

Press release

Baby Loss Awareness Week – Coventry Cathedral Service

Anyone who has experienced or been affected in any way by pregnancy loss or the death of a baby is invited to attend a special service at Coventry Cathedral.

Bereaved parents, family members and friends are set to commemorate the all too brief lives of their babies from 2pm on Sunday, October 13.

It comes as part of Baby Loss Awareness week (October 9 to 15), which encourages people to talk openly and raise awareness of baby loss.

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) NHS Trust, the George Eliot Hospital in Nuneaton and South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust, with the support of local partner organisations, have organised the service.

George Eliot Hospital chaplain Ricarda Witcombe, who is leading the service alongside the Cathedral's Canon Pastor, Rev Kathryn Fleming, said: *"We hope this service will help those who have been affected feel more connected and less alone."*

"Through meeting with others who understand their feelings, support and hope is offered and families are helped to break the silence and talk openly about baby loss."

"We look forward to meeting people from across Coventry and Warwickshire. Everyone is very welcome, however old your baby, or how long ago your loss was."

Copies of the popular Guess How Much I Love You book, donated by the 4Louis charity, will be available to families attending the service.

Wide-ranging information is also being made available about support services, while pupils from Exhall Grange Specialist School are singing.

Actor, Director and Tutor David Monteith, the father of Grace, who sadly died the day before her birth, will also be sharing his experiences with those who attend.

He said: *"The death of a baby is not simply an event from which you need to plan a recovery, but an ongoing maelstrom of grief re-writing the way you interact with the world."*

"I'm proud to be able to attend events like this which acknowledge this and bring some normality to grief whilst honouring our children."

Specialist charities and organisations from Coventry, Warwickshire and beyond are helping to support the service. Refreshments will be available on the day. Everyone is welcome to attend the service, including children, and there is no need to book.

Activities are taking place across the area as part of Baby Loss Awareness Week. Bereaved parents, families and friends are invited to light a candle at 7pm on Tuesday, October 15 and leave it burning for at least an hour in memory of babies who died too soon.

Baby Loss Awareness Week is led by Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, in collaboration with more than 40 charities across the UK. For more information please visit www.babyloss-awareness.org.