



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

*Jan / Feb / Mar 2021*

## **I REMEMBER**

Dear One,

I greet you every morning  
As I arise and look at your picture,  
... and remember.

I see you every day  
As I look at the field we walked,  
... and remember.

I hold you every year  
In my heart on your birthday  
...and remember.

I grieve for you always  
As the years come and go,  
... and remember.

I hope to be with you again  
As I pass into eternity,  
... and rejoice.

Jean Fisk  
TCF Contra Costa County CA  
In Memory of my son, Barry

## **LIKE THE BUTTERFLY**

It fluttered above my head  
Weightless in the soft breeze.

I reached up my hand  
It lit on my finger.

Waving glistening wings gently,  
It looked at me for timeless moments.

I smiled, reaching deep and  
Finding all those cherished memories.



As it flitted off through the sunlit morn,  
I knew we had said hello once more.

Leslie Langford  
TCF North Platte, NE

## **PRECIOUS MEMORIES**

Memories, Memories, Memories  
Are all I have of you,  
Precious, precious memories of a  
daughter who died too soon.

Some of my memories are visible  
And some of them are not.  
But all are treasured in my mind  
And deep within my Heart.

Memories, Memories, Memories  
They help me face each new day,  
Precious, precious memories  
Can never be taken away.

With Love—Momma

Peggy Wood Nolan  
TCF Nashville, TN

## Monthly Meetings

**Thursday, January 7**

**Thursday, February 4**

**Thursday, March 4**

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

## ON BUTTERFLY WINGS

From earth's caterpillars to heaven's butterflies -  
They soar with the angels from the earth to the sky.  
Their wings seem so fragile, translucent and light -  
But they transfuse our  
world giving us strength  
in our night.

In silence they appear like  
messengers of love,  
Bringing hope and  
comfort from heaven  
above.  
These beautiful butterflies  
so graceful in flight,  
Transport us from  
darkness to color and  
light.



So when choosing a symbol to help grieving parents  
cope,  
What more than a butterfly could best symbolize  
hope.  
Our hearts stand in awe and hope from within us  
springs.  
As our hearts take flight - On Butterfly Wings.

By Faye McCord  
TCF Jackson, MS  
In loving memory of my son, Lane McCord (1/26/65  
- 9/13/98)

## MEMORIES

Within each tear that falls is a mirror...  
That reflects a special moment in our lives.  
Tears trickle warmly down and land in a puddle in  
my heart.

Tammy Tobac  
TCF Pittsburgh, PA

## WHEN FEBRUARY COMES...

...there is finally an end in sight to the long winter.  
Sometimes melting snow reveals the green tips of an  
early crocus or even the exquisite blossom itself—a  
soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of  
graying snow and biting wind and ominous sky—a  
small promise of new life to come.

My heart, grieving for my son who died, was like that  
image of winter. For somehow even during the  
darkest, coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope  
appeared. As days and months dragged, my heart  
finally learned once again to be open to the promise  
of new life. Painful memories  
melted into loving ones. Life  
that seemed forever dormant  
once again sprang forth from  
my heart. In living hopefully  
and lovingly, the season of the  
heart can change. The loving  
memories of your child, like  
the flower in the snow, can be  
the beginning of the end of  
winter.

Nancy Ann Dramer  
TCF Arlington Heights, IL

## THE PROMISE

Cold winds blow across the frozen pond.  
Snow lies deep upon the fields.  
But the change has begun.

Daylight hours increase slowly.  
With each passing day later sunsets are more  
apparent  
Winter is ending.

For bereaved parents  
The change is awfully slow  
The progress is not always apparent  
But the promise is the same.

Winter will end.  
Spring will return.

Betty Stevens,  
TCF Baltimore, MD

*Mourning can go on for years and years. It doesn't  
end after a year, that's a false fantasy. It usually ends  
when people realize that they can live again, that  
they can concentrate their energies on their lives as a  
whole, and not on their hurt, and guilt and pain.*

*Elisabeth Kübler-Ross*

## MISSING YOU

I just can't believe it...  
The sun still rises and sets,  
The moon and stars still  
shine.  
The flowers still bloom, the  
birds still sing.  
I expected a change in  
everything.

I just can't believe it...  
It still gets dark and light,  
The ocean still has waves,  
The rain still rains, the wind  
still blows.  
Is it because they do not know?

I just can't believe it...  
I thought the world would stop  
When in my house I found  
An empty chair, a missing smile  
I thought it would stop for just a while.

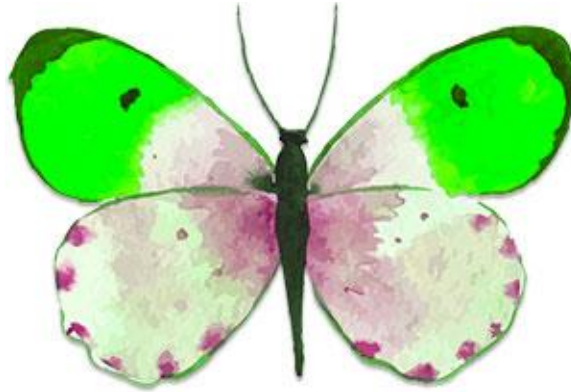
I just can't believe it...

