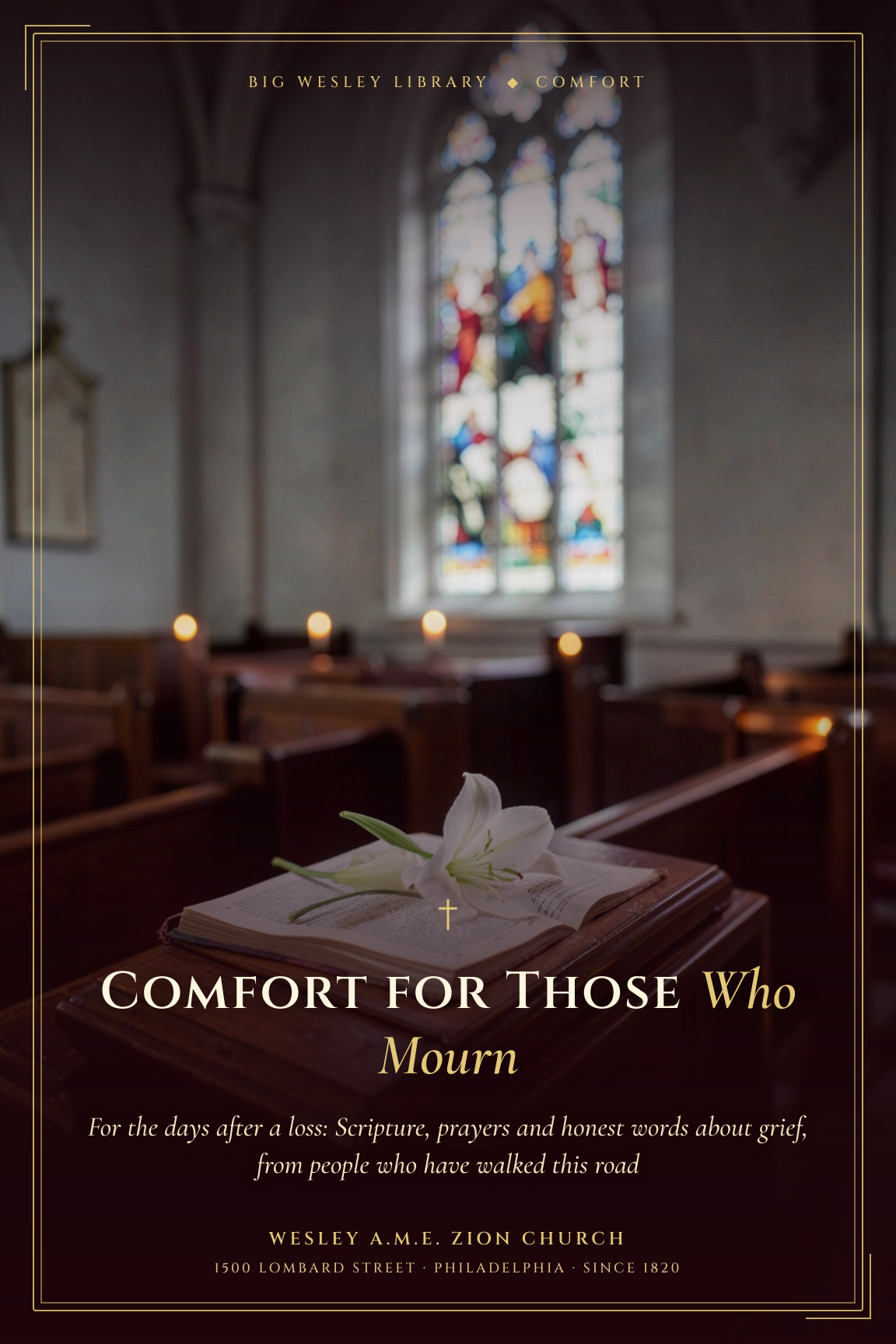


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COMFORT FOR THOSE *Who* *Mourn*

*For the days after a loss: Scripture, prayers and honest words about grief,
from people who have walked this road*

WESLEY A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
1500 LOMBARD STREET · PHILADELPHIA · SINCE 1820

COMFORT

COMFORT FOR THOSE *Who Mourn*

*For the days after a loss: Scripture, prayers and honest words about grief,
from people who have walked this road*



IF YOU ARE HOLDING THIS BOOKLET, SOMEONE YOU LOVE MAY HAVE died. We are so sorry. There are no words that make it right, and this booklet will not pretend there are.

