



PRESBYTERIAN HEALTH NETWORK  
A Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)

# When Life Is A “D” Word

## With Darkness/Depression

RESOURCES FOR HEALTH AWARENESS SUNDAY and  
DAY OF PRAYER FOR HEALING AND WHOLENESS  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



*“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them has light shined.”*

*Isaiah 9:2*

Prepared by the Presbyterian Health Network (PHN):

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## **When Life Is A “D” Word With Darkness/Depression Contents**

Use this packet with your congregation as you recognize Health Awareness Sunday and Day of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness 2014, which occurs on February 16<sup>th</sup> this year but can be observed at any time during the year. Our focus is on individuals living with depression.

- Liturgical Resources for a Service on Darkness/Depression
- God’s Redeeming Love (Possible Bulletin Insert)
- Life on the “D” List Prayer Service
- Suggested Scripture and Hymns
- Life on the “D” List – Darkness Sermon
- Bulletin Inserts – When Life is a “D” Word with Darkness/Depression and What can YOU do?
- Depression – A Concern for Caregivers
- Further Resources
- Contact the PHN Leadership Team and Health Ministry/Faith Community Nurse Consultants

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# Liturgical Resources for a Service on Darkness/Depression

## WORDS TO PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

We all prefer to walk in the light that comes with the knowledge of God’s love for us, but sometimes it feels as though we are walking in darkness, even when it’s light outside and, objectively speaking, there is nothing to be depressed about. Other times, our moods shift up and down, hour by hour, or even minute by minute. Today we consider human darkness; depression, despair, and other conditions that hamper the children of God.

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 139

**ONE:** The Lord has searched us and known us; the Lord has searched out our paths and knows our ways.

**MANY:** Even before a word is on our tongue, the Lord knows our thoughts.

**ONE:** If we ascend to Heaven, God is there. But what is surprising is even darkness is not darkness to God. Night does not discourage the presence of our God.

**MANY:** In darkness, the Lord is our light.

**Hymn** “Lead Kindly Light,” hymn 331, 1955 Presbyterian Hymnbook or “Precious Lord, Take My Hand,” hymn 404, 1990 Presbyterian Hymnal; hymn 834, 2013 Glory To God

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Dear God of light and love: sometimes there is enough darkness in the attitudes and actions of those around us that it threatens to darken our souls as well. At other times, we ourselves feel blanketed with darkness. It hovers over us, we fall into despair and do not live as your child. O Lord: open our eyes to see your light, and fill our souls with it, so that we can show faith, hope, and love to others around us. Through Jesus Christ we pray, the light of the world. Amen.

**FIRST LESSON** Lamentations 3:1-20

**ANTHEM** “The Lord is My Light” Allitsen/Stickles

**SECOND LESSON** Luke 11:33-36

**SERMON** “Life on the ‘D’ List: Darkness” (Sermon follows, in packet contents)

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** Adapted from Colossians 1: 13-20

*(Adapted from a service designed by Dr. Jeffrey Sumner, Senior Pastor Westminster By-The-Sea Presbyterian Church, Daytona Beach Shores, Florida and member of PHEWA’s Presbyterian Health Network.)*



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## Who is in need of God's redeeming love?

...the person whose mind cannot function normally;

OR

the person whose mind is closed and refuses to seek the wisdom of God?

...the person who talks to "make believe" people;

OR

the person who cannot permit himself to have an imagination?

...the person who is alone and crying for someone to come and visit her;

OR

the person who refuses to give her neighbor a helping hand?

...the person who cannot get help on his own;

OR

the person who believes that he has to take care of himself?

...the person who has depression and cannot get out of the bed in the morning;

OR the person who is so busy that she does not have much time for sleep?

...the person who attempts death by suicide;

OR

the person who ignores talking about suicide?

...the person who is anxious and cannot make a decision;

OR

the person who makes a decision that is harmful to others?

The truth of the matter is we are ALL in need of God's redeeming love. Let's remember that.



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## LIFE ON THE “D” LIST: DARKNESS

### PRAYER SERVICE

(Time for quiet reflection)

Sometimes we feel as though we truly are a child of light; other times, we feel like we are living in darkness. Often, these two feelings exist together.

