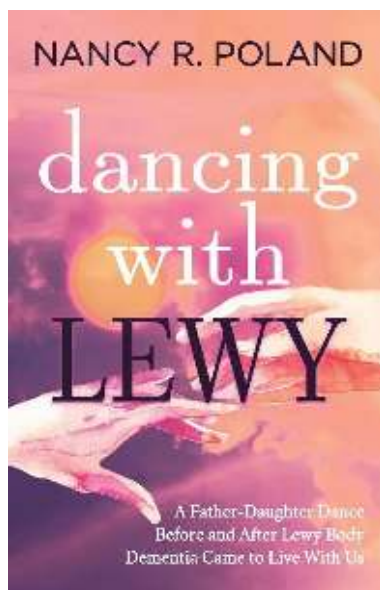




**Caring for the Caregiver: Dementia Topics  
Guideline for Classes  
Based on the book**

***Dancing with Lewy: A Father Daughter Dance  
Before and After Lewy Body Dementia Came to  
Live with Us***

**by Nancy R. Poland**



Author Nancy R. Poland

Nancy Poland's memoir,  
*Dancing with Lewy*, gives  
hope to caregivers tending  
to a loved one with a  
debilitating illness.

## Instructions for Leader

Thank you for choosing to share “Dancing With Lewy” with your faith community education class, small group, or community group (generally referred herein as “Group”.) In Part 1 you will find ideas for classes to be presented in one or two sessions.

A word of advice: don’t plan too much for one class.

In Part 2 you will find optional activities to keep your audience active and engaged, including video suggestions.

Contact me with questions or help on ideas at [author@nancyrpoland.com](mailto:author@nancyrpoland.com), or use the inquiry box below. I am also on Facebook Messenger. I can help you design the classes or brainstorm, and I am available for some travel or virtual appearances. There is a speaker Request Form under <https://nancyrpoland.com/speaking/> you can complete and email to me.

Books are available at <https://nancyrpoland.com/bookstore/>. You can also find them at:



Wishing you all the best, and God bless you and your caregivers.

Nancy

## Part 1

### Introduction/Purpose

Sample information to place in bulletins, social media posts, or announcements:

- You are invited to classes called “Caring for the Caregiver: Dementia Topics”. These classes are based on the book, “Dancing With Lewy: A Father Daughter Dance Before and After Lewy Body Dementia Came to Live With Us” by Nancy R. Poland. Classes will be held [dates, locations, time].
- Purpose of classes: To provide Christian education regarding the following:
  - Experiences of a caregiver of a person with dementia.
  - As a group, develop sensitivity to struggling caregivers, and to fulfill Christ’s commandment of bearing each other’s burdens.
  - Identify practical ways our group can minister to those who need love and support as caregivers.

Foundational Bible Verse: Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

**Book questions are found here: <https://nancyrpoland.com/dancing-with-lewy-2/> at bottom of page under “Book Club Questions.**

This could be done in one or two (or more) classes. Suggested activities:

- Have a speaker (or speakers) talk about their experience of caring for a person with dementia. (I am available to tell my story in “Dancing With Lewy” in person or virtually as travel allows.)
- Discuss questions in “Dancing With Lewy” (see link above). You could also read parts of the book to the group.
- The Alzheimer’s Association resources:
  - Educational classes: search on Alz.org, go to your location, look for Education. You can find both virtual classes or can request an in-person Community Educator. A good one to start with is “The Ten Warning Signs.” (I am a volunteer Community Educator and do both in-person and virtual classes in the Minnesota and North Dakota Chapter.)
  - Under [Alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/facts-figures](http://Alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/facts-figures) you can find statistics about Alzheimer’s and dementia, and a short introductory video.
- There are many YouTube videos on the topic, try searching “Alzheimer’s Caregivers.”

- Break into small groups or a large group and discuss practical ideas for supporting people caring for a loved one with dementia. It will be important to find a point person for communicating with the family, and scheduling supporters.
  - Arrange for meals to be periodically brought in. Some caregivers may want you to stay and eat with them and their loved one to provide conversation and company.
  - Schedule people to provide relief for a caregiver, even for a couple hours at a time.
  - Visit the person with dementia and share pictures, music, or readings with them.
  - Offer to run errands or pick up groceries.

## Part 2

### Activities to Keep Audience Engaged

- Provide handouts where they can fill in the blanks or take notes.
- Ask them to give a thumbs up to people who speak or ask questions.
- Hand out treats, especially go people who participate or answer questions.
- Ask them to give a one-breath answer to a question. They take a breath and can only speak as long as the breath lasts. For example, “What is your best caregiving idea?” or “How were you blessed this week?”
- Use visual aids.
- Have a surprise guest pop in.
- For virtual presentations:
  - Have them answer a question in the chat. It can be a question related to the topic, or something in the beginning to get them engaged such as “What good thing happened to you this week?” or “Give us the first name of someone you have cared for.”
  - Ask them for input periodically.
  - Break them into small groups for discussion.
- For both in person and virtual, show a YouTube video, even a short clip can break up the discussion. **Make sure to preview all videos.** Some ideas:
  - Caregiver Prayer for family caregivers for elderly  
<https://youtu.be/BmrmVn8w4OI>
  - Search for “Caregiver Prayers,” “Dementia Prayers” for more options
  - Search “Caregiving” for numerous options.