

THE WESTMINSTER LOG

Generations of Generosity

The psalmist writes, "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts" (Psalm 145:4). Faithful saints from generations past have generously handed down the care of this community to us and it is up to us to continue their work for God's kingdom and ensure that it is passed on for generations to come. This year, Westminster Presbyterian celebrates 160 years of faithful ministry in Bay City, and with your continued support, looks forward to many more years of serving God in this community.

In December, the Stewardship Ministry asked you to begin praying about how God will use your gifts in 2025. Our church thrives on your generosity and on your response to God's call on your life. Without the gifts of your time, your creativity, your prayers, and your monetary gifts, Westminster would not be able to be in ministry. God has called us to be "doers" of the word (James 1:22) and that is made possible only through your offerings.

God has entrusted us with many precious resources and calls us to use all that we have for the good of others. God gives abundantly and expects the same from us. The gifts you share with Westminster are used in many ways. We provide

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fellowship events full of food and fun, laughter and conversation. We offer **educational opportunities** for all age groups from Bible studies and Vacation Bible School, to book groups and grief conversations. We stay actively engaged in **mission outreach**, whether we are feeding the hungry in Bay County, supporting the Good Samaritan Rescue Mission, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, and other worthwhile non-profits, to collecting special offerings for natural disasters and Children's Sabbath. Every week, we offer **welcome, joyful, and Spirit-filled worship** services that glorify God. We broadcast these services for our members, friends, and community members who cannot worship with us in the building. We also open our beautiful building to many outside groups, while our expanded Community Food Pantry welcomes over 30 families each week. None of this would be possible without

your continued generous support.

The Annual Report and the Narrative Budget continue the story of Westminster's ministry made possible through your generosity. Please join us on Sunday, February 16, as we gather to worship God and dedicate our "Estimate of Giving" cards as a way to offer our thanksgiving to God and share generously with the generations to come. There is space on the front of the card to indicate your financial gifts, and on the back to share your time and talents. Before filling out your card, we invite you to pause and prayerfully consider how God is inviting you to share your gifts in 2025.

May we all continue to generously share God's abundant blessings with one another and our community for generations to come!

Your Stewardship Ministry:
Sally Calvo, Heather Heidtman, Julie Kelly, Phil Reagh, Karen Schoeppach (chair), and Rev. Jamie Milton



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WWW.WPCBC.ORG

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Monday through Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Visit us on Facebook:
Westminster Presbyterian
Church - Bay City



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Parish Associate
Rev. Linda Williams (ext. 203)

Church Secretary
Bill Petzold (ext. 201)

Financial Administrator
Pat Foster (ext. 206)

Facilities Manager
Harold Miller (ext. 205)

February

Sundays

8:45 a.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal
for our Adults; the Bells play during Worship once a month

9:00 a.m. Sunday School
For children PreK-4th grade

9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study

9:30 a.m. Fellowship
Join us in Fellowship Hall for Coffee and Donuts and Conversation

10:30 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Fellowship
Join us in the Chapel for Coffee and Cookies and Conversation

5:00 p.m. Youth Bells

5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner and Youth Group
For Youth 5th-12th grade

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Website: wpcbc.org

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Westminster Presbyterian Church - Bay City

Sunday	Monday
<p>Happy Birthday*</p> <p>Penny Reagh William Capp Richard Talbot Leslie Frontjes</p> <p>William Auger John Young Donna Horn</p>	
<p>2 4th Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Annual Meeting 11:30 a.m. Souper Bowl of Caring and Bake Sale 5:30 p.m. Saginaw Spirit Faith Night</p>	<p>3</p> <p>5:30 p.m. Mission Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Deacon Mtg.</p>
<p>9 5th Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p>11:45 a.m. Fellowship and Outreach Meeting</p>	<p>10</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Property Meeting 6:00 p.m. Finance Meeting 7:00 p.m. Stewardship</p>
<p>16 6th Sunday after Epiphany Stewardship Sunday</p> <p>11:30 a.m. Stewardship Celebration</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>23 7th Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p>Ordination and Installation</p>	<p>24</p>

