

## *Grief Support & Training*

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Lunn Funeral Home LLC, dba Lancaster Morgan Funeral Home began offering grief seminars at our funeral home starting in January 2008; six months after its purchase from previous owners in June 2007. In 2008 and in 2009, we offered six seminars per year; offered every other month throughout each of those years.

Our 2008 Grief Seminars were held on 02/23/2008, 04/26/2008, 06/28/2008, 08/23/2008, 10/25/2008, and 12/2008.

Our 2009 Grief Seminars were held on 02/21/2009, 04/25/2009, 06/27/2009, 08/22/2009, 10/24/2009, and 12/19/2009.

Our 2010 seminars are based on a curriculum we've purchased from Grief Share, which is a Grief Recovery Support Group. However, the material is appropriate for the grieving, and those who are ministering to the grieving. Our 2010 schedule through the June 30<sup>th</sup> criteria date is:

01/23/2010	Living with Grief
02/27/2010	The Journey of Grief
03/20/2010	The Effects of Grief
04/17/2010	When Your Spouse Dies
05/15/2010	Your Family and Grief
06/26/2010	Why?

Since it's inception, all Grief Seminars have been facilitated by a local licensed therapist, who provides handouts, and leads the discussion topics held at our funeral home.

As a local family owned funeral home, we felt it was our mission to reach out to those in our community who are hurting as a result of the losses associated with grief in their lives. When we first started, there were no permanent support groups or regular seminars to the grieving or to those ministering to the grieving in our community. Since beginning our seminars, we've also been able to sponsor the purchase of resource materials for a grief support group that began meeting in our community. We have a close relationship with its leaders, and are committed to providing continued financial resources for the group's needs on a permanent basis.

We view our seminars as a permanent outreach to our community. These seminars are provided free of charge, and include materials and lunch every month. Our community now has a permanent resource available to help families work through their losses, when previously, nothing had been available. These permanent services allow our staff a time of regular aftercare as we walk in an ongoing relationship with families to address unresolved issues of hurt and loss in their lives. By working with a licensed therapist, it has also developed our skills as funeral providers, to be more attuned to the needs of families, and ways to help them through their grieving. In our unique way, we feel these seminars are able to offer hope and healing to the people of our communities.

In addition to the grieving, these seminars are a valuable resource to area clergy, hospice workers and nursing staff. Local pastors in particular have been very grateful to be able to receive regular training on grief, without out of pocket costs. Our trainer is also able to provide certificates for training hours that may be used for professional continuing education training.

We advertise our seminars in our local newspaper the two weeks before the monthly meeting, we call families to make them aware of the date of the seminars, and send local clergy a personalized card through SendOutCards.com reminding them of the seminar dates. I also send our seminar information to local radio stations and our local cable station which promotes our seminars as public service announcements. In addition, I create an "Event" on Facebook, through which I invite more than one hundred friends and clergy whom I think would be interested in our Grief Seminar. One week before the seminar, on two separate occasions a few days apart I'll also add a Facebook "Status Update" which states:

*"Doug Hunter is sponsoring a Grief Seminar, Saturday, **The Event Date**, at Lancaster Morgan Funeral Home, 11 Clover Street, Caribou, from 9-11:30AM. Nancy Nichols, LCPC, NCC will be presenting a biblical approach to Grief and Loss entitled, "**The Seminar Title**" The seminar, materials and lunch are offered free of charge; you may RSVP by calling 492-2171"*

As I have more than 800 friends on Facebook, this is a great way to keep people in my community updated about the seminars our funeral home is offering. As a result of my social networking through Facebook, and these custom seminar events created each month, new people have come as a result of this advertising.

While those reading our local newspaper, my Facebook Updates, and those listening to radio and seeing television public service announcements may not be facing a grief issue at the present time, these messages are remembered; Lancaster Morgan Funeral Home is a permanent resource available to the grieving in our community.