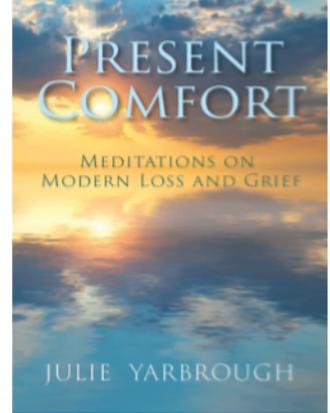


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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

COPING WITH LOSS AND GRIEF: A PANEL DISCUSSION ***Pastors, Author invite the public to join in a conversation about*** ***grief, loss, and hope for the future***

Plano, Texas – April 7, 2021 – Invite Resources and St. Andrew United Methodist Church invite the community to “**Coping with Loss and Grief: A Panel Discussion**,” an in-person event featuring Julie Yarbrough, author of *Present Comfort: Meditations on Modern Loss and Grief*, and Rev. Jennifer Powell, pastor of congregational care at St. Andrew. The event will be in the sanctuary of St. Andrew UMC, 5801 W. Plano Parkway on Sunday, April 25, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. and will be hosted by Rev. Robert Hasley, senior pastor of St. Andrew. Registration is \$20 and includes a copy of *Present Comfort*.

Loss of life and loss of hope are currently overwhelming our global society. Over one million have died from a worldwide pandemic; loss of income and property are forcing many into food insecurity and out of their homes; natural disasters are altering lives and landscapes; acts of random violence, school shootings, and mass slayings are happening with alarming regularity; and political strife and racial injustice are dominating our daily lives and nightly newscasts.

During this event, Dallas author Julie Yarbrough will share highlights from her new book, *Present Comfort: Meditations on Modern Loss and Grief*, while engaging in conversation about grief and loss with Rev. Jennifer Powell, pastor of congregational care at St. Andrew. This is an event for all who have experienced loss of any kind as well as those who are at a loss to understand the myriad of emotions of grief.

Inspired by the death of her beloved husband, Yarbrough has written extensively on grief. She is also the author of *Beyond the Broken Heart* and other books that address the practical and spiritual challenges of grief. In writing about grief, her premise is that those who grieve seek answers found only when they understand their personal experience of grief. Visit her blog at beyondthebrokenheart.com.

A native of Dallas and a graduate of Texas Christian University, she is president of Yarbrough Investments and serves on the board of Methodist Health System, Texas Methodist Foundation, and the executive board of Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. Her late husband, Dr. Leighton Farrell, was senior pastor for 23 years at Highland Park United Methodist Church, where she remains active today.

“*Present Comfort* is a helpful resource not only for those who grieve the death of a loved one, but also for those who feel sad, bewildered, frustrated, or confused by the chaos and uncertainty in the world,” said Julie Yarbrough. “If you are struggling with loss, this event will provide insight into how to move forward and find peace and renewal in life.”

The meditations in *Present Comfort* reflect on many of the complicated, more complex issues of modern grief and identify many of the issues that may arise from the devastation of loss. Topics include collective grief, collateral grief, survivor torment, outcast grief, unresolved grief, and reconciliation, to name a few. The book offers direction and guidance from a spiritual perspective through the comfort and support of scripture.

“As a society, we grieve more often and more publicly than ever before, with an urgent need to understand our experience of grief,” said Julie Yarbrough. “The meditations in *Present Comfort* offer assurance, encouragement, and spiritual insight for those who grieve and context for those who desire to share in the heart and language of grief. The hope is that *Present Comfort* will inspire a deeper faith that in each whisper of comfort, there is the presence of God.”

Rev. Jennifer Powell, pastor of congregational care at St. Andrew United Methodist Church, will provide insight on what she finds to be the most effective in coping with loss and grief, not only from working with others through the St. Andrew Grief Care Ministry, but also on a personal level. Powell experienced the tragic loss of her first husband and two of her children, each at different times in her life. She has been on the pastoral staff at St. Andrew for 17 years and previously served as the nursery director, pastor of children and families, director of missions and outreach, and executive director of The Storehouse of Collin County. She is the founder of Gary’s Angels, a ministry for children with special needs and currently serves as the executive director of Four Corners Global Outreach, which provides medical care to the Cabècars, an indigenous people of Costa Rica.

“With the ongoing pandemic, there are many who are experiencing devastating personal loss, anxiety, isolation, and loneliness,” said Rev. Jennifer Powell. “There is hope for all, and there are wonderful resources such as *Present Comfort* to guide us through some of the most difficult times in our lives. Please join us on April 25 and learn how you can navigate these incredibly hard times and move forward to a brighter tomorrow.”

For more information and to register for this event [visit this link](#). *Present Comfort* is \$17.99 (paperback) and is available for purchase at [Invite Resources](#) and through major booksellers everywhere.

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St. Andrew United Methodist Church began in 1986 in the spirit of its namesake, a disciple of Jesus. The life of the Apostle Andrew embodies the church's mission, which is to invite the Christian and the unchurched to become passionate servants of Christ. The congregation of St. Andrew follows Jesus, lives in relationship, serves others, and takes risks in faith. Worship includes four services each weekend on a 21.2-acre campus at the corner of Plano Parkway and Mira Vista in Plano, Texas, where more than 2,000 people gather each weekend. Recent renovation allows the Sanctuary to host worship in both Traditional style, with the classic pipe organ, and Contemporary style, with a new LED center screen and lighting technology. Small groups and Bible studies gather on campus and throughout the region every day of the week. Mission opportunities serve our local area, neighboring regions, and global communities. The church has been repeatedly selected as a "Best Place to Worship in Plano" by the readers of the Plano Star Courier. St. Andrew United Methodist Church is located at 5801 W. Plano Parkway, Plano, Texas 75093. Visit www.standrewumc.org; call 972-380-8001.

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