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri/Sat
	<p>Westminster Community Pantry is open every Wednesday in February from 4 to 6 p.m.</p>	<p>Westminster Community Pantry is open every Thursday in February from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.</p>	1
<p>4</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Staff Mtg. 6:00 p.m. Personnel Mtg.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>4 p.m. Westminster Community Pantry open 4 to 6 p.m.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	7
<p>11</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Matthew 25 Cafe 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 1:00 p.m. Lions Club 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m. Spiritual Growth Meeting</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:30 p.m. Worship Committee 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Confirmation</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 1:00 p.m. Lydia Circle 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 6:00 p.m. New Officer Training 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	8
<p>18</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 1:00 Help Thanks Wow Book Study 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m. Session Meeting</p>	<p>19</p> <p>5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Confirmation</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah Lutheran 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	14
<p>25</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Hearts & Hands Knitting 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 12:00 p.m. Lunch and Learn 6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts</p>	<p>26</p> <p>5:15 p.m. Contemporary Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Confirmation</p>	<p>27</p> <p>8:30 a.m. TOPS 2:00 p.m. Coffee and Conversation 5:00 p.m. Food of Faith at Messiah 5:00 p.m. Deborah Circle 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study via Zoom</p>	15
			21
			22
			28
			March 1st

*Birthdays listed are for our 75+ Members

Frequently Asked Questions about Stewardship

What benefits does Westminster receive from pledged gifts? *Pledges are the financial cornerstone for all that we do at Westminster. Pledges, unlike donations and loose offerings (also very appreciated and helpful) allow our Session and Finance Ministry a solid basis on which to map our programs and ministries for the coming year.*

What benefits do I derive from pledging? *Making a commitment expresses the love we have for God and our gratitude for gifts God has given us.*

How are our gifts used at Westminster?

Your gifts fund every aspect of our ministries. Every thing we do and the costs incurred are made possible because of your gifts. While we are a non-profit, we have expenses like any business. Personnel, facilities costs, and other monthly costs.

How do I make my pledge?

Pledge cards will be handed out at the annual meeting or mailed out, if your unable to attend. There is also a pledge card insert here in the Log. Pledge cards are due Sunday, February 16th.

Thank you for continuing to support the church during the month of January. Despite waiting to collect commitment cards in February, your giving to Westminster didn't waiver. Any gifts made during this time, will be applied to your commitment for 2025.

Per capita for 2025 is \$30.69.
This is per active,
confirmed member.

In December, the **Operating Fund** had income of \$27,784.16 and expenses of \$57,022.96. The shortfall for the month was covered with investment funds income. The **Mission Ministry** made their quarterly gifts to the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. They also made gifts to the Food Pantry, Hidden Harvest, CAN Council of the Great Lakes, and Sleep in Heavenly Peace; and purchased duffle bags for foster children. The **Worship Ministry** renewed their annual music license and purchased music for the various church performing groups.

The **Building Improvement Fund** received \$489 in contributions and spent \$608 on poinsettias and fall landscaping. As of the end of December, the Fund has a balance of \$14,002.43. The **Major Repairs Fund** received \$394 in contributions and had no expenses, and had a fund balance of \$43,880.69 at December 31. Thank you to those who continue to contribute to these Funds.

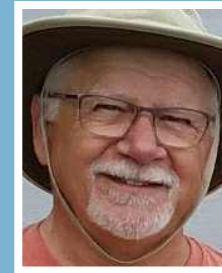
The **Capital Campaign Fund** received \$2,358 in contributions in December. The loan balance is \$35,640.75 as of the end of the year.

By the time you read this, you should have received your Annual Giving Statement, either through the mail or via email. Those of you who give online will also have received a giving statement from Vanco, our online service provider. The online giving shown on that statement is a duplicate of what is shown on your Westminster giving statement. If you have any questions, please contact me via email or by leaving a voicemail message.

Pat Foster

Financial Administrator
treasurer@wpcbc.org
616-485-8272 (cell phone)

With Sympathy



Prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of Tom Majchrzak. Tom passed away January 1, 2025.



Thanks to each and every one of you for your kinds words of sympathy in the recent passing of our husband and dad, Tom Majchrzak.

Your thoughts and prayers mean so much to us.

~ Peggy Majchrzak and family

With Sympathy



Prayers and sympathy of the congregation are extended to the family and friends of Pat Quantz. Pat passed away January 13, 2025.

FELLOWSHIP TIME



Join your church family for a time of fellowship before and after Sunday's worship service. Coffee and donuts included!

Clerk says Farewell

After 18 years, it is time to say "Good bye" as Westminster's Clerk of Session. I have enjoyed being your Clerk over the years.

I took over this position from Marilyn Lapham, who did a splendid job at record keeping for our Church Register and Minute Book. She invited me over to her home and said she had some things to pass on to me – records and important historical information to hang onto. Keeping church records is so important especially when someone calls the church to ask about their baptismal record from 20 to 30 years ago or more. We do still have our microfilm reels to use at the Wirt Library. One could spend lots of time just viewing this source of information. There are six reels to go through consisting of church register and minutes over the years. The reels are labeled and broken down in years.

