

Resources for Pastors - Destressing During the Pandemic

Triangle Pastoral Counseling

[Triangle Pastoral Counseling](#) - Interfaith pastoral counseling center directed by Kelli Walker-Jones, NCCUMC Elder

[NC Pastoral Counseling](#) - Network throughout NC

How to Pay for Counseling?

- Behavioral telehealth through the Conference insurance is \$0 copay
- Office of Ministerial Relations has a counseling fund for clergy under appointment of \$400/year. The application is on the Conference website.

Nami-Wake County

- Getting on the NAMI email list is helpful. They offer classes, training, and general assistance about mental health and suicide prevention. (nami-wake.org)
- [Managing Anxiety in the Midst of Covid-19](#) (Resource from NAMI)

Life Together Apart—video and journaling series

- Rev. Dr. Kate Bowler from Duke Divinity offers a seven week video and journaling program about how to get through the pandemic challenges (no charge). (lifetogetherapart.katebowler.com)

Recommended Webinars (recorded)

Center for Leadership Excellence

- [Living from the Heart in a Time of Heightened Anxiety](#) with Winston Charles - A focus on centering practices and their importance in overall health/spiritual development
- [Ministering to the Whole Person: Wesleyan Precedents for Ministry in a Pandemic](#) with Randy Maddox - A Wesleyan re-grounding about health in the pandemic

- [Trauma and Preaching](#) with Kimberly Wagner - Explains why the pandemic trauma is different than other types of trauma—helpful to better understand the unique situation we’re going through (particularly first half)
- [Self Care as Spiritual Practice for Leaders of Color](#) with Donna Coletrane Battle- An honest and straightforward talk about being a pastoral leader of color

Amplify and Brotherhood Mutual Webinars

- [Resilient Pastor: A Live Discussion about Wellbeing in Ministry](#) - Brotherhood Mutual has a webinar series—recent webinars are contextually relevant to the pandemic
- [Taking Self-Care Seriously](#) - One in a series by Amplify (Cokesbury), with host Lisa Yebuah. Respected leaders talking transparently about their challenges

Additional Resources—Articles and websites

Flourishing in Ministry

- [Matt Bloom, “A Commitment to Personal Rituals Can Sustain Clergy, Even in a Pandemic”](#) - Article about creating rhythms and rituals
- [A Work Well Project – Flourishing in Ministry](#) - A number of resources for pastors

Thriving in Ministry (TIM) Program at Millsaps College, what helps clergy thrive?

- [“Best Practices to Promote Clergy Well-Being”](#) - The link is to a graphic about clergy health—developed from Clergy Health Initiative data and research: The TIM program recognizes the importance of finding a “restorative niche”—finding a skill or hobby that makes you feel fulfilled and competent—regularly practicing something that has nothing to do with your work/ministry such as working on guitar skills, painting, practicing yoga, etc. The key is to do something that helps you to feel competent in something other/different than ministry.

Media Center Resources

[Rest in the Storm: Self-Care Strategies for Clergy and Other Caregivers](#) by Kirk Byron Jones. Drawing from biblical, theological, and sociological sources as well as personal experience, author Kirk Jones discusses the fundamental importance of self-care for clergy and other professionals engaged in helping people. Filled with creative and practical strategies for integrating self-care into vocational life, this compelling resource identifies the factors that influence overload and outlines plausible strategies for escaping such bondage. *Rest in the Storm* is a lifeline for caregivers who feel overwhelmed by the demands of their calling or profession.

[Faithful and Fractured: Responding to the Clergy Health Crisis](#) by Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell and Jason Byassee. Duke's Clergy Health Initiative, a major, decade-long research project, provides a true picture of the clergy health crisis over time and shows that improving the health of pastors is possible. In addition to physical health, the book treads deep into the territory of mental health and spiritual well being, and suggests that increasing the presence of positive mental health may prevent future physical and mental health problems for clergy. The authors weave concrete suggestions tailored to clergy throughout the book.

[Soul Reset: Breakdown, Breakthrough, and the Journey to Wholeness](#) by Junius B. Dotson. For Reverend Junius B. Dotson, it took an actual breakdown during a funeral for him to realize he needed a reset. As he recalls his own journey through grief, depression, burnout, and emotional breakdown, Dotson is passionate about calling for a Soul Reset for pastors, church leaders, and all disciples of Jesus Christ. This is a 6-week churchwide study for everyone who moves at breakneck speed through their daily lives, often relying only on their own strength to bring God's kingdom on earth. Jesus shows us a different way, an easier, unforced rhythm of what kingdom work looks like. It's a balance of work, rest, play, worship, exercise, and eating well—spiritual practices that keep our souls hydrated and healthy as we do the work of the church in the world.

[Tending Body, Heart, Mind, and Soul: Following Jesus in Caring for Ourselves](#) by Mary Jane Gorman. During the days of Jesus' ministry, how did he care for his own body, heart, mind, and soul? In this compelling book, Mary Jane Gorman looks behind and

between the words of Jesus to discover his humanity, painting a vivid portrait of the life he called us all to live.

