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THE WESTMINSTER LOG

Tell Me Something Good: *Grounded in Good News This Lent*

As we continue our Lenten journey, we remain centered in our theme, Tell Me Something Good, returning again and again to the heart of Jesus' life and ministry. Lent invites us not only to reflection and preparation, but to be grounded, rooted in what truly matters.

Jesus' good news is radical in the truest sense of the word: it brings us back to the root of faith—loving our neighbors, caring for the vulnerable, seeking justice and mercy, and trusting in God's abundant grace. This good news stretches us and challenges our comfort, calling us into a fuller and more faithful way of living.

Throughout March, we will continue exploring these foundational teachings of Jesus: good news that is generous and persistent, embodied and alive in the world around us. And as Lent moves us toward Holy Week, we will see that this good news does not shy away from suffering or sacrifice. It carries us through the table, the cross, and the silence of the tomb, trusting that even there, God's goodness is at work.

May we keep listening for the good news. May it keep grounding us. And may it lead us all the way to the hope of Easter morning.

For more information about Lenten worship and activities at Westminster, see pages 2 and 3.



There Is Still Room

by Lauren Wright Pittman
Inspired by Luke 14:15-24
Digital drawing with collage

This image is meant to be viewed from the center, moving outward. The host sets a table, with arms stretched wide in welcome. Surrounding this initial invitation, the first invitees form a ring of rejection around the host—arms crossed, closed off, and distracted by their material wealth and status. One surveys their vast vineyard, another counts their livestock, and the third navigates the economics of joining two households.

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Visit us on Facebook:
Westminster Presbyterian
Church - Bay City



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Leah Sneller (ext. 208)
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- Financial Secretary
Martha Tapley (ext. 206)

March

Sundays

8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal
for our Adults; the Bells play during Worship once a month

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study
Our Adult Bible Study sessions will follow our Lenten theme, "Tell Me Something Good." See Pages 2 and 3.

9:30 a.m. Fellowship
Join us in Fellowship Hall for Coffee and Donuts and Conversation

10:30 a.m. Worship
This Lenten season, our theme "Tell Me Something Good" invites us to not only reflect and prepare, but also to be ground and rooted in what truly matters. See Pages 2 and 3.

11:30 a.m. Fellowship
Join us in the Chapel for Coffee and Cookies and Conversation

5:00 p.m. Youth Bells
For Youth 5th-12th grade

5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner

6:00 p.m. Youth Group
For Youth 5th-12th grade
See Page 8 for the Youth Schedule or to sign up to help provide Youth Dinners in March.

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Website: wpcbc.org

Join us on Facebook

Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay City

Sunday	Monday
1 <i>Communion</i>	2 5:30 p.m. Mission Mtg 7 p.m. Deacons Mtg
8 <i>Scout Sunday</i> 11:45 a.m. Fellowship Meeting	9 4:30 p.m. Property 5:30 p.m. Finance 6:30 p.m. Stewardship
15	16 6 p.m. Bay Doxa Dinner until 8:30 p.m.
22 11:30 a.m. Town Hall (See Page 1) 5:30 p.m. Being Presbyterian	23
29 <i>Palm/Passion Sunday</i>	30