What we can offer is this: you are not alone, your grief is not a lack of faith, and God is closer than you know. Jesus Himself wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus — even though He knew He was about to raise him. Tears are not the opposite of faith. They are the price of love.

Jesus wept.

JOHN 11:35 · THE SHORTEST VERSE IN THE BIBLE · KJV

YOU ARE NOT GOING CRAZY

WHAT GRIEF *is like*



Grief does not move in a straight line. Some days you may feel almost normal; other days, a song or a smell or an empty chair will bring it all back. You may feel numb, angry, guilty, exhausted or scattered. You may forget things. You may be angry at God. All of this is normal. The Psalms are full of people saying to God, *How long?* and *Why?* He can handle your honesty.

THINGS THAT HELP

Let people help. Accept the meals, the rides and the phone calls. **Keep a few routines.** Eat, sleep, walk, even when you don't feel like it. **Talk about them.** Say their name. Tell the stories. **Don't make big decisions too fast** if you can avoid it. **Ask for help** if grief becomes too heavy for too long. A grief counselor or support group can make a real difference. The pastor can help you find one.



Grief takes as long as it takes.

HOPE FOR BELIEVERS

WHAT THE BIBLE *promises*



Christians grieve, but Paul says we do not grieve *"as others which have no hope."* For those who die in Christ, death is not the end. It is a doorway.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

4 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent

them which are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

KING JAMES VERSION

JOHN 14:1-3 · JESUS' PROMISE

14 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

KING JAMES VERSION

IN PLAIN WORDS

Jesus told His friends, the night before He died: Don't be troubled. There is room in My Father's house. I am going to get it ready for you, and I will come back for you. That promise was for them, and it is for everyone who belongs to Him.

PRAYERS FOR *grieving hearts*



IN THE FIRST DAYS

Lord, I don't know how to do this. The world keeps moving, and I can barely stand. Hold me up. Hold me close. Thank You for the life of _____, for every year You gave us. I give them back into Your hands, because I know Your hands are good.

Comfort me as only You can.

AMEN.



ON THE HARD DAYS

Lord, today is hard. It is the birthday, the holiday, the anniversary, or just an ordinary day that suddenly isn't. Meet me in this missing. Let me cry when I need to cry, and laugh when a good memory comes. And remind me that this is not goodbye forever.

AMEN.



FOR A GRIEVING FAMILY

Father, wrap Your arms around this family. Give them peace in their home, patience with one another, and strength for every decision. Heal the old hurts that grief brings to the surface. Let them feel the love of Your church around them.

AMEN.

SCRIPTURES *for the funeral and after*

1

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

PSALM 23:4

The valley of the shadow of death is a valley, not a dead end. He walks through it with us.

2

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

JOHN 11:25-26

Jesus said this to a grieving sister, Martha, at her brother's grave.

3

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.

REVELATION 21:4

One day God Himself will wipe away every tear.

4

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

PSALM 30:5

Weeping lasts for a night. Joy is coming.

5

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1

Our bodies are like tents. God has a permanent house waiting.

6

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 8:38-39

Not even death can separate us from the love of God.

FOR FRIENDS AND CHURCH FAMILY

HOW TO HELP *someone who is grieving*



- ☐ Show up. Your presence matters more than your words.
- ☐ Say their loved one's name, and share a memory.
- ☐ Offer something specific: *I'll bring dinner Thursday.*
- ☐ Avoid *Everything happens for a reason* or *They're in a better place* in the early days. Just say, *I'm so sorry. I love you.*
- ☐ Remember the dates: call on the birthday and the anniversary.
- ☐ Keep checking in after the funeral, when most people stop calling.

THE CHURCH IS HERE FOR YOU

Big Wesley offers dignified homegoing services and pastoral care for grieving families. If you need a visit, prayer or help with arrangements, please call the church office at **(215) 735-8961**.

SIT WITH IT

What is one memory of my loved one I want to write down and keep?

Who can I lean on in the weeks ahead?



“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

MATTHEW 5:4

WESLEY A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

“Big Wesley” · The Freedom Church · Founded June 6, 1820

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 AM

SUNDAY WORSHIP 11:00 AM

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