Our records of minutes and church register are also kept in Philadelphia, PA from when Westminster first opened in 1865 through 2007. We will send in more minutes and register information to be digitalized.

Many past members took on this role as clerk besides Marilyn Lapham – Chris Thurman, Zane Larive, Walt Moore, Dorothy McDonough, Martha Kovacs, Ernie Zielinski to name a few.

Chris Thurman became our next official Clerk in January 2025. Please welcome her. She is a very capable person in keeping records. I wish her the best. Thank you for the many people who helped and trusted me over the years.

*"Respectfully submitted,"
- Jan Witucki*

Sadie Eloise Bonds, daughter of Zachary and Catherine (Kelly) Bonds was born October 2, 2024 at Covenant in Saginaw. She was baptized on January 12, 2025, at Westminster. Sadie is the little sister of siblings Leighton and Claire.



PRAYground

Parents and Grandparents: Be on the lookout for updated worship bags and our "PRAYground" space. Westminster wants your children to feel welcome in worship, and for you as their grownups to have a space to worship and feel connected. Before worship, feel free to help your child choose a worship bag containing items to keep busy bodies and minds focused during worship while they sit with you. We also understand that young children may need to move and have different ways of experiencing God. In addition, there will be a supervised space at the back of the church where your children can explore quiet activities while also absorbing the sights, sounds,



smells, movement, and emotions connected with worship. And, as always, nursery care is available for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers during the service!

Lots going on February 2

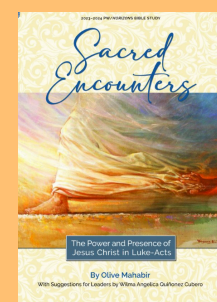
The Session has called for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation to be held during our Worship Service, Sunday February 2, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. During worship, we will hear from representatives of our committees on the work they have done and wish to continue in 2025. The 2025 budget will be available that morning for your information.

After worship service and meeting, we hope you'll join us for our annual Souper Bowl of Caring lunch and Bake Sale. We'll have a variety of soups, breads and crackers, plus desserts you can purchase. A free-will offering will be collected for the Soup luncheon, with the collection going towards our Food Pantry. Proceeds from the Bake Sale will go to support our Youth Group.



Looking ahead to Lent

This year during Lent, we'll follow closely some of the stories of Jesus from Luke's gospel. Beginning with Jesus setting his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), our series flows through several familiar stories—the Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, the fruitless fig tree, the Lost Sheep, Zaccheus, and more. Jesus' ministry was rooted in relationships that disrupted the established social, political, and religious divides of his time. When we study these stories in their historical and cultural context, we see how they mirror the cultural and political divides many of us experience in our families, churches, and communities today. This series is an invitation to navigate the polarities in our lives with more faith, intention, and openness to be transformed. Join us, beginning on **Ash Wednesday, March 5** as we journey with Jesus and his disciples.



LYDIA CIRCLE
THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 20
1:00 P.M.

Lydia Circle will meet monthly in person on the third Thursday at 1:00 p.m. in the Session room.

We are using the *Horizons Bible Study*, Sacred Emotions.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah Circle will meet at 5 p.m. on **Thursday, February 27 at the home of Sherry Holley where we will watch The Chosen.** If anyone wants to join, please call Karen Schoeppach at 989-684-1322 or email her at kaysue@chartermi.net.

Stewardship Celebration

Join us, Sunday, February 16th as we celebrate Stewardship Sunday. Westminster's Session Members will be hosting a Celebration luncheon after worship. Please plan to attend and celebrate all that we're able to do together!

“Prayer is taking a chance that against all odds and past history, we are loved and chosen, and do not have to get it together before we show up.”

— **Anne Lamott**, Help Thanks Wow: Three Essential Prayers

Book Study Group

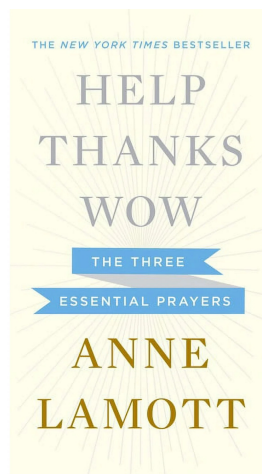
Author Anne Lamott writes about the three simple prayers essential to coming through tough times, difficult days and the hardships of daily life. Readers have

followed and cherished Anne Lamott’s funny and perceptive writing about her own faith through decades of trial and error. And in this book, Help, Thanks, Wow, she has coalesced everything she knows about prayer to these three fundamentals. It is these three prayers – asking for assistance from a higher power, appreciating what we

have that is good, and feeling awe at the world around us – that can get us through the day and can show us the way forward. In Help, Thanks, Wow, Lamott recounts how she came to these insights, explains what they mean to her and how they have helped, and explores how others have embraced these same ideas. Insightful and honest as only Anne Lamott can be, Help, Thanks, Wow is an everyday faith book.

