



The Forastiere Family
Funeral & Cremation
Newsletter

Full Circle

At Forastiere Family Funeral & Cremation, we are here to help before, during and after your loss. Our care encompasses the full circle of your experience... the full circle of your life.

- WINTER 2021

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Support Group Changes

Agawam (AF-AW) are no longer being offered.

The Coping Addiction Loss group in East Longmeadow will start at 7pm and end 8:30pm.

The Windowed Support Group in East Longmeadow will start at 6:30pm and end 8pm.

Signs

Often I will have people tell me that they see signs that are comforting. The signs range from spiders to butterflies, from pennies to dimes, from flowers to breezes. The most important part of getting the signs is to slow down and pay attention. **The following article is one person's experience. I am always interested in the signs people receive from loved ones.**



Pennies From Heaven

by **Stefanie Hart-Miller**, *Bereavement Magazine 1995*

Many times since my son's death, I have thought about his presence being with me. It's usually when I'm alone at home, at the office or in my car, he keeps me from getting lost; he was good at reading maps.

I used to think that it was just my imagination, but there is a strong sense of his presence — like before he died, when he was somewhere in the house reading or asleep. There is a comforting feeling that mothers have in knowing that their children are safely at home. I believe mothers have a special bond with their children, and I question whether that bond is severed after death. It's difficult for me to believe that bond is forever broken by death.

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Pennies From Heaven

There is a warm, inner feeling of comfort in knowing that I can feel his presence and even visualize his smiling face watching me. Even when the thought crosses my mind that he is smiling that beautiful smile, it brings tears because I want more than just the thought of his presence. I want him here. I want us to share our thoughts, laughter, and plans again. I thought I knew how to let go, but there is no letting go. There is a bond of love that will always be there.

Sometimes, I can feel Derrick, my son, saying something funny that will cause me to laugh or smile inwardly. Words that I know only he would say. It is the way he would have said it. Most of the time I would hear, "I love you, Mom. You will be okay. I'm always with you."

Sometimes I just want to be angry because it's not enough. It's not fair that my arms ache to hug him and never let him go anywhere; to want to see him again and hug him again. These are real feelings.

As time goes on, the moments of his presence are welcomed. I remember the first time I took flowers to the cemetery. How difficult that was! I never thought that I would be staring down at a stone with his name, birth, and death dates on it. I remember arranging some flowers in his vase; one broke off, and I just cried. I wanted the flowers to be perfect, showing my love and care, and now one was broken. As I picked it up, I could see my son's smiling face saying, "Mom, this one is for you."

There was another time that I was missing Derrick very much, and I believe he knew it. I remember a month ago...I was seeing pennies in the strangest places; in my jewelry drawer, in my sock drawer, two or three in my lingerie drawer. I was getting to the point where I was getting tired of seeing pennies. There was one on the sidewalk, and I even found one in my flower pot. Of course, I would pick them up, but I had to ask myself, "What's with the pennies; why am I seeing pennies all over the place?"

I believe what I received then from my son was, "Mom, these are pennies from Heaven." He knew that I was feeling depressed and missing him very much, and I could only smile the kind of smile that touches and heals my heart.

I believe that our loved ones have very special ways of letting us know that we can be touched by a little bit of Heaven just because they are there. And if we are not still full of anger, every once in a while they will send us a hug.

To Those I Love

By Isla Paschal Richardson

If I should ever leave you, whom I love

To go along the silent way:

Grieve Not!

Nor speak of me with tears,

But laugh and talk of me

As if I were beside you there,

(I'd come — I'd come, could I but find my way!

But would not tears and grief be barriers?)

And when you hear a song

Or see a bird I loved,

Please do not let

The thought of me be sad...

For I am loving you

Just as I always have...

You were so good to me!

There are so many things

I wanted still to do —

So many things to say to you —

Remember that I

Did not fear...

It was just leaving you

That was so hard to face...

We cannot see beyond...

But this I know:

I loved you so — twas heaven here with you!

Good Grief

By Joanne Sullivan, RN. Grief Specialist

Well, if you are reading this newsletter, you made it through the holidays! *Congratulations!* Although hurdles continue to come, it is important to pat yourself on the back when you manage to get through trying times. It's baby steps, inch by inch.

As we wage the war against the COVID-19 pandemic, the fall out continues like dominoes. Businesses, homes, restaurants, and churches became off limits for a time only to return with many restrictions, while some were unable to sustain the loss.

I guess, like many of the wars the human race has faced, we will be forever changed. Not only are we changed due to the magnitude of the loss of loved ones, but as well as the loss in our economy. We will have scars and pain to carry in our memories. Our children will have many stories to tell their children about their life during the pandemic.



