individual and family care; and making hospital and home visitations.

Health ministry is not a program but a relationship connection with parishioners. A faith community nurse utilizes his or her nursing skills from a holistic care approach (whole person health of body, mind and spirit), and most serve in a volunteer capacity. They can provide an aspect to healing, faith (with prayer) and health that the world does not offer but the Church can – in keeping with the diocesan mission statement of “Love, Teach, Heal.”

With the ongoing mission of the Downtown Ministerium walk-in ministry, there is an opportunity in the future for enhancement of meeting the needs of the community through assistance from faith community nurses and those interested in health ministry.

For more information about hosting a health ministry workshop in your parish or about volunteer opportunities, contact Amy Armanious, Health Ministry Specialist at Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry at aarmanious@pittsburghmercy.org.

Currently, the national Episcopal Health Ministries organization is on hiatus, pending discernment of its future role. Updates on this volunteer ministry will be forthcoming. Until then, my prayer for you is:

Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well. (3 John 1:2)

Respectfully submitted;
Paula Wasko
Diocesan Coordinator
Episcopal Health Ministry