

Lifeline Chaplaincy and Compassionate Touch

2022 First Quarter Details by Region



A Prayer for Compassion

We love because He first loved us. – 1 John 4:19 NIV

*Don't be interested only in your own life,
Be interested in the lives of other people, too. – Philippians 2:4 EVD*

Lord God,
We Confess:

our lifestyles are too busy, our focus self-centered,
and our world is consumed with fear, greed, and pride.
Sometimes, Lord, we react to the pains of others
with a flippant “who cares?”

Yet, in our more receptive times,
when Your voice calls to our innermost beings,
We know with absolute certainty two things we desperately need:

To be loved...and to love.

Hear us, Lord,
grateful, thankful to experience occasional
breakthrough moments of unconditional love.

Be with those whose hearts are broken, demoralized by life's blows;
those who mirror to us that unfairness and suffering
is not lightened by pat answers or avoidance,
but is made bearable because of fellow travelers
who truly do care, and show it.

Walk with us, God.
Our trek is not always easy, our vision shortsighted, our love often hidden.
May we seek the deeper places where our compassions, our joys reflect
You, the God who is love.
Amen.

Dr. Virgil M. Fry taken from Rekindled, Warmed by the Fires of Hope

First Quarter Calendar Events

- 1/15 **Escaping the Messiah Trap: Learning to Help Others Without Hurting Ourselves, Those We Serve, and Those We Love** – Virtual Seminar led by Paul Riddle (Based on Carmen Renee Berry’s book *When Helping You is Hurting Me: Escaping the Messiah Trap*)
- 2/19 **Ministry in Times of Illness and Loss: Part 1** – Dallas, TX
- 2/19 **The Viewing Room** by Jacquelin Gorman – Virtual Book Discussion led by Paul Riddle
- 3/19 **Self Care for Spiritual Caregivers** – Virtual Seminar led by Paul Riddle
- 3/26 **Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief** by Pauline Boss – Virtual Book Discussion led by Tom Nuckels
- 3/26 **Ministry in Times of Illness and Loss: Part 2** – Dallas, TX

Houston

Hospital Patient Visits (In Person + Televisits)	802
Pastoral Contacts	263
Development Team Touches	580

Refined by Fire by Paul Riddle

James has suffered for as long as I’ve known him. He has been in and out of one of the TMC hospitals on my “beat” for at least five years, and I’ve visited him many times. A chronic disorder of a major organ has caused him much pain and discomfort, and has resulted in frequent hospitalizations, sometimes lasting a few days, sometimes lasting a few weeks. He has been on the list for a transplant for long time, but the scarcity of organs and other medical issues he’s dealing with have resulted in a very long wait.

I’ve observed James closely over the course of many hospitalizations, and I’ve noticed two things that cause me to have great respect for him: Despite being frequently ill and in great pain, I have never seen him complain or indulge in self-pity, and I have never seen him be unkind to anyone. No matter how badly he may feel, he greets each person who enters his room as though he were welcoming them into his home, often calling them by name. When asked how he’s feeling, he often acknowledges his pain and suffering, but he does not dwell on that; instead, he wants to know how the visitor is doing, what’s up with the visitor’s kids, how the visitor’s holidays went. James’s room is a place of warmth and welcome for family, visitors, his nurses, his doctors, the folks who deliver his meals, the folks who clean his room, and me.

It’s sometimes said that adversity develops character. Perhaps, but I’m more inclined to believe that adversity reveals character and refines it. In James’s case, his suffering revealed a character of kindness and hospitality, a character that over times has been refined into a spirit that, at least to me, reflects the spirit of Christ.

Not too long ago, James finally got his transplant. I’m happy to report that the transplant went well, and the healing and recovery process is going smoothly. My prayer for James is that he will enjoy many years of better health and a better quality of life than he has known. I am grateful to have been touched by his generous spirit, a spirit refined by the fire of adversity.

NOTE: Names and certain details have been changed to protect patient privacy.

Central Texas

Hospital Patient Visits	1003
Development Team Contacts	273

Lifeline Partners with Cedar Park Regional Medical Center

Throughout Lifeline's history in Central Texas, it has been a challenge to have volunteers badged in an acute care hospital in the Austin area. We have finally been able to have a partnership with Cedar Park Regional Medical Center (CPRMC) after receiving a "green light"

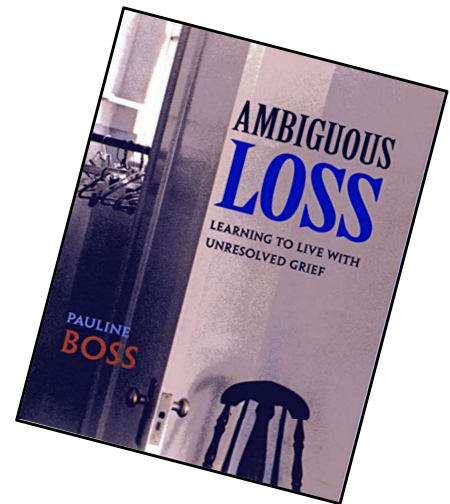


from the CEO. The date of March 9, 2022, marks the date of Lifeline's beginning partnership with this hospital in providing volunteer chaplaincy services to the patient population there. Maxine Hooks and Tom Nuckels will be providing spiritual care two days a week. Everyone on staff without exception has welcomed us warmly.