We will begin this book group on **Tuesday, February 18th at 1:30 PM** and will complete the book over three gatherings. We will discuss the first section “Help” on February 18th. Please call the office or Rev. Linda with any questions.

Books are available in the church office for \$5.00.



Lunch and Learn

As we often say, Presbyterians love learning and love lunching. So, for the past several years, folks have been meeting in the Fellowship Hall on the fourth Tuesday of the month to hear a variety of speakers from the community while bringing in our own bag lunches.

In February we continue that tradition. We will meet on **Tuesday, February 25th at noon** in the Fellowship Hall. A physical therapist will join us to share valuable tips and advice tailored specifically for seniors. Their presentation will cover essential topics such as maintaining mobility, preventing falls, and incorporating simple exercises into daily routines to enhance overall well-being. This session is designed to empower seniors with practical knowledge to stay active and healthy.

Plans are underway for our other community speakers - someone from the library, the Area Agency on Aging, and even a local author.

In March, we will “Lunch & Laugh” – a time that is all about coming together to play games, enjoy each other's company, and share a few laughs. Whether you are a fan of card games, board games, or perhaps some friendly Bunco, there will be something for everyone.

Join us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship, where the emphasis is on building connections and creating joyful memories.

Join us on **Tuesday, February 25th, at 1:30 PM** in Fellowship Hall. We can't wait to see you there and to share in the joy of play and camaraderie.

We will again order sandwiches from a local deli, placing a group order but people will be choosing and paying for their sandwiches individually. Between now and then, if you have a deli preference let the office know, and we will place our group order (but your individual choice for sandwich) with the deli that receives the most votes. Of course, you are welcome to bring your own bag lunch from home.

Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.

Happy Valentine’s Day from the Westminster Community Pantry

Remember when we were in school, how fun it was to give Valentine’s cards to someone special? This month, the Westminster Community Pantry is sending Valentine’s to the special people who help us get food to families in need.

♥ To our **Pantry guests** who are so appreciative of how the food items help them and their families.

♥ To **volunteers** who serve the pantry in so many ways from helping with deliveries, stocking shelves and serving our Pantry guests with a smile and warm welcome.

♥ To our **Westminster congregation** for supporting the pantry with donations of food, gloves, scarves and hats as well as monetary support. A special thank you to Judy Hudson for the scarves and hats she makes for the pantry.

♥ To the **Midland Street businesses** whose customers donated almost \$1,200 by purchasing paper ornaments that were displayed at the business. These included Cops and Doughnuts, River Rock, Brooklyn Boyz, O'Hare's, Lucky's and Rathskellar.

♥ To **WIC** for a \$250 grant which helped to fill the pantry shelves.

♥ To **Marlette Chiropractic** for a food drive which provided a car load of food to the Pantry.

♥ To **Mary Rose Davis** for making and donating three festive holiday wreaths that provided \$500 to the Pantry.

The FEBRUARY ITEM OF THE MONTH will continue to be Chunky Soup. This is a popular item with Pantry guests and something we can not get through the Food Bank. We also would appreciate **can openers** as many guests need them.

Have any old **HATS, MITTENS OR COATS** laying around that you haven’t worn in a while? We have noticed that some of our **food pantry clients are in need of warm winter clothing**, and are now collecting donations of warm clothing items that can be given away to those who visit the Westminster Community Pantry. Donations may be left on the cart outside the pantry or in the church office.

2024 PANTRY FINAL STATISTICS

Families Served	945
New Families Served	475
Pounds of Food	32,298
Total Number in Household	2,906
Total Number in New Households	1,525
Ages Served (stats October through December, 1,575 people): 0-17 - 481 (30%); 18-59 - 861 (55%); 60+ - 233 (15%)	

Gospel of Luke is focus of February Adult Bible Study series

The **Feasting on the Word** series provides an in-depth and rewarding framework to explore the Bible. This Bible study series in February focuses on the Gospel of Luke, using information to help us better understand the passage’s richness and challenges, blending scholarly insights with practical applications to daily life.

Each session will focus on the readings designated for that Sunday in worship, giving us an opportunity to delve into the passages, either before worship if you come to the Sunday morning Bible study or reflect back on the passage and sermon if you attend on Thursday evening Bible study by Zoom.

During our February studies, we will consider Bible passages from the Gospel of Luke with themes of “Deep Discipleship” and “Listen and Love” to name just two.

