

# Grace Harbor Pastors Outreach Packet

*13-Month Monthly Support Sheets + Quick-Start Guide*

## Start Here: QR Support Access



*Scan to open the Pastors page*

### **For Pastors (scan first):**

Open the online Pastors page for packet downloads, updates, and orientation resources.

### **Pastors page URL:**

<https://www.graceharborcompassionateservices.org/pastors.html>

### **For families (offer first):**

“Here’s a QR code—scan it for short daily grief support, and choose the path that fits you. You can return anytime.”

### **Family support page:**

<https://www.graceharborcompassionateservices.org/today>

**Contact line:** (903) 796-9669 | [Info@QueenCityFuneralHome.com](mailto:Info@QueenCityFuneralHome.com)

## About the Founder

Tracy R. Lee, FD, CG-C (ret.) is the founder of Grace Harbor Compassionate Services. She is a funeral service professional, certified grief counselor, author, and nonprofit leader with more than two decades of experience supporting families through loss. Tracy earned an Associate of Science in Funeral and Restorative Arts from the Dallas Institute of Funeral Service and holds grief counseling certifications through the American Institute of Health Care Professionals and Columbia University. She is currently completing her Bachelor of Science in Leadership at Texas A&M University, with a focus in Occupational Leadership.



### **Family support:**

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Tracy's work spans direct family care, community leadership, and grief education. She served as Caregiver Program Director for Easter Seals and founded Heaven Sent Corp, supporting families through pregnancy and infant loss. Through her syndicated column, Pushing Up Daisies, her grief writing has been published more than 1.5 million times across various outlets and professional journals. She is also a retired professional artist and served as Official Hall of Fame Artist (Former) for the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame.

*Personal note (optional): Tracy values family deeply and remains committed to fostering healing through gentle kindness, helping others find purpose and joy, and staying actively present in the lives of those she loves.*

## **Scope & Gentle Guardrails**

- Keep language simple; offer one small next step at a time.
- Avoid platitudes (for example: "God needed another angel" or "Everything happens for a reason").
- Ask permission before prayer, scripture, or spiritual framing.
- These sheets are supportive and educational; they are not medical, legal, or mental health treatment.
- If there is any safety concern (self-harm, abuse, medical instability), escalate to the appropriate emergency/clinical supports.



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*13-Month Monthly Support Sheets + Quick-Start Guide*

## Purpose

These pages are designed as quick-reference support for brief visits, follow-up calls, and tender conversations with grieving families.

## Quick Start (60–90 seconds)

- Offer the QR card first: "Scan this for short daily support. Choose the path that fits you best."
- Keep it simple: presence + one small next step.
- Ask permission before scripture/prayer; allow lament and honesty.
- Organize one practical help and one follow-up touchpoint.

## Gentle Guardrails

- Keep language simple; offer one small next step at a time.
- Avoid platitudes (for example: "God needed another angel" or "Everything happens for a reason").
- Ask permission before prayer, scripture, or spiritual framing.
- If there is any safety concern (self-harm, abuse, medical instability), escalate to the appropriate emergency/clinical supports.



**Family support:**

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## Monthly Sheets

### Month 1 — Shock & Stabilizing

**Aim:** Offer steady pastoral presence, gentle scripture (when welcome), and simple next steps in the first days and weeks.

#### **What families often say:**

- This doesn't feel real.
- I can't breathe when I think about it.
- I don't know what to pray.

#### **What you may notice:**

- Numbness or agitation; repeating questions.
- Decision fatigue; overwhelm with details.
- Fear-based thoughts about the future and other loved ones.

#### **What to say (borrowable lines):**

- I'm here with you. We don't have to rush this or explain it.
- If you'd like, we can pray a simple prayer for strength - one sentence is enough.
- Shock can make everything feel unreal. Your mind and body are taking in a lot.
- You only have to do the next small thing. We'll walk with you.
- It's okay to be honest with God - even if it's anger or silence.

#### **What to offer (practical):**

- QR (first): "Here's a QR code. It takes you to short daily support. Choose the path that fits you best."
- One practical church help: meals, childcare, rides, or sitting presence.
- A brief prayer of comfort, and permission to lament (not perform faith).

