



Apply Pastoral Care Liberally

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By Rev. Nate Brantingham, UCF Campus Pastor at UIUC

The question was raised, "What can we as churches do to support our college students?" The answer is surprisingly biblical for a time so unique. Love on them. They are struggling, and yes, we are all struggling, but they are hurting so badly. It's the broken promise of what college was supposed to be, the isolation, the disappointment in those not following rules ruining it for everyone, the constant fear, the professors who think raising the bar is the way to enhance scholastic rigor in online teaching, it's the dropped connections, and piles of stress without any of the usual coping methods available. Many of them are just too down to even reach out for help and have given up on finding community. The litany of cancelled events

means many won't even bother planning to go to anything anymore.

So what can you do? Love on them. Be intentional. Reach out. Call them. Yes, on the phone like it's 1997 and the phone has a 50 foot chord. They hate answering the phone, they say that. Try anyway. They want to hear your voice, I promise. They want you to say those magical words, "Hey, I was thinking about you..." Send them cards in the mail like it's 1965 and the mail service was reliable. Send them a care package like they are 14 years old and in summer camp. Baked goods and favorite recipes are lifelines of love. In short, do not ask if or what they need. They need. Apply pastoral care liberally.