**KC CARE Groups**

**CARE groups meet at the church or in people’s homes once or twice a month for spiritual and emotional support. Each CARE group has its own additional focus, such as serving others, studying the many paths to knowing God, and exploring people’s individual ministries.**

**CARE is an acronym that stands for Commitment, Accountability, Reflection and Engagement.**

**These groups are the lifeblood of our church. They are the place of support and accountability for KC Members in their faith journey. Members make annual commitments to the core spiritual disciplines and receive support for their faith life commitments in the CARE groups, so CARE group participation is a requirement for KC Members.**

**These are the CARE groups at KC in 2019:**

**Between a Rock and a Heart Place**

Between a Rock and a Heart Place is composed of women balancing full-time work, personal responsibilities and spiritual development. It practices the discipline of bearing witness to one another as we share about our personal and spiritual lives. The core of the group of “bearing witness” to each other’s lives, without advice, without judgment, has served the group well, deepening connections and providing a space for members. Last year, we formalized some structures around how meetings were run (including having a food and inspiration leader) and this year we worked on formalizing welcoming new members. With this, we welcomed a new member and formalized a July and January exploratory period for interested new members. It has been quite a year and as always, the women have been amazing and loving supports to each other.

**Disciplined Life**

The focus of the Disciplined Life CARE GROUP is the personal and internal development of living into the KC Disciplines, rather than any specific action in the world, although this focus leads us into caring action, inevitably. We explore and embrace the creative and challenging practices that we commit to when we become members of this church.  These are prayer, worship, service to others, giving, and continuing spiritual study. This CARE group fosters, supports and celebrates those who wish to embrace these practices. We come together to pause, examine, discern and to care for and challenge each other. We commit to encourage, celebrate and sustain one another, and it is our hope that we will grow in courage and wisdom, and in love of and support of one another, and joyful living.

 **Heart and Hands**

How do we use our hearts and our hands to do God’s work right where we are, in our jobs and as volunteers? That is the question that our CARE group reflects on each month as we check in with each other and as we explore ways to be more effective in this endeavor. We get together one evening each month for a simple supper, to examine our commitment to be the hearts and hands of God, and to check in with each other to see how we are doing. We spent a lot of time this year examining how we maintain our Christian values and spirit-based lives in our contentious world. Hearts & Hands welcomes anyone who is interested in support for their service to others and spiritual growth.

**Many Paths One God**

**Evening Section**
Each CARE group focuses on a particular theme.  Our CARE group, “Many Paths, One God,” focuses on learning from the many different spiritual paths taken to seek a relationship with God.  We have found that our Christian traditions and beliefs have much in common with other faith traditions. We have learned that our spiritual journeys have been strengthened and clarified by the study and appreciation of the richness and wisdom found in the diversity of faiths. This past year, we had conversations around a variety of questions.  Here is a sampling:

·        The power of words for both good and evil, sharing times when words had a powerful effect on us.

·        Cherished memories as a way of staying open to the joy in our lives and to open our hearts in gratitude.

·        How the story of the loaves and the fishes exemplifies “unexpected abundance” in our lives if we can be aware.

·        Sharing artwork (music, poetry, paintings, sculpture) that moved us emotionally and spiritually.

·        Reflecting on the words of Mother Pollard: “My feets is tired, but my soul is rested.”  How do we find ways to rest our soul so we can do the work we are called to do?

Our group functions using a shared leadership model, with different people choosing the topic and leading the discussion—all as they feel called to lead.  All interested KC attendees are invited to join us.  There are no eligibility requirements or limit on the size of the group.  We have adopted a standard set of group norms, one of which is strict confidentiality.

  **Many Paths, One God**

**Daytime Session**

We have 10 active members, including two who are not in the KC congregation. Our meetings are rich with discussion and thoughtful exploration of many topics having to do with all paths to God. To facilitate that discussion, we enjoy videos, books and sometimes even lectures from special guests at our twice-monthly meetings. Our individual sharing times are both inspiring and endearing. We are an open group. Anyone is invited to join us.

**Ministry Support**

The goal of our CARE group is for ministering to those who minister, basically “Caring for the Caregiver” – supporting and affirming and encouraging each other through our ministerial journey. The sharing in the group is about ministry.

**Simple Abundance**

Our mission is to enable each other so that, living out of our gratefulness, we can share God’s abundance with others. Our reaching out begins with family and spreads to community.
Each week:

We encourage each other to share what is happening in our lives and the KC Community.

We read the Scripture, aware that each reading can evoke different reactions among us.

The Care Group signs up each year to serve on a Worship Task Group. This year we chose “to do the Book of Job all the way down. We were surprised at the richness and ideas that sprang from that month’s exploration.

We discuss the book that we are collectively reading. Christophe Andre’s “Looking at Mindfulness” is our current book. Mindfulness is, we believe, a practice for knowing one’s self, a first step in helping others.

We laugh out loud. The group values humor, there is so much we don’t know!

We believe in the power of prayer. Our meetings end holding hands and praying.

Gratefulness is the energy for our care of others. Feeling it is difficult, I believe, if we are depressed. The scientists tell us that there are multiple causes of depression. The Simple Abundance Group addresses some of these, such as disconnection from others or letting materialism replace our intrinsic values that lead us to happiness.
Come and explore!

**Finding My Place**

This is the newest of the KC CARE groups. It is designed as a place for new Members to learn about and explore how CARE groups can enhance and provide support for one’s spiritual life. This group is intended to be a transitional place from which Members either join another existing CARE group of explore God’s call to start one of their own.