#### **When to loop in team:**

- Any self-harm talk or unsafe situation: contact emergency supports and hospice/clinical team.
- Family overwhelmed by logistics: loop in a trusted church care coordinator.
- Ongoing inability to function after initial days: encourage bereavement counseling.



#### **Family support:**

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## Month 2 — Body, Sleep & Grief in the Flesh

**Aim:** Normalize physical grief, reduce shame, and encourage gentle care without pushing productivity.

### What families often say:

- I can't sleep.
- My body feels wrong.
- I feel guilty for not being stronger.

### What you may notice:

- Fatigue, appetite shifts, aches, headaches.
- Crying spells or irritability; forgetfulness.
- Spiritual guilt: "I should have more faith."

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- Grief affects the body. Needing rest is not weakness.
- God is not disappointed in your tears. Tears are a form of love.
- You don't have to find the right words. We can pray a psalm, or sit quietly.
- Let today be about basics: water, food, rest, one small task.
- If someone tells you to "be strong," remember: strength can look like asking for help.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): daily short support and faith-seeking content if helpful.
- A check-in plan: one person texts you daily for a week.
- A simple scripture/prayer option (only if welcome): a short psalm or blessing.

### When to loop in team:

- Persistent sleeplessness with worsening functioning: encourage hospice nurse/clinical support.
- Deepening depression signs: encourage bereavement counselor or therapist.
- Substance misuse or unsafe home dynamics: seek appropriate supports.



### Family support:

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## Month 3 — Ritual, Service & Saying Goodbye

**Aim:** Help families create a meaningful service and a gentle goodbye that fits their story.

### What families often say:

- I can't make decisions.
- I'm scared I'll regret everything.
- I don't know what to say at the service.

### What you may notice:

- Overwhelm with choices.
- Family disagreements about traditions.
- Tenderness and anger surfacing in waves.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- There are no perfect choices - only loving ones made in a hard moment.
- We can keep the service simple and true.
- If you want, I can help you find words for goodbye, blessing, and hope.
- You don't have to carry this alone. Let the church hold part of the weight.
- It's okay if the service is both sorrowful and grateful. Both belong.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): first-days grief supports.
- Help drafting a short tribute or prayer.
- Organize a church support plan: meals, ushering, childcare, quiet room at service.

### When to loop in team:

- High family conflict: consider neutral support (counselor/mediator).
- Complex logistics: loop in church admin/team.
- Safety concerns: seek appropriate emergency/clinical supports.



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## Month 4 — The Quiet After

**Aim:** Provide follow-up when attention fades and loneliness rises after the service.

### What families often say:

- Everyone went back to normal.
- The house feels too quiet.
- I feel worse now.

### What you may notice:

- Isolation; avoidance of home spaces.
- Difficulty doing small tasks.
- Anger at God or church due to hurtful comments.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- The quiet after can feel heavier. You're not doing grief wrong.
- Would it help if we planned one small anchor for each day this week?
- You don't have to answer everyone. It's okay to rest and limit conversations.
- If church felt hard, we can find a gentler way to stay connected.
- Grief isn't a straight line. Waves are normal.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): daily "today" support page.
- Set a pastor/care-team check-in schedule for 4 weeks.
- Invite them to a small support circle or grief group (if available).

### When to loop in team:

- No support network and growing depression: recommend counseling/bereavement resources.
- Not eating or basic self-care failing: encourage clinical evaluation.
- Any self-harm concerns: immediate escalation.



### Family support:

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## Month 5 — Anger, Guilt & Hard Questions

**Aim:** Make room for lament, anger, and guilt without offering quick theology.

### What families often say:

- I'm mad at God.
- I failed them.
- Why would God allow this?

### What you may notice:

- Rumination and self-blame.
- Avoiding church due to shame.
- Irritability toward family and friends.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- God can handle your honesty. Lament is biblical.
- Guilt often shows up because you loved deeply. It doesn't always mean you caused anything.
- You don't have to solve the 'why' to be held and cared for.
- Let's take this one question at a time, and not force an answer today.
- I'm here. You're not alone in the anger or the ache.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): guilt/anger briefs and grounding tools.
- A lament practice: write a prayer that begins with "Lord, this hurts."
- Suggest a trusted counselor for persistent guilt or trauma responses.