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri/Sat
3 10 a.m. Hearts and Hands Knitting (Page 1) 10 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. Book Group - Movie: Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (Page 6) 4 p.m. Safety Task Force 5 p.m. Personnel 6 p.m. Boy Scouts	4 10 a.m. Wondering Wednesday until 2 p.m. 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	5 8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until noon 1:30 p.m. Caring Connections 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Zoom Bible Study	6
10 9 a.m. Matthew 25 Café 10 a.m. Hearts and Hands Knitting 11 a.m. Do-All, Inc. Yoga 12 p.m. Lions Club 1:30 p.m. Book Group 6 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m. Spiritual Growth	11 10 a.m. Wondering Wednesday until 2 p.m. 10:30 a.m. Outreach and Hospitality 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6 p.m. Mid-Lenten Potluck 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	12 8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until noon 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Zoom Bible Study	7
17 10 a.m. Hearts and Hands Knitting 10 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. Book Group 6 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m. Session	18 10 a.m. Wondering Wednesday until 2 p.m. 1 p.m. Out-to-Lunch Bunch 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	19 8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until noon 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Zoom Bible Study	13
24 10 a.m. Hearts and Hands Knitting 10 a.m. Log Folding 11 a.m. Do-All, Inc. Yoga 12 p.m. Lunch and Laugh 1:30 p.m. Book Group 6 p.m. Boy Scouts	25 10 a.m. Wondering Wednesday until 2 p.m. 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	26 8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until noon 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Zoom Bible Study	14
31 10 a.m. Hearts and Hands Knitting 10 a.m. Staff Holy Week Runthrough 11 a.m. Do-All, Inc. Yoga 1:30 p.m. Book Group 6 p.m. Boy Scouts	April 1 10 a.m. Wondering Wednesday until 2 p.m. 4 p.m. Food Pantry until 6 p.m. 5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	2 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> 8:30 a.m. TOPS 10 a.m. Food Pantry until noon 5 p.m. Food of Faith 7 p.m. Worship	20
		3 <i>Good Friday</i> 7 p.m. Worship	21
		4 4 p.m. Holy Saturday Family Service (Page 3)	22
			23
			24
			25
			26
			27
			28
			29
			30

Happy Birthday*

Dianne Young
Elizabeth Dore
Kenneth Lange
Colleen Schmidt
Larry Pryce
Chris Elzinga

2026 is off to a good financial start!

You should have already received your 2025 annual giving statement for your records, either via email or in the mail. If not, please let me know and I will send you another copy.

Remember that per capita was paid to the Presbytery in February, so paying your share of the per capita in addition to your regular giving keeps more money in our church for local use.

Thank you to those of you who have returned your stewardship pledges, either on Stewardship Sunday or at another time. In answer to the oft-asked question, yes, PLEASE, turn in a new pledge form even if you plan to give the same as in prior years. I don't want to make any assumptions about anyone's giving plans, so turning in a pledge form helps us to properly budget for the year.

As always, if you have any questions or if there is anything I can do for you, please contact me via

GENERAL FUND	Month to Date	
	2026	Year to Date
Pledges & Other Giving	\$ 28,947	\$ 56,116
One-time Gifts	\$ -	\$ -
Other Cash Received	\$ 248	\$ 3,167
Total Income	\$ 29,195	\$ 59,283
Expenses	\$ 13,408	\$ 42,354
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ 15,787	\$ 16,929

Budgeted expense total for 2026 is \$467,000.

email at treasurer@wpcbc.org, or on my cell at 616-485-8272.

Pat Foster

Financial Administrator

With Sympathy



Prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of Bev Rector. Bev passed away February 11, 2026.

We Need Some Hearts and Hands!

Our group of knitters and crocheters needs help. Hearts and Hands of Westminster has been getting together for 20+ years now creating winter items, lap robes, and things for babies. But our numbers have been reduced as we have lost members. If you knit or crochet, we would love to have you join us Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Session Room. If you don't knit or crochet and would like to learn, we would be happy to teach you! We have lots of yarn, extra needles, and hooks, and lots of patterns to share. If you aren't able to join us in person, but want to help, you can take yarn to create items at home. If you have friends who knit, crochet, or would like to learn, we welcome them to join us. Over the years we have had several people join our group who were not members of Westminster.



The items we make are shared with schools, Good Samaritan Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, hospitals, our Pantry clients, and Bay Area Women's Center. The need is great and we want to be able to help as many as possible. Please consider joining us as we use our hearts and our hands to share God's love.

Hey, Westminster!!! Have you ever wanted to play an instrument? Dawn and Seth are thinking about starting a **beginner's ukulele group**. Let one of us know if you are interested in joining!

