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August 30th National Grief Awareness Day: Ask Me Their Name Launch

Ask Me Their Name is a new Indianapolis, Indiana based non-profit organization supported by Roberts Park United Methodist Church and The Garden Community Church, that focuses on grief awareness, education, and counseling.

In recognition of National Grief Awareness Day on August 30, 2021, the newly established Ask Me Their Name organization is officially launching in the parking lot of Roberts Park UMC at 11:30 a.m.

According to www.coronavirus.in.gov between March 16, 2020, and August 18, 2021 **13,797** Hoosiers have died of COVID 19. In addition, across those same months many other Indiana residents have died for any number of reasons. It is estimated that for every death there are at least 9 surviving family and friends.

Due to the pandemic many of these deaths have not been honored with gatherings of family and friends at memorial or celebration of life services. Traditional gatherings provide the space for family and friends to begin saying goodbye to their loved one. Gatherings also offer a compassion and sacred space for people to share their feelings, remember and honor a life well lived surrounded by community. Without these traditional practices, there are many who are mourning in silence.

Historical customs offer a way to remember together those who have died. Wearing black mourning armbands stretches back to as early as 1614 when in her portrait Queen Elizabeth Stuart is featured with black mourning armband on her left arm in honor of her brother, the Prince of Wales, Henry Frederick. Ask Me Their Name has created armbands, t-shirts, ball caps, and pins with the words as an expression of past traditions that allow communities to acknowledge the loss and be mindful of the need to treat mourners with tenderness, compassion and respect.

According to grief educator Deb Brandt, often people are afraid to ask about how someone is doing after a death loss for fear of causing more pain. However, those who are mourning find it comforting name and share stories about their loved one's life.

The idea behind Ask Me Their Name is to give mourners a symbolic way to honor their loved one. Wearing an Ask Me Their Name pin, hat, t-shirt or armband recognizes that someone has died. It also invites those around a mourner to simply ask. When you see the Ask Me Their Name logo, you can begin a kind and caring conversation to learn more about the individual who died.

What: Ask Me Their Name public launch on National Grief Awareness Day - August 30, 2021

When: 11:30 a.m.

Where: Roberts Park United Methodist Church, 401 N Delaware St. Indianapolis, Indiana

Who: Open to the public and in particular, anyone who has experienced a death loss in the last 2 years. The Ask Me Your Name team as well as Deputy Mayor Judith Thomas will be in attendance. If you are unable to attend and would like to learn more or receive a pin or armband, please visit our website at www.AskMeTheirName.org.