



Ask to Come Home. Ask for Caldwell Hospice.



Walking the Mourner's Path

Walking the Mourner's Path®, a nationally franchised program of grief support, encourages family members and friends who have survived the death of a loved one to share their experiences, begin the healing process, and find peace.

Facilitator training for this program develops among lay people the necessary skills to lead surviving family members along the "mourner's path" to healing. "We are a Christ-based, spiritually directed support group. Facilitators are ordained clergy and lay persons specifically trained to pastorally minister to the bereaved." At Caldwell Hospice, these facilitators include the two full-time chaplains. Specially selected Caldwell Hospice volunteers are trained to serve as the lay facilitators

Participants appreciate all parts of the program: "Group support, well-facilitated, good workbook, spiritual emphasis, Christ-centered...at the last meeting, I felt very unburdened."

Beneficial to the whole community

Walking the Mourner's Path® focuses on family members and friends who have survived the death of a loved one. It is available to anyone in the community. Participants are the immediate beneficiaries, as they travel from grief toward healing. Those who agree to learn and then teach this program also benefit, as they facilitate the participants' transformation.

Shared experiences and guidance

Walking the Mourner's Path® helps group members work on specific issues related to grief, such as perceived guilt. As they share experiences and stories of how God is healing their pain, each person has time to process and talk about grief issues, as stated by one participant, "helping me to face issues that I didn't even realize I had."

Two facilitators, the congregation's pastor, and six to 10 participants meet for 90 minutes one evening each week for eight weeks. The pastor recruits a secret "Prayer Partner," who is asked to pray each day for the participant. The goal: "transforming grief into joyful living"® for people who have faced the death of a loved one.

Participants receive workbooks that offer questions for reflection, as well as structured exercises to help individuals define a new relationship with their deceased loved ones and to find God's direction in their lives. Everyone has the opportunity to express as little or as much as is needed, in an emotionally safe environment, which offers, in the words of a participant: "the sense of security in the confidentiality...." Participants bond and support each other during the eight weeks: "Sharing, crying together has been great!"

Specific questions related to each night's topic are discussed. The structure provides a framework for examining different facets of grief, with facilitators offering reassurance that participants may feel the impact of differing facets of grief in uniquely personal ways. As one participant noted, "the program is very adaptable," and facilitators recognize when circumstances require flexibility.

The Christ-centered program utilizes grief-centered prayer and devotional readings. Its spiritual foundation touches participants, one of whom said, "The worship service was a great way to end the group. Prayer Partners was an added benefit and was much appreciated."

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