

## The Trauma and Grief Connection

*Sam Gingerich, Administrator*



Not all grief that we face has trauma, but all trauma has grief.

We all have learned strategic ways to grieve our losses, or not to. For most of us, our coping mechanisms were developed through childhood experiences. These trauma events we didn't choose but had a profound

impact in shaping who we've become and how we engage others, especially at a heart level. Childhood trauma shapes who we become as adults. Since God has made us body, soul, and spirit, undealt trauma affects all aspects of our being.

This article is not touching the extent of massive trauma, but the kind of incidents that we call small trauma. Experiencing angry outbursts or receiving constant criticism, watching a sibling struggle with illness or being abandoned by a close friend are examples of small trauma. These kinds of situations cause pain but are often not given the space to grieve.

Some time ago, I heard the story of a student that was mocked at school by other students. The experience brought deep shame and embarrassment. In sharing it with his parents he was told, "Be strong in the face of adversity. If there is something for you to learn through this, that is okay, but don't let it get you down." They heard the event but didn't listen to his heart and how he was impacted.

Traumatic events, large or small, bring a barrage of grief responses. That day in school this student learned about stinging pain that can come from peers and that evening at home he learned that his feelings didn't matter. There was no space given to validate his pain or for him to acknowledge how he wanted to disappear from school and never go back.

Our bodies hold the memory of a trauma experience, what we don't express and work through. Numerous events that are held inside create added inner stress and turmoil. Often it surfaces as a physical ailment or compulsive behavior or panic that seems out of our control. The rent, as they say, eventually comes due.

The opposite is also true. When children are given permission and freedom to vulnerably move into their pain and to grieve traumatic events in their lives, they have the potential to develop resiliency and deep faith in times of devastating loss. This will also grow the emotional acuity to care for others.

There is a time for parents, after listening and caring, to share about God's love in those moments. When a child experiences the love of a father, the transition to receiving the heavenly Father's love and care is natural. They can believe their pain is seen and matters to the Lord.

If you have undealt trauma and grief in your story, there is hope. Choose people and places that are worthy of your precious grief. Share your grief with someone that will hold it. It's in these moments we know we are not alone and experience healing through meaningful connections.

Healing from our trauma and losses doesn't mean it didn't happen, it means it no longer controls us. It is from this posture that we can care for others and be present to their grief. And in time, they too will experience a deep, abiding joy. True joy is forged in sorrow.

May this Christmas season, when family and friends come together to remember and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, give you meaningful moments to enter into the hearts and lives of those you love dearly.



# May God's Peace grace your holiday Season!



Back L-R: Sam Gingerich, Dave Myer, Michael Hochstetler, Adam Lehigh, Elaine Yoder, Lorinda Newcomer, James Mast.

Front L-R: Cathie Gingerich, Amy Wagler, Brenda Hershberger, Lonita Wise, Naomi Zimmerman, Darla Hackman, Sherilyn Mast (Not pictured: Joshua Strickler, Hannah Beiler, Anna Stoltzfus)

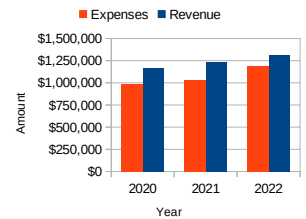


## From the Director of Development:

Thanks to each one who contributed this year! The income totals for the first three quarters look very encouraging. Expenses in the last quarter of the year will include renovations to our building and grounds. Looking ahead, we anticipate continued growth. Please pray with us as we search for someone to step into the new role of Public Relations Director. This person will take over my responsibilities as Director of Development and other key areas of communication, planning, and providing for the future of LCM. The bar chart shows how the last three years stack up. We depend on God's provision through His people to supply for our increasing opportunities to bring hope to the hurting. Thank you for your interest and prayers.

— Adam Lehigh

Annual Income & Expenses



## Gifts God Loves

Brenda Hershberger, Office Manager



At this time of year, gifts are in the forefront of many people's minds – gifts we will give, gifts we will receive, gifts the wise men brought. But have you ever considered the gift you might give to your Heavenly Father?

I envision the wise men parading into Joseph & Mary's house in their royal robes carrying boxes covered in gold and jewels. Seeing the child on Mary's lap, they fall at her feet in total adoration. The worship continues as they open their treasure boxes and present to Him their precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Did Baby Jesus babble and coo with delight at the treasures He was receiving? I'm doubtful. But surely these gifts pleased Mary & Joseph and, even more so, the heavenly Father. To have His beloved Son recognized and honored for who He was – the King, the Messiah, the Lord – this must have been a joyous moment for Father God!

Recently, a lovely 19th-century hymn caught my attention:

*Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!  
Bow down before Him, His glory proclaim.  
With gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,  
Kneel and adore Him--the Lord is His name!*

*Fear not to enter His presence in poverty,  
Bearing no gifts to present as your own.  
Bring truth in its beauty and love in its purity--  
These are the offerings to lay at His throne.*

-John Monsell; adapt. David Steele

Maybe you wish you could bring elaborate gifts such as the wise men offered. Maybe you feel Jesus would be most pleased if you could bring Him a saved soul or if you donated \$1000 to a poor child. But instead, you have nothing in your heart to bring Him except pain, despair, and brokenness.

The good news is that He is absolutely pleased when you bring your neediness and brokenness to Him. The tiniest shred of faith and love, He will accept. Can you believe that He deems your obedience as precious gold? your humility as a sweet aroma? your praise and adoration beautiful? Read the following passages (and there are many more) for glimpses of what delights the heart of God: I Samuel 15; Proverbs 11:20; Psalm 51; Psalm 147.

This season, let us delight our Father God with gifts of humility, obedience, and praise – gifts that He loves any time of the year.

