



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Apr / May / Jun 2021

PRAYER FOR SPRING

Like springtime, let me unfold
And grow fresh and new
From this cocoon of grief
That has been spun around me.

Help me face the harsh reality of
Sunshine and renewed
life
As my bones still creak
from
The winter of my grief.

Life has dared to go on
around me
As I recover from the insult
Of life's continuance.

I readjust my focus to
Include recovery and growth
As a possibility in my future.

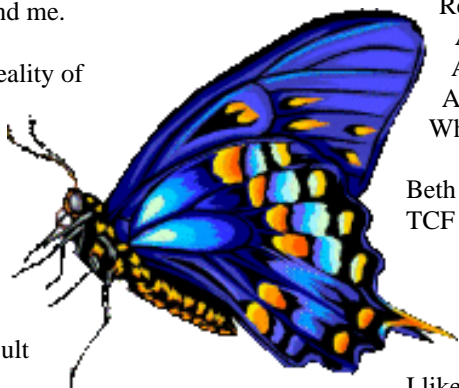
Give me strength to break out of
The cocoon of my grief.

But may I never forget it as
The place where I grew my wings,
Becoming a new person
Because of my loss.

Janice Heil
TCF Vancouver, Canada

*This sharp and jagged stone you have in
your heart will become smooth with the
rivers of time.*

*Roger Stuart
TCF NW Chapter- Houston, TX*



WHAT I NEED

A lot of time!
A little space,
A kind of quiet
Resting place,
Are what I need
At times like these
A special spot
Where I can grieve.

Beth Pinion
TCF Andalusia AL

OUR CHILDREN

I like to think
They are encircling us
Sunlight in their hair
Starlight in their eyes
Holding hands in love
The older ones nurturing the younger
Helping them grow.
I like to think
They are One
As we are One
A family of Love.

Gloria Grant
TCF Miami, FL

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, April 1

Thursday, May 6

Thursday, June 3

6:30 PM
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.
Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

The last time I saw your face
I remember the time and the place.

The last time I saw you smile
I remember, though it has been awhile.

The last time you shook my hand
You did it like I taught you
You did it like a man.

If I had known it was the last time
when we said goodbye
Could I have changed things
And not had all these tears to cry.

The answer to that, we'll never
know.
I just hope you knew, that I love you so.

Try as I may I can't get it in my mind that the last
time,
Has to last me a lifetime.

Love and Miss You Lad,
The Old Man

SOMETIMES

"Sometimes, I still don't believe it,"
My husband said to me.
We have gone to bed, said our goodnights
And were resting comfortably.
My reply was short and to the point.
I simply said, "I know,"
Though it's been eight years since you have died.
Chip, we miss you so.
The memories of our life with you
Are treasures that we share.
For nineteen years we loved you well
While you were in our care.
So once again we said goodnight.
But before this we did pray.
This was a very poignant night.
This night was Father's Day.
In loving memory of my son, Chip

Nancy McKenney

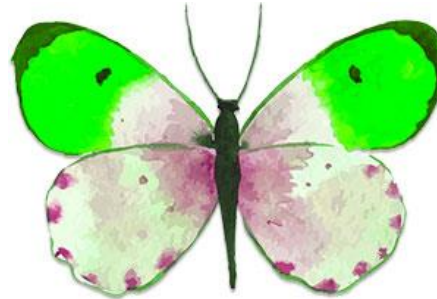
... from the book, *My Son, My Son*

I don't know why.
I'll never know why.
I don't have to know why.

I don't like it.
I don't have to like it.
What I have to do is make a choice
about my living.
What I do want to do is accept it and
go on living.
The choice is mine.
I can go on living, valuing every
moment
in a way I never did before,
or I can be destroyed by it and,

in turn, destroy others.
I thought I was immortal.
That my family and my children were also.
That tragedy happened only to others.
But I know now that life is tenuous
and valuable.
So I am choosing to go on living,
making the most of the time I have,
valuing my family and friends
in a way never possible before.