#### CALL TO PRAYER:

Based on Psalm 139

**ONE:** The Lord has searched us and known us; the Lord has searched out our paths and knows our ways.

**MANY:** Even before a word is on our tongue, the Lord knows what we will say.

**ONE:** If we ascend to heaven, God is there. But what is surprising is that even darkness is not darkness to God. Night does not discourage the presence of our God.

**MANY:** In darkness, the Lord is our light.

#### HYMN OF LIGHT “Lead, Kindly Light”

LUX BENIGNA

#### PRAYER OF INVOCATION

(Unison)

**ALL:** “Even when we walk through valleys of deepest darkness, we will fear no evil. For you are with us,” O God. In those times when the path disappears from beneath our feet and we wander as one who is lost, call us back to your love. When darkness seems stronger than the light of your love, remind us that, in you, the victory is already won. And as we make our way in this world of both darkness and light, we pray for Jesus to be a light for our path. In his name we pray.

**ONE:** Amen. (Silence)

**KYRIE 574** Lord have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us.

#### LESSONS FOR REFLECTION

Lamentations 3: 1-20

(Silence)



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## LESSONS FOR REFLECTION

Luke 11: 33-36

(Silence)

## REFLECTION

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**ONE:** Dear Lord: what we give is a reflection of what is in our hearts.

**MANY:** We offer our best to God.

**ONE:** Prepare our youth for their mission to others,

**ALL:** As we offer our financial and prayerful support. Amen.

### EVENING PRAYERS

LORD'S PRAYER, p. 16 hymnal (Traditional)

**CLOSING HYMN 543** "Abide With Me" vs. 1-3

EVENTIDE

### CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

**ONE:** Go Into the world and let the light of Christ brighten your world.

**MANY:** We will go.

**ONE:** And may God bless you on life's journey.

**MANY:** Thanks be to God! Amen.

### Reflections-

When we consider physical darkness, we know that there are physiological changes that we face. Our eyes begin to dilate to let in more light, and the vitamins and nutrients found in vegetables such as carrots come in to play. If we are moving through a dark room, we put out our hands, hunting for walls or the banister or doorframes; or if we are outdoors we may run in to spider webs, hanging leaves, or predators. We may tense up, ready for a quick response to stimuli. We may wish we had brought along a flashlight or a lantern.



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For those who face spiritual darkness, there are also physiological changes. The body, mind, and soul are all connected. Spiritual darkness may make mobility quite difficult, as the inertia to stay at rest is stronger than our ability to move. Depression may set in, or perhaps despair, doubts, or a sense of hopelessness. Through the light of Christ, offered through caring church people, or loving friends, or the spirit of the living God, it is possible to make our way through the jungle of darkness. It is difficult, but helpers can make it easier: mental health specialists, pastoral counselors, doctors, social workers, ministers, and spiritual directors are but a few. This Sunday we will take a look at our times of human darkness.

### **Prayer:**

Dear God of light: we pause to send out our thoughts and words of love and praise. It is good to be in your presence. Your prophets like Elijah and Jeremiah knew the darkness of despair because of situations they faced. Rachel and Sarah went through their times of darkness as well. And many Christians through the ages such as St. John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila, had their times of darkness. Those of us here today who have faced dark times give you thanks for all the ways you bathe us in the awareness and assurance of your presence. If we have gotten stuck down in a darkened valley reveal your compassion to us. Unwrap the ties that have bound our broken heart so tight that we are able to risk loving again. Send your Holy Spirit, that we might live again.

Finally, we thank you for those who have prepared our food and we ask you to bless it to our use, and us to Thy service. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

*(Adapted from a service designed by Dr. Jeffrey Sumner, Senior Pastor Westminster By-The-Sea Presbyterian Church, Daytona Beach Shores, Florida and member of PHEWA's Presbyterian Health Network.)*



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## Suggested Scripture

**Presbyterian Health Awareness and Day of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness**

**Colossians 1: 13** – *“He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son . . .”*

**Isaiah 9:2** – *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them has light shined.”*

**John 8:12** – *“Again Jesus spoke to them saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”*

**Deuteronomy 31:8** – *“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”*

**2 Samuel 22:29** – *“You are my lamp O Lord; the Lord turns my darkness into light.”*

**Psalm 31: 22,24** – *“You heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help. . . Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.”*

