

**Key Note Address: - "Learning to Walk in the Darkness....Do You Question This?" Becky Kay**

“Peace: It does not mean to be in a place with no noise, trouble, or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart. “ Author Unknown

**Art to Heal the Heart**

**Jane King**

Hello, my name is Jane King and I am a self-taught artist and Heartstrings Mom. These classes are fun and easy, so please bring your inner child with you. At the end of the day you will have a lovely little treasure to take home to remember your day. We are going to paint and laugh and share. We will paint artistic mini-birdhouses in one class and paint small bird-nest canvasses in the other. You will only be given one art class; pick the class you will like best.

**The Heart of a Mom When Her Baby Dies**

**Bev Leckie**

This is *not* a group about statistics, causes of death, or genetics, but it is about the *heart* of a mom when her baby dies, or when she knows the baby she is carrying will, most likely, *not* survive. We want to share together all too familiar stories and be encouraged by each other and by our God. Your baby may have died due to miscarriage, pre-mature birth, at birth or shortly after, or months after. We would love for your heart to hear God’s heart and the hearts of other moms. Grandmothers are also welcomed to be with us.

*Bev Leckie is a South Carolina return-ee, having attended school here, marrying, giving birth to 4 children, and assisting her husband in pastoral ministries in the Lexington/Columbia area until God called them to Southern California where they pastored a local church for 30 years until their retirement, and a return to South Carolina. While in California, Bev also became part of Umbrella Ministries, a growing outreach with a biblical foundation, giving hope and support to moms who have suffered the loss of a child. Connecting with Umbrella Ministries gave Bev an understanding of her own loss many years before. Her daughter Tonia had died at birth after a full term pregnancy during a time that grief support was non-existent. Bev’s growing involvement with Umbrella Ministries gave her years of leading, supporting, writing, and talking and sharing – giving to others what God has given her. Today, in a new place, her desire is to continue giving as God unfolds her tomorrows.*

**The Physical Aspects of Grief**

**Dr. Rebecca Smith**

“The organs **weep** the tears the **eyes** refuse to shed” (Sir **William Osler**, 18th-century physician). This session will focus on the impact grief has on the physical body, how suppressing grief can lead to surprising negative outcomes and how addressing grief can lead to both mental and physical health.

*Dr. Rebecca Smith is a Family Physician in private practice in Simpsonville, SC. In addition, she is the medical director of the Taylors Free Medical Clinic, Assistant Professor at the USC School of Medicine Greenville, and on the Prisma Health (formerly Greenville Health System) Board of Governors. Dr. Smith is also actively involved with the Christian Medical and Dental Association and a member and teacher at Eastside Presbyterian Church.*

**Finding Balance After the Death of a Child**

**Kim Hamilton**

Join Kim Hamilton for a discussion about the emotional impact of grief. He will talk about the grief process, the difference between grief and depression, and will share insights about healing from his expertise as a Christian counselor. Kim is a Marriage and Family Therapist with Alpha and Omega Counseling in Greenville. He states: “God loves you. It is my life’s endeavor to show each person who enters my office how much. Just as Jesus came...I am not here to condemn but to help my clients find freedom and a new life in Jesus Christ. You do not have to suffer alone.”

**Overcoming Roadblocks to Healing**

**Marie Pritchett**

Do you feel “stuck” on your grief journey? We will share some tools to help you claim your life back and find meaning and purpose again.

*Marie Pritchett loves the Lord and has a servant’s heart, especially for those who are grieving the loss of a child. She has faced overwhelming adversity in the tragic death of her son, Josh in 2005. In her darkest night, Marie discovered Gods amazing grace like never before. Marie is an officer of Grace in the Wilderness ministries. She is married to her high school sweetheart Joel and they live in Pickens, SC. They have been blessed with two children. Josh who joyously awaits them in Heaven and Ali who lives in Easley with her husband, Calton. Ali and Calton have blessed Marie and Joel with a precious grandson, Brody who is the light of their life.*

## **No Time for Good-bye - Creating a path to peace with this loss**

**Becky Kay**

The death was so sudden, so unexpected- there was no time to prepare...no time to say good-bye. Join Becky to gain understanding of ways to cope with this type of tragedy. Becky is a mom who has experienced a loss such as this.