Gretta Viney  
TCF Yakima, WA

## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

Now the holidays are over, and once again a new  
year faces us—for some, the first one without that  
precious loved one—for others, another one of many.  
The loss is still remembered, no matter how many  
others we have faced.

What will we do in the coming months? Each hour  
seems so long and the days seem to stretch ahead  
forever, as if another year cannot possibly ever come  
to an end. But friends, it will and we will survive.  
The road at times is hard and the pain is so hard to  
bear, but each year we realize that the pain has eased.  
We never will be totally without this pain of love and  
shattered dreams, but we will be able to live. This  
love that is stored in us for our missed child can be  
spread out to others to help us to ease their pain.



So, in this New Year, let's  
make a new resolution—that  
our love for our dead child  
will be brought out of our  
hearts and given with our  
best effort to others to help  
them ease their pain. In so  
doing, we will find our pain  
is eased also.

Thelma Richardson  
TCF Mesa County, AZ

## IN THE COLD OF WINTER

In the cold of winter, and the dark of those nights,  
the heart remembers the laughs, the fights.

In the warmth of the spring and the light of those  
days,

the heart remembers –  
and loves...always.

Sondra Wright  
TCF Atlanta Chapter

### Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith  
Luann & James Butler

### Steering Committee

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

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## WAITING FOR ANSWERS

Years ago I left my first meeting of The Compassionate Friends and drove home in tears. My son, Max, had died a few short weeks before and I had been anxiously awaiting this evening. These people must have some answers, I thought. With paper and pen in purse, I was ready to take notes and do as they prescribed. I would do anything to ease the ache in my soul.

But when I walked out into the spring air later that night, I felt betrayed. I hadn't heard any answers. Instead of learning how to leave my grief behind, it had been confirmed, made more real with expression. I knew I would miss Max forever. Now I wondered if I would grieve forever. Would it always be this way, a flash of pain aligned with every memory?

During the next months and years, I attended TCF meetings and conferences, read books, raged, kept busy, sometimes spent the day in bed. I wrote, cried and talked about Max. Slowly, I discovered the answers I had long feared *were* true: yes, I will grieve forever, and yes, my memories will often provoke tears. But something had changed.

My grief was now more forgiving, my tears almost sweet with memory. Max's life took shape again as the anguish of his death began to recede. If I would always miss him, I would also always have him with me in so many ways. I wanted to carry his memory into the future: the joy, the lessons, and the inevitable pain. How could I do otherwise?

As I walked to my car after that first meeting, the TCF chapter leader caught up with me. "How can I stop this pain?" I asked. She put her arm on my shoulder. "Just do what feels right to you," she said. "Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too."

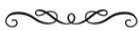
Sometimes the best advice is none at all.

Mary Clark  
TCF Sugar Land/SW Houston Chapter

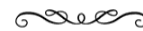
## LONELINESS AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT

Why are there times when a bereaved parent feels lonely even though surrounded by loving people the bereaved parent loves? Loneliness is the outgrowth of separation from one who has given meaning to life. Yes, other relationships offer meaning, but it is normal for the searing pain from the loss of one's child to supersede the pleasure from other experiences. Part of yourself has been invested in another person. When that person has died, in a sense, you are lonely for a part of yourself that has been destroyed. At times you look around you and think that no one else is experiencing the pain you are feeling; no one else's world has been shattered. This self centeredness is a natural part of the grief process. Do not deny it, but *do not hold on to it as a way of life*. Give yourself permission to accept help from others and then to reach out and help others. Although your child is not here to give continuity to your life, by having lived and having given purpose to your life, your child can be the bridge to your continuity with life as a thinking, loving and active person.

Ruth Eiseman  
TCF Louisville, KY



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 JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Eddie Foreman	01/03/60	Jimmie Sue Reeves
Lisa Pearson	01/03/67	Layne Pearson
Brandi Spradlin	01/05/78	Rita & Terry Colegate
David Dayton	01/06/81	Pat Dayton
Paul Johnston	01/06/06	Gloria & Paul Johnston
Tricia Smith	01/08/74	Brenda & Randy Smith
Stephen Smith	01/08/76	Marilyn & French Smith
Cody Allen	01/12/92	Regina Kenney
Hunter Potts	01/14/05	Terri Miller
Mario Lambert	01/15/10	Helma Lambert
Amanda Maxwell	01/17/86	Angie Maxwell
Mickey Loflin	01/18/71	Katy Loflin
Hope Johnson	01/18/94	Fran Johnson
Cole Crawford	01/22/19	Sylvia & Greg Crawford
Kimball James	01/24/71	Betty Jean & Johnny James
Stephen Sivils	01/25/77	Veda Sivils
Norman Craig	01/28/64	Pat Craig
Allen Byrnside	01/29/19	Terri Musgrove-granmother
Maaliyah Fletcher	01/30/02	Jeanette Fletcher
Matthew Elliott	01/31/99	Guina Elliott