**Psalm 34:18** – *“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”*

**1 Peter 5:7** – *“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”*

## Suggested Hymns

Any hymns that provide comfort in your congregation including:

- Abide With Me
- The Lord’s Prayer
- Lead, Kindly Light





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## LIFE ON THE 'D' LIST- DARKNESS

Lamentations 3: 1-20

On the day when we remember Jesus' Last Supper, and then again on the day we remember his crucifixion, we often sing the old hymn "Go to Dark Gethsemane." To most everyone Gethsemane is a dark place; dark because it is the garden where the Lord Jesus went to pray for his life, to ask his Father to consider a different way, and finally to know that the course into the darkness of anguishing death was set.

For Jesus, darkness occurred most powerfully on that terrible cross when, in pain and suffering he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But the term darkness may mean something different to you. I have known darkness, but I have not known crucifixion. I know some with depression know darkness, and some who have tragically lost a child; I know that some women (and men) can face darkness with fertility issues and others can face darkness in post-partum stages. Men (and women) can face darkness when they have lost their job, or when they are threatened by others in power. Terrified people can also face darkness. And bullied children or youth in trouble after trying to fit in can face darkness. Today let's look at the idea of darkness, that even Jesus faced, and then suggest how others have moved beyond it.

Like children who hide under beds or in small places, adults have their own ways of hiding. Some will hide their true feelings from others; some will hide their fear from their children, or they will hide their anxiety from a spouse or from friends. Others try to hide the fact that they are struggling, as they go through their day on autopilot. Some eat very little, while others over eat. Some try to do their work and hope that they are hiding their emotional pain or spiritual anguish from others. Yet astute persons will look into eyes that look lifeless and sunken, and look at a face that seems sullen or forced, and they will have a glimpse into the other person's struggle. There are people all around us that are working to hide their darkness ... and there are others around you who have faced darkness but coped with it; and there are still others who have gone through making lemonade when life has handed them lemons. Many of one's coping devices are formed at an early age, but traumatic events can throw monkey wrenches into the cogs of coping. When we consider physical darkness, we know that there are physiological changes when we face it. Our eyes begin to dilate to let in more light and



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all our senses of hearing, taste, touch and smell join sight on full alert. It is dark, and in the dark the unknown surrounds us. Perhaps you've known a person who is blind, and have asked them what it's like not being able to see. When I move through our house at night if a storm has knocked out power, all is pitch black. I put out my hands, hunt for the walls, I remember to shuffle my feet on the floor so as not to trip. When I have to climb stairs, in the dark I reach for and hold the handrail, which I rarely do when it's light. When we are in the dark, especially a black out, many tense up and try to think what to do next. We try to think where our flashlight is, or where we can find a match. Light brings reassurance as it dissipates darkness.

Emotionally some people, perhaps not you, have found themselves in darkness. In the Bible you will note the despair of Elijah, the great prophet of the Old Testament. Fortunately the Bible does not sugarcoat the lives of anyone. You may recall when the prophet Elijah, who had, with great bravado, called for a contest on Mount Carmel between the gods of Baal, and God the Lord; Ahab was after him, but it was Queen Jezebel who pushed him over the edge. If you stop reading with 1 Kings 18 which is the great showdown, or if you skip over to 2 Kings 2 which is Elijah taken up in a whirlwind to heaven, you will miss the darkness of Elijah. In First Kings 19, Elijah ran from Ahab and Jezebel; he ran into a desert perhaps not thinking clearly, or perhaps hoping he could crawl into a cave and hide. But before he got there, he stopped in the burning sun and took shelter under a pathetic broom tree for shade. And there, the great prophet, thinking there is no one around to see him, shows his state of darkness. Calling out to God in desperation, he asked God if he would just take his life.

