CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
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Equipping the Saints to Love and Serve Those Battling Suicidal Thoughts

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Purpose:

To help equip you as saints to better love and serve those who battle suicidal thoughts so that they may benefit from and become a benefit to their families and communities for the glory of God.

Common Myths to Dispel:

- "Christians don't struggle with suicidal thoughts."(cf. **Numbers 11:15, 1 Kings 19:4, Jonah 4:8**)
- "Those who die by suicide go to hell."(cf. **Psalm 103**; The Scriptures never declare this myth. IN fact, many passages such as **Psalm 103** indicate the Lord's mercy and grace in reference to our frailty.)
- "Talking about suicide introduces or encourages the idea."(cf. **Ephesians 5:11-14**)
- "Struggling with suicidal thoughts is a sign of God's judgment or displeasure."(cf. **Job 3, 10**)
- "Suicide is a completely selfish act."
- "If they've tried once and failed, they are less likely to try again."(cf. **1 Peter 5:8**)
- "If someone has made up their mind to die by suicide, there's nothing I can do." (cf. **James 5:13-16**)

Common Symptoms / Presentation:

- Withdrawal and isolation from community and family
- Hopelessness
- Frequent talk of dying or threatening to kill themselves; Risk greatly increases with specificity of a plan and presence of means
- Putting their affairs in order, giving things away
- A sudden, dramatic brightening of mood following a bout of depression

Common Causes:

- Intense interpersonal conflict (particularly adolescents)
- Abuse
- Meaninglessness/Purposelessness
- Feelings of defeat related to addiction or some other struggle
- Chronic pain and suffering
- Change in medication for psychological disorders

How You Can Love and Serve Someone Who's Suicidal:

- NEVER agree to keep their secret about wanting to kill themselves
- Focus on their immediate safety as opposed to the long-term cure
- Talk directly but gently about their suicidal thoughts or plans
- Formulate a safety or crisis response plan
- Put together a hope kit that includes a clear plan for basic daily activities, key reminders of worth, and phone numbers
- Help them find a way to make it simply through one more day; avoid thinking too far ahead
- Avoid simple platitudes or dismissive
- Emphasize God's dynamic forgiveness and grace
- Encourage professional help (i.e. hospitalization, counseling, psychiatry); Seek help for them especially if they have a plan, means, and opportunity to act on their suicidal thoughts
- Remove the means of self harm

Resources:

-***Grieving a Suicide: A Loved One's Search for Comfort, Answers, and Hope*** by Albert Y. Hsu
-***Preventing Suicide*** by Karen Mason
-***Grieving a Suicide: Help for the Aftershock*** by David Powlison
-***I Just Want to Die: Replacing Suicidal Thoughts*** with Hope by David Powlison