

from Marlboro Meeting House

Matthew Deen, Pastor

"Grieving is an art that when it is fully known and made to actively happen in all its grandeur and integrity, is the backbone of all real peace. It is the art of all arts; it is the art behind all real art."

—Martin Prechtel, *The Smell of Rain on Dust: Grief and Praise*

No matter who you are, most of us have been touched in some way by the experience of grief due to a significant personal loss. Our losses vary greatly. Losing a job, a special routine, a physical ability, a hope for a better future, a loving relationship—all of these experiences can result in grief and suffering. And very often many of us feel that merely having and expressing this pain is "silly" or counterproductive.

Does this describe you? As you move through life, do you hold back on expressing how much grief is affecting you? If so, it's understandable; there simply aren't many public spaces for folks to be present with and express the difficult emotions they're regularly experiencing. This summer, Marlboro Meeting House will create such a space.

Marlboro Grief Circles

On Friday, July 15 and Friday, August 19, at 2:30pm, Marlboro Meeting House will host a grief circle open to anyone in the Marlboro community who has endured and continues to grieve a personal loss, regardless how long ago that loss occurred. I (Matthew Deen) will facilitate the circle, in which participants can share about their experiences of grief and loss with others and receive support from a community of fellow-grievers.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on your grief journey, you are invited and most welcome to join this circle. While I am a Christian minister, this circle will not be held as a religious space. Our intention is simply to make space for members of the community to share feelings of grief they don't have regular occasion to share in their day-to-day lives.

Please note that these grief support groups are not a substitute for professional care for depression or related mental health challenges, which may share similar symptoms of grief. With depression, getting a diagnosis and seeking treatment from a doctor and/or therapist is essential and can be life-saving. But talking through your experiences of grief with those who have gone through or are going through similar situations can be helpful.

If you would like to join, simply show up at the Meeting House on Friday, July 15 and/ or Friday, August 19. Doors will open at 2pm and we'll

begin promptly at 2:30pm. For more information, please write to matthew.deen@gmail.com or call me at 802-221-8411.

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