Dawn 989-327-0412 or Seth (810) 288-7710



Town Hall Meeting – Sunday, March 22

Following worship on Sunday, March 22, we'll gather for our first Town Hall of 2026.

We'll begin by sharing the results of our Stewardship Campaign and offering updates and answers to any remaining questions from our 2025 conversations together. After that, we hope to spend more time listening.

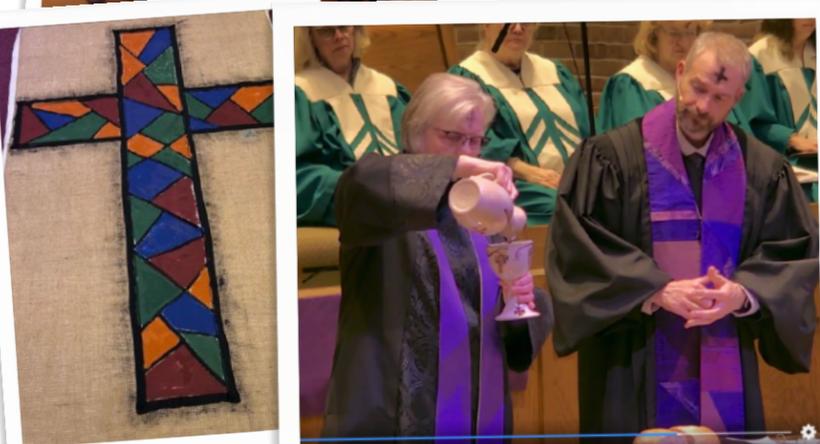
This Town Hall is an opportunity to hear from YOU:

- What are your ideas, your hopes, your dreams for Westminster?
- What do you value most about this church, and where do you sense God leading us next?

To help us provide the most accurate and thoughtful responses—especially to detailed or financial questions—we encourage you to submit questions ahead of time. There will also be time for open conversation during the meeting.

We hope you'll join us as we continue to discern, together, how God is calling Westminster to grow and serve in the year ahead.

Ash Wednesday



Youth Group Schedule:

- March 1 - Normal Sunday
- March 8 - Normal Sunday
- March 15 - No Youth Group (Enjoy St. Patrick's Day with your family)
- March 22 - Normal Sunday
- March 29 - Fun Night!

Do you like to cook or bake meals? If yes, then we would love for you to sign up to help with Youth Dinners for Sunday night youth group meetings. If not, there is still a way you can help with dinner. You can choose to provide dinner by providing pizza, chicken tenders,



Mac & Cheese or something along those lines. We usually have dinner from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. You will get a count a couple of days in advance. Please scan the QR code, visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4AAFAC22A4F9C61-62431551-march/> or contact Leah Sneller.

Save Your Stuff!

Need to unload some items you find while spring cleaning this year? Westminster's Presbyterian Women committee is planning a **Spring Rummage Sale** for Wednesday, April 15 through Friday, April 17. We will begin collecting rummage sale items and setting up on Sunday, April 12. More details will follow as the date approaches.

Second Sunday in Lent, March 1 (Sacrament of the Lord's Supper)

The good news is...great love for God & neighbor
Luke 7:36-50; Matthew 25:35-40

Simon and some Pharisees host a dinner for Jesus and an unexpected guest arrives: a woman who kneels at Jesus' feet and washes him with expensive perfume. Simon scoffs, but Jesus reorients his focus, asking him to truly see the woman and recognize that she has shown "great love." The woman shows a shocking, extravagant love that exemplifies the greatest commandment: to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind and to love your neighbor as yourself. Will the other guests see that loving God goes hand in hand with loving neighbor?

This Lent, the Gospel reading each Sunday will be shared as a dramatic reading. If you are interested in participating, please contact Pastor Jamie.