Tom writes, "*Maxine is a perfect fit since she retired as a nursing supervisor from this hospital in 2019. Many of the staff already know her and this has proven to be a tremendous blessing in building relationships with staff.*"

Ambiguous Loss Seminar

Tom Nuckels held a seminar via Zoom from 9-10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 26. There were fifteen people in attendance. The subject dealt with complicated losses where loved ones are sometimes disenfranchised in their grief such as a family member with Alzheimer's or other form of dementia; or a soldier who is Missing in Action. There is uncertainty surrounding that kind of loss. The seminar was based on work by Pauline Boss, "*Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief.*"



Dallas

Hospital Patient Visits (In Person + Televisits)	455
Pastoral Contacts	125
Development Team Contacts	1750
Soft Touch Pillow Ministry Volunteers	38
Soft Touch Pillow Ministry Items Created	1080

Anchored Faith by Jesse Stroup

Anchored faith and tender friendships can sustain a person with a serious illness. A patient, who I will call Ann, taught me this lesson as she battled Cystic Fibrosis. In my visits with Ann, I learned that she lived with her sister and another close friend. Ann unfortunately could no longer work due to the advancement of her debilitating disease. For numerous weeks, she required breathing equipment and often found herself in health care facilities.

I witnessed Ann's sister and close friend faithfully care for her day after day. During this time, I also witnessed Ann's great faith. She impressed me with how kindly she treated the hospital staff, her sister, and her friend, especially as she struggled to breathe. One of the last things that Ann muttered to me still sits with me. "You can have confidence in the person God is making you to be." In the time that I spent with Ann, I learned many things. I even learned that one of our Lifeline volunteers was her Bible class teacher when she was a young girl. When you listen hard enough and long enough, it's amazing the things you can learn.

Being physically ill is difficult and strenuous. Caring for a chronically ill family member, too, is hard. As caregivers, our ability to care well for those around us comes from a source beyond our capabilities. The question that often emerges: From where does strength come to help when hope seems darkly veiled? Months after Ann's passing, I discovered a short but profound verse in the psalms. It seemed to shed light on this question, and I thought of Ann's sister and friend when I read it. "Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God" (Psalm 146:5). As we care for each other, for those seriously ill and for those that provide care in these difficult scenarios, our hope and help come from the Lord Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and Earth.

Tarrant County

Hospital Patient Visits (In Person + Televisits)	362
Pastoral Contacts	406
Development Team Touches	800

Joining the Journey by David Martin

Blind rounds challenge your skills. Never knowing what one may find in the room, the volunteer chaplains simply announce themselves, then ask permission for a short visit.

Today, a patient stood by his IV pole, and rather than answering my request for a visit, asked if I would attend him on a walk down the hall.

“Gladly.” As we walked, I heard of his frustration over having a surgery delayed for an entire day, postponing his next meal even further. I cannot blame the man. Nothing increases anxiety more than the back of your belly button pressing against your spine, demanding satisfaction. To make matters worse, patients are often restricted on their liquid intake, though this particular gentleman was more intent on grabbing a smoke in a small area by the elevators.

I wasn’t sure he was supposed to be lighting up, but advice-giving and moralizing certainly weren’t going to help. So I listened to his life story, of divorce and the Korean War. (Why this story, and why now)?

My best guess: he needed to confess. I let him. He apologized several times for foul language, but this gave me an opportunity to assure him I was no perfect vessel either.

After forty-five minutes, we decided his absence from the room could possibly alarm the nurses. “But before we head back, would you like a prayer?” He was such a salty guy. I wondered if he would permit it.

But he did. And he wept, thanking me for my time.

Really, is there any better way to use the clock than to consume it with a fellow traveler?

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 – Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.



Assistance Provided

Total Amount of Assistance Provided	\$170,657
Number of Patients Assisted	504
Veterans – 20%	
Homeless – 5%	
Children/minors – 25%	
States Served	17
Texas Counties Served	71
Patients Funded Since 1997	28,559
Amount Funded Since 1997	\$5,224,669

Celebrating Hospital Social Workers

In March, we celebrated social workers. Why social workers? Well, they are a vital connection to the patients we serve with Compassionate Touch funding. Through these marvelous individuals, we assist the most vulnerable. So, naturally, we wanted to show our social work partners our deep-seated appreciation for what they do day-in and day-out. Here is one of the sweet messages that Carol Pauley and Carri Hill sent out to our network of social work partners.

To Our COMPASSIONATE TOUCH Hospital Partners Spring Greetings!

Spring is often described as a time of rebirth, renewal, and awakening. Blossoming flowers are pushing through the earth. Things are coming to life, and fresh hope comes to the world. There is a feeling of a new beginning.

Compassionate Touch is now only two months away from our 25th Anniversary. This season certainly causes us to pause and reflect on the impact we have on people and a renewed commitment to the very meaning of our name. We define **Compassionate** as a *sympathetic consciousness of another's distress with a desire to alleviate it*, and **Touch** as *an indelible mark left on the life of another*.

Spring is indeed a hopeful season! You are the people who represent that hope to your patients, and to their families who love and care for them. *We know YOU bring your own spring sunshine into the hospital rooms you enter.* We are always cheering you on and know you will make the most of this new season!

THANK YOU for being our partners in compassion!

A kind word is like a spring day. – Russian Proverb
Despite the forecast, live like it's spring. – Lilly Pulitzer