

Children and Family

May 2020

Well, here we are. Week 6 of sheltering in place/quarantine/lockdown, whatever you want to call it. Hopefully, parents have created some sort of schedule for their children and are managing everything. I imagine people have some of the same feelings and thoughts that I am having. What will summer look like? Will we still be able to do something fun and memorable? I know that our own East Ohio Camps are suspended for this summer and MUMC's G.O.D. (Get Out Doors) Camp has been canceled for this June. These are only two things and there are so many more events that will not be happening this summer.



As I am thinking about all of things that are being affected by COVID19, I realize that what I am experiencing is grief. I do know that I have felt grief over the past month as my 101 year old grandmother passed peacefully and our family dog of 12 years arrived at the Rainbow Bridge. The grief I am experiencing is not the loss of life but the loss of so many life events that will not happen or will happen with a new look. There are five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. I have gone through them in no particular order. And am continuing to go through them. And am thinking I will be continuing to go through them as time goes on.

If I (and possibly you) am experiencing this, then what about our children? How can we recognize if our children are grieving? What can we do to help them get through this time? Here is a resource from [National Alliance for Grieving Children](#) entitled [Responding to Change & Loss](#). Some key points on how to support your child are:

1. Listen to your child
2. Allow emotional expression
3. Encourage coping skills
4. Practice self-care
5. Understand grief comes in waves
6. Establish/maintain routines
7. Ask for help
8. Make new memories

This resource provides practical ideas on how your children and teens can care for themselves and some specific activities you can do with your child. While I am continuing to try and remain connected with you and your family, please remember that I am online every Monday through Friday at 11:30 AM and on Sunday at 10:30 AM. This is a time for us to sing, dance, read some scripture, pray, and stay connected. If you would like more information on how to join in, please email me at tpalermo@mentorunc.org. I am also holding Youth 56 meetups on Sunday evenings at 7:00 PM. These meetups with your kiddos are a highlight to my day!

As we move to June, we will be hosting a VIRTUAL Vacation Bible School. The VBS Team is working on the logistics and planning on how to make this a worthwhile experience for our children. It is open to children age 4 through 6th grade and only costs \$10 per child. Please [REGISTER](#) as soon as you can in order to prepare the craft kits for each child. I am hopeful that this will be a fun week for your children.

Praying that God will continue to provide us with the hope that we need to continue each day. I know the next few weeks will continue to challenge us as schoolwork will be continuing. May we all remember whose we are and where we are headed. God knows the outcome of this surreal experience. We just need to remain faithful to Him and allow Him to work in our lives each and every day.

By HIS Grace and through HIS love,
Tammy

Tammy Palermo
Director of Children and Family Ministries
tpalermo@mentorunc.org