### When to loop in team:

- Severe depression or hopelessness: encourage professional support.
- Escalating anger creating safety issues: seek help promptly.
- Substance increase: connect to appropriate supports.



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## Month 6 — Belongings, Memories & Holding On Well

**Aim:** Support families as they face belongings and keep a healthy connection to the loved one.

### What families often say:

- I can't touch their things.
- I'm afraid I'll forget them.
- I feel stuck.

### What you may notice:

- Avoidance or sudden purging with regret.
- Tears with everyday objects.
- Searching for signs; dreams; longing.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- There is no timeline for belongings. Go slowly.
- Remembering is not clinging - it's love.
- Would it help to choose one small item or photo to keep close right now?
- You can honor them and still keep living.
- If you notice dreams or signs, we can hold them gently without forcing meaning.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): memory and continuing-bonds supports.
- A memory project: a journal, a box, a recipe day, a photo corner.
- Invite a short blessing over the home or a remembrance prayer.

### When to loop in team:

- Family conflict about possessions: consider counselor/mediator support.
- Extreme avoidance or inability to function: recommend bereavement counselor.
- Persistent trauma symptoms: recommend professional help.



### Family support:

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## Month 7 — Relationships & Secondary Losses

**Aim:** Help families navigate different grief styles, conflict, and friendship changes.

### What families often say:

- My spouse and I don't grieve the same.
- People vanished.
- I'm tired of explaining.

### What you may notice:

- Arguments, withdrawal, resentment.
- Friends avoid; hurtful comments.
- Church misunderstandings or pressure.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- Different grief styles can still be love. You don't have to match to be connected.
- It's okay to set boundaries. You can protect your heart.
- Would you like a sentence to tell people what you need?
- Loneliness is common. It doesn't mean you're failing.
- If church has been painful, let's find a safe and gentle path back.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): relationships and boundaries briefs.
- A script: "Thank you for caring. What helps most is \_\_\_\_."
- Offer a grief support group, mentoring couple, or pastoral counseling session.

### When to loop in team:

- Domestic safety concerns: seek immediate help and appropriate authorities/support.
- Severe isolation with depression: recommend counseling.
- Ongoing conflict impacting children: recommend family counseling.



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## Month 8 — Holidays & Milestones

**Aim:** Prepare for dates that intensify grief and help families plan gentle, meaningful remembrance.

### What families often say:

- I dread the holidays.
- Their birthday is coming.
- I don't know how to face this.

### What you may notice:

- Avoiding gatherings or over-committing.
- Increased sadness and irritability.
- Longing for reassurance or a sign.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- Milestones can bring a fresh wave. It doesn't mean you're going backward.
- We can make a plan: what to do, what to skip, and how to leave early.
- Would you like a small ritual - candle, prayer, meal, letter, donation?
- You can honor them and still protect your energy.
- It's okay if joy feels complicated this year.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): milestone planning supports.
- A 3-option plan: comfort person, remembrance act, exit plan.
- Invite a church remembrance moment or prayer (if desired).

### When to loop in team:

- Major depression signs around milestones: recommend professional support.
- Family conflict about holiday choices: suggest counseling/mediation.
- Any safety concern: immediate escalation.



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## Month 9 — Faith Strain, Doubt & Hurt

**Aim:** Care for spiritual struggle with humility, avoiding platitudes and pressure.

### What families often say:

- I feel abandoned.
- I don't know what I believe now.
- People keep saying the wrong thing.

### What you may notice:

- Avoiding worship; shame about doubt.
- Anger at God or church.
- Existential distress; meaning crisis.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- You are allowed to doubt. Faith can include questions.
- I won't offer you a quick answer. I'll stay with you in the hard place.
- If platitudes have hurt, I'm sorry. You deserve tenderness and truth.
- Would you like a simple practice: one line of lament, one line of hope?
- If prayer feels hard, we can borrow words from the psalms - or sit quietly.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): faith-seeking and grounded/practical supports.
- Offer a gentle pastoral conversation focused on presence, not fixing.
- Recommend a trusted grief counselor if faith pain is overwhelming.

