

Lifeline Chaplaincy Programs

- **Hospital Visitation**

The heart of Lifeline’s mission is to provide spiritual support to patients and caregivers. Through encouragement, counsel, and prayer, Lifeline chaplains and volunteers offer consolation and affirmation in very stressful medical conditions. Our staff and volunteers collaborate with and work alongside the hospital pastoral care departments, focusing on Church of Christ patients and referrals.

- **Soft Touch Ministry**

The “Pillow Ministry”, as some call it, helps pastoral care volunteers connect with patients and provides comfort to hurting people. These simple items such as pillows, lap robes, and wheelchair bags made by Lifeline volunteers have blessed patients for more than 40 years.

- **Compassionate Touch**

Compassionate Touch works with hospital social workers to provide short-term financial needs of patients and their families. Since 1997 this ministry has given over \$1 million dollars to patients and their families for hotel stays, parking vouchers, food, and other special needs. Financial burdens in a time of illness can be the biggest burden to families and patients whose primary concern is getting well.

- » Area hotels do their part by contracting with Compassionate Touch to provide rooms at greatly reduced prices for up to four nights.
- » Compassionate Touch 501(c)3 allows foundations and local businesses to contribute to a cause that does make a difference in releasing those financial burdens.



Administrative Office

Address: 1415 Southmore Blvd.
Houston, TX 77004
Phone: 1-888-767-6363 (toll free)
Website: LifelineChaplaincy.org
Email: Lifeline@LifelineChaplaincy.org



“Dedicated to providing compassionate support to the seriously ill, their families and caregivers, and to being an educational resource for crisis ministry.”

“Serving the hospitals of the Texas Medical Center in Houston and major hospitals in Dallas, Tarrant County, Austin, and Temple.”



Lifeline Chaplaincy Mission

Dedicated to providing compassionate support to the seriously ill, their families and caregivers, and to being an educational resource for crisis ministry.

We carry out this mission in the following ways:

- *Providing a professional chaplain to each city*
 - » This person builds relationships with hospitals in each city so that Lifeline and our volunteers can serve patients in that hospital.
 - » Chaplains are also responsible for conducting visits in each hospital on Lifeline's behalf and recruiting and training volunteers to do the same.

- *Pastoral Care Volunteers*
 - » Schedule a set time each week or month to visit patients in the area hospitals. Their visits are coordinated by the chaplain for their city. These volunteers minister in the following ways:
 - * Be a friend who visits and lets you know that you are not alone.
 - * Pray with you or read scripture.
 - * Call a family member or friend back home.

- *Educational Resources*
 - » Lifeline provides workshops, training and seminars to those who wish to touch lives in crisis. Its two workshops, "Creating a Healing Community" and "Advanced Listening Skills", are required of anyone who wishes to be a Pastoral Care volunteer.
 - » Lifeline offers "Ministers' Days" and other short ministry workshops that are open to all who want to minister in crisis situations. Please check the website for seminar dates in your area.
 - » Lifeline chaplains also work closely with Christian universities such as, Austin Graduate School of Theology, Abilene Christian University, and Pepperdine University to offer academic classes in crisis ministry, and summer internships.

Our History

The inspiration for Lifeline Chaplaincy goes back to 1968 and the work of Marie Banister who began visiting the children's ward of M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

She became known as "The Pillow Lady" after she started bringing small, handmade pillows to the children, a legacy that lives on in Lifeline's "Soft Touch" ministry. Over the years, hundreds of Lifeline volunteers have sewn and distributed more than 50,000 pillows, lap robes, cancer caps, and wheelchair bags to hospital patients.

"Marie's humble spirit of service and dedication to the needs of others continues to live on in the ministry of Lifeline Chaplaincy."

Through Marie's advocacy, the Churches of Christ Medical Center Chaplaincy was born in 1983. In 1997, the ministry was formally incorporated as Lifeline Chaplaincy and became a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. The ministry now employs five full-time chaplains and has more than 100 pastoral care volunteers serving in all its locations.

Because of her selfless contributions to others over the last quarter of a century, Marie was given a National Caring Award. At the ceremony, she was joined by former President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn and eight other humanitarians as recipients of the award from the National Caring Institute.

A plaque at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center honors Marie Banister for more than 16,000 hours of volunteer service.



How Can You Be Involved?

The lifeblood of Lifeline is our volunteers and friends. Please consider the following ways you can partner with Lifeline to touch people in crisis.



First, consider becoming a Pastoral Care volunteer representing Churches of Christ. If you have a heart for hurting people, Lifeline can give you the skills and confidence you need to touch their lives in meaningful ways. We can also provide you with many opportunities to use those skills in hospital settings.

Second, attend Lifeline's training workshops even if you are not interested in becoming a Pastoral Care volunteer. Our training sessions are open to anyone. The training you will receive will help you as you minister to friends and neighbors about crisis situations they have in their lives.

Third, refer patients to Lifeline. If you know of a friend or relative in the Houston Medical Center, Dallas, Tarrant County, Austin, or Temple hospitals, let us know about them as well. Send us an email at lifeline@lifelinechaplaincy.org, or call us at 1-888-767-6363 and we'll have someone stop by and visit with them.

Fourth, become a part of a "Soft Touch" near you. Perhaps you do not feel called to go to the hospitals and to visit the sick. You can sew or stuff pillows, or 'ouch buddies' that will bring a smile and comfort to a hurting patient. You can also start a pillow ministry at your congregation. Please contact us at 1-888-767-6363 for more information.

Fifth, you can support Lifeline with a one-time, monthly, or planned gift. Your support will ensure that people's lives are touched in critical points with grace and peace. You may give online, by mailing a check, over the phone, through gifts of stock, or a planned gift. Please contact Lifeline today for more information. You may also learn more at www.lifelinechaplaincy.org.