



Growing through times of change

Week 8 Reflection



St Paul's
LUTHERAN CHURCH BOX HILL

John 11:17-19, 32-37

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

* What grief do you hold?

* Think about the statement that Jesus was 'deeply moved'. What does God want to say to us about who he is?

* How might Jesus sit with you in your pain and discomfort?

Weeping God,

You sit beside us in our loss and grief, moved by our suffering. Work through us so that we might sit with others in their grief, holding them with our presence that reflects your love. Amen.

We experience grief when we lose something of significance in our lives.

Grief has been defined as "*desperately wanting something that you can't have*". We may feel sadness, pain and sorrow when something we long for is unattainable for us.

Have there been times over the last few months that you have desperately wanted something you can't have? *To see these things as grief shifts the focus to an internal experience that is deeply personal and intimate and must be owned by me.*

Grief is uncomfortable – when we experience it ourselves and when we see others in grief. We do our best to lessen and avoid the discomfort.

We grieve for a reason. It has a purpose. What purpose might grief have?

- ≈ *Maybe it's a reminder to honour what holds meaning in our lives.*
- ≈ *Maybe it's a reminder to be grateful.*
- ≈ *Maybe it's a reminder to connect with others who also know grief.*
- ≈ *Maybe it's a reminder to connect with ourselves.*
- ≈ *Maybe it's a reminder that loss is a part of life.*

Grief takes time. We find ourselves *fluctuating between the need to grieve and the need to re-invest in life.* As you allow yourself to make space for your grief, you will be able to find a way through the pain and sadness. You will come to recognise that suffering can enrich and strengthen and eventually bless the life you live.

There is no formula for grief. It follows no pattern or sequential stages and it has been observed that most of us will work through our own grief in our own way.

When we are able to recognise, make space for and process our grief then we can begin the journey toward peace that comes with acceptance and faith that even in this there is growth and hope.

Then you really will know the value of grief.