Come join as us we continue this spiritual adventure together, growing in faith and fellowship with the goal of enriching our understanding of the Biblical narrative and its place in our lives today.

Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in the Conference Room

Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Please call the church office or Rev. Linda with any questions.

Dealing with disenfranchised grief

All grief needs to be blessed. In order to be blessed, it must be heard.

~ Dr. Lani Leary

George became incensed when people questioned him about why he attended his ex-wife's funeral. After Julie's 24-year-old son died by suicide, no one called to ask how she was doing. And when Michael's beloved cocker spaniel was put down at the ripe age of 16, he was baffled by responses from friends. "It's a dog," people told him. "You can always get another one."

Each of the above are examples of disenfranchised grief, a type of grief first coined in the 1980s by gerontology professor Kenneth Doka and it refers to the grief one feels when the survivor is not accorded the right to grieve. Can others really deny us the right to feel sorrow and pain? Can they set limits on our grief? Sadly, they can and it happens often for all sorts of reasons.

Disenfranchised grief takes society's expectations to a different level by suggesting who is entitled to grieve and, in turn, who is supported in their grief. Society dictates that we grieve blood relatives but beyond that inner circle of family—the co-workers, step-children and in-laws, for example—society interprets these more distant relationships as less worthy of grief. Disenfranchised grief often occurs when a particular death is stigmatized by society. Death by suicide, abortion, drunk driving and accidental drug overdose frequently cause grievers to



hide their guilt, shame, blame and countless other feelings. When a relationship is stigmatized by society, grievers also feel the sting of disenfranchisement. People grieving the death of a same-sex partner, a partner from an extramarital affair or a high-risk peer group such as a gang member may feel their grief is unacknowledged.

Sometimes people disenfranchise their grief with self talk that sounds like this: It feels disloyal to laugh or to be happy... How can I let myself love again if it all comes down to this?...What can I possibly have to look forward to?

The stress of grieving in isolation can be unbearable. Even if you are able to endure the ups and downs of grief work on your own, the healing will be compromised. It is not time that heals, but rather healing that comes from validation. Someone must be present, someone who is willing to hold your pain by listening without judgment or comparison. It is grief that must be blessed.

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

Coffee & Conversation

From *Grief One Day at a Time*:
"Our culture doesn't teach people to be present to grief, so it's no wonder that so few of our friends and family members have stuck around. But still, we need people to listen to us and support us in

our grief. We can't do it alone."

In our monthly "Coffee & Conversation" Group, we have found that to be true. It is true that we all grieve individually – grief is a very personal thing – yet there is help in sharing

this journey with others, no matter if our grief is new or not so new.

Join us on Thursday, February 27th at 1:30 p.m. Any questions, please call the church office or Rev. Linda.

When you are grieving a loss that others minimize or ignore ...

1. **Acknowledge that your love for the person who has died was significant and that your loss is no less valid.** Love is love and loss is loss. Your love was real and valid as is your grief.
2. **Remember you're entitled to the time and space to grieve,** be it the death of a co-worker, friend, four-legged companion, ex-spouse, etc. So when someone says something dumb and dismisses your feelings (and they will!), remember you have the right to experience your own unique grief. Ignore what other people think and say.
3. **Remember you're not alone.** It's easy to retreat when your grief is neither acknowledged nor supported. Seek the company of others who have experienced a similar loss. You may find this support through a casual acquaintance (such as the friend of a friend) or even the internet. More groups are popping up for people who have lost a loved one to suicide, overdose, miscarriage, stillbirth and murder. Being in the company of others who've experienced a similar loss enables you to honor your sorrow as well as your memories.
4. **Create your own rituals.** Perhaps due to the nature of the relationship you had with the person (or pet) who died, you didn't feel comfortable or welcome at the funeral or memorial service. Or perhaps there was none. If it is helpful, consider creating your own rituals or remembrances now. Consider if this is important to you and what may be appropriate. Rituals and remembrances don't have to be elaborate gestures.
5. **Assess your support system.** Although it may feel that none of your family and friends are supportive, think this through before you write everyone off. Sometimes you'll find empathetic people in surprising places.
6. **Seek ways to explore and express your emotions.** Consider journaling, art, photography and other forms of personal expression. Though you may not have the external support you want, you can still find ways to explore your grief and emotions on your own.
7. **Be a support to others experiencing disenfranchised grief.** Maybe you're not ready to do this right away, but down the road it's healing to be a support to others whose feelings have been minimized or ignored. Acknowledging others who may feel on the fringe of grief not only helps them recognize and validate their right to grieve, no matter how similar or dissimilar their experience is to yours.