



Comfort for the Grieving Heart

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

March 2026

Seasons of Transition

As we enter the season of spring, change is all around us. Bare trees hint at green once more. Early buds push up through the soil. The air carries brief moments of warmth, gently reminding us of what lies ahead. These shifts often bring feelings of hope, renewal, and possibility.

Our behavior shifts with the season as well. Warmer days invite us outdoors for a walk, a bike ride, or a simple moment in the sun. We open our windows and let fresh air sweep away the dust of winter. We turn our faces toward the light and quietly remind ourselves: *I'm still here.*

And yet, early spring still carries traces of winter. Unexpected cold days send us reaching for the coat we thought we had put away for good. In much the same way, this season can also awaken reminders of our grief.

Holidays, birthdays, and traditions arrive without the presence of the person we miss. A garden once lovingly tended now sits untouched. A holiday meal feels incomplete without a familiar dish or shared laughter. Even as life moves forward, absence makes itself known.

These contrasts reflect the nature of grief itself- unpredictable moments of sadness alongside stretches of calm. Grief travels with us, changing shape but never leaving.

We have learned that grief is a journey. It remains a part of us because memories remain a part of us. Moving forward does not mean leaving grief behind. Grief exists because love exists. Carrying it often means finding new ways to express that love. Grief is not something to rush, fix or silence – it is something to acknowledge, witness, and carry with care.

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)

Gardening as an expression of our Grief

According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, the language of flowers has been recognized for centuries across Europe and Asia. Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, and Chinese cultures all used flowers as symbols to convey meaning. William Shakespeare frequently wove floral symbolism into his writing, and during the Victorian era, flowers became a way to communicate emotions that could not be spoken aloud. They were used to answer questions, express joy, and share in profound sorrow. Even today, flowers continue to carry deep significance and meaning.

As we consider and reflect on our individual grief journeys, the slow, quiet acts of growing flowers and plants can offer a sense of comfort and connection. Creating a garden, flowerpot, or raised flower bed can be a meaningful way to express grief while also honoring the memory of the one you have lost. Whether it is a small corner of your home near a sunny window or a patch of earth in your backyard, this space can become an invitation to slow down, reflect and heal.

When choosing seeds or flowers to plant, it may be helpful to select varieties that hold personal meaning or reflect where you are in your grief journey at this moment.

The following are the Victorian era meaning of some flowers, plants and herbs:

Baby's breath- everlasting love

Basil- good wishes

Belledonna- silence

Black-eyed Susan- justice

Callalily- beauty

Camellia (pink)- longing

Pink Carnation- I'll never forget you

Purple Hyacinth- sorrow

Rosemary- remembrance

Carnation- memory

White roses- reverence

Forget-me-nots- remembrance

White Lilies- symbolize the restored innocence of the soul

Chrysanthemums- represent death, lamentation and honor in many cultures.



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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: 3/6, 4/3**

Hanover Twp. Community Center, 3660 Jacksonville Rd, Bethlehem 18017 **6:30-8pm: 3/17, 3/21**

Brodheadsville Area Support Group

Western Pocono Comm. Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville 18322 **1-2:30pm: 3/18, 4/15**

Carbon/Schuylkill Area Support Group

St. Luke's Lehighton Campus, 211 N. 12th Street, Lehighton PA 18235 **1-2:30pm: 3/11, 4/8**

Sellersville Area Support Group

Zwingli UCC Church, 350 Wile Ave, Souderton PA 18964 **1-2:30pm: 3/9, 4/13**

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: March 12, April 23

Join us from 6-7:30pm: March 25, April 8

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**





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 givinggriefavoice.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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