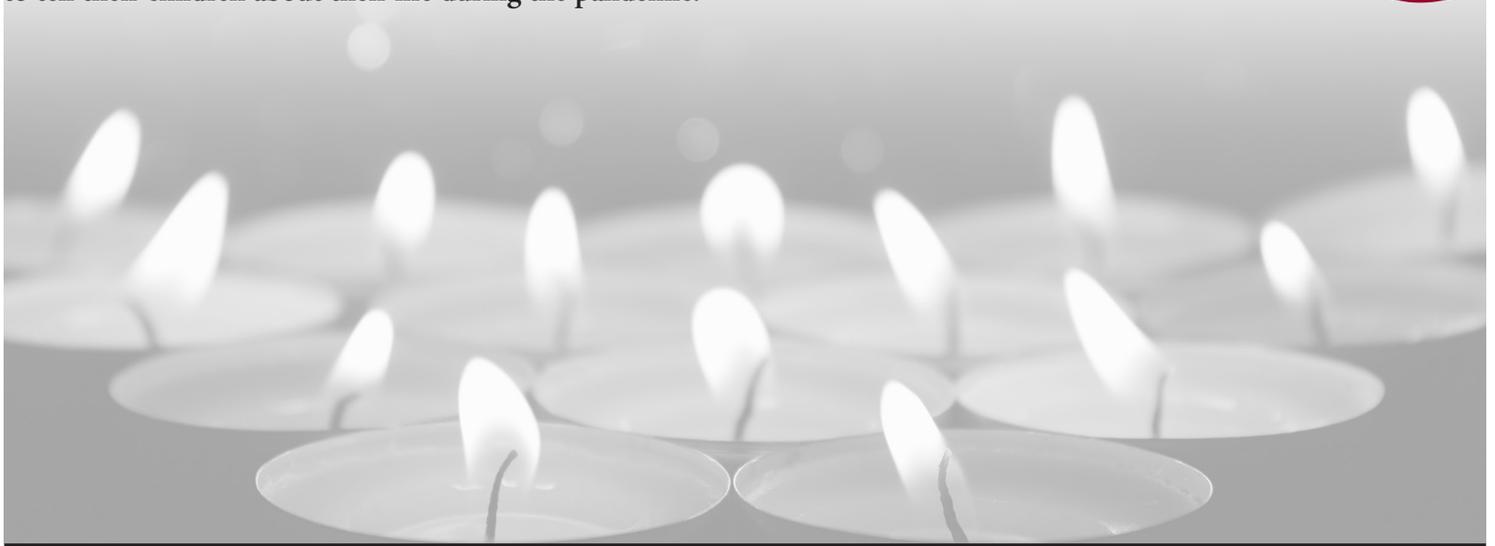
Joanne Sullivan

They will tell about the heartfelt prayers for the first responders, the healthcare teams, and all of those people stepping up to meet the demands of their neighborhood and country. They will talk about how it truly takes a village... We will be forever changed due to the many losses and hardships that 2020 brought us.

Grief changes how we react to loss. The way we view the world becomes fundamentally different. It can be powerful and confusing when you don't value the things you valued before because the loss has helped you find new values and new priorities. So remember to be careful about rash decisions. Step back and review your choices.

As we talk about a "new normal," for those who have lost a loved one, this is going to be the biggest "new normal" ever... So respect yourself and take your time. Be open to joy and purpose. Don't close yourself off to *possibilities*.

Blessings, Prayers, and Hugs,
Joanne



**"As a boy, I would see scary things in the news.
My mother would say, 'Look for the helpers.
You will always find people who are helping.'"**

~ Mr. Rogers

To receive our Full Circle Newsletter it will be available on our website and via email. We will no longer be mailing the publication. The link on our website will allow you to view and save the newsletter or if you would like it emailed directly please email us at wecare@ForastiereFuneralHome.com with the word, "Newsletter" in the subject line and it will arrive every quarter. Our newsletter is at your fingertips, which includes our Care Calendar of support groups. You may now download it, share with friends, or just store it for future reference.



Options... for a brighter tomorrow Care Calendar

These monthly support groups are provided free of charge to anyone in the community by Forastiere Family Funeral & Cremation. Please select the group most tailored to your loss. No registration or long-term commitment is needed. Our Grief Specialist, Joanne Sullivan, welcomes you to attend the group whenever you need some support.

■ **EW = Widowed Support In East Longmeadow** For anyone who has lost a spouse.
Forastiere-Smith Grief Support Center · 220 North Main Street, East Longmeadow · 6:30pm-8pm

■ **SS = Survivors of Suicide** For anyone whose life has been touched by suicide.
Forastiere-Smith Grief Support Center · 220 North Main Street, East Longmeadow · 7pm-9pm

■ **WSF = Family & Friends Support** For those who have lost a child, parent, sibling, or dear relative or friend.
West Springfield Senior Center · 128 Park Street, West Springfield · 3:15pm-4:15pm

■ **CAL = Coping Addiction Loss** For those who have lost a loved one to substance use.
Forastiere-Smith Grief Support Library · 220 North Main Street, East Longmeadow · 7pm-8:30pm

January

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	CAL	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	SS	26	EW	28	29	30
31						

February

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7	8	9	CAL	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	EW	25	26	27
28	SS					

March

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	CAL	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	SS	23	EW	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

This newsletter provides us with an opportunity to share with you some information we hope will be helpful. For more information about any of these topics or the services we have available to you, please call (413) 733-5311 (reaches all locations) or complete the information request form within.

FORASTIERE
 45 Locust Street
 Springfield, MA 01108
 FORASTIERE
 220 North Main Street
 East Longmeadow, MA 01028

FORASTIERE
 COLONIAL
 985 Main Street
 Agawam, MA 01001

FORASTIERE
 SOUTHWICK
 624 College Highway
 Southwick, MA 01077

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