GUIDE FOR
CARING TABLE VOLUNTEERS

Purpose of the Caring Table

The Caring Table serves as one of the links between the joys and concerns of individual church members/friends and the TVUUC community.   On Sundays, the Table serves three main functions:

1. Write cards to members, friends, and others with church ties, who have joys and concerns.   Encourage others to sign the cards and answer questions.
2. Collect information about new or ongoing joys and concerns and pass them on to the Pastoral Care Minister (Jenny Arthur), and collect names of people willing to help those in need
3. Provide a Welcoming Corner where people can come to talk or share their own concerns.

Sunday Duties

1. Arrive at church by 9:30 am (maybe a little earlier when there is only one service).

2. Set up table and chairs.   We suggest setting two extra chairs so card signers can sit, if they wish, or visitors can sit and talk.
[Note if there is a potluck or other major event in the Fellowship Hall, the Caring Table can seek another place for the day, either in the lobby or outside (if the weather is nice.)

3. Get Caring Box out of the coat closet

4. Attach Caring Table sign to the front of the table.   Strings can be used to tie the sign to the table legs, but there is masking tape in the box to help hold the sign up.

5. Look for list of cards to be written this week, usually provided by Jenny Arthur.   It should be in the polka-dot folder in the Box.   Make sure you have the list for this week and not last!

6. For each person, date the card and write an appropriate message on the card. (Example: "John - You are in our thoughts this week.   Here's to a quick recovery from surgery").   Card can be signed as you choose.

   Suggestions:
   #   "The TVUUC Community"
   #   "Your TVUUC Family"
   #   "The Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church"
          (Appropriate if card is for a non-church member)
   (Sign your own name too, somewhere)

There are blank cards in a large envelope in the Box. They have a drawing of the church on them. There are other miscellaneous cards in another envelope. Use them if you want, if appropriate (People have donated cards and RE kids have made some)

7. On a Post-It, write a summary of the reason for the card. Include the <u>full</u> name of the recipient

8. Put the card on the table to be signed by others, with the Post-It next to it. Put a pen next to each card (Pens are in an envelope in the Box)
Our goal is to have all cards and Post-Its written and laid out before the first services gets out.

9. Also lay out on the table:
   < Blue and Tan Forms to collect information about new concerns and names of volunteers (such as people willing to cook meals, give rides, etc)
   < Sign-up sheet to collect names of possible Caring Table Volunteers

10. After all the cards are ready for signing, the envelopes can be addressed. There are two church directories in the Box, with addresses. (Remember that addresses may be listed under the name of the spouse or partner) If one directory does not have a name & address, try the other directory or ask other church members for clues! If you still cannot find the address, attach a Post-It to the envelope and ask Nina Lee to add the address or to check with Jenny.

   Add a return address label. Envelopes and labels are in a large envelope in the Box.

11. There is a school notebook in the Box (currently white and red). On the last blank page, list the cards sent this week. Also, before the crowds appear, look over the list of cards sent in the last few weeks. People may ask you.

12. Feel free to attend the second service. But during the "coffee hours", Table Volunteers should sit at the Caring Table to encourage people to sign cards and answer any questions about the cards or the recipients (if you can) . Cards can be left out on the table during the service, unless the table has been set up outside)

13. If you hear of a new concern or a new volunteer, you can fill out the form and pass it on to Jenny Arthur before you leave. (Or just tell Jenny) She may be in her office. If you can't find her, you can send her an e-mail when you get home, or pass the information on to Caring Table Coordinator (Wendy Syer) (Name of Caring Table Volunteers can be left on the sign up sheet, and the Coordinator will get them)

If you feel privacy is not an issue, you can write a card to be signed today. BUT

i   In cases of illness or other potentially sensitive issues, do not write a card. Jenny will contact the person to see if they want their concern known.

i   If you learn of the new concern late in the morning, don't write a card. Just pass the information on to Jenny or Wendy, and we can do a card next week, when more people can sign

14.   We encourage you to chat with people who come by the table. The empty chairs may invite conversation!

15.   When all or most of the crowd has left the Fellowship Hall (around 12:45 if there are two services?):

       T   Put the cards in envelopes (Make sure you get the right envelope for the card!)
       T   Do not seal it (Nina Lee likes to sign it too before she mails it)
       T   Put all cards on Nina Braden's desk, in an obvious spot.
       T   If we are short of supplies (envelopes, Post-its, etc), write a note for Nina Lee and leave it with the cards. She will add them to the Box.
             [Note if you need supplies today, look in the supply closet in the office]

16.   Put all the supplies back in the Box and return to the coat closet.

17.   Put tables and chairs away, unless they are needed for another event

18.   Remember to read the weekly e-mails from the Table Coordinator. They include the upcoming Caring Table assignments, as well as quick thoughts and reminders.

If you hear of new joys, concerns, or caring needs, in between your table days, please pass the information on to Jenny Arthur or Wendy Syer. Caring Table Volunteers are a diverse and caring group, with connections in many parts of the community. You may become aware of a need that Jenny is not aware of. Remember that information will be kept in confidence unless the person agrees to have it known.

thank you for volunteering

and thank you for caring!