



Have a Dynamic Grief Ministry For Your Church and Community

Where No One Falls Through the Cracks

SPARKOFLIFE.ORG



Churches CAN Make a Lasting Difference When Loss Hits

Most churches do a great job immediately after someone has a loss. However, grievors often feel forgotten and ignored by their church after a few weeks.

Thousands of grievors in over one hundred 3 ½ - day Grief Retreats and over 80 Grief Workshops, have reminded us of this. Most know the neglect is not intentional, but their pain and loneliness are real.

We know you *do* care for not only your members when they experience deep loss, but also for those in your community.

We also know that at times you might be frustrated in how to practically and powerfully help those who are experiencing many losses *after those initial efforts*.

How can a church respond better with the love of Christ, and how do you even know who in your churches and community are experiencing deep loss?

And how do you as a church create within your community the awareness that you are a church that cares, and is there when loss hits, with a real, practical, powerful, and ongoing strategy?

We know all of this can be difficult.

But we also know difficult does not equate to impossible.

We at Spark of Life want to take the 'impossible' out of the equation, and share with you a powerful, practical strategy that is proven to give hope to those in grief.

This strategy has also given hope to churches who desire to impact their communities with the love of Christ, in a powerful, real, ongoing way.

Take the Impossible Out of the Equation

How Spark of Life Can Help

Where No One Falls Through the Cracks

Since 2009, almost 10,000 grievors have helped us at Spark of Life see more clearly this relationship between churches and grievors.

Two problems are common:

(1) After the loss, when the newness of the loss wears off, everyone else's life continues as before - but not the griever's life. Things are forever different. Thousands have told us that they indeed feel neglected, so much so that many just quit on God and the church.

Grievors in the community, who might not have any church home, feel the same way.

(2) Often we do not know about one's loss, especially a non-death loss, which is devastating to them. How can we help if we don't know?

Spark of Life's strategy is designed to address both of these issues.

Imagine Your Church

Imagine your church's leadership/staff having a clear plan on how to implement strategies that have proven to work, to identify those with loss, and how to proceed to help those who need it.

Imagine those grieving in your community, many of who have no church home, knowing that your church really cares, and 'gets it.'

Imagine many of these grievors in your church and community using their loss to help others who are grieving, even leading and participating in the ongoing Grief ministry - both for your church and community.

Talk about an outreach strategy that works! Meeting people where they are, with deep pain – with a message that cries out to them – “God does care, so we care. We are here for you.”

**Here is a brief rundown of the specifics of
Spark of Life's Grief Ministry Strategy offerings.**

1. The 3 ½ - Day Spark of Life Grief Recovery Retreat

The retreat is often the entry point of a church deciding to develop or improve a grief strategy that is ongoing.

When staff and/or members attend a retreat, they experience and see the powerful change in those who are grieving, including themselves.

They see hope return to 'Live Forward' with their pain.



They desire to take this new-found hope back home to their church and community.

These retreats are conducted throughout the year at various locations around the country. Having conducted 118 retreats since 2009, we have seen over 1700 participants find hope again.



2. The Spark of Life Grief Workshop

This 1-2 day workshop is usually conducted at your church and is open for staff, members, and community – for both griever and current non-griever.

It is often scheduled after one or more of your staff and members attend a Grief retreat, though often the workshop propels staff and members and community to attend a retreat.

After conducting over 80 Spark of Life Workshops in churches around the country, we have learned this:

About ½ of workshop attendees will be from your community, and ½ from your church.



The reason? It is very comfortable for your members and staff to ask their friends, co-workers, and family whom they know are grieving, to come to this free workshop.

And when someone is hurting so deeply, they often are open to try many things to receive help.

If funeral homes, hospice organizations, therapists, etc. help sponsor the workshop, they not only help with the financing, but they also spread the news to their clients.

At the workshop, the Spark of Life Grief Small Group Course, The Divine Grief Recovery Method, is offered.

