



RESOURCES FOR *A Christian Approach to Suicide Prevention*



Introduction

Psalm 34:18 reminds us that, “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.” Suicidal thoughts torment those who are dealing with grief, mental illness, trauma or despair. The isolation and stressors from the coronavirus pandemic, economic uncertainty, racial harm, intensified grief and loss, as well as the burdens of life’s trials and tribulations can also lead to thoughts of suicide and feelings of depression and overwhelming sadness. As a community of faith, the church can provide hope, refuge, counseling, and a space for healing for those who may think ending their life is their best option. We can also offer support and care for those impacted by suicide. Below are some resources that clergy and lay leaders can use to provide care, assistance, and hope for those who may be considering suicide.

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Additional Resources

National Action Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), a faith-community task force, has best practices. Faith.Hope.Life. is a campaign aimed at involving every faith community in the United States, regardless of creed, in suicide prevention. The organization hosts the National Day of Prayer Against Suicide. <https://theactionalliance.org/faith-hope-life>

Suicide Prevention Resource Council (SPRC) offers specific resources for faith communities <https://www.sprc.org/settings/faith-communities> and offers recommendation on how to hold a funeral or memorial service for a victim of suicide. <https://www.sprc.org/>

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, the nation’s public-private partnership for suicide prevention, and its Faith Communities Task Force released new Suicide Prevention Competencies for Faith Leaders: Supporting Life Before, During, and After a Suicidal Crisis. The new resource provides feasible, practical, research-based actions faith leaders can adopt immediately to help save lives and restore hope in faith communities nationwide. <https://www.faithconnectionsonmentalillness.org/suicide-prevention-for-faith-leaders.html>



www.NationalCouncilofChurches.us

Training Resources for Ministry

Soul Shop

Soul Shop is the only in-person, faith-based training available across North America. The Soul Shop team reaches both secular and faith-based communities, equipping community leaders to minister to those impacted by suicide. The 8-hour training covers a wide range of topics including recognizing signs of suicide risk, companioning those who experience suicide loss, and strategies for integrating suicide prevention into the life and ministry of local congregations and faith communities. Soul Shop’s approach offers best practices for ministry that are grounded in both theological imagination and practical wisdom. Trainings are offered to a general audience, but are also directed to suit the concerns of particular groups such as youth workers, the Black church, campus ministries, and adult education. The workshop is endorsed by AFSP. [Website](#)

AFSP

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) has local chapters that will partner locally to offer training. Churches can seek to work together with these chapters and possibly take advantage of funding opportunities for the training.

[Website](#)

[Trainings from AFSP](#)

Living Works

LivingWorks offers a six-hour video training. This online learning program features information, simulations, and stories from over a dozen faith leaders and suicide survivors. It teaches key skills for suicide prevention, intervention, and post-vention within the faith community setting. [Website](#)

NAMI

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) does not offer virtual training but will do a 90-minute online training. [Website](#)

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