Do you know people who just want God to take them? I do. What can we do to comfort people who want to say "Now!" to God about the end of their life, while God says to them "Not yet!" Sometimes it surprises us, who has words or thoughts like Elijah's. "It is enough," Elijah said with fatigue, "O Lord, take away my life." It was in Felix Mendelssohn's great oratorio called "Elijah" that he pictures the angel who woke him and pointed to bread and water as being a comforting heavenly host of angels as he transports listeners to the scene with the hauntingly beautiful chorus from Psalm 121, "Lift thine eyes, O lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh, whence cometh, whence cometh help." How would God best approach you with such comfort if your soul was so fragile that it was leaking tears out of your eyes? Some people might just say, "Shake it off!" or "Stop with all that silly crying." But there are others, God included, who know how to turn off the fearful, confrontational, or threatening human voices and let you hear the holy voices of angels. Some have suggested that Elijah was having burnout or an emotional breakdown in that chapter. The same darkness has come over ministers and other laypersons, often while feeling overwhelmed, or powerless, or hopeless. After all, conflicts with people can create tension, conflict, or criticism. God knows it; and Jesus felt it. You are not alone. How did God help Elijah? He arranged for



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a successor to take the burden of responsibility from Elijah. God has done that countless times for others as well. We don't stop praying, we don't stop hoping, and we don't stop living. God knows what is in your prayers, and when the time is right, you will find light again. I was once in darkness, even more than once, and found light again. I imagine you, or others around you, have too. Take heart if you are in darkness today. In Elijah's case, like a worn down relay swimmer or runner who gets to tag a new person with new energy to run the race, God provided a tag team. It is a good idea in human life to have someone in waiting, learning under you, who can run that stage of the race when you can't move; you have laid down in your desert of torment under the shade of a broom tree. Yes, the Bible tells us that "the people who walked in darkness" get to see a great light in Christ. But sometimes a fractured soul, a battered heart, or rattled mind cannot see the light, not yet anyway. If you live in the light daily and encroaching darkness has not overwhelmed you, then you are fortunate. But I know that this has been, or will be, the experience of someone you know.

In the days when barrenness was seen as a curse from God, Sarai and Rachel wept in anguish because they could not have children. How many others have gone through that anguish? Or other women have had their darkness when they had their child, and a state of depression set in. And what man has not had some dark nights of his soul when he loses his job; or what soldiers who have seen the combat of war have not gone into the darkness and terror of PTSD? There is darkness all around, even in the places you might look for light. For those who face spiritual darkness, there are also physiological changes. The body, mind, and soul are all connected. Spiritual darkness may make mobility quite difficult, as the inertia to stay at rest is stronger than our ability to move. Depression may set in, or perhaps despair, doubts, or a sense of hopelessness. These are crippling conditions. The way to see the light of God's love again may be tricky. You might think caring Christians could help a person in darkness, but sometimes caring Christians contribute to a person's darkness. You might think the love of family might help people out of their darkness, but sometimes the well-intentioned - or the malevolent - family members are a root cause of the darkness. You might say those people just need to pray more, but those people find that they cannot pray or hear God. You might say they just need more faith, but asking faith of one who is broken down is a Herculean request. Sometimes all one can do is stumble in the dark, and at times it is all one can do to just be; even life is painful. It is during those times when some of the best help that can be offered is: a) to be with them in their despair and, b) to be a great listener. There are specialists around who can gently guide people back toward light and functionality: pastoral counselors, doctors, social workers, ministers, and chaplains are a few of those specialists. And we know that darkness sometimes breeds other "D" words like despair, desperation, depression, and debilitating weakness. In addition, when the mind gets corrupted, distortions of the soul can make sin seem extra overwhelming.



