

Transitions: A Journey through Grief and Loss



Facilitator:
Sarah Donnelly, BA, M.Div.

**New groups starting this spring in
Victoria, Cobble Hill and Chemainus!**

To register or for more information please
call
(250) 710-7675
info@sarahdonnelly.ca
www.sarahdonnelly.ca

Whether someone is currently grieving, or has experienced a loss some time ago and has not given themselves time to grieve, this 10-week program will provide insight, hope and prayerful support as they journey through the painful times of grief and loss in their life.

Loss or anticipated loss of spouse or family member, loss of good health in themselves or someone they love, loss of a job, retirement from a much-loved career and the ending of a marriage are some of the life experiences that bring people to Transitions.

Not sure if Transitions is right for you? You are very welcome to attend the first session before deciding to join a group. Please call Sarah for more details: (250) 710-7675.

“Thank you for providing a safe and sacred place for us to address our sadness and pain. Thank you for the gentle understanding way you guide us through each session...”

Sheila Loeffler, Ladysmith BC

“I found the time of sharing most helpful. The questions resulted in my looking at things I have given too little attention to...”

Sandra Thompson, Duncan BC

Transitions: A Journey through Grief and Loss

Three new groups offered this spring!

**Tuesday evenings,
7:00 – 9:30 p.m.
April 21 – June 23, 2009
St. John’s Anglican Church
3295 Cobble Hill Road, Cobble Hill BC**

**Wednesday mornings,
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
April 22 – June 24, 2009
Lutheran Church of the Cross
3787 Cedar Hill Road, Victoria**

**Friday mornings,
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
April 24 – June 26, 2009
Chemainus United Church
9814 Willow Street, Chemainus BC**

Cost: \$150 or \$15/week

Please note: financial assistance is available in order to ensure that this support group is available to everyone

Resources used in developing this program: Your Sorrow is My Sorrow: Hope and Strength in Times of Suffering by Joyce Rupp, The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999 and Praying our Goodbyes by Joyce Rupp, Ave Maria Press, 1988.

Transitions: A Journey through Grief and Loss has been offered in churches in the Cowichan Valley since 2004 and more recently in Victoria. A program grounded in Christian Spirituality and Prayer, this supportive group offers encouragement, companionship and insights into the often confusing, painful and lonely experience of grieving.

There is no cost to a church that hosts **Transitions**. The cost to participants is \$150 or \$15/week. Each session is 2.5 hours long, and can be offered during the day or evenings. Participants receive a booklet containing a summary of the content of each session, related articles, and questions for personal reflection and small group discussions.

Choosing to join a grief support group can be a difficult decision for many people. For some, the thought of sharing their sorrow and loss with strangers may feel uncomfortable. Others may not want to “burden” people with their stories and memories. All of these concerns are understandable. Past participants have frequently shared how nervous they felt coming to the first session, and how easily their discomfort was transformed before the end of that first session.

What happens at Transitions?

Each session begins with a brief check-in, followed by an opening prayer and biblical reflection. Sarah continues with a presentation on the topic of the week. After this talk participants are invited to write down their response to questions in silence, and following a break, they share their responses in small group discussions. Each session ends with announcements and a closing prayer.

Each week looks at a different aspect of grief:

- Session 1:** Praying our Goodbyes
- Session 2:** The Foretelling of Sorrow
- Session 3:** Fleeing from Destruction
- Session 4:** Searching for Our Lost Treasures
- Session 5:** Meeting Our Pain
- Session 6:** Standing Beneath the Cross
- Session 7:** Embracing our Loss
- Session 8:** Laying our Sorrows to Rest
- Session 9:** Hello-Goodbye-Hello
- Session 10:** Social Gathering and Farewell



Sarah Donnelly was born and raised in southern Ontario, receiving her undergraduate degree from the University of Waterloo and her Masters of Divinity from St. Peter’s Seminary (University of Western Ontario). She was the Director of the Life and Family Resource Centre, Catholic Diocese of Calgary, for seven years, working in the areas of marriage preparation, support and enrichment, separated/divorced support, other healing and educational ministries and offering workshops and retreats. She also started her own business which allowed her to work in broader ecumenical circles.

Following a serious car accident in 2001 Sarah’s road to recovery led her to meet and subsequently marry Scott Pittendrigh, Rector of St. John’s Anglican Church in Cobble Hill. Sarah continues to offer workshops, retreats, spiritual direction, funerals and grief support groups to the ecumenical Christian community on Vancouver Island and throughout western Canada. Sarah was baptized in the Anglican tradition, raised in the Roman Catholic tradition, and joined the Anglican Church of Canada in 2008. Sarah, Scott and their golden retriever Dudley live in Cowichan Bay, BC.