



# Links Players

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## When Christmas Hurts

*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2, NIV)*

Earlier this year, I was interviewing LPGA player Angela Stanford about a fellow player who had recently lost her mom. Angela lost her mother, Nan, last year to cancer, and I asked if the two friends had talked about their shared loss.

"I just sensed that she wanted to share," Angela said, "and I'm glad she did. I think there are moments when you're just happy somebody asked."

That last sentence still rings in my ears.

Someone in your life will experience their first Christmas without a loved one this holiday season. Or it may be their second. Or their third.

Grief doesn't let up just because the calendar flipped to a new year. When someone dies, cards, phone calls, and flowers come in the following days and weeks. But months later, even a year later, more often than not, people quit asking.

When Jesus sees Mary and her friends mourning the death of Lazarus, he too weeps. (John 11:35) He's deeply moved by their pain, as we should be when those we love are grieving.

Take time in the weeks leading up to Christmas to think about people in your life who have suffered a deep loss in recent months and years. Maybe they're not even a close friend, but the Lord puts them on your heart because you asked. Be intentional about checking in. Often, the best thing we can do is invite and listen.

Recent U.S. Census Bureau data says this country has roughly 11 million widows and 3 million widowers. Chances are, we all know several for whom the grief is still very raw.

Help carry their burden this holiday season.

**Prayer – Father God, we're so grateful that we can come to you on our darkest days and weep with you. Show us who we can sit with in their grief this holiday season.**

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Beth Ann Nichols

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