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Now we will consider the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Here is what theologian Georgia Harkness has said about him: “There is nowhere in the Old Testament a more tragic, triumphant figure than Jeremiah. He knew well enough in his own experience what the dark night of the soul means. Betrayed by his own townsmen, thrown into a miry cistern, repeatedly subjected to indignity and danger by the very people for whom he sought to intercede, and apparently [feeling] abandoned at times even by God ....” [DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL, Abingdon Press, 1945, p. 32-33.] Jeremiah, man of God and proclaimer of God’s word, also said, “Woe is me, mother, that you have born me, a man of strife and contention to the whole world.” (Jeremiah 15: 10) and “Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable that refuses to heal?” (15: 18) And then in his Lamentations we have today’s passage which, in part, reads: “I am the one who has seen the affliction under the rod of God’s wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; against me alone he turns his hand, again and again, all the day long. He has made my flesh and skin waste away and broken my bones; he has besieged and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he had made me sit in darkness like the dead of long ago.” Such words are so haunting that they disgust some with their sniveling while they make others want to come alongside of Jeremiah and just be with him. There are times to just be with someone in their darkness, and there are times to guide them out of it. One of my mentors in the Doctor of Ministry program is Dr. Kathleen O’Connor, who has written an entire book on Lamentations. To move the shaking of a personal foundation into a more global picture that reminds us of the recent horrendous earthquake, tsunami, and ruptured nuclear cores in Japan, these words of hers offer current counsel: “For survivors of civil wars, destroyed cities, and genocides, for refugees, and for those who subsist in famine and destitute poverty, the poetry [in Lamentations] mirrors reality with frightening exactitude. When, like me, readers live in relative safety and prosperity, Lamentations calls forth loss and pain more narrowly, personally, and indirectly. Yet even in the prosperous United States there are normal human losses to lament, deaths, disappointments, and hidden depression with which to contend. There are broken marriages, catastrophic illnesses, and violence among our children, hatred between groups, and debilitating poverty exacerbated by wealth all around.” [LAMENTATIONS AND THE TEARS OF THE WORLD, Westminster/John Knox Press, p. 5.] When people are so fragile, we cannot rush the light; but we can point to it, offer hope, and embody the one who is the Light. May you see light at the end of your tunnels of darkness.

Jeffrey A. Sumner  
Presbyterian Health Network (PHN)  
Westminster By-The-Sea Presbyterian Church  
Daytona Beach Shores, Florida



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## When Life is a “D” Word with Darkness/Depression

**Depression** is a serious mental illness that involves the brain; more than 20 million people in the United States suffer from it. There are a variety of causes, varying degrees and types of depression. It can be manifest itself physically, emotionally, or both. Hopelessness is a common feeling. Treatment is available – the most effective of which often involves antidepressant drugs and talk therapy – but treatment is not always accessible, challenging the faith community to step in.

Depression is more than just being “down in the dumps” or “blue” for a few days. Depression is like a bruise that never goes away. A bruise in your mind. . . Everyone occasionally feels sad but when symptoms interfere with daily functioning or last for more than two weeks, treatment should be considered. The most worrisome complication of depression is suicide and the admonition to “just pull yourself up by your bootstraps” is not only cruel, it doesn’t work!

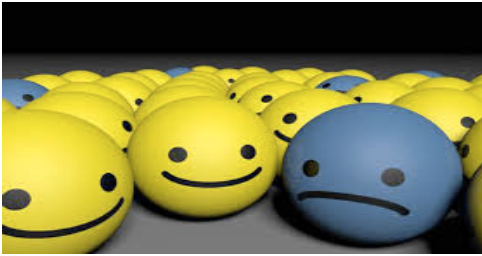
### **Some Symptoms:**

- Persistent sad, anxious or empty mood
- Diminished interest or pleasure in activities
- Insomnia, early waking or late sleeping
- Weight gain or loss, appetite change
- Restlessness or sluggishness
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Lack of concentration or indecision
- Feelings of worthlessness, inappropriate guilt



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## What can YOU do?

### When a Friend or Family Member is feeling “blue:”

- Pay attention when a friend or family member acts differently or admits “things aren’t going well.”
- Try to be a good listener (without giving advice) and encourage them to talk about it. You don’t have to fix the problem, just be there and listen to let them know you care. Your support is what is important.
- Encourage the other person to look at the problem from another perspective, to use a different approach. Help him/her think about other people who might be available to talk.
- A neutral person who has training and expertise can help decode family dynamics and conflicts, and counseling is not always expensive. Clergy or a Faith Community Nurse can offer therapeutic wisdom, spiritual support, and appropriate referrals.

### When you are feeling “blue:”

- Seek out trusted people to talk to. Sharing out loud can help one sort things out and move toward solutions.
- Consider your options. You may want to write them down in a journal.
- Try to participate in social activities.
- Don’t expect those close to you to figure out that you’re depressed and do something to fix it. Even families who have lived together for years can’t read each other’s minds. Take responsibility for yourself by expressing your feelings and needs.
- Be willing to ask for and accept assistance. Seek support.

