

Counselor's Corner: **For everything there is a season**

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For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...A time to weep ...And a time to mourn. (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4)

"I didn't think I had any tears left in me; that I'd gotten it all out of my system, but the tears just kept coming."

"It's so bizarre how the rest of the world just keeps going as if nothing's happened. I got the day of the funeral but then the world seems to expect me to act as if nothing's happened, as if nothing's changed."

"I don't know where to go with this anymore. I don't want to be a burden to anyone. I don't want my family or friends to worry."

"Sometimes I feel like I'm going crazy. I wonder if I'm completely nuts."

These are comments I or others who have experienced significant loss have made. While the people who care about us hate to see us hurting and wish it away, unfortunately it doesn't go away. If we've truly loved, we truly hurt, and recovering is truly going to take time.

For everything for which there was a time to laugh, there is now a time to weep. (Ecclesiastes 3:4)

Give yourself at least a year. You and those who care about you need to know that it's not just one loss that you're grieving but a whole host of losses. Each new event that you experience without the loved one—family gatherings, birthdays and anniversaries, each season and holiday, all the places and spaces that you had shared together, the songs and sights and carols that hold memories—each are pleasant and yet painful reminders of what was, an additional part of what was lost, yet another loss that needs to be grieved.

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.

(Ecclesiastes 3:5, 7)

Pay attention to what you do that makes you feel

worse and what brings you any kind of relief or comfort, and allow yourself more of the latter.

This may change from day to day, from moment to moment.

Sometimes you will feel a strong need to be alone, sometimes to be around others; sometimes you'll want time to remember, and sometimes a break from remembering. Pay attention and go to where the bits of Relief and Comfort are being offered.

Past, present and future. Know that part of what makes recovery from a significant loss difficult is that it affects your past, present and future all at once. Not only are you dealing with incredible pain and emptiness in the present, you are also experiencing the regrets about the past and what did or didn't get said or done, in addition to all the uncertainties about the future, shattered hopes and dreams.

Every intense emotion. A significant loss also engages every intense emotion: joy, anger/rage, sadness/despair, fear, guilt/shame. Unfortunately these emotions all come at once and are, initially anyway, overwhelming. This is where you might begin to feel "crazy" and where you might find yourself getting stuck.

For everything there is...a time to heal. (Ecclesiastes 3:3)

Talk to someone. We all need others, community, companionship in order to heal and continue on our journeys in a meaningful way. If you don't know who those others are anymore, if you are concerned about burdening your friends or worrying your family, if you'd like to be able to share with someone what's going on with you, for them to be able to hear and appreciate and perhaps help unravel and understand and be with you in your loss and be with you...please call. We are here.

For everything there is a time...



Leta Herrington

Nominate Congregational Leaders

By Larry Kuusisto, Congregational Nominating Committee

Throughout the summer, members of the Congregational Nominating Committee will accept the names of recommended candidates for officers of Westminster. We are asking for your recommendations of those who will serve as Deacons, Elders and Trustees. Please help us through your prayerful consideration and nomination of those you determine to have the commit-

ment and leadership skills needed. Our future depends upon the combined gifts of our own congregation. We have a growing church with an important mission, and our congregational leaders play a vital role in sustaining that mission of service.

A nomination form was included in the July 7 News. Forms are also available at the church and at online, www.ewestminster.org.

If you have questions, please contact Larry Kuusisto at 763.521.4565 or lakuusisto@cs.com.