



Comfort for the Grieving Heart

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

October 2025

A Season of Healing, Transformation, and Hope

As summer gives way to fall, the air turns crisp, the days grow shorter, and trees shed their leaves in a slow, graceful surrender. Nature itself seems to pause—marking an ending, even as it prepares for something new.

For those who are grieving, this season of change can stir deep emotions. Autumn often brings a sharp awareness of absence. The empty chair at the table, the missing voice in the conversation, the singular cup of morning coffee where there once were two, the traditions that feel different now. These small, everyday moments remind us that life has changed in ways we're still adjusting to and learning to understand.

Grief, like fall, is a season of transition. It may not always be dramatic, but it is always moving—shifting within us, asking us to pay attention. Some days may feel heavy, others unexpectedly peaceful. Sometimes, just when we think we are moving forward, a memory will pull us back. This is all part of the process. Grief doesn't follow a straight path, and it certainly doesn't follow a timeline. Just as trees release their leaves to prepare for new growth in the spring, grief invites us to release the pressure to “move on” and the belief that healing has a deadline. Instead, we are encouraged to move through, gently and honestly, at our own pace.

In nature, fall is also a time of preparation—a turning inward before the stillness of winter. It's a reminder that rest and reflection are not only necessary, but sacred. For those who are grieving, this season may be an invitation to slow down and care for your heart. You might find comfort in quiet rituals: lighting a candle at dusk, walking among the falling leaves, sharing conversation with a trusted friend, writing down your thoughts, or simply allowing yourself to feel without judgment.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Some may find strength in community, while others need solitude. Some may feel emotions close to the surface, while others feel numb or unsure. However it shows up for you this fall, know that your grief is valid, and you are not alone. Whether it's been a few weeks, months, or many years, your grief matters and deserves to be witnessed. As the leaves fall and the world turns again, may you find moments of peace in the quiet. And may this season, though it may feel heavy, hold glimpses of healing, transformation, and hope.

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)

Caring for Yourself Through the Fall: Practical Ways to Cope, Connect, and Find Comfort

Fall reminds us of change—and with it, memories, emotions, and longings may rise. Here are some gentle, practical things you can do to care for yourself this season.

Connect with Nature

- Take a quiet walk through the leaves.
- Sit outside and simply observe.
- Collect a few fallen leaves as symbols of love, change, and letting go.

Being in nature gently reminds us that change can hold beauty, too.

Stay Gently Connected

- Call a friend or write a note.
- Join a grief support group if you feel ready.
- Let others know how they can help—even if it's just sitting with you.

You are not meant to carry grief alone.

Do Something Grounding

- Bake something simple
- Knit, paint, walk, garden, journal
- Write a letter to your loved one—just to say what is in your heart.

Your hands can lead your heart toward steadiness.

Give Yourself Permission to Rest

- Listen to calming music.
- Take a nap or let yourself slow down without guilt.
- Try 2–5 minutes of breathing or meditation each day.

Grief is hard work—rest is part of healing, not something to earn.

Gentle Fall Comfort: Warm Spiced Apple Cider

Ingredients

- 4 cups apple cider or juice
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 4 whole cloves
- 1 orange, sliced

Optional: 1 tsp honey or maple syrup

Directions

Simmer all ingredients gently in a pot for 10–15 minutes. Strain and serve warm. Inhale deeply. Sip slowly. Let it comfort you.



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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, PA 18017.

Join us from 10-11:30am: October 3, November 7

Hanover Township Community Center, 3660 Jacksonville Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18017.

Join us from 6:30-8pm: October 21, November 18

Brodheadsville Area Support Group

Western Pocono Community Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville, PA 18322.

Join us from 1-2:30pm: October 15, November 12

Carbon/Schuylkill Area Support Group

St. Luke's Miners Campus, 360 W. Ruddle St. Coaldale, PA 18218

Join us from 1-2:30pm: October 8, November 5

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: October 2, November 13

Join us from 6-7:30pm: October 8, November 19

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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