..... from the book, *My Son, My Son*, by Iris Bolton,
whose son Mitch died by suicide



Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith
Luann & James Butler

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Johnny James, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscatto, Library
Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach
Ann Cole, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

THE GATE TO TOMORROW

There is a gate that each of us has unknowingly passed through. This gate opens only one way.....once we have passed through this gate we cannot return to the other side. Each of us stepped through the gate at a different time and in a different way. This gate opens to the world of parents whose children have died; it is their gate to every tomorrow.

There is no other place that compares with life in this world beyond the gate; there is no sorrow like the sorrow inside the gate. The numbing pain and perpetual agony we experience when first stepping through this gate are so overwhelming that we often don't immediately realize that there will be no return. But we will never return to life before the gate.

The new world inside the gate is populated with friends who are strangers and strangers who are friends.

Our perspective on life has changed forever. Few of our friends from life before the gate will linger with us now; these people are now the strangers. Our pain is all encompassing; they have lives to live, things to do, plans to make, happiness to capture. We are no longer part of their picture. Rare is the friend who stands by us inside the gate.....stands by us until one of us dies and leaves the world inside the gate.

The strangers who are now friends live inside the gate with us. Some have just come through the gate; others have been here a long, long time. But these strangers who are now friends share our experience; they understand our need to talk about our children, each life and each death. They applaud our tiny advances toward acceptance and serenity and peace. Although we can never go back to life before the gate, we now have our compassionate friends.....once strangers but now kindred souls who share our lives and our world.

Life will not be the same again, yet life can be good again. Inside the gate we will each find ourselves with the help of our compassionate friends. They listen carefully to stories about our child. They know our child's name better than they know our name. And that's how we want it to be....remember our children.

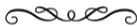
Remember with us.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
Katy, TX TCF
In memory of Todd Mennen

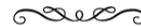
VACATION TIME

Your first vacation without your child. Do something different, or visit a place your child had wanted to see. Bring a photo or other special memento of your child—set it on the hotel dresser—or carry it with you. We did, and it gave us the feeling that she was with us in spirit. Don't feel guilty about taking a vacation. It can be hard, but your child would want you to take care of yourselves.

TCF Boise Area Chapter



Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter to keep our chapter going strong. Please contact Julie Petty with your ideas.



Also, remember you can bring your child's favorite snack for refreshments to our monthly meeting or do a flower arrangement for the table. Please contact Marilyn Smith one month prior to the meeting.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Jason Garrett	04/02/67
Chris Pauley	04/02/77
Chris Culpepper	04/04/69
April Mizell	04/23/83
Shannon Scharf	04/06/62
Robby Jenkins	04/10/88
Thomas Stephens	04/12/95
Chris Travis	04/13/72
Austin Thames	04/14/99
Layton Patton	04/17/02
Rod Taliaferro	04/17/64
Wendi Janway-Jones	04/23/78
Ashley Loflin	04/23/73
Ethan Massey	04/25/01

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Sandra Garrett
Sharon & Gary Pauley
Noel Culpepper
Pam Spillers
Robert S. Green
Beverly Jenkins
Susan & Gray Stephens
Gloria & Kenneth Travis
Kim Thames
Terri Miller
Shirley Taliaferro
Rosalyn & Tom Janway
Katye Loflin
Michelle Massey

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Holly M. Robertson	04/01/17	Nancy & Joe Mulhearn
Chris Pauley	04/05/95	Sharon & Gary Pauley
Michael Stephens	04/05/68	Maggie & John Stephens
Krista Corrent	04/08/00	Anna Ruth Hill
Pamela Ford	04/10/04	Leona Upton
Martha Mickel	04/13/84	Ruth Mickel
Pamela Wimbish	04/14/16	Pam Wimbish
Danny Morgan	04/18/16	Jeanie Morgan
Michael Johns	04/19/06	Nell Book
Courtney Cole	04/22/12	Ann & Henry Cole
Mickey Loflin	04/23/73	Katye Loflin
Joe David Williams	04/24/18	Dolph Williams
Anne Barham	04/25/91	Pat Barham

