

**American Baptist Churches of New State  
Lay Study Program**

**MINISTRY TO INDIVIDUALS**

**A Brief Course Description**

The course will provide a Biblical basis for ministering to individuals. There will be particular emphasis on:

- using one's pastoral presence as a channel through which the love and power of God can flow,
- the impact healthy Christian relationships can have on changing an individual's relationship to God, family, and neighbors, and
- ministering in a variety of crisis situations.

**Expected Outcomes**

Students will:

- have examined the theological basis for ministering to individuals.
- have considered helpful and unhelpful use of scripture when ministering.
- be encouraged to use prayer to support and prepare themselves to minister to individuals.
- have considered how to pray with individuals in ways that are helpful and uplifting in the context of various circumstances of ministry to individuals.
- have considered her or his own personal attitudes and predispositions about ministering.
- have learned how to be a shepherd, to know when to be silent and when to offer advice without trying to fix problems.
- have explored methods for working with individuals so individuals arrive at their own understanding of problems and are able to explore and apply their own solutions, remedies and approaches to their concerns.
- through readings, discussion, and practical experience become aware of the power of effective communication and listening techniques and the power of healthy, constructive relationships in ministering to individuals.
- have learned the destructiveness of ineffective communication and unhealthy relationships.
- have attained knowledge of theories and methods for ministering to individuals facing crisis issues such as death, dying, grief, unemployment, loneliness, and suffering with dementia.
- have learned how to visit individuals in their homes, hospitals and nursing homes including practical advice on etiquette in those places.
- have learned the importance of confidentiality in ministering and in interaction with fellow students.

**Class Expectations**

Students will read the assigned readings and participate in class discussions.

Students taking the course for credit will attend at least eight of ten classes.

Students who are taking the course for credit will create and hand in and/or present the written assignments and/or complete projects, designed by the instructor, which may include paper/s on particular subjects, presentations, etc.

## **Suggested Resources**

### **Primary Texts**

Lay Shepherding: A Guide for Visiting the Sick, the Aged, the Troubled, and the Bereaved by Rudolph E Grantham (Judson Press, 1980). (This was the primary text – may be dated.)

A Pastor in Every Pew: Equipping Laity for Pastoral Care by LeRoy Howe (Judson Press, 2000)

Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart: How to Relate to Those Who Are Suffering by Kenneth C. Haugk (Stephen Ministries, 2004).

You Are One of Us: Successful Clergy/Church Connections to Alzheimer's Families. (Available along with other books from The Duke Dementia Family Support Program  
<https://dukefamilysupport.org/files/2019/10/DFSP-Publications-8-13-19.pdf>

Redeeming Dementia: Spirituality, Theology, and Science by Dorothy Linthicum and Janice Hicks (Church Publishing Inc., 2018)

### **Other Texts**

Lessons in Care-giving for the Dying by William H. Griffith (Judson Press)

The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society by Henri J. M. Nouwen (Doubleday Religion, 1979)

Good Grief: A Constructive Approach to the Problem of Loss, (Deals with loss in general)

A Widow's Journey: Reflections on Walking Alone by Gayle Roper (Harvest House Publishers, 2015) <https://www.harvesthousepublishers.com/books/grid-view/category/comfort-grief>.

### **Helpful Organizations**

The Duke Dementia Family Support Program  
<https://dukefamilysupport.org/files/2019/10/DFSP-Publications-8-13-19.pdf>;

Stephen Ministries "Journeying through Grief" books  
<https://www.stephenministries.org/griefresources>;

Family Caregiver Alliance

County Offices of the Aging

Hope for the Bereaved (Syracuse) <https://hopeforbereaved.com>;

National Alliance for Grieving Children (Local programs - Hope for the Bereaved, Syracuse; HUGs from Cara, Auburn; Hospice of Chenango County, Norwich; Wounded Healers Bereavement Support Group, Inc., Horseheads)