### When to loop in team:

- Spiritual despair linked to self-harm risk: immediate escalation.
- Severe hopelessness or inability to cope: recommend professional support.
- Complex trauma responses: recommend therapist/bereavement specialist.



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## Month 10 — Re-Engaging Life & Returning

**Aim:** Support families as they re-enter routines without shame or pressure to "move on."

### What families often say:

- I feel guilty laughing.
- People expect me to be over it.
- I don't recognize myself.

### What you may notice:

- Grief bursts at work or in public.
- Pressure from others; identity shift.
- Ambivalence: relief and sorrow together.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- Moments of relief are not betrayal. They are part of healing.
- You are building a new life that still includes love.
- Grief comes in waves. The goal isn't to erase it - it's to learn its rhythm.
- Would you like to name one small step toward life this month?
- Your pace is allowed. You don't owe anyone a timeline.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): returning-to-life supports.
- A "two things" practice: one task of living, one act of remembering.
- Invite them into a low-pressure community moment (coffee, walk, small group).

### When to loop in team:

- Persistent inability to function: recommend professional support.
- New panic attacks or severe avoidance: recommend counseling.
- Relationship strain intensifies: recommend couple/family support.



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## Month 11 — Weariness & Support System Repair

**Aim:** Address exhaustion and rebuild a small, sustainable support circle.

### What families often say:

- I'm still so tired.
- I don't know who to lean on.
- I feel like I'm failing.

### What you may notice:

- Burnout and irritability.
- Withdrawing from community.
- Spiritual dryness: "I have nothing left."

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- Of course you're tired. You've been carrying a lot for a long time.
- Needing help now is not weakness. It's wisdom.
- Let's rebuild a small circle: one helper, one rest practice, one connection.
- Rest is not selfish. It's stewardship.
- Would it help to ask for three specific kinds of help?

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): caregiver/support system supports.
- A textable "help menu" list: meals, errands, sitting company.
- Offer church care team check-ins for another month.

### When to loop in team:

- Burnout with depression symptoms: recommend counseling.
- Substance use increases: connect to appropriate supports.
- No supports and worsening function: encourage clinical evaluation.



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## Month 12 — Anniversary & Re-Grief

**Aim:** Normalize re-grief at the 1-year mark and help plan remembrance with support.

### What families often say:

- It's been a year and it hurts again.
- I feel alone in this now.
- I don't want to face the date.

### What you may notice:

- Sleep disruption near the date.
- Heightened sensitivity and tears.
- Longing for closeness and reassurance.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- Anniversaries often reopen the ache. This is normal.
- You don't have to perform strength. You can be honest about missing them.
- Would you like to plan a small, meaningful act for the day?
- Some people want company; others want quiet. Both are valid.
- Love doesn't follow the calendar. Neither does grief.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): anniversary planning supports.
- A remembrance plan: who, where, what, and an exit option.
- Invite a prayer, candle lighting, or short service of remembrance.

### When to loop in team:

- Severe depression or safety risk around anniversary: immediate escalation.
- Persistent trauma symptoms: recommend therapist/bereavement specialist.
- Ongoing intense impairment: encourage professional help.



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## Month 13 — Continuing Bonds & When Grief Stays Stuck

**Aim:** Support ongoing connection while recognizing when grief needs added professional support.

### What families often say:

- I thought I'd be better by now.
- I can't stop replaying everything.
- I feel like my life ended.

### What you may notice:

- Persistent intense yearning with little relief.
- Avoidance of reminders; inability to resume basics.
- Hopelessness, numbness, isolation.

### What to say (borrowable lines):

- There is no shame in needing more support. Some grief is heavier and needs more hands.
- We can honor your love and also build supports that help you live again.
- Would you be open to counseling alongside pastoral care?
- You deserve care that matches the weight you're carrying.
- Let's name one thing that feels impossible - and take a first step together.

### What to offer (practical):

- QR (first): ongoing daily supports and grounding tools.
- Warm referral to a grief counselor or therapist.
- A continuing-bonds practice: letter-writing, service, or a memorial act.

### When to loop in team:

- Any self-harm talk: immediate escalation.
- Prolonged severe impairment: recommend professional evaluation.
- Complicated grief indicators: coordinate with bereavement resources.



### Family support:

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