Third Sunday in Lent, March 8 (Scout Sunday)

The good news is...
together, the impossible is possible
Mark 6:32-44; Ephesians 3:20-21

As Jesus and his disciples head to a deserted place, many from the surrounding towns follow them. Instead of turning them away, Jesus expresses compassion and begins teaching. As the day goes on, the disciples urge Jesus to send the people home. Instead, Jesus presents them with an impossible task: "You give them something to eat." Despite their

Mid-Lenten Potluck and Interactive Prayer Service (Wednesday, March 11, 6:00 p.m.)

Gather with us for our **Mid-Lenten Potluck**, a relaxed evening of food, prayer, music, and creative reflection for all ages. Rooted in our Lenten theme, **Tell Me Something Good**, we'll make space to notice where we've seen goodness lately and how God's good news continues to grow in our shared life. Everyone is welcome—bring a dish to share if you're able, yourself, and invite a friend!

mindset of scarcity, their meager provisions multiply so that thousands are fed. Jesus models a way to be in community by coming together and sharing what we have, dispelling perceived impossibilities. The good news empowers us to believe in the miracles that can become possible through the power of community.

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 15

The good news is...
protection & care for the vulnerable
Matthew 19:13-15;
Deuteronomy 24:17-22

In Jesus' context, spending time with children would have seemed wasteful or useless. When Jesus blesses a crowd of children, he is reorienting socially constructed hierarchies to center the vulnerable.

Throughout his ministry,

Jesus emphasized the last, the least, and the lost. Jesus uplifting children is a reminder that we were all once children and we have all been vulnerable at some point in our lives, relying on the protection and care of others. If we're truly living out the good news, then anyone vulnerable will not only be protected from harm, but cared for so they have the chance to thrive.

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 22

The good news is...
rooted in justice, mercy, & faithfulness
John 8:2-11; Matthew 23:23

Jesus' ministry was frequently at odds with the religious leaders who prioritized loyalty to legality and perceived Jesus' teachings as a threat. While Jesus is teaching in the temple, some scribes and Pharisees interrupt to put both him and a woman caught in adultery on trial. Instead of focusing on punishment, Jesus flips the script and invites each person to consider their own sin, defusing the spectacle by condemning no one. Much of Jesus' teachings were grounded in his understanding of the Torah; however, many of his actions called for reinterpreting the law. As we wrestle with our own rules, we should ask, "What is the most just, merciful, and faithful interpretation?"

The results are in for the Meijer Simply Give program, and they are astounding! In total, this project raised **\$15,030** for our pantry. That is almost a third of our annual spending! And Meijer was so generous, as they directly donated \$10,690 of the total. Amazing! Thank you all for your support and for helping to spread the word about this program.

2025 Giving: Thank you, thank you, thank you! Rev. Jamie Milton announced that the food pantry received over \$40,000 in cash donations in 2025. Of that, about \$25,000 came directly from Westminster members, \$6,000 from the Missions Partnerships committee, \$1,800 from the Westminster Deacons, and \$697 from the 2025 Westminster Souper Bowl of Caring. The balance (about \$6,500) came from non-member donations, community gifts, and food grants. We also received so many food donations from members, non-members, and food drives. We are starting 2026 in a good financial position, but contributions are always needed to keep our heads above water. We don't want to see a repeat of October 2025 when we had to close early because we ran out of food

Westminster
COMMUNITY PANTRY

and didn't have the funds to purchase more. All donations are very appreciated!

January Statistics: As we saw last year, our January numbers were a little lower than our average. We served 527 people from 179 households with 6,038 pounds of food. Of those, 122 people from 42 families were first-time visitors. We also noted that 67 families hadn't been to the pantry in at least two months.

The March "Item of the Month" is rice and noodle side dishes, such as Rice a Roni, Knorr sides, Suddenly Salad, etc. Donations may be left on the cart outside the pantry door. Thank you for your support!

We are pleased to partner with Barney's BakeHouse as they invited us to pick up items directly from them every first and fourth Saturday. These items will help round out our offerings, and we are thankful for their generosity.