3. Spark of Life's Small Group Grief Course #1

The Divine Grief Recovery Method

The recommendation is for the course to be scheduled a few weeks after the workshop. This 8-week course is provided to the congregation who hosts the workshop and can be offered as a follow-up to the Grief workshop above.

It works well like this:

At the workshop, attendees will have the opportunity to register for the course.

This 8-week small group grief course can be offered continually throughout the year.

The local church's Grief Ministry Team is often formed from those who have experienced deep loss, and who attend this course.



4. Spark of Life's On-Line Offerings

Grief Coaching from Spark of Life Certified Grief Coaches

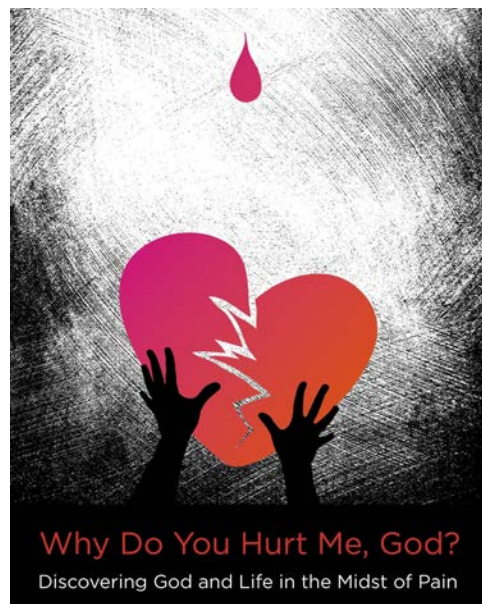
Available 24/7 – all coaches are committed Christians – all have found hope after devastating losses.

Online Grief Retreats

3 ½ day intensives – exactly the same methods and exercises as the in-person retreat. Led by Spark of Life trained facilitators.

Online Grief Courses – Including Divorce Recovery

Online Resources – Videos, Articles, Podcasts, Books



DAVID J. MATHEWS

THE PLAN

Launching a Powerful Grief Ministry is Simple

We know all the above seems like a lot. It might even seem complicated. Having worked in churches for over 40 years, I understand the feelings of being overwhelmed, and not knowing what to do next.

So we want to keep this simple and help you know exactly what steps to take to get started and build something that will benefit many people - both believers, used-to-be believers, and unbelievers.

STEP ONE – ZOOM MEETING

Schedule a 45-minute Zoom Call with SPOL Co-Founder David Mathews. Have your key person/staff/leadership attend this meeting.

Email David Mathews - david@sparkoflife.org - to discuss the exact time and date for the call.

At the meeting, we both ask relevant questions, being sure there is a complete understanding of the process – all designed to help those who are grieving to have hope to *Live Forward*.

Our role is to help you design a unique strategy for your congregation and community, which will include a Spark of Life Retreat, and a Spark of Life Grief Workshop for your church.

NOTE: A Spark of Life *Retreat* is 3 ½ days at locations around the country. The retreat is limited to 16 participants from around the world.

A Spark of Life *Workshop* is usually Saturday morning at your building and is an unlimited number. We have had as many as 220 attend the Saturday workshop.

STEP TWO – REGISTER FOR A SPARK OF LIFE GRIEF RETREAT

Your church encourages the individuals or couples who need to come to a 3 ½ day grief retreat, and the specific retreat to attend.

We suggest you send at least one person or couple; more if needed.

This could include staff or other members who have experienced deep loss, or both.

STEP THREE – SCHEDULE A WEEKEND GRIEF WORKSHOP FOR YOUR CHURCH

As stated earlier, the Workshop is usually Saturday morning, at your building. Details can be discussed on the Zoom Call.

We send you promotional items that have proved successful in helping spread the word, and also videos to promote the workshop to show at your assemblies if you choose.

We also send you the small group, 8-week course – *The Divine Grief Recovery Method* (How God Handles Grief), to be offered after the Grief Workshop.

Sign-up sheets for the course will be available at the Workshop, again – if you choose.

