



Being There

Grief is perhaps one of the most misunderstood and most dreaded feelings. It indicates a loss of something or someone important in our lives.

Lutheran Congregational Services' grief counselor, Sylvia Havlish, helps people navigate their grief. In addition to one-on-one counseling, Sylvia leads a six-week program called Journeys Through Grief.

If you know someone who is grieving the loss of a loved one, you can play an important role in providing comfort and leading them to a place of hope. Here are Sylvia's tips on how to help:

1. Be there for them, don't avoid them. Let them know that you are willing to listen or just sit in silence with them. Each person will process loss in their own way, and while some will want to talk about their loss, others may feel too overwhelmed to talk about it.
2. Let them talk about their pain and emotions. When they do, empathize and comfort them. Keep in mind that you don't need to have answers and it's not your role to make it all better by appeasing them. And they especially don't need your judgement or advice.

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Why I Volunteer

Barb loves to learn new skills as a volunteer. Her existing skills, particularly painting, come in handy, too. A member of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit in Emmaus, PA, Barb volunteered several days this past May along with others from her congregation. Lutheran Disaster Response – Eastern PA (LDR-EPa) has led a long-term recovery effort in Eastwick since Tropical Storm Isaias devastated many homes in the neighborhood.



Barb Roba (left) and Eileen San Pedro (right) volunteer in Eastwick.

"My Dad taught me to paint," Barb shares. She takes great care in painting. "I have painted in my own home, so when I go on a volunteer trip," Barb continues, "I try to learn new skills, but I really enjoy the painting. I paint just as I would in my own home. I'm very proud of my job. I want the homeowners to know that I've done my best effort."

Long-term recovery projects last for several months or years. Volunteers play a vital role in these efforts after a natural disaster. Whether by learning new skills or bringing existing skills with them, such as carpentry or construction, the volunteers bring hope and love to neighborhoods in need as they help restore the community.

The community appreciates each and every volunteer.

"What you have given, they give right back," Barb shares, reflecting on her experience with survivors from the Eastwick community. "These homeowners are so gracious. They come and check on us. We show them our progress, and they're thrilled," Barb says, "and when we walk on the street they all say 'hello' to us and 'how are you?'"

Since August 2020, Julia Menzo, Director of Community Outreach for Lutheran Congregational Services, a ministry of Liberty Lutheran, and Vice President of the Pennsylvania Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), has led volunteer service days in Eastwick.

There are a number of ways to support disaster rebuilding and resiliency this September as part of God's Work. Our Hands Day. Volunteer in Eastwick on Sept 14 or 15, 2022, join for a rebuilding skills learning day at Northeastern Penn Synod on September 11 or visit our website at www.LutheranCongregationalServices.org for other ideas. Opportunities abound for those who would like to volunteer on upcoming service days as LDR-EPa continues its long-term recovery projects. We look forward to seeing you!

Oktoberfest

at St. Paul's Lutheran
in Glenside

October 1st



PROCEEDS BENEFIT
LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE (LDR)
IN EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training

Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training
is a one-day training event.

Fall 2022 Dates:

September 10th

Christ Lutheran Church
467 S Main St, Conyngham, PA 18219

October 1st

Advent Lutheran Church
1601 Green Ln, West Chester, PA 19382

Training runs from
9:30AM – 4:00PM

Cost is \$30.00/per person

To register visit:
LutheranCongregationalServices.org

Training for Lay Eucharistic Ministry

"If the people are unable to come to the church, then the church needs to go out to the people. This is the ministry that the Lay Eucharistic Ministers fulfill," according to Pastor Bradley Gow, of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Riegelsville, Pa.

"A Pastor cannot serve everyone in the Congregation alone and perform the myriad administrative duties that are required all at the same time. Lay Eucharistic Ministers are an invaluable resource in this regard. Barbara Yob, for example, has been a Lay Eucharistic Minister for the last 14 years through St. Peter's, and she has been so helpful to church members who cannot attend regular church, due to illness, or other reasons," explains Pastor Bradley.

One St. Peter's member who trained recently for the Lay Eucharistic Ministry is Natalie Wriker, who was baptized there and has been a member all her life. "I was initially called to serve in this way because I wanted to help my grandparents, who were getting older and were unable to attend their regular church," she explains.

