



March 2018

The Goodnews Letter

St. Paul United Methodist Church

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Volume 32 Issue 3

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From the Pastor's Desk

During the celebration of the Resurrection, let us consider how grace overcomes the grief of death in our faith journey.

Our society continues to perpetuate a number of myths about grief and mourning, that may seem harmless, but they can quickly become hurdles to healing. Here are five of the most common myths about grief.

Myth 1. Grief and mourning are the same experience. They are not! They are often used interchangeably but there is an important distinction between them. People move toward healing not by just grieving, but through mourning. Grief is the internal thoughts and feelings we experience when someone we love dies. Mourning is taking the internal experience of grief and expressing it outside ourselves.

In reality, many grieve, but they do not mourn. Instead of being encouraged to express their grief outwardly, they are often greeted with messages such as "carry on," "keep your chin up," and "keep busy." So they end up grieving within themselves in isolation, instead of mourning in the presence of loving companions. Avoid this trap by knowing the truth.

Myth 2. There is a predictable and orderly progression to the experience of grief. "*Stages of grief*" have helped some people make sense out of an experience that isn't as orderly and predictable as they would like it to be. Many people have used the "*stages of grief*" to face the process of dying, as well as bereavement, grief, and mourning.

Each person's grief is uniquely his or her own. It is neither predictable nor orderly. Nor can its different dimensions be so easily categorized. When people around the grieving person believe that he or she should be in "*stage 2*" or "*stage 4*" by now, they only get themselves in trouble. Trying to prescribe what the grief and mourning experiences of others should be—or trying to fit our own grief into neat little boxes is impossible. Avoid this trap. Everyone's story is different.

Myth 3. Move away from grief and mourning instead of toward it. Many grievers do not give themselves permission or receive permission from others to mourn.

Many people view grief as something to be overcome rather than experienced.

People who continue to express their grief outwardly—to mourn—are often viewed as "weak," "crazy" or "self-pitying."

Refusing to allow tears, suffering in silence, and "being strong," are thought to be admirable behaviors. Many people in grief have internalized society's message that mourning should be done quietly, quickly, and efficiently. The problem is that attempting to mask or move away from grief results in internal anxiety and confusion. With little social recognition of the normal pain of grief, people begin to think their thoughts and feelings are abnormal. They are not, they are just grieving.

In order to heal, they must move toward their grief through continued mourning, not away from it through repression and denial. Often this myth is perpetuated in local churches that do not appropriately emphasize Christian discipleship enabling believers to grow in their faith journey.

Myth 4 dismisses any value in our tears. It goes: tears expressing grief are a sign of weakness and personal inadequacy.

Crying on the part of the mourner often generates feelings of helplessness in friends, family, and caregivers. Out of a wish to protect mourners from pain, friends and family may try to stop the tears. Comments such as, "Tears won't bring him back" and "He wouldn't want you to cry" discourage the expression of tears.

Yet crying is nature's way of releasing internal tension in the body and allows the mourner to communicate a need to be comforted. Crying makes people feel better, emotionally and physically. Tears are not a sign of weakness. In fact, crying is an indication of the griever's willingness to do the "work of mourning."

Numerous scripture references support the value of our tears. The promise of the LORD's healing grace is offered to those who cry as an expression of going through sorrow. GOD will dry their tears and heal their hearts.

Myth 5 is to hurry up and "get over" your grief. We have all heard people ask, "Are you over it yet?"

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To think that we as human beings “get over” grief is ridiculous! We never “get over” our grief, but instead become reconciled to it. We do not resolve or recover from our grief. These terms suggest a total return to “normalcy” and yet in my personal, as well as professional experience, we are all forever changed by the experience of grief.

For the mourner to assume that life will be exactly as it was prior to the death is unrealistic and potentially damaging. Those people who think the goal is to “resolve” grief become destructive to the healing process. Mourners do, however, learn to reconcile their grief. We learn to integrate the new reality of moving forward in life without the physical presence of the person who has died.

With reconciliation comes a renewed sense of energy and confidence, an ability to fully acknowledge the reality of the death, and the capacity to become re-involved with the activities of living. We also come to acknowledge that pain and grief are difficult—yet necessary—parts of life and living.

As the experience of reconciliation unfolds, we recognize that life will be different without the presence of the person who died. At first we realize this with our head, and later come to realize it with our heart.

We also realize that reconciliation is a process, not an event. The sense of loss does not completely disappear, yet softens, and the intense pangs of grief become less frequent. Hope for a continued life emerges as we are able to make commitments to the future, realizing that the person who died will never be forgotten, yet knowing that one’s own life can and will move forward.

While we would like it to be so, no one is exempt from the shock of grief and sorrow when something traumatic takes place in our life. This is particularly true when someone dies and even truer when someone dies suddenly with little or no warning. I trust this article helps everyone know that the LORD is with us even in the worst of times such as the death of a loved one. May this information help you find the LORD’s healing grace whenever you may experience grief in your life journey.

