



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

Jan / Feb / Mar 2020

In March

The year moves on
between the weeks and days
are spaces filled
with more than only time:
those minutes, moments,
when your life stand still
and aches in memory...
And part of you
needs to endure the dark,
because it means
to have love again.
And part of you
prays for forgiveness,
because your mind
may break, remembering.
Between the weeks and days
are spaces filled
with more than only time...

Sascha Wagner
TCF Des Moines, IA

REMEMBERING

Friends may think we have forgotten
When at times they see us smile.
Little do they know the heartache
That our smile hides all the while.

Beautiful memories are wonderful
They last till the longest day.
They never wear out, they never
get lost and can never be given away.

To some you may be forgotten,
To others a part of the past.
But to those who loved and lost you,
Your memory will always last.

Author unknown



A HEART WEEPS

This is a level of loss
That numbs every part of my being
My heart is bound so tightly
That it cannot even weep.
Will this ever end?

The ground lies bare and brown
Covered with last year's leaves.
The earth is cold and hard

As desolate as my heart.
Sustain me in this hour!

Today, from that barren earth
A clump of green appeared
White snowdrops clustered there.
And I saw, once again, a fragment of beauty!

I weep with thanksgiving
For this beauty that has warmed me.
For this heart that leapt, and now knows
That joy can enter once again.

Marie Andrews
TCF Southern Maryland

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, January 2

Thursday, February 6

Thursday, March 5

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

THE MUSIC IS FOREVER

One life,
Like the song strummed
softly on the strings,
Makes music to the ears of
those who hear it sing.
Discordant notes and
harmony, together make the
sounds,
But the space between the
notes
is where the meaning can be
found.

A life,
May be as brief as a note on a page,
Or as long as a symphony with all the movements
played.
But long or short,
the melody has its meaning though unfinished,
And for those with ears to hear it, the meaning's not
diminished.
Somewhere the song continues its sweetly singing
phrase,
The music is forever, not just for those days.

One life,
Like a Song,
Strummed softly on the strings,
Makes music to the ears
of those who hear it sing.

Karen Howard
TCF Miami, FL

THE FIRST SNOW

The first snow since you left
Fell on the coldest day of the year,
Settling onto rooftops and heights,
Onto the ground, drifts of white.

I drift in thought to past winters
To silhouettes against white,
Rosy-cheeked children crunching snow
In woolen paws for a snowball fight.

Shrieks of delight streak the air
Like rising steam from warm breath.
As memories frozen in mind
Thaw like snow in the morning sun.

I don a coat against the wind,
Remembering when past snows
Encased snub footprints in white
And angels fell blinking in the light.



Years have passed since that winter
scene
Yet those images move my heart still
As memories like angels' wings
Disturb the silence, and the chill,
And the murmur of the wind protests
The coldness of unmarred snow.

Peggy Walls
TCF Alexander City, AL

GRIEF AT EASTER

Take time to grieve. Take time for the memories of
other Easters. Take time to mourn what might have
been. Indulge yourself in the beauty of an Easter lily.

Don't be afraid if at first there seems more pain than
comfort in the age-old words and the beautiful music
of Easter. And never be ashamed of your tears. One
day, you too, will say, "It is finished."

To walk through grief is not easy. When the shock
and numbness have gone, we are left with reality, the
reality that life includes pain and loss. Easter is a
season of many feelings...a time of pain and loss. It
is also a time of rebirth and of real personal growth.
So, also, are the Seasons of Grief.

TCF Boise, ID

"Regardless of the circumstances of our child's death, for most of us, anger and guilt are a part of our grieving. We may not always be able to label these emotions or to acknowledge them, but they are there and we must deal with them. Failure to do so often results in our experiencing worse physical and emotional problems later on."

Bill Ermatinger

SPRING IS COMING

If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your "first" spring, you may be surprised by some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks. We hear so much about the beauty of spring – the new life and the feelings of renewal that are supposed to accompany this lovely time of year. During my "first" year, I expected that spring would cheer me up, and make me feel lots better. How surprised and frustrated I was when, on one of those truly magnificent spring days as life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was "in the pits." When a friend said to me, "Doesn't a day like this really lift your spirits and make you feel better?" I had to reply honestly that I was having a really bad day —that the sense of loss and emptiness was greatly intensified.

Gradually, I began to realize that my expectations for spring were unrealistically high. I had looked forward to spring with the wrong kind of hope. When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and the grief work which we all must do before we can be healed.

The coming of spring cannot make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's process will continue, and that can offer us hope.

I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun's warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the south, and forsythia, the daffodils and the greening of the world. Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature. Don't expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that spring can offer into your heart.

Evelyn Billings
TCF Springfield, MA



THE THINGS I DIDN'T SAY

If I could sit and talk to you
For just a little while,

To say the things I wish I'd said,
Like-
how I loved your smile,
how much I loved the sight of you,
your voice, your eyes, your face,
to watch you playing basketball
and see you win a race.

You were so much a part of me,
The part that's gone away.

Those memories you left become
More precious every day.

I pray that you can hear this
And God will let you see

The pride, the joy, the happiness
That your life gave to me.

Pat Fennell
TCF Delmar/Albany, NY

**The walls we build around us to keep sadness out
also keeps out the joy.**
Jim Rohn

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

WISHES FOR BEREAVED PARENTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

To the newly bereaved, we wish you patience, patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.

To the bereaved siblings, we wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.

To those of you who are single parents, we wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone, with your loss.

To those of you who are plagued with guilt, we wish you the reassurance that you did the very best you could under the circumstances and that your child knew that.

To those of you who have suffered multiple losses, those of you who have experienced the death of more than one child – we wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life once again.

To those of you who are deeply depressed, we wish you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadow."

To those experiencing marital difficulties after the death of your child, we wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.

To all fathers, we wish you the ability to express your grief, to move beyond society's conditioning, to cry.

To those with few or no memories of your child, perhaps because you suffered through a stillbirth, a miscarriage, or infant death, we wish you the sure knowledge that your child is a person and that your grief is real.

To those of you who have experienced the death of an only child or all of your children, we offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such as inspiration to the rest of us.

To those of you unable to cry, we wish you healing tears.

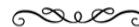
To those of you who are tired, exhausted from grieving, we wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.

To all others with special needs that we have not mentioned, we wish you the understanding you need and the reassurance that you are loved.

Joe Rousseau, Past President
TCF National USA



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 Keirse	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

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

Return Service Requested