"The training consisted of one full 8 hour day at Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasant Valley, which was convenient since it was not far from my home. It was very informative, but what really expanded my confidence was going out on an observational visitation with Barbara Yob, when she called on a congregant in Assisted Living. I saw the book of prayers she had, which suggested specific prayers for different life circumstances and that made me feel comfortable to do a visit on my own."

Shortly after the training, Natalie realized that younger people, not only elderly or sick church members, can benefit from Lay Eucharistic Ministry. "Some friends my age have not been to church in years, or they received no religious training in their upbringing, so they haven't known where to begin to provide that for their children," she explains.

"For those people, or for others who have work schedules that conflict with traditional church services, Lay Eucharistic Ministry provides a way to be involved with church," claims Natalie. Not everyone receives Communion with every visit. She elaborates, "One friend wanted to teach her young children about morality and religion, but she didn't know where to begin, so as a way to introduce them to religion, I visited her, read Bible Stories, and her kids colored pictures of Jesus."

The key, according to both Natalie and Pastor Bradley, is "to listen to people and to serve their needs accordingly."



Our private
Facebook group,
Journeys Through Grief,
is an online community
for those who have
lost a loved one.

If you or someone you know is coping
with grief, please join our virtual
online community by visiting
Facebook.com/groups/JourneysThroughGrief.

Being There (cont.)

3. It's OK if you're not sure what to say. Just be open and honest in your communication and let them know that you care.
4. Offer to help. Do they need meals prepared, pets attended to, laundry washed?
5. Weeks, months and even years following the loss, never assume that someone no longer grieves. The pain may lessen, but the grief is still there. They may be uncomfortable to bring it up as time passes, so gently let them know you care and it's still OK grieve.

The key to helping is to reassure them the feeling of despair doesn't last forever, and that they are loved. Be patient and compassionate as you walk along with them, holding them through their pain.

Next 6 week program for
Journeys Through Grief
will be held on Tuesdays,
Sept. 13th through Oct. 18th.

From 2:00 to 3:30pm
at St. John's UCC in Emmaus, PA.

To register contact Sylvia Havlish
by calling 610-395-5045.

UP FRONT WITH THE DIRECTOR



The Match

In this issue of *The Servant* we feature the story of Barb from Holy Spirit Lutheran Church Emmaus. Like Barb, and along with my two grown children, I had the opportunity to volunteer in Eastwick a few weeks ago too. Together we hung dry wall and laid flooring. Meeting the homeowners, learning new skills, and smiling at the end of the day seeing progress is what it's all about!

What is much less easy to photograph though is all the work that goes on behind the scenes to make a volunteer day happen. Months ahead of time, disaster case managers (DCMs) meet with survivors to understand their disaster related needs. They listen for what is most important to a survivor for their recovery and try to understand the whole picture of resources needed to help the family recover. The DCM and survivor work together to identify the steps and resources needed to achieve that recovery. This process helps the survivor to be in charge of their own recovery and it also helps us make the best possible use of donated dollars.

At the same time the case management process is happening, a construction coordinator is determining repair costs and ordering supplies, and the volunteer coordinator assesses volunteer skill sets and availability.

Many partners work together to make "The Match" volunteers with the survivor's rebuild plan. Some groups affiliate volunteers, others perform the construction assessment, find storage for the supplies, and provide the case management. Lutheran Disaster Response – Eastern PA's role in the "The Match" is primarily volunteer affiliation and disaster case management. We are really proud of our team of DCMs and volunteers! Stacey Ford serves as DCM for the Tropical Storm Isaias Recovery that is ongoing in Eastwick and Linda Frey and Ali Corr serve as DCMs for the Hurricane Ida flooding and tornado recovery. We couldn't do any of this without the many contributions of volunteers and donors.

Thank you!

Julia Menzo

Director of Community Outreach,
Lutheran Congregational Services



THE SERVANT

c/o The Lutheran Center
2354 Grove Road
Allentown, PA 18109



LUTHERANCONGREGATIONALSERVICES.ORG



A SPOOK-TACULAR EVENT



WITH

TRINITY
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
LANSDALE

PRESENTS

PUMPKIN FEST



ON SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 22ND, 2022
FROM 6:30 PM TO 8:00 PM