

OVERVIEW OF THE FRIENDSHIP MINISTRY

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction.
(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

The Friendship Ministry is a free program offered to churches worldwide that helps them strengthen their capacity to respond to members' mental health needs. It is firmly grounded in the Christian faith and is consistent with biblical teachings.

The program train Pastors and Co-Leaders (selected by Pastors) to train congregational members to be Friendship Ministers. The Pastor(s), Co-Leader(s) and Friendship Ministers become the Friendship Ministry Team, which adapts the program for the particular needs and capacities of each church.

Friendship Ministry Training

Training to launch a Friendship Ministry follows a **train-the-trainers** model. At three-day in-person conferences, Pastors and Co-Leaders (selected by Pastors) are trained to train and supervise congregational members to be Friendship Ministers.

Training includes:

- An **overview** of the program and its rationale
- A clear and accessible framework for **understanding mental health problems** and how to help
- Guidance on **promoting** the Friendship Ministry within the congregation
- Review of **privacy, confidentiality**, and other foundational requirements
- Instruction in **active listening** skills and a practical **problem-solving framework**
- Guidance on recognizing when referral to professional care is needed
- Suggestions for **teaching and supervision** for the Pastor and Co-Leader
- Guidance on using the **training manuals** to prepare members to serve as Friendship Ministers