

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**    **Victoria BC, November 15, 2017** – The holiday season can be a stressful time for many people but for those grieving a loved one, it can be especially challenging. Memories of past celebrations with family and friends who are no longer here can magnify feelings of loss. That’s why over the next few weeks, Victoria Hospice is pleased to offer **three community events** to help people share their concerns, make connections, and honour the lives of their loved ones.

	<p>On <b>Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup></b>, a free workshop on <a href="#"><i><b>How to Cope with the Holidays When You Are Grieving</b></i></a> will take place at the Greater Victoria Public Library – Juan de Fuca Branch (1759 Island Hwy.) from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm. Pre-registration required.</p>
	<p>On <b>Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup></b>, <a href="#"><i><b>Sharing of the Lights</b></i></a> at the University of Victoria’s Finnerty Gardens from 4:30 – 5:30 pm is a chance to come together and pay our respects to those we have loved and lost. We will share candlelight and company, and transform the grief and loneliness that can arise at this time of year into companionship and community. We will honour the lives that were shared with us and perhaps, through this time together, we might even lighten our hearts.</p>
	<p>From <b>December 1<sup>st</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup></b> <a href="#"><i><b>Celebrate a Life</b></i></a> takes place at Hillside Centre. This long-running community event invites you to hang a personalized tribute ornament in memory of a loved one at our tree at Hillside Centre. Our highly skilled volunteers will be on hand to assist with this annual tradition. If you cannot make it to Hillside, you can make a tribute on our virtual Celebrate a Life tree online any time throughout the holiday season.</p>

“These events support our commitment to the community,” says Mischelle vanThiel, CEO, “which is to provide the best possible patient and bereavement care services.” They also coincide with the first ever **Bereavement Day** on **Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>** created by the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association. Useful information for grieving families including [Bereavement Tips for Special Holidays](#) can be found on the Victoria Hospice website.

**Did you know?** Donations from the community fund almost half of Victoria Hospice’s annual operating costs and are critical for the ongoing operation of programs for patients and families and for education and research.