

Ministering Principles

COMMUNICATE THAT YOU CARE

There are so many ways we can show we care, especially at Christmastime. We can say it, text it, write it, give it, share it, pray it, bake it, sing it, hug it, play it, plant it, or clean it. Simply try it.

Showing love to others is at the very heart of ministering. Relief Society General President Jean B. Bingham said: “True ministering is accomplished one by one with love as the motivation. . . . With love as the motivation, miracles will happen, and we will find ways to bring our ‘missing’ sisters and brothers into the all-inclusive embrace of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹

Letting others know we care is an essential element of developing personal relationships. But different people get the message in different ways. So how can we appropriately express our love for others in ways they will understand and appreciate? Here are some ways to communicate that we care, along with a few ideas to start your own thinking.

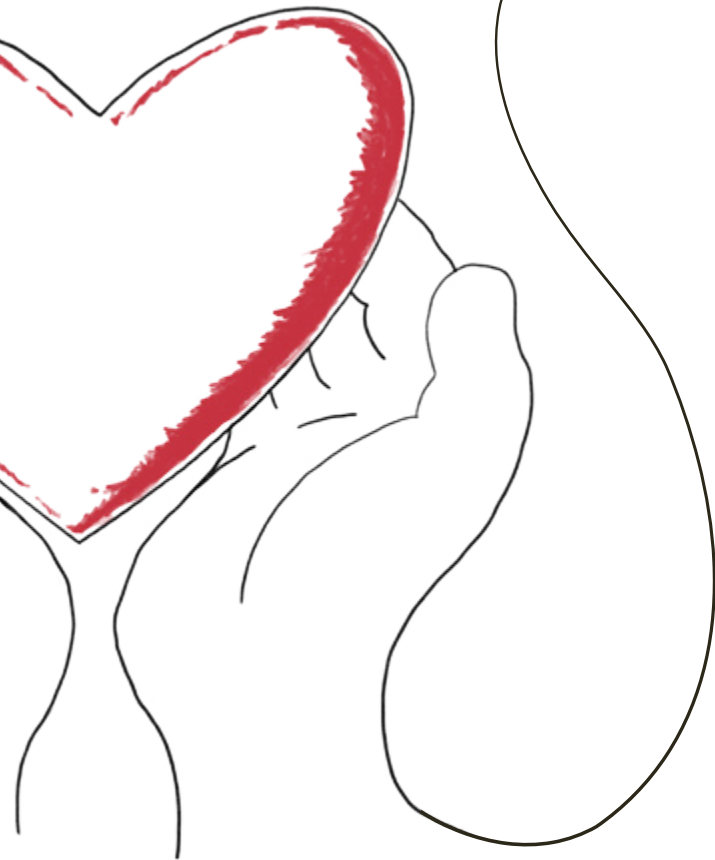
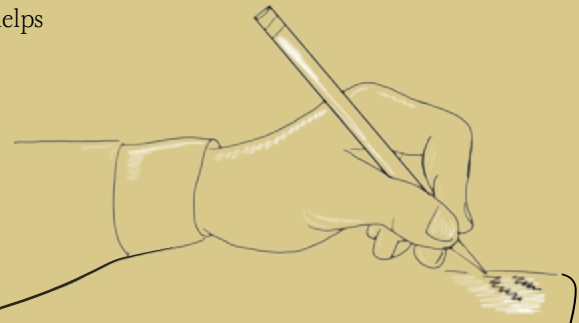


“Ministering Principles” articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as a message during visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.

Say It

Sometimes there's no substitute for saying how you feel about someone. While this could mean telling someone you love them, it also includes sharing what you admire about them or paying a sincere compliment. This kind of affirmation helps strengthen relationships. (See Ephesians 4:29.)

- Find an opportunity to let the individual know how much you admire one of his or her strengths.
- Stop by, call, or send an email, text, or card telling the individual you're thinking of them.



Visit

Taking the time to talk with and listen to someone is a powerful way to show how much you value him or her. Whether you visit at home, at church, or elsewhere, there are many people who need someone they can talk to. (See Mosiah 4:26; D&C 20:47.)

- According to the individual's needs, schedule a visit. Take time to really listen and understand his or her circumstances.
- Where it may be difficult to visit homes because of distance, cultural norms, or other circumstances, consider finding time together after Church meetings.



Serve with a Purpose

Be mindful of what the individual or family needs. Providing meaningful service communicates that you care. It combines the valuable gifts of time and thoughtful effort. “Simple acts of service can have profound effects on others,” said Sister Bingham.²

- Offer service that strengthens individuals or their families, such as watching the children so parents can go to the temple.
- Look for ways to lighten loads when life gets overwhelming, such as cleaning windows, walking the dog, or helping in the yard.



Listening to others will help us discover ways to show them that we care. See the Ministering Principles article “Five Things Good Listeners Do” in the June 2018 issue of the *Liahona*.



Do Things Together

There are individuals who don’t connect through deep conversations. For some people, connections are made by finding common interests and spending time together doing those things. The Lord urged that we “be with and strengthen” (D&C 20:53) our brothers and sisters.

- Go for a walk, plan a game night, or set up a regular time to exercise together.
- Serve together on a community or Church project.

Give a Gift

Sometimes time or opportunities to interact are limited. In many cultures, giving gifts is a sign of caring and empathy. Even an occasional, simple gift can communicate your interest to build a better relationship. (See Proverbs 21:14.)

- Take them a favorite treat.
- Share a quote, scripture, or other message you feel they could benefit from.



A Labor of Love

As you come to know those to whom you minister and for whom you seek inspiration, you will learn more specifically how to communicate your love and care to them individually.

Kimberly Seyboldt of Oregon, USA, tells the story of seeking inspiration and giving gifts to show love:

“When I find life is getting me down, I get up and make zucchini bread, usually about eight loaves. My special ingredient is the silent prayer I offer as I bake to know who needs those loaves of bread. I have been able to better know my surrounding neighbors as the warm zucchini bread has been my invite into their homes and lives.

“One warm summer day, I pulled up alongside a family selling pints of blackberries on the side of the road. I didn’t need more blackberries, but the young, thin boy at the stand was excited to see me, thinking I was his next customer. I bought some blackberries, but I also had a gift for him. I gave the boy two loaves of bread. He turned to his father for approval, then said, ‘Look, Dad, now we have something to eat today.’ I was filled with gratitude for this opportunity to show love in a simple way.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles pleaded “that every man and woman—and our older young men and young women—will [be] . . . more deeply committed to heartfelt care for one another, motivated only by the pure love of Christ to do so. . . . May we labor side by side with the Lord of the vineyard, giving the God and Father of us all a helping hand with His staggering task of answering prayers, providing comfort, drying tears, and strengthening feeble knees.”³



Jesus Christ Cares

Before Jesus Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, “Jesus wept.

“Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!” (John 11:35–36).

“I have compassion upon you,” Christ said to the Nephites. Then He called for their sick and afflicted, their lame and blind, and “he did heal them” (see 3 Nephi 17:7–9).

The Savior set the example for us as He cared for others. He taught us:

“Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

“This is the first and great commandment.

“And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:37–39).

Who needs your care? How could you show them that you care? ■

NOTES

1. Jean B. Bingham, “Ministering as the Savior Does,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 106.
2. Jean B. Bingham, “Ministering as the Savior Does,” 104.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Be With and Strengthen Them,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 103.