STEP FOUR – FORM YOUR GRIEF MINISTRY TEAM

This team often is formed by those who come to the 8-week course, *The Divine Grief Recovery Method* (How God Handles Grief).

It may or may not involve a staff person.

We have discovered that one of the keys to a healthy recovery from loss is *Purpose*. What am I going to do with this loss I have experienced? is a great question.

Thus griever with a purpose to use their gifts to help grievers is a powerful step toward a healthy recovery.

We will share with you some ideas and suggestions for how this team functions, and specific things and programs they can accomplish, such as:

- Having a yearly (at least) ‘Lament Service’ for your church and community
- Offering a yearly memorial service for those in your church and community who have lost a loved one recently
- Offer the Spark of Life Grief Course often throughout the year
- Work with Spark of Life to have a 3 ½ Grief Retreat in your area, and have the Grief Ministry Team serve at the retreat

YOUR INVESTMENT

Imagine your church having an organized, intentional, and practical Grief Ministry system in place where you can constantly have more awareness of those in your church and community who are hurting.

Imagine the number of those people who ‘fall through the cracks’ goes down – and the number of people who learn to ‘live forward through their pain’ – goes up.

Imagine those in your community *knowing* that there is a church that not only says they care, but demonstrates God’s love in a tangible way, at the most vulnerable times in their lives, with real options that work.

Imagine a church that intentionally and consistently invests in people who are grieving.

Pricing

Pastor Only Grief Recovery Retreats – for anyone involved in ministry, para-church organizations, missionaries, etc. For any kind of loss; Also for grief training

February 27 – March 2, 2023---- Monday 4:00 PM – Thursday 12 Noon

November 6-9, 2023 -----Monday 4:00 PM – Thursday 12 Noon

Gatlinburg, TN – Wafloy Mountain Village – 10-minute drive to downtown Gatlinburg
www.wafloy.com

Pastor Only Retreats

Single (1 person in a room) --- \$995

Double (2 to a room) ----- \$1495

DISCOUNT – 20% if booked by December 31, 2022

Single - \$795 Double - \$1295

Includes private room and bath for 3 nights, all materials, all food – including 8 meals and snacks



Spark of life Grief Retreats – Open to 18 years and older, for any kind of loss

In-Person Retreats – Includes private room and bath (3 nights), all materials, 8 meals

Single (1 person in room) -- \$995

Double (2 to a room) ----- \$1495

May 18-21, 2023 – Gatlinburg TN

Wafloy Mountain Village – 10-minute drive to downtown Gatlinburg www.wafloy.com

August 10-13, 2023 – Gatlinburg, TN

Wafloy Mountain Village – 10-minute drive to downtown Gatlinburg www.wafloy.com

2023 Spark of Life Grief Recovery WORKSHOPS - Held at your church building, Date TBD

Saturday 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Sunday – optional – Sunday Class and/or Sermon by David Mathews

Class – The Power of Biblical Lament

Sermon– Why Do You Hurt Me, God?

Pricing: \$5,000 + Expenses – 20% Discount if a 2023 Workshop is booked by December 31, 2022

Discounted Price: \$4,000 + Expenses

Price includes:

Facilitating the Workshop by Spark of life Co-Founder and Executive Director – David Mathews

The Leader’s Guide and Participant Workbooks to the 8-Week Small Group Course – *The Diving Grief Recovery Method (How God Handles Grief)*

Staff/Leadership Training - Friday before the Workshop – Optional - Or through Zoom

What Churches Have Said About Working with Spark of Life

We know how frustrating it can be for a church to have a workshop or seminar, where everyone is excited about a new program, and then...what next? The excitement often erodes quickly.

We also get how difficult it is to have an 'outside the walls' church, where outreach is not just another program, but a way of life.

Most of us know that when people are devastated by life, what they really need and desire is to have someone 'be there,' and not try to 'fix' them, but to be there. Did I say that before – just be there?

