

## **Faith and Health Care Decisions**

What if a sudden accident or illness left you unable to speak for yourself?

Who would you want to speak for you?

What would you want this person to say?

***Your faith may impact your health care values and wishes. Here are some questions to ask yourself.***

### **What beliefs do you have about the end of life?**

- What does your faith teach you about what happens at the end of life?
- What does your faith say about human suffering?
- How does your faith define a “good” or “meaningful” death?
- What part does a higher power play in your end-of-life decisions?

### **What are your spiritual questions about the end of life?**

- Do you view death as a part of a spiritual journey? If so, how?
- Can death be a way to deepen your relationship with a higher power? If so, how?
- If you believe we are part of a higher power’s work in the world, how does that affect your end-of-life decisions?
- How does your own faith impact how much you wish to take part in your own dying process?

### **How do your beliefs impact your wishes for medical care?**

- Does your faith inform you of the type of care you would or would not want at the end of life?
- Does your faith inform you about how much control physicians, medications and/or treatments should have?
- What faith considerations are important to you when seeking to prolong life or not?
- What role should doctors and medicine play in making end-of-life decisions?

### **What spiritual practices are important to you at the end of life?**

- What prayers or rituals are important to you at the end of life?
- How might thinking, talking, prayer or meditation help you make end-of-life decisions?

### **What role do you want your faith community, friends and family to have in your end-of-life decisions?**

- What part does your faith community play in end-of-life decisions? Are there aspects of death that are a community event?
- What is the role of family and/or friends in making end-of-life decisions for you?
- What kinds of faith considerations might come up when you discuss your end-of-life preferences with your family and friends?
- Do you have different spiritual beliefs than your family and/or friends? If differences exist, how will you ensure your wishes are honored?