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Bo Best	05/02/84
Tonya Bell	05/05/69
Kellie Falgout	05/06/82
Justin Petty	05/07/82
Melissa Blankenship	05/08/65
Will Bryan	05/08/91
Jason Hutts	05/12/81
Mickey Chambers	05/13/62
McKenzie Hudson	05/13/88
Derrick Sadberry	05/15/65
Elizabeth Vaughan	05/19/65
Hunter Carr	05/21/91
Jill Whitaker	05/21/82
Timothy Smith	05/26/61
Brian Gregory	05/28/73
Kelly O'Neal	05/28/70
Scott Thompson	05/29/78

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Charlene Best & Charles West
Ann Smith
Patricia Falgout
Julie & Danny Petty
Peaches Cathey
Beverly & David Bryan
Carol & Greg Hutts
Merrell & Mike Chambers
Dayna Hudson
Belinda Sadberry
Marilyn Stern
Juanita Carr
Cynthia Machen
Mary & Buddy Smith
Frances & Jim Gregory
Nancy Oliver
Tammy Thompson

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mickey Loflin	05/10/05	Katye Loflin
Ashley Loflin	05/10/06	Katye Loflin
Shontavious Foster	05/12/13	Sarah Foster
Ethan Massey-Rydi	05/13/10	Michelle Massey
Lisa Giovingo	05/15/15	Frances Giovingo
Leigh Ann White	05/15/05	Janet & Ken White
Barry Kirby	05/18/13	Lisa Kirby
Lance Thomas	05/18/08	Connie & Danny Thomas
John Dobbs	05/21/08	Maggy & John Dobbs
Stacey Gentry Morrison	05/22/15	Sandy Kendrick
David Webb	05/22/05	Paula Webb
Justin Petty	05/26/01	Julie & Danny Petty
Kellie Falgout	05/28/02	Patricia Falgout

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Brant Surles	06/01/71
Justice Farrar	06/05/98
Lauren Lang	06/08/93
Caroline Cole	06/11/70
Jenna Johnson	06/12/88
Katie Joyce	06/25/08
Blade Gilbreath	06/13/05
Debbie Pope	06/14/52
Andrew Rinicker	06/16/72
Jackson Kennedy	06/18/00
Jeremiah Bynum	06/19/92
Mike Hayes	06/20/63
Kelly Chapman	06/23/78
Walker Dayton	06/23/81
Katie Joyce	06/25/08
Savannah Thornton	06/25/85
CW2 Bryan Henderson	06/29/85

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Joy and Elvis Surles
Martha Anderson
Lisa Lang
Ann & Henry Cole
Sandy Johnson
Kathryn & Jeff Joyce
Dawn & Brandon Gilbreath
Jean Hamilton
Dale Rinicker
Jonann Layton
Darnita Peeler Williams
Margaret & George Hayes
Judy & Bennie Chapman
Vickie & Ed Dayton
Kathryn & Jeff Joyce
Rhonda & Ronald Thornton
Kim Bryan Henderson

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Melissa Blankenship	06/13/04	Peaches Cathey
Kody Spann	06/14/07	Cindy Spann
Terry Watson	06/21/13	Henrietta/Paul Watson
Brandi Pearson	06/22/17	Layne Pearson
William Tousignant	06/27/18	Gregg Tousignant
Brant Surles	06/10/19	Joy and Elvis Surles

TO OUR LONG TIME MEMBERS:

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back ... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE;
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for our children unites us.
Your pain becomes my pain just as your hope becomes my hope.
We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds.
We are young, and we are old.
Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that we feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;
some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;
others radiate an inner peace.
But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together
as we reach out to each other in love
and share the pain as well as the joy,
share the anger as well as the peace,
share the faith as well as the doubts
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
P.O. Box 6114
Monroe, Louisiana 71211

Return Service Requested