*Becky is a native of Greenville, South Carolina. She attended local schools and has an Associate in Business from Greenville Technical College. She is a member of the American Management Association, served for a term of four years on the board of Pendleton Place, a shelter for abused and abandoned children, served 12 years on the board of Mental Health America of Greenville County and was President of the board for 2 terms. She is a Stephen Minister and Leader, Facilitator for SOS, designed an 8-week intensive support group for people who lost loved ones to suicide and is a frequent speaker for the training classes at MHAGC Crisis Line and other places and companies and has a Grief Support Group, The Journey. Becky also has a Certificate in Reformed Spirituality from Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. She turned to gardening after the loss of her youngest son in 1997 in a car crash, then eight months later, her eldest son completed his life in 1998. Her husband died several years ago and she is passionate about mental, physical, and spiritual healing and health because of her own suffering and loss. As a result of good therapy, her church, physician and friends, she not only survived what was the single most horrible loss – deaths of children – but also the loss of her husband. She now is beginning a “new-normal” life.*

## **Stretches to Soothe Away Stress and Make You Stronger**

**Leiat Aloia**

Come and spend a little time focusing on creating a Mind and Body Connection, drawing strength through minor muscle movement. Learn how to use stretching to soothe during stressful times, as well as build a healthy core and good posture. Another benefit will be a sense of accomplishment that you have learned these things to help yourself. Participants will need to wear capris or pants to this class. Come comfy!

*Working out is Leiat's “Mental Floss.” She says she can leave everything at the door and enjoy the time spent in attaining physical strength and mental rest as well. Leiat is originally from California, worked in the beauty industry for 15 years and is also a former fitness instructor. She is married and a proud mom to 11 year-old identical twin boys. The event is something close to her heart since she has suffered the death of her brother at the hands of someone yet to be found. Her mom is part of a support group like Heartstrings and Leiat actively wants to help pay it forward for her family.*

## **Grace Embraced**

**Linda Findlay**

Join us to talk about how we may have not embraced the grace God had ready for us at the time of our loss but how we can deepen our understanding of God's Grace! 2 Corinthians 9:8 will be the focus of this class: *“And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”*

*Linda became a bereaved parent with the loss of her infant daughter, Aubrie Marie. Linda founded Mourning Discoveries, Grief Support Services in 1991. Since that time she has filled the role of Aftercare Coordinator for funeral homes currently representing over 300 of them in 25 states and Canada. Linda has also continually facilitated several bereavement support groups as a hospice volunteer and is an AARP Widowed Person Service volunteer trainer and outreach provider. In a style reflecting compassion, personal loss, experience working with bereaved families, and special training, she effectively communicates with bereaved families. Through the sharing of personal stories and professional experiences with both integrity and credibility, Linda provides valuable tools, understanding, and solid practical ways to help the bereaved.*

## **HEAVEN AWAITS.... AND MORE...**

**Kathy Schultz**

I remember sitting by my 25 year-old daughter's bedside and reading to her about heaven and what awaited her. After my Kate died, I found myself reading quite a few books on heaven and digging into Scripture to see what it said. I longed to know what Kate was experiencing. In this session I will share what I learned. As C.S. Lewis once said, "I was made for another world".

*I have been a missionary now for 39 years, working in Alaska and Siberia for 14 years with my husband and 3 children. We moved to Rutherfordton, NC in 1995 for my husband to be the Director of the Center for Intercultural Training, a missionary training center. I am currently the Director of the TCK Department and teacher in the teen department, as well as overseeing all the training for the children of missionaries that come to us. My oldest daughter is in heaven and my other 2 children are married and have blessed me with grandchildren..... 2 boys and 2 girls.*

## **Sibling Grief**

**Ann Bennett**

Siblings often have nowhere to turn for extra support during their loss. Ann will provide helpful information for understanding the grief of siblings and some practical suggestions to help them during the loss of a brother or sister.

*Ann is a retired teacher who is a leader in Umbrella Ministries, a national association for the support of bereaved moms, and also leads GriefShare in her hometown of Gastonia, NC.*

## **Find Yourself Under His Wings**

**Ann Vaughan**

Our faith is shared as dialogue with our Lord. We may “come to the table” with worries, joy, sorrow, anger, or celebration. God accepts us as we are. This workshop is an introduction to the history of prayer and how to use some different colored beads as a possible tool to help you focus on your prayer journey.

*Ann Vaughan is a retired educator, who loves to serve in her church, Green Pond United Methodist Church. She teaches Sunday School, leads the senior adults, and sings in the choir. She enjoys reading, drawing, and traveling. She has often shared devotions with our Heartstrings group.*

## **How Personality Affects the Way We Grieve**

**Kathryn Helt**

Did you know your personality type will likely impact how you experience grief and how your loved ones also experience grief? Using one of the most widely used personality assessments, identifying 16 different personality types, we will discuss how best to approach healing based on your unique characteristics.

*Kathryn is the Community Outreach Director for Dignity Memorial locations in the Upstate. She is also a Grief Recovery Specialist. She has joined hands with Heartstrings since the first year of our day retreats and has been a huge blessing. She has a loving heart and true compassion for those of us who walk this journey of healing.*

## **Straight Talk!**

**Heartstrings**

Join a panel of moms who have journeyed this road of grief and healing for a number of years for authentic conversation about how to navigate a world without your precious child. Come with questions. This will be a safe and confidential environment to find out how others have handled sensitive situations.