What we have been honored to have discovered in walking with thousands who are battered and bruised by loss and by life, is this:

Sharing the love of God is shockingly simple – being there, accepting them where they are, with all their questions, emotions, etc. Simply loving them.

We have also learned this: Having an organized system in place for your church, staff, and community – helps us better discover who is hurting, helps us avoid saying the wrong things, and helps us to know what it means 'to be there.'

Three Churches of Many Who Have Partnered with Spark of Life

Each did three things

1. Someone from their church came to a Spark of Life Retreat.
2. Their church scheduled a Spark of Life Workshop after they returned.
3. Their church offered the Spark of Life 8-week course to those who attended the workshop and to others in their church and community.

West Memphis (Arkansas) Church

In January 2019, David Mathews conducted the Spark of Life Grief Recovery Workshop for our church and community in West Memphis. On Saturday morning, over 200 people came, and about ½ of that number were from our community.

What a great workshop! The help we received both as individuals and as a church is incalculable. Then on Sunday David taught about the power of Lament and then preached on God and suffering – why does God appear to be silent when we need him the most, etc.

We highly recommend this workshop. One of the most important things that this workshop did for us is that it gave us the motivation and the strategy to implement an ongoing and dynamic Grief Recovery Ministry both for our church and community.

UPDATE: March 2022 – This church has just completed its 6th Grief Class using Spark of Life's Material #1 – *The Divine Grief Recovery Method – How God Handles Grief*

Mike Seale – Minister – Missouri Street Church, West Memphis AR

Highland Hills Church – Glasgow, KY

We at the Highland Hills Church are happy to help financially support the Spark of Life Foundation. My wife Amanda and I attended a Spark of Life Grief Recovery Retreat in 2014 after the tragic death of her parents. The retreat helped us tremendously.

We then had David Mathews, co-founder and executive director of Spark of Life, come to our church and conduct a Grief Recovery Workshop for our community. Many from our community and our church came on Saturday, and then David spoke at our Sunday services.

This has helped us as a church not only reach out to our community in a powerful way, but has also helped us minister to those grieving in our church

Update: 2022 – *We just hosted our 2nd Spark of Life Grief Workshop – with greater attendance the 2nd time. Many more came from our community. And we just completed our first Grief Small Group Class using Spark's material. It was wonderful.*

Chad Lockhart – Minister – Highland Hills Church, Glasgow, KY

University Church – Shreveport, LA

What do you say to someone who just lost a job, a spouse, or a child? What do you do when a faithful Christian quits coming to services after a terrible loss? Why do some people turn to their church family after a disaster and others feel the church is the last place they want to be?

These are difficult questions but the Grief Recovery Workshop from Spark of Life gives answers. Thank the Lord for faithful leaders to teach us how to tackle the difficult times in our human existence when the world has nothing to offer but hopelessness.

The Grief Recovery Workshop is something every congregation needs to prayerfully consider offering to their congregation and community and we are so glad we did. We give it five stars!

UPDATE: We completed our first offering of Spark's 8-week grief course. We loved it. It helped so many.

Ike House – Elder - University Church, Shreveport, LA

Let's Do This

We are excited about working with your church as you give hope to those in your church and community – hope to *Live Forward* with purpose.

We have 4 dates reserved for our 3 ½ day retreats for 2023, with the hope of having at least 8 more.

We are also NOW booking dates for 2023 for our Church Grief Workshops.

From now till the end of 2022, we are offering a 20% discount for both **2023 Pastors Only Grief Retreats – February 27-March 2, and November 6-9, 2023.**

And we are offering a 20% discount for every church that books a 2023 Grief Workshop by December 31, 2022.

How to Proceed? It's simple:

1. Click on the link and email David Mathews – david@sparkoflife.org

We will set up a time to talk, answer questions, and design a plan that will work for your church.

2. Register staff and/or members for a Spark of Life Retreat - Your staff may come to the Pastors' Only Retreats, or to a regular retreat. www.sparkoflife.org/retreats
3. Schedule a Spark of Life Grief Workshop for your church and community.

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