May we look to the Resurrection! We can celebrate this hope year round!

-Pastor Robert

Flower Schedule

- 4. Communion
- 11. Louise Feagans
- 18. Karen & Charlie Wyont
- 25. Palms

Church Nursery

- 4. Melinda Brinkley & Jane Morris
- 11. Eirene Ferguson & Shelly James
- 18. Toby James & Sandy Webb
- 25. Kathy Moore & Minnie Goodman

Acolytes

- 4. Nolan Akins
- 11. Zoey Hall
- 18. J. B. Morrow
- 25. Eve Morrow

Visitation

- 4. Pastor Robert
- 11. Minnie Goodman
- 18. Lynn Alexander
- 25. Sandy Webb

Ushers

- 4. Billy Watkins & Joe Eubanks
- 11. Bo Herndon & Randy Stowe
- 18. Charles Goodman, Sr. & Doug Summer
- 25. Vince Maglio & Michael Thompson

Lay Assistant

- 4. Charles Goodman, Sr.
- 11. Rick Crosby
- 18. Mason Morrow
- 25. Randy Stowe

Offering Accountants

Melinda Brinkley & Charles Goodman, Sr.

Communion Preparation

- 4. Darlene Paradise

SS Assembly Refreshment

- 4. Adult Choir
- 11, 18, 25 SS Assembly Group



Stewardship Report for March 2018

& Upcoming Events



The first FUNDRAISER has been completed. Thanks to all of you who worked out the details and made it an inspiring Sunday.

Special thanks to all of you who provided the soup fixin's and the great donations.

We received \$1,160, and as previously announced, 90% of that will be used toward our apportionments. Since the event was in the Family Life Center, 10% of it will be used to help pay off our loan.

A running total of how much has been allocated to apportionments will show on your bulletin under the line "allocated for apportionments."

Following is the information for the Fundraiser for March.

The Finance Committee agreed to use the undesignated loose offerings on all 4 Sundays in March. You are asked each Sunday to consider bringing any \$ that you might have saved during the week if you have given something up for lent, or that you might have saved at the grocery, etc. when using coupons. Or maybe you are especially thankful and want to express it with a gift to St. Paul. Cash is nice, but if you would prefer to write a check, make it out to St. Paul and mark "apportionments" in the memo line.

DO REMEMBER any gifts should be over what you give on a regular basis. At the moment, we are staying very close to where we need to be for the General Fund and the Family Life Center and we must make certain that we stay on track with our expenses at St. Paul.

As mentioned before, our APRIL fundraiser will be a yard sale, so please start thinking about what you might no longer need. Randy Stowe will be heading up this event and will be looking for help on setting up and assisting with the event. The date will be announced in the April Newsletter.

The Finance Committee will be looking at more Fundraiser events at their April meeting to decide on which ones will be most effective. If you have any ideas, please let me know.

While we make this special effort for apportionments, it is important that this does not draw from our weekly giving for the General Fund and Family Life Center.

For other March events, check the calendar attached.

The NURTURE Committee will be planning several events to expand our Bible IQ and help us make it valuable in our daily lives. This could come in the form of Bible Studies or perhaps the theme of special Family events. You will be receiving a questionnaire in the near future so that events can be planned that are really of interest to you.

The interaction of all who attend St. Paul is essential if we are to carry out Christ's command to spread the Gospel.

One other item of note—The Joy Circle and the Louise Best Circle have joined forces and are now known as THE BEST JOY CIRCLE. New Members are always welcome. The meeting is the 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10 a. m., in the Fellowship Hall.

March 2018



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
(A) Anniversary (B) Birthday				1 Good News Club, Greendale, 2:30 <i>Daisy Herndon (B)</i>	2	 March 10., 2 am
4 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Friendship Circle 4, FH	5 Trustees Mtg., 6, FH	6	7 M & M Choir 6 Adult Choir 7	8 Good News Club, Greendale, 2:30 <i>Taylor Bradford Montgomery (B)</i>	9	10 <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i> FLC reserved by Jessica Moore <i>Shirley Johnson (B)</i>
11 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 M & Ms sing	12 UMM, 7, FLC <i>Setti Stephens (B)</i>	13	14 Best Joy Cir. 10, FH M & M Choir 6 Adult Choir 7 <i>Mitch Watkins (B)</i>	15 Good News Club, Greendale, 2:30	16 <i>Janie Owen (B)</i>	17
18 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 <i>Doug Summer (B)</i>	19 <i>Jennifer Morrow (B)</i>	20 <i>Patrick Ferguson (B)</i>	21 Adult Choir 7 <i>Sandy Webb (B)</i>	22 Good News Club, Greendale, 2:30	23	24
25 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Easter Egg Hunt, 12, FLC - Hot dog lunch following, Everyone invited!	26	27	28 Adult Choir 7 <i>Larry Atkins (B)</i>	29 Good News Club, 2:30 Maundy Thursday 7 <i>Jennifer Gustafson (B)</i>	30 Good Friday	31