



Comfort for the Grieving Heart

St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program 484-526-2499

February 2026

The Hidden Harvest

In nature, February is a time of quiet, unseen preparation. Though the ground may still be frozen, life is gathering its strength beneath the surface. Plants are doing their most vital work, sinking their roots deeper into the earth. As we move through the quiet, heavy, and cold days of mid-winter, we often feel “stuck” in our grief. However, there is a profound difference between being stuck and becoming rooted. The plant in winter gives example to our own grieving process. While we often focus on the “bloom” of healing. The real transformation happens in the dark.

The Biology of Bereavement

1. Anchoring vs Staying Stuck

The Plant: In winter, the roots grow outward weaving through the soil to create a wider, stronger base to support the blooms of summer and survive the strong winds ahead.

Our Grief: You may feel “stuck”, but you are moving deeper. You are learning the architecture of your changed life. You are anchoring yourself in memories and building a foundation that can hold your love, sorrow, and joy.

2. Necessary Dormancy

The Plant: Dormancy is survival. The plant pulls its energy into its core to protect itself from the frost.

Our Grief: If you are feeling quiet, withdrawn, or tired this month, remember your soul is protecting its core. This isn't a lack of progress; it is your conservation of energy so that it can begin to thaw.

3. Gathering in the Dark

The Plant: Many seeds require a period of “chilling” known as vernalization to even be capable of blooming. Without the cold they cannot grow. They are gathering minerals the leaves cannot reach.

Our Grief: Much of our healing happens in the “dark” hours – the quiet February nights and days. In these moments, you are absorbing truths about your own resilience and the enduring nature of your love. Finding nourishment in the memories that fuel your return to the light.

For more information about the services offered by the St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program or if you would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact us at 484-526-2499. Newsletters are also available electronically by calling our office or online at www.sluhn.org (search - grief)

Navigating the Mid-Winter



When grief feels like frozen ground, try these gentle ways to soften the edges...

* Acknowledge the "Frost"

- Don't fight the feeling. Say out loud: "I feel heavy today, and that makes sense for where I am."
- If you feel you "should" be more social or productive, remind yourself: The ground is frozen; it's okay to be still. Validation is the first step towards a thaw.

* The "Thaw" Ritual:

- If you feel a "freeze" coming on (that numbness or paralysis), do one small physical task—wash three dishes, fold one towel. It proves to your brain that you still have the power to change your environment.

* Tend to Your "Soil"

- Nourish: Warm soups, hydration, and rest.
- Warmth: Surround yourself with soft textures and people who don't ask you to be "fine."
- Light: Sit by a window or light a candle to remind yourself that darkness isn't permanent.

* Seek Calm Moments

- In the middle of winter, there are often brief intervals of calm, sunny weather. Look for these small breaks in your grief—a moment of laughter, a good meal, or a peaceful night's sleep. Enjoy them without guilt; they are the sunbeams that keep the roots alive.

* The Sunset Scan

- Since the days get longer in February, make a habit of looking at the sky at 5 PM. Notice the minute-by-minute increase in daylight. It is a physical proof that time is carrying you forward.

* Identify Your Anchors

- What are 2 or 3 things that keep you tethered to reality? (e.g., a morning cup of coffee, a daily shower, calling one specific person). Focus on those anchors.
- Journal the "Unseen": Write down things you've survived that no one else saw. This is your "Hidden Harvest"—the strength you've built in the dark.
- Find "Winter People": Seek out others who are also in a season of loss. There is a specific comfort in being with people who don't expect you to "bloom" before the frost has lifted.

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Our Monthly Support Groups

Our bereavement support groups are facilitated by one of our grief counselors. We provide a safe and collaborative space to process your grief journey. For more information, call us at 484-526-2499.