### What can YOUR CHURCH do?

- Encourage an open and non-judgmental attitude of friendship at church.
- Provide training for teachers/pastors, especially of teens, in symptoms of depression and appropriate interventions including when to contact parents. Know area resources.
- Consider training for Friendly Visitors/Deacons or Stephen Ministry.
- Be alert to those who may be grieving a loss. Offer a “Blue Christmas” worship opportunity or other prayer/healing services during the year. (An example available at:  
[http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/resources/worship\\_resources.html](http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/resources/worship_resources.html))
- Hang posters with phone numbers for a Suicide Hotline in bathrooms.



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## Depression: A Common Concern for Those Who Offer Care



*“We must strike a balance between what we do for ourselves and what we do for others, learning to receive as well as to give. For if we only give and never receive, we get out of balance.”*

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

It is not uncommon for those who offer care to “get out of balance” and experience times of depression. The major lifestyle changes that come with caring for a loved one with a chronic or terminal illness are often the source of depression. Depression is not unusual in the situation of being responsible for another’s care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In Psalm 32 King David writes about his depression, “While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long...my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.”

### **Forerunners of depression may include:**

- ♥ loss of usual contacts with friends and neighbors.
- ♥ loss of social interaction found in church, civic, social or work activities.
- ♥ a feeling of guilt and a sense of hopelessness in the irreversible decline of a cherished person.
- ♥ sadness about the illness and perhaps impending death of a loved one.

If these feelings are very strong or last for most of the day nearly every day for more than two weeks, they may indicate depression.



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### **Some warning signs of depression you may experience:**

- ♥ Changes in the way you feel—
  - You feel sad, hopeless, or guilty most of the time.
  - You feel tired or lack energy.
  - You have thoughts of suicide or death.
- ♥ Changes in sleeping and eating habits—
  - You sleep either too much or too little.
  - Your appetite has changed. You have gained or lost weight.
- ♥ Changes in daily living habits—
  - You have lost interest and pleasure in daily activities.
  - You have problems making decisions or thinking clearly.

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms, talk with your pastor, Faith Community Nurse (parish nurse), or other healthcare professional about what to do. The sooner you get help, the sooner you will begin to feel better. The longer you wait, the harder the depression will be to treat. Depression can be treated with counseling, medication, or both. Medications for depression that are taken appropriately are not addicting or habit forming. Treatment works gradually over several weeks. If you do not start to feel better after this time, tell your healthcare provider. It may take some time to find what works best for you.

### **A Prayer for Those Who Offer Care**

From 124 Prayers for Caregivers by Joan Guntzelman

“Dear God, I do not want to leave out any part of my life. I want everything I do, everything I feel, and every moment to be lived and shared with you. You are with me when I’m up and when I’m down, when I am in the middle of a mess and when things are in order, when I’m at loose ends and when I’m calm and peaceful, and all the times in between. I hope you are ready for all this, God. AMEN.”





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## Further Resources

### **NAMI - The National Alliance on Mental Illness**

[www.nami.org/](http://www.nami.org/)

The nation's largest grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness; see especially:

<http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=depression>

### **NAMI FaithNet, NAMI's Outreach to Faith Communities**

[www.nami.org/namifaithnet](http://www.nami.org/namifaithnet)

Founded by Dr. Gunnar Christiansen, member of PHEWA's [Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network \(PSMIN\)](#), NAMI FaithNet is a network composed of members and friends of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). It facilitates the development within the Faith Community of a supportive environment for those with serious mental illness and their families, points out the value of one's spirituality in the recovery process, educates clergy and congregations, and encourages advocacy to bring about hope and help for all who are affected by mental illness.

### **Pathways to Promise**

[www.pathways2promise.org/](http://www.pathways2promise.org/)

An interfaith technical assistance and resource center which offers liturgical and educational materials, program models, and networking information. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and **PHEWA's Presbyterian Serious Mental Illness Network (PSMIN)** are partners in this vital ministry.

### **Mental Health Ministries**

<http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/index.html>

A partner organization through Pathways to Promise, Mental Health Ministries is a good source of educational resources and worship aids to use in efforts to erase the stigma of mental illness and help congregations effectively minister with people living with mental illness and their families and loved ones.



