

## Greetings Trinity family!

Wishing you all a blessed and healthy 2021!



As I write this there is a mass COVID-19 immunisation programme running, which was a positive ending for what for many of us has been a difficult and sad year.

I know some of you within Trinity church and outside in Frome community are sadly grieving the loss of a much-loved member of your family or a friend and we would like you to know you are very much in our thoughts and prayers at this time.

The word grief is derived from the Latin word GRAVARE I have discovered which means to make heavy. It is a very appropriate word I think expressing the sad, oppressive feelings that grief gives us when someone we love dies.

In my long nursing career, I have had many conversations with those who are struggling to cope following bereavement, whether recent or many years ago, and people usually surprise me by apologising for not being able to “get over it”. But, how can we? I don’t think a bereavement is something we can ever “get over”, but it’s something we will hopefully learn to live with and accept as time passes.

Our Christian faith can also help us in our grief journey, but it may test us too, especially if the death was traumatic and unexpected.

We know as Christians that life will not be easy and there will be pain and sorrow along our life journey. But we also have hope as Christians that death is not the end.

However, nothing can prepare us for grief, and God can feel extremely far away from us at our time of need. Praying can be difficult then or even impossible. It’s hard to believe God loves us then, as we struggle to make sense of our loss.

At this time with a combination of support from family, friends and church family our faith can survive and may even be strengthened.

In 1969 Psychiatrist Elizabeth Kubler Ross devised the five stages of grief that we go through after the loss of a loved one, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

I think this was useful guidance when it was written, but now many years later seems a little formulaic. We have learnt since then that the stages of grief will vary enormously from person to person, and no one’s grief journey will be the same or in the same order. **Remember God created you as a unique individual and your journey will be unique also!**

If you’ve been bereaved or know someone who is, you/they may be feeling:

- Physically drained
- Not able to sleep at night
- Experiencing a change in appetite
- Physical symptoms such as chest pain, headaches, or nausea
- forgetful and not able to think clearly
- Staying busy to avoid thinking about grief
- Eating drinking watching television excessively
- with drawn lonely and apathetic
- Frequently tearful
- Sense or dream about their deceased love one frequently

There will be highs and lows, and moments of hope followed by deep anguish. Some people find that their pain diminishes within weeks or months and arrive at a place of acceptance while for others the healing process is longer, and they will find it really hard to enjoy a reasonable quality of life. Anniversary’s, birthdays, and special family occasions will be painful reminders of the fact our loved one is no longer part of our lives, especially when we do them for the first time after our loss.

The grieving process can be a long an isolating journey, and it’s important to accept support rather than grieve alone. Talking is an essential part of healing. We all need to receive reassurance and feel listened to and understood, especially when we are grieving.

Sometimes we just don't know what to say to show our love and support, and we may even avoid those who are grieving. Research has shown those who are experiencing loss are really helped if we simply acknowledge their loss, and just listen while they share their loss story. Reaching out at anniversaries and holidays too as often these are painful times, even many years later. If you are finding it difficult to cope or know someone who is, it is maybe time to talk to a professional about how you feel.

And the good news is that there is **lots of help available**.

My two working days will vary from February but please call me on my work phone if you require signposting for bereavement services, and I will get back to you. It may take several days though!

My role as a Parish Nurse nurse at Holy Trinity is not about clinical procedures, its about signposting, health promotion and spiritual support too. If you need me to accompany you to an appointment, either myself or one of my amazing volunteers would be happy to do so. Thank you, Heather & Trevor Shortman and Jane Logie, for your continual support, helping transport people to RUH and GP surgeries. My work number is 07423318929

And if you would like prayer, I can always include your prayer in our email prayer circle, so others from Trinity church can include you in their prayers. I will never disclose more personal information than you would like.

Revelation 21:4 KJV

***“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”***

Now that's a beautiful thought to leave you with!

Love & Blessings!

**Jan x**

### **Useful numbers:**

- **Cruse helpline Bath& district :**  
01761 417250 10-1pm Mon-Fri
- **We Hear You Frome :** free therapeutic support for those affected by cancer and other life threatening conditions, 01373 455255
- **NHS :** Do see your GP if you are struggling with low mood or anxiety
- **Child Bereavement UK:**  
08000288840 Mon-Fri 9-5pm
- **Samaritans:** 116123 for 24-hour emotional support
- **Calm:** 0800585858 5pm – midnight supporting men anywhere in the UK
- **Bereavement Trust Helpline**  
0800435455 6-10pm daily
- **Somerset Bereavement Support**  
080030474129-5pm Mon -Sat