Wishing for spring? Planning your garden? Consider planting a little extra to donate to the pantry! Fresh produce is a wonderful addition to our summer pantry options. All donations are welcomed.

Support the Salvation Army and Mission Partnerships – Lend a Hand, Make a Difference

Are you looking for a fun and inspiring way to give back to your community? The Salvation Army's Matthew 25 Café is seeking enthusiastic volunteers to support our mission of serving those in need. We invite you to sign up for a two-hour shift on the second Tuesday of each month. Your time and effort will help create a warm and welcoming environment where everyone feels valued.

Volunteering at the café is more than just serving food—it's about connecting with others, sharing kindness, and making a real impact. Whether you come alone or bring a friend, you'll find this experience to be both rewarding and uplifting. No special skills are required, just a caring heart and a willingness to help.

Join our mission-driven team and be a part of something greater. If you're interested in signing up, the sheet is located on the Volunteer Board in Wenona Lobby. Shifts are 9 to 11 a.m. for food prep and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for serving. If you would like more information, please contact the church office or Darlene Kusterer. Together, we can make a difference, one meal and one smile at a time!

Westminster is partnering again with **Sleep in Heavenly Peace** for our 3rd Annual Bed Build on April 18 at SHP's



new location, 4055 S. Saginaw Rd. in Midland. Our goal is to build 55 beds for children in Bay and Midland counties. No construction experience is needed, and all training and tools are provided. Youth ages 12 and older are welcome (parent or guardian signature required for those under 18). Registration begins at 8:45 a.m. We hope to have

35 Westminster volunteers. Please sign up using the QR code, or stop by the Wenonah St. lobby on March 29 for assistance. Questions? Contact Len Petroff.



Dave Crook, though a relatively new member, has been participating in the life of Westminster for several years. You may recognize Dave from singing in the choir, but he really stands out when he blesses us with one of his other gifts—the trumpet! On more than just special occasions, Dave adds a bright and joyful note to our worship, helping our music ring out with energy and praise.

Beyond music, Dave is a dedicated volunteer in our Community Pantry, faithfully helping unload delivery trucks and making sure our neighbors are cared for. And if you've ever joined the Out to Lunch

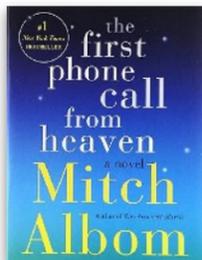


Bunch, Dave received your RSVP and made the reservations for our wild group gathering. Dave also serves Coffee Fellowship alongside of Karen about once a month! Food, music, and service? Dave certainly

fits right into our family at Westminster! We give thanks for the ways God's gifts shine through him, and for the joyful noise, helping hands, and welcoming spirit he shares with our church community.

Thanks for all you do, Dave!

Westminster's Book Group continues to be a lively gathering for passionate readers, with up to 17 members joining in weekly discussions every **Tuesday at 1:30 PM**. After wrapping up Sidney Poitier's inspiring autobiography, *Measure of a Man*, the group will celebrate by watching his classic film, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, on **March 3 at 1:30 p.m.** (Of course popcorn and soda will be served – can't watch a movie without it!)



Beginning March 10th, we embark on our next book, *First Phone Call from Heaven* by Mitch Albom. This moving novel explores themes of hope, faith, and the power of human connection when a small town in Michigan is shaken by mysterious phone calls from the afterlife. Join us as we dive into this thought-provoking story and share in lively conversation and community.

Please call the office or see Rev. Linda with any questions.



Lunch & Laugh – The next time we gather in March for Lunch & Laugh it will be officially Spring. (Though who knows if that's what it will feel like). So, to encourage and welcome

Spring, join us for **Bunco in Bloom** on Tuesday March 24th at noon for lunch and then let the fun begin at 12:30 when we will play Bunco. No skill necessary; it is truly a game of luck. And time of laughter.

Any questions, please call the church office.