## **Let's Survive...and Thrive**

**Jeannie Thrailkill**

Jeannie and her daughters, Brooke and Caroline, will share some uplifting thoughts about navigating this road of healing from their own experiences and from [Life After the Storm](#) by Jan Harrison. Jeannie has walked in similar shoes as you and can fully understand the feelings and challenges you are experiencing. Join her for a message of Hope that may make a huge difference in your perspective on healing. Jeannie is an active member in her church, in her community, and in Heartstrings.

## **Transforming Your Grief from Your Burden into Your Superpower**

**Karen Camerato**

Losing a child, no matter how, no matter when, is THE MOST devastating of all losses. Although all moms grieve differently, there are common problems and pitfalls that can delay the ability to find happiness and meaning again. Ideas for overcoming these obstacles will be discussed. Even if you are very new to this journey, these concepts can offer hope. And for those farther along on the journey, your eyes can be opened to the possibility of something greater.

*My name is Karen Camerato and I survived the loss of my precious first born 8 year-old son Nicholas in 1996. After several years of simply existing with my grief, I found a way to bring true joy back to my life. I am now a Certified Grief Coach working with moms in all different stages of dealing with the loss of their child. The most rewarding and uplifting part of this has been helping these moms work through the grief that is keeping them from feeling happy again. They can truly turn this grief into a superpower by finding meaning, purpose and joy again!*

## Spread Your Wings...Soar!

Anna Hewett

"Faith is a bird that feels dawn breaking and sings while it is still dark." R. Thagore Don't get stuck in the wilderness and fog of your grief. Be brave, bold, bright, and beautiful. Make a difference!

*Anna Hewett has experienced the death of her son and is able to relate to your struggles on a personal level. She is an integral part of our Heartstrings group and has presented at the day retreat on several occasions. She is also an active member of her church and community.*

## What Now?

Laura Boehm

This is certainly not the journey you thought you would be on and it is so hard to move forward. We will look at stories from scripture and modern day and see how we can learn from others and move forward to what God has planned for us next. Whether you are years into your journey or just beginning, come get words of encouragement and strength that only HE can give.

*Laura Boehm is the mother of three beautiful children and wife to husband, Jason. Being the youngest daughter of Mike and Ruth Greene, Laura grew up in evangelistic ministry, singing with her family in churches, camps, retreats, and conferences. Currently she continues a life of ministry by serving at Shannon Forest Christian School. Tragedy struck her family in November 2006 when her five year-old daughter, Lindsey, died suddenly from a heart condition. Since then, Laura has numerous occasions to encourage other mothers who have lost children.*

## Lies We Believe When Our Child Dies

Mary McAfee

The death of our child can feel like an attack on our primary role as a mom. It comes naturally to feel insecure, out of control and like a failure. Thankfully, our supernatural God goes with us through grief and loss and has prepared a nest of security and identity in him. Let's explore God's Word together to expose the lies we believe when our child dies and come to a deeper understanding of the love, purpose and protection found in God as we snuggle up under His wings. Questions welcome and interaction encouraged.

*Mary McAfee comes to us from Union Mills, NC halfway between Asheville and Charlotte, where she and her family live on campus at the Center for Intercultural Training (CIT). Mary and her husband Sean are parents to four children, three five and under, with their precious Moriah Keeper McAfee already celebrating real life in Heaven. Suffering from a diaphragmatic hernia in the womb, she was born alive at 39 weeks and lived for twenty minutes. One month after her death, Mary was invited to attend her first Heartstrings One Day Retreat, where the Lord met her with his comfort and truth, along with the unexpected treasure of belonging to a group. "It is an honor to share life together with you on this special day."*

## Information for those coming from out-of-town:

**Friday Night Supper:** Please join us at the church in the formal dining room on the first floor of North Building (the new 3 story building) at 3 Hedge Street for an informal dinner and a time of fellowship with other moms coming from out of town. Ann Bennett will lead us in a few low-key activities to help us get to know each other a little better. We'll eat at 6:30 but come on over at 6:00 if you get into town that early.

Please RSVP for dinner so we'll be sure to have plenty for everyone. [jan@pdtm.us](mailto:jan@pdtm.us) or call or text to: 864-963-3543.

**Accommodations:** There are several hotels in Simpsonville. After doing some on-site research, we recommend:

**Comfort Inn Suites 3971 Grandview Drive Simpsonville 29681 864-757-1552**

When you register, tell them you are part of the Heartstrings group from First Baptist Church in Simpsonville and ask for the church rate: Rooms with a king-sized bed are around \$94 plus tax; Double queen rooms are around \$99 plus tax. (You can also ask about a AAA rate, if you are a member.)

All rooms come with a sitting area, couch, flat screen TV, closet, refrigerator, desk, and coffee maker. There is a salt-water indoor pool and fitness room. A hot breakfast is served from 6-10 am. Coffee is always available.