## Addressing & Understanding Mental Health Issues Seminar

April 11-13, 2024 • 8:45am - 4:00pm

In this 3-day seminar, Dr. Joshua Strickler, Mr. Michael Hochstetler, Dr. Chuck Jantzi, and Dr. Joel Yeager will address topics related to understanding mental health, OCD & religious scrupulosity, shame, and truth-telling.

### Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Religious Scrupulosity – Joshua Strickler, Psy.D. (Thursday)

Underlying presuppositions about mental health will be reviewed from a Biblical relational perspective and then applied to understanding OCD and religious scrupulosity. Participants will gain an understanding of what it is like to struggle with this experience, learn how to help, and explore ways that faith in Jesus Christ is foundational to finding healing.

### Working with Personality Disorders – Chuck Jantzi, Psy.D. (Friday morning)

The terms narcissism or borderline personality are frequently used to describe people in our lives with patterns of relating that are difficult to understand and deal with. Often the way to redemptively relate to these people appears counter to ways that seem Christ-like and loving. Come learn how to love and care for those with these difficult relationship styles.

### Toxic Shame: Causes and Cures – Michael Hochstetler, MA, LMFT (Friday afternoon)

Chronic, unhealthy shame is a root cause of many of the emotional struggles that people face and one of the most important issues in counseling today. In this session, we will explore this issue from various angles.

### Wise Truth-telling Strategies – Joel Yeager, MD (Saturday)

The goal of this 5-session seminar is to teach people how to be wise truth-discerners and truth-tellers and not just rely on feelings or popular opinion. Sessions will cover the following: why this is crucial in both church and society; philosophical laws of logic and thought; Biblical principles for discerning truth; common misconceptions amongst Anabaptists regarding mental health; practical truth-telling strategies for working with people.

**January 2, 2024** – Registration opens for pastors, ministry workers, people helpers

**February 2, 2024** – Registration open for all other interested persons

Availability is limited. Cost: \$200 per person  
To register, call the office at 717-871-0540 or email [info@life-ministries.com](mailto:info@life-ministries.com)

*This writing explores the Biblical, feminine images of God's nurturing, wise, compassionate care, revealed by women.*

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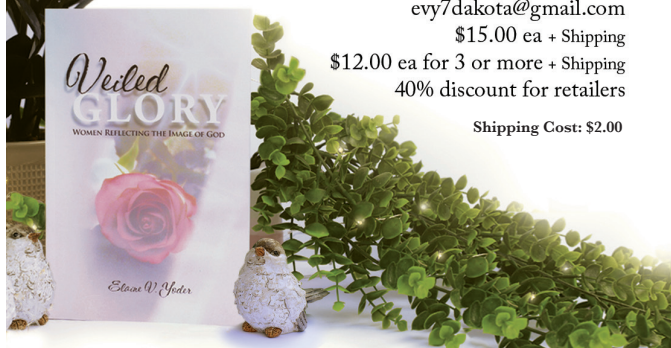
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## PRAYER & PRAISE

### Praise God for...

- For the precious gift of His Son who has come to "free us from Satan's tyranny"
- The provisions to remodel the downstairs restrooms and an excellent crew to make it happen
- A responsive group of Counselor Trainees in fall/spring workshop.

### Pray for...

- wisdom for the board and administration as they lead the ministry
- God's guidance in the search for a Public Relations Director
- health and stamina for the staff during the flu season
- spiritual and physical protection for the ministry

## TEN-COURSE SUBJECTS

### Biblical Interpretation

January 31-February 2. **Registration now open**

### Core 1, Lab 1

January 11-13; March 14-16 **FILLED**

To register, please call the office at 717-871-0540 or email [info@life-ministries.com](mailto:info@life-ministries.com).



### Farewell, Abby

We regretfully say good-bye to Abby Lambright who capably served as receptionist at the Spring Garden office for the past year. Abby was a willing servant and committed to excellence. Thank you, Abby! We wish you well in your new role of motherhood.



### Meet our New Receptionist

Anna Stoltzfus recently joined our team as receptionist at the Spring Garden office. She is from New Holland; a wife, mother, and grandmother. After being a widow for seven years, she recently married Mel Stoltzfus. With her own journey of grief and depression, she cares about people's pain and desires

to create a safe atmosphere for all who walk through LCM's doors. Welcome, Anna!

## Upcoming Events

### Annual Banquet

March 24, 2024. Registration opens January 2  
*You must register to attend.*  
Phone: 717.871.0540  
Email: [info@life-ministries.com](mailto:info@life-ministries.com)  
Online: [www.life-ministries.com](http://www.life-ministries.com)

### "Understanding Mental Health Issues" Seminar April 11-13, 2024

**Father/Son Retreat**  
June date TBA. Registration opens March 1

**Rocky Mountain Men's Retreat**  
August date TBA. Registration opens March 1

To register for any of these events, please call the office 717.871.0540



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MINISTRIES

250 Meadow Lane  
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## LETTING GO:

### *A Portrait of a Woman at Rest*

This course offers married women practical Biblical tips on how to be happy, respectful, empowered wives. This online, six-week, intensive course involves daily interactive emails, one group Zoom call per week, and journaling homework.

Coaches: Cathie Gingerich and Sharon Kuepfer

### NEXT COURSE DATES:

JANUARY 1 – FEBRUARY 12, 2024 **FILLED**

MARCH 18 – APRIL 29, 2024

MAY 27 – JULY 6, 2024

For more information, contact Lorinda at  
[lorindan@life-ministries.com](mailto:lorindan@life-ministries.com)  
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Life Counseling Ministries is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established to provide counseling for individuals, marriages, families, and church leaders. LCM also offers training and teaching through workshops and seminars. This newsletter is published quarterly and is available to interested persons at no cost.

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