Bethlehem Area Support Groups

Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem 18017 **10-11:30am: 2/5, 3/5**

Hanover Twp. Community Center, 3660 Jacksonville Rd, Bethlehem 18017 **6:30-8pm: 2/17, 3/17**

Brodheadsville Area Support Group

Western Pocono Comm. Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville 18322 **1-2:30pm: 2/18, 3/18**

Carbon/Schuylkill Area Support Group

St. Luke's Miners Campus, 360 W. Ruddle St. Coaldale, PA 18218 **1-2:30pm: 2/11, 3/18***

***NEW LOCATION STARTING March 18—St. Luke Lehighton, Board Room, 211 N. 12th St., Lehighton**

Sellersville Area Grief Program

Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church, 733 Ridge Rd. Sellersville 18960, 1-2:30pm

Six week grief education and support program beginning on 1/19—2/23.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. SPACE IS LIMITED. CALL 484-526-2499 TO REGISTER.

Starting Monday, 3/9—Support Group will meet monthly on 2nd Monday from 1:00-2:30pm

Good Grief Workshops

These virtual 90-minute workshops are offered monthly to provide you with a better understanding of what grief is. This workshop is informational, interactive, and a good starting point towards entering our in-person support groups. Sign-up is recommended for those 4-6 weeks out from their loss. For more information, call 484-526-2499.

Join us from 1-2:30pm: February 12; March 12

Join us from 6-7:30pm: February 18; March 25

St. Luke's Senior Meals

St. Luke's University Health Network provides healthy, affordable meals for seniors (65 or older). It's a great opportunity for a great meal at a great price (under \$5 for an entrée, salad, side, veggie, dessert and drink) and enjoy meeting new people. **ALL ARE OFFERED WEEKDAYS ONLY.**

- **Anderson, Carbon, Upper Bucks & Warren Campuses – DINNER 4pm-6pm**
- **Geisinger/St. Luke's—DINNER 4:30pm-6pm**
- **Miner's Campus— LUNCH 11:15am –1:30pm; DINNER 4:15pm-6pm**



Video Library

St. Luke's website includes a dozen short videos that provide information about the grieving and mourning process and ways to care for yourself after a loss.

To view the videos, go to <https://www.sluhn.org/vna/hospice>. Scroll down to "Grief Support".

Click onto the video library heading "Want to understand your grief?" at the bottom of the page.

Then view the videos from the comfort of your home.



Other Places to Find Support

We encourage you to call the number on the back of your insurance card to find resources paid by your individual insurance plan. Find an individual therapist at psychologytoday.com

Community Bereavement Resources

Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center offers bereavement support for LGBT people who have experienced loss. Visit bradburysullivancenter.org or email at reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org.

Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley provides professional programs of emotional support and education. Visit cancersupportglv.org.

The Compassionate Friends offers ongoing support for parents, grandparents, and adult siblings grieving the loss of a child, grandchild, or sibling. Visit thecompassionatefriends.org. Enter your zip code to locate the local chapter and contact person near you.

Doylestown Hospital Hospice offers a variety of support groups and programs that change seasonally. Visit doylestownhealth.org/hospital/services/bereavement or call 215-345-2079.

Gentle Yoga for Grief, Stress and Life Transitions is currently being offered virtually by Wendy Littner Thompson, M.Ed., LPC, RYT. Visit givinggriefavoices.com or call 610-730-1992. Be sure to indicate if your loved one was a St. Luke's Hospice patient.

GRASP (Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing) currently offers two virtual evening meetings per month, plus an afternoon meeting at the Oasis Center. Call 484-788-9440.

Grief Share is a faith-based support group offered throughout the Lehigh Valley. Visit griefshare.org and enter your zip code to find the contact person and program near you.

Lehigh Valley Health Network offers many groups and services for adults and children between the ages of 6-17. Call 610-402-7481. For information about program offerings in the Pocono area, call 272-762-3826 or email Bryson.Boes@lvhn.org.

OASIS Community Center offers a variety of support groups to those grieving a loss due to substance-related causes. Therapist-led meetings are held in-person and virtually for bereaved parents and young adults (siblings, partners, friends, etc.). Visit oasisbethlehem.org, call 484-747-6825 or email at rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org.

Suicide Loss. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has excellent information on risk factors, statistics, and education about suicide. Visit afsp.org and enter your zip code to find the chapter/contact person near you. All chapters are run by people who have experienced the suicide of a loved one.

Support Information in New Jersey

Karen Ann Quinlan Hospice offers support to those who are grieving the death of a loved one. For more information, call 973-948-2283 or visit karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement.

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