## OUR CHILDREN'S JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
David Dayton	01/02/02	Pat Dayton
Kelly O'Neal	01/03/09	Nancy Oliver
David Moore	01/06/84	Barbara Moore
Scottie McLarrin	01/09/99	Mary McLarrin
Jackson Kennedy	01/11/02	Jonann Layton
Trent Weaver	01/11/13	Donna VanVeckhoven
Benjamin Box	01/13/06	Erlene & Jack Box
Janey Kight	01/20/83	Sandra Casteel
Richard Bryan	01/25/02	Linda & James Bryan
Fred Page	01/26/98	Charlotte Colquette
Carl Alexander	01/26/04	Valerie & Billy Matejowsky
Jeremiah Bynum	01/26/17	Darnita Williams
Dominique Bruscato	01/26/88	Gene Bruscato
Chris Travis	01/26/13	Gloria & Kenneth Travis
Elizabeth Vaughan	01/28/17	Marilyn Stern
Caroline Cole	01/30/88	Ann & Henry Cole
Robin Munholland	01/30/18	Terry Williams
Lauren Lang	01/31/16	Lisa Lang
Chris Springfield	01/31/17	Deborah & Waler Springfield

## OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Michael Moreau	02/03/69	Bonnie & Ron Nay
Cecilia Mouser	02/04/59	Kathryn Hutchinson
Andy Smith	02/04/87	Anita Wynn
Matt Mouser	02/05/53	Kathryn Hutchinson
Corey Washington	02/14/69	Gracie Washington
Dean Keirseay	02/14/76	Shirley Porter
Courtney Cole	02/25/65	Ann & Henry Cole

## OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Deborah Smith	02/01/11	Mary & Buddy Smith
Ryan Clark	02/04/04	Linda Clark
Walker Dayton	02/04/09	Vickie & Ed Dayton
Cecilia Mouser	02/04/59	Kathryn Hutchinson
Tricia Smith	02/05/06	Brenda & Randy Smith
Thomas Stephens	02/05/11	Susan & Gray Stephens
Greg Dennis	02/06/05	Camille Dennis
Eddie Foreman	02/15/99	Jimmie Sue Reeves
Layton Patton	02/17/14	Terri Miller
Hunter Patton	02/17/14	Terri Miller
Tracy Patton	02/18/18	Nina Shlosman
Alyssa Neitz	02/23/18	Jennifer & Joey Neitz
Jayden Ward	02/23/14	Alicia Hill
Cedrick Hotard	02/28/07	Sharon & Stephen Hotard
Adam McKenzie	02/28/03	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie

## OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Allison Butler	03/03/88	LuAnn & James Butler
Kaye Shields	03/04/62	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Tyrone Edwards	03/10/81	Sheila Edwards
Greg Gilstrap	03/12/70	Jean Gilstrap
Hope Bruscato	03/24/72	Gene Bruscato
Ryan Clark	03/24/74	Linda Clark
Ben Caldwell	03/26/83	Emily & Douglas Caldwell
Jon Bowman	03/27/85	Jill Puckett
Jayson C. Crawley	03/27/71	Ruby Crawley
Michael Johns	03/28/75	Nell Book
Ryan Simon	03/31/81	Sandra & Rene' Simon
Tracy Patton	03/31/75	Nina Shlosman

## OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mickey Chambers	03/04/11	Merrell & Mike Chambers
Jeremy Barnhill	03/08/02	Kathi & Terry Barnhill
Donald Acree	03/10/10	Fran Acree
Brian Gregory	03/10/98	Frances & Jim Gregory
CW2 Bryan Henderson	03/11/13	Kim Bryan Henderson
Lisa Pearson	03/13/84	Layne Pearson
Duston Albritton	03/14/98	Linda & Ronnie Albritton
Will Bryan	03/15/19	Beverly & David Bryan
Raymond Scott	03/16/12	Pam Lavender
Maaliyah Fletcher	03/20/06	Jeanette Fletcher
Brandi Spradlin	03/22/98	Rita & Terry Colegate
Danny Washington	03/26/12	Dorothy Washington
Michele Perry	03/29/72	Clara & Don Perry
Ryan Simon	03/29/13	Sandra & Rene' Simon
Tyrone Edwards	03/30/02	Sheila Edwards
Kimball James	03/31/01	Betty Jean & Johnny James

### **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](http://www.tcfnortheastla.org)

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

Return Service Requested