[A Way Through the Wilderness: Growing in Faith When Life is Hard](#) by Rob Renfroe. In the Scriptures we see that often God's people went through a wilderness experience, and these experiences changed them in profound ways. With sensitivity and warmth, Rob Renfroe explores the wilderness experience—what it is, how we get there, why God allows it, and how we can get through it God's way so that we learn the lessons that can be learned only in the desolate seasons of life when we are totally dependent on God. This is a DVD study that can be completed in small groups.

[Soul Keeping: Caring for the Most Important Part of You](#) by John Ortberg. In this video-based small group Bible study, Ortberg shows that caring for your soul is necessary for your Christian life. John shows participants what your soul is, why it is important, how to assess your soul's health, and how to care for it so that we can have a meaningful and beautiful life with God and others. When you nurture your soul, your life in this world will come to make sense again; you can find your way back to God from hopelessness, depression, relationship struggles, and a lack of fulfillment. Your soul's resting place is in God, and John Ortberg wants to take participants to that home.

[Hope for Hard Times: Lessons on Faith from Elijah and Elisha](#) by Magrey R. deVega. Your story of hurt, heartache, and hopelessness has been heard, and God has a message for you: don't give up, don't lose hope. God is with you and will give you everything you need. It's the same message God gave to Elijah when he was so alone he hid in a cave. And it's the same message he gave to Elisha when he was surrounded by his enemies. In *Hope for Hard Times*, you'll discover how these two great, biblical prophets trusted God to find a way for them. Read these stories, pray, and listen as you receive encouragement and guidance for whatever you are facing today.

[Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Uncertainty](#) by Walter Brueggemann. Why bother with the interpretive categories of biblical faith when in fact our energy and interest are focused on more immediate matters? The answer is simple and obvious. We linger because, in the midst of our

immediate preoccupation with our felt jeopardy and our hope for relief, our imagination does indeed range beyond the immediate to larger, deeper wonderments. Our free-ranging imagination is not finally or fully contained in the immediacy of our stress, anxiety, and jeopardy. There is more than that and other than that to our life in God's world.

Books Not in the Media Center

[Switch Off: The Clergy Guide to Preserving Energy and Passion for Ministry](#) by Heather Bradley Enterprises, LLC, Miriam Grogan. Challenge yourself to look at old problems in a new way and discover tools you can use to unwind...to switch off. Includes self-evaluation and steps for improvement that will lead you to a more effective ministry as well as encourage and motivate you to deeper satisfaction.

[Four Gifts: Seeking Self-Care for Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength](#) by April Yamasaki. Drawing on the ancient scriptural command to love God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, Yamasaki helps readers think about the spiritual dimensions of attending to your own needs, setting priorities, and finding true rest in a fast-paced world. She weaves together personal stories, biblical and theological insights, questions for reflection, and practical ideas for self-care. *Four Gifts* helps readers sustain their spirits and balance competing demands.

[The Essential Guide to Burnout: Overcoming Excess Stress](#) by Andrew Procter, Elizabeth Procter. This book covers everything you need to know about how to recover when life gets to be too much, including stress, brownout (the stop on the way to burnout), and, of course, burnout, when you cannot go on. Wherever you are on the slope toward burnout, this book serves as a first step toward a full recovery, providing all the necessary tools to ensure you never go back.

[Mad Church Disease: Healing from Church Burnout](#) by Anne Marie Miller. Anne developed a website that allowed church leaders to share their struggles. Within a few days, she was flooded with over a thousand responses from people pouring out their stories of pain. *Mad Church Disease*, born out of that experience, is a lively, informative, and potentially life-saving resource for anyone who has ever stepped foot

in a church who would like to understand, prevent, or treat the epidemic of burnout in church culture.

[Leading on Empty: Refilling Your Tank and Renewing Your Passion](#) by Wayne Cordeiro. Gives leaders the tools to recognize and overcome burnout, providing them a new vision for greater levels of both rest and productivity.

[Clergy Burnout: Recovering from the 70-Hour Work Week and Other Self-Defeating Practices](#) by Fred Lehr. In this highly accessible book, Fred Lehr clarifies the nature and practice of clergy codependence. In short, insightful, and highly readable chapters, filled with many examples and stories from his own life and those he has counseled, Lehr identifies the typical forms codependence takes in the life and ministry of clergy.

[Planning Sabbaticals: A Guide for Congregations and Their Pastors](#) by Robert Saler. This guide for congregations and their pastors draws on nearly two decades of wisdom from the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program and helps draw the conversation away from a pastor-centric model and towards a holistic congregational framework for thinking about how the entire community can benefit from a pastor's sabbatical.

****Note: The information listed on this page should not be used as a substitute for seeing a licensed therapist. We are not associated with any licensed medical organization or mental health organization. Use of this information is voluntary. Any specific products or psychological/theological advice derived from this site or its links does not imply our endorsement, nor does listing imply full agreement with the content or the authors of each site listed above. We expressly disclaim liability that would result from use of information from this page's references, referrals, or links.***