In March, the Out-to-Lunch Bunch's delicious destination will be Lasko's Restaurant, 3966 E. Wilder Rd. in Bay City. Lasko's offers American

cuisine, and is known for its generous portions and delicious food!
We will meet at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March, 18. Please RSVP with Dave Crook at (847) 624-5798 or crookds@earthlink.net by March 16.

Holy Week

Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29

*The good news is...
inspiring us to act*

As we have done throughout this Lenten season, we will watch the Palm Sunday and Passion stories play out before us in worship. As we enter into this week that lies at the heart of our faith, join us as we tell the story again, as if for the first time.

Maundy Thursday, April 2 (7:00 p.m.)

*The good news is ...
even Judas gets his feet washed*
John 13:1-35

Knowing he is nearing the end, Jesus surrounds himself with his closest friends. Though he is aware of who will betray him, he doesn't exclude Judas or Peter from the table. Instead of excluding Judas Jesus chooses to care for him instead, offering him bread and cup and loving care. Jesus doesn't define Judas by his worst act. It really is good news that nothing can separate us from God's love! We are not judged by our worst actions, which means we are called to extend grace to others too. The good news is that God's radical, unstoppable love extends to *all* people.

Good Friday, April 3 (7:00 p.m.)

The good news is...revealed through nonviolence
Luke 22:47-53; Luke 23:33-38, 44-46

Where is the good news on Good Friday? Where do we see glimpses of goodness within an awful, brutal story? Jesus kisses the one who betrays him. He exclaims, "No more!" in the fury of drawn swords, offering healing instead. He uses his final breaths to plead for forgiveness for those who have crucified him. Jesus is stripped of all decency and humanity, yet his actions reveal the good news of a peaceful God. The good news is Jesus' ministry is not defeated by death—it is only interrupted. More will be revealed on the third day.

Adult Bible Study

We meet Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in the conference room and Thursday at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Rev. Linda with any questions. Come join in this year's Lenten Journey.

Holy Saturday Family Service,

April 4 (4:00 p.m.)

Have your family join our family in the quiet of Holy Saturday as await the good news of Easter morning! This interactive service is intended for all ages and will include lots of movement, stories, and songs. Another great opportunity to share what you love about your church with a friend or a neighbor.

Easter Sunday, April 5

(Services at 8:30 and 10:30 am)

The good news is ... alive in the world
Matthew 28:1-10

Death cannot stop the good news. It is alive, unbound, and wild in the world. Like the mustard seed, it grows without limit. Like water turned into wine, it surprises us with joy. Like loaves of bread, it multiplies to feed each hungry soul. And now, even in the face of death, it will not be buried or silenced. The angel at the empty tomb delivers good news: "Do not be afraid." On the way to Galilee, Jesus greets the women with this same message, but adds: "Go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me." As we celebrate the good news of Easter, let us also go out seeking Christ in the faces of neighbors and strangers, and in the good works that are alive in this world.

WONDERING WEDNESDAYS

Throughout the Wednesdays of Lent (until April 1) the sanctuary will be open from 10am-2pm for an intentional time for prayer and reflection. We'll have some quiet music playing and some images for reflection on the screens.

PRAYERS IN THE PEWS

Following Worship Services
Weekly: A simple quiet time of lifting up the needs of others. Prayer Teams will pray for others in person one-at-a-time.

Monthly: First Sunday of the month, an opportunity to pray for our community and the world with compassion and intention. Printed prayers from the Book of Common Worship will be available, as well as a time of silent prayer.



The Hidden Harvest

In nature, mid-winter is a time of quiet, unseen preparation. Though the ground may still be frozen, life is gathering its strength beneath the surface. Plants are doing their most vital work, sinking their roots deeper into the earth. As we move through the quiet, heavy, and cold days of mid-winter, we often feel “stuck” in our grief. However, there is a profound difference between being stuck and becoming rooted. The plant in winter gives example to our own grieving process. While we often focus on the “bloom” of healing. The real transformation happens in the dark.