PRESBYTERIAN HEALTH NETWORK

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### **American Psychiatric Association**

[www.healthyminds.org](http://www.healthyminds.org) or [www.psychiatry.org/mental-health](http://www.psychiatry.org/mental-health) (both take you to same web site)

A medical society that offers information about depression and other mental illnesses, including treatment options.

### **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance**

[www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org)

A peer-directed national organization that provides educational materials on mood disorders and information on support groups throughout the United States.

### **Mental Health America**

[www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org)

“Mental Health America, founded in 1909, is the nation’s leading community-based network dedicated to helping all Americans achieve wellness by living mentally healthier lives.” With 240 affiliates across the country, they work to advocate for changes in mental health and wellness policy, educate the public, and “provide critical information and deliver urgently needed mental health and wellness Programs and Services.”

### **National Institute of Mental Health**

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; see especially:

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml>

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The Presbyterian Health Network (PHN) is a network of  
the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)  
A ministry of the Compassion, Peace & Justice Ministry, Presbyterian Mission Agency  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
100 Witherspoon Street, Room 3228, Louisville, KY 40202-1396  
Toll-free phone (888) 728-7228 ext. 5800 or (480) 298-1524  
Websites: <http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/phn> and <http://www.phewacomunity.org/>



## **PRESBYTERIAN HEALTH NETWORK**

A Network of the Presbyterian Health, Education & Welfare Association (PHEWA)  
Leadership Team, January 2014

### **Moderator**

**Ruth Syre, R.N., MSN, FCN**  
Hospital Network Coordinator  
Congregational Health Program  
Dept. of Pastoral Care, Centra  
Lynchburg, VA  
[Ruth.syre@centrahealth.com](mailto:Ruth.syre@centrahealth.com)  
Faith Community Nurse, Rustburg PC  
**Presbytery of the Peaks**

### **PHEWA Board Representative**

**Pat Welsh, R.N., MSN, FCN**  
Health Ministries Coordinator  
Norton Healthcare  
Louisville, KY  
[pwelsh@gmail.com](mailto:pwelsh@gmail.com)  
Faith Community Nurse, Anchorage PC  
**Mid-Kentucky Presbytery**

### **Secretary**

**Joanie Friend, R.N., BSN, FCN**  
[jfriend@pobox.com](mailto:jfriend@pobox.com)  
Faith Community Nurse, Bradley Hills PC  
Bethesda, MD  
**National Capital Presbytery**

### **Members-at-Large**

**Jane Givens, R.N., BS, MA, FCN**  
Portage, MI  
[jgivens@givens.net](mailto:jgivens@givens.net)  
**Presbytery of Lake Michigan**

### **W. Daniel Hale, Ph.D.**

Special Advisor to the President  
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center  
Baltimore, MD  
[whale5@jhmi.edu](mailto:whale5@jhmi.edu)  
**Baltimore Presbytery**

### **Rev. Dr. Jeffrey A. Sumner**

Pastor, Westminster By-The-Sea PC  
Port Orange, Florida  
**Central Florida Presbytery**  
[sumnerj@aol.com](mailto:sumnerj@aol.com)

### **Betty Yurkewitch, R.N., FCN**

McLean, VA  
[betty.yurkewitch@verizon.net](mailto:betty.yurkewitch@verizon.net)  
Faith Community Nurse, Lewinsville PC  
**National Capital Presbytery**

### **Health Ministry/Nursing Consultants**

**Lois Bazhaw, R.N., FCN**  
Pleasant Garden, NC  
[loisbazhaw@bellsouth.net](mailto:loisbazhaw@bellsouth.net)  
**Salem Presbytery**

### **Deborah Carney, R.N., FCN**

Punta Gorda, Florida  
[carneydeb@hotmail.com](mailto:carneydeb@hotmail.com)  
**Presbytery of Peace River**

### **STAFF:**

**Rev. Trina Zelle**  
PHEWA National Organizer/Executive  
Director  
[trinazelle6@gmail.com](mailto:trinazelle6@gmail.com)

### **Susan Stack**

PHEWA, Presbyterian Mission Agency  
[susan.stack@pcusa.org](mailto:susan.stack@pcusa.org)