

Grief in the Time of Covid-19 Resource Sheet

On April 28, 2020, members and friends of the Hymn Society got together over Zoom to discuss the issue of grief during a pandemic, and how complicated all our usual liturgical and social practices become when we cannot be together physically. As part of that session we put together a resource list, in hopes that our combined wisdom can help other congregations in need!

I. Scriptures, II. Hymns, III. Liturgical Resources, IV. Other Ideas

I. Scriptures

- The Psalms, particularly these:
 - Psalm 6
 - Psalm 10
 - Psalm 13
 - Psalm 23
 - Psalm 31
 - Psalm 38 (especially 8-11)
 - Psalm 88
 - Psalm 102
 - Psalm 107
 - Psalms for all Seasons RCA
- The book of Job
- Romans 8:26-27
- II Corinthians 4:7-12
- John 11
- John 14
- Lamentations 3:19-26,31-33
- Revelation 21:1-6; 22:1-5

II. Hymns

- Hymns written during other periods of pandemic/plague:
 - Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (not published until later, but text written in 1918)
 - Wonderful Grace of Jesus
 - A Mighty Fortress is Our God
 - Now Thank We All Our God
- New hymns written during Covid 19:
 - Adam Tice - "I Am Not Alone"
 - Ruth Duck - "In Fear the World is Weeping"
 - Michael Joncas - "Shelter Me"
 - Charles Freeman - When hands can no more reach and hold

- Other helpful hymns:
 - O Lord Hear My Prayer, Taize
 - Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child
 - Precious Lord, Take My Hand
 - How can I keep singing
 - You raise me up
 - It is Well with my soul
 - On Eagles Wings
 - Deep River
 - Abide with Me
 - Be Still My Soul
 - Jesus, Priceless Treasure.
 - What a fellowship. “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms”
 - Soon I will be done”
 - Beams of heaven, as I go
 - God Will Take Care of You (Civila D. Martin)
 - I Know Who Holds Tomorrow (Ira Stamphill)
 - God Leads Us Along (G. A. Young)
 - His Eye Is On the Sparrow (Civila D. Martin)
 - Hold Me God (K. Graber, A. Loepp Thiessen)
 - When Life Makes No Sense at All (Jane Best)
 - <https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/michael-ha-w-n-ten-favorite-hymns-on-psalm-23>
- From Hymnary, songs on grief
<https://www.hymnary.org/search?qu=topics%3AGrief%2B%20in%3Ainstances>
- Also from Hymnary, Covid-19 Resources:
<https://hymnary.org/topic/covid-19>
- Covid-19 resource page from Hymn Society:
<https://thehymnsociety.org/covid-19/>
- Glory to God Lament for Longing and Healing section
- John Bell Lament

III. Liturgical Resources

A. Funerals

- UM Book of Worship Funeral Service for an Untimely or Tragic Death (pg 163)
- Calvin Institute Resource page:
<https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/covid-19-and-worship-resources-for-churches-adapting-to-social-isolation>
- Calvin Institute’s funeral suggestions:
<https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/funer>

[al-practices-during-covid-19-praying-for-wisdom-in-pastoral-and-liturgical-adaptations](#)

- PCUSA Covid-19 resources, including funeral practices:
<https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>
- Enriching our Worship 3 (church publishing free download)
- Episcopal church prayer book of 1928, prayer in times of disease

B. Beyond Funerals: Services of Lament (Blue Christmas style services, whether this is online, at a later date in person, or both)

- Helpful guide to planning a service of lament unique to your context from the Institute for Congregational Trauma and Growth:
https://www.ictg.org/uploads/1/2/9/5/12954435/ictg_guide_to_planning_a_service_of_lament.pdf
- Service of Lament using CCM songs from Re:think Worship:
<https://www.rethinkworship.com/lament-service/>
- Service of Lament including Communion from RCA:
<https://www.rca.org/resources/service-lament-and-prayer-liturgy>
- Keith Getty Hymns of Comfort

IV. Tangible Ways of Showing Communal Support for the Grieving

- Balloon release at social distance
 - Not environmentally friendly; bird seed, bubbles instead?
- Parade of Support
- Sidewalk chalk messages on their driveway or walkway
- Cards, phone calls, emails
- Delivery of food to their house, supporting local restaurants in the process
- Create a memory book by compiling stories/letters from friends and family
- Assign a staff member or church member other than clergy to follow up with the grieving regularly.
- Bring a plant to them.
- Experienced by one member of the group: They collected on pieces of paper words to describe the deceased, put them in a bowl, and then read them aloud. Later, those papers were put together into an art piece.
- Possibly some ideas in Horizons Bible Study (Presbyterian Women), just published: "Into the Light" by Dr. Lynn Miller