The Biology of Bereavement

1. Anchoring vs Staying Stuck

The Plant: In winter, the roots grow outward weaving through the soil to create a wider, stronger base to support the blooms of summer and survive the strong winds ahead.

Our Grief: You may feel “stuck”, but you are moving deeper. You are learning the architecture of your changed life. You are anchoring yourself in memories and building a foundation that can hold your love, sorrow, and joy.

2. Necessary Dormancy

The Plant: Dormancy is survival. The plant pulls its energy into its core to protect itself from the frost.

Our Grief: If you are feeling quiet, withdrawn, or tired this month, remember your soul is protecting its core. This isn't a lack of progress; it is your conservation of energy so that it can begin to thaw.

3. Gathering in the Dark

The Plant: Many seeds require a period of “chilling” known as vernalization to even be capable of blooming. Without the cold they cannot grow. They are gathering minerals the leaves cannot reach.



Our Grief: Much of our healing happens in the “dark” hours – the quiet February nights and days. In these moments, you are absorbing truths about your own resilience and the enduring nature of your love. Finding nourishment in the memories that fuel your return to the light.

Reprinted from St. Luke's Hospice, Bethlehem, PA

Grief has no season. As we are fast approaching the season of Spring and everyone is anxious for sunny days, birds singing and flowers pushing their way through the earth, people who are grieving the loss of a loved one are searching for other things.....comfort, understanding, answers.

The coming of Spring cannot make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's process will continue, and that will offer us Hope. Be gentle and patient with

Caring Connections
will meet again
Thursday, March 5
from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the
Lounge. All are welcome!

yourself and with nature. Don't expect too much all at one time. Know that someday you will again welcome Spring as you once did with probably a lot more meaning.

With the Lenten focus on invitation and inviting people into your life, I invite anyone who may be going through some rough

times in dealing with the loss of a loved one, to attend one of our Caring Connection meetings and travel on that grief journey with you. We promise “no pressure”. If you want to just come and listen, you are most welcome.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 5 from 1:30 to 3:00 at the church. Outside community is also welcome. Looking forward to seeing some new faces and always happy to see those have been attending.

Blessings to all!

Mary

Navigating the Mid-Winter

When grief feels like frozen ground, try these gentle ways to soften the edges...

Acknowledge the "Frost"

Don't fight the feeling. Say out loud: “I feel heavy today, and that makes sense for where I am.”

If you feel you “should” be more social or productive, remind yourself: The ground is frozen; it's okay to be still. Validation is the first step towards a thaw.

The "Thaw" Ritual:

If you feel a “freeze” coming on (that numbness or paralysis), do one small physical task—wash three dishes, fold one towel. It proves to your brain that you still have the power to change your environment.

Tend to Your "Soil"

Nourish: Warm soups, hydration, and rest.

Warmth: Surround yourself with soft textures and people who don't ask you to be “fine.”

Light: Sit by a window or light a candle to remind yourself that darkness isn't permanent.

Seek Calm Moments

In the middle of winter, there are often brief intervals of calm, sunny weather. Look for these small breaks in your grief — a moment of laughter, a good meal, or a peaceful night's sleep. Enjoy them without guilt; they are the sunbeams that keep the roots alive.

The Sunset Scan

Since the days get longer in February, make a habit of looking at the sky at 5 PM. Notice the minute-by-minute increase in daylight. It is a physical proof that time is carrying you forward.

Identify Your Anchors

What are 2 or 3 things that keep you tethered to reality? (e.g., a morning cup of coffee, a daily shower, calling one specific person). Focus on those anchors.

Journal the “Unseen”: Write down things you've survived that no one else saw. This is your “Hidden Harvest” — the strength you've built in the dark.

Find “Winter People”: Seek out others who are also in a season of loss. There is a specific comfort in being with people who don't expect you to “bloom” before the frost has lifted.