



# *The Compassionate Friends* of Northeast Louisiana

## Supporting Family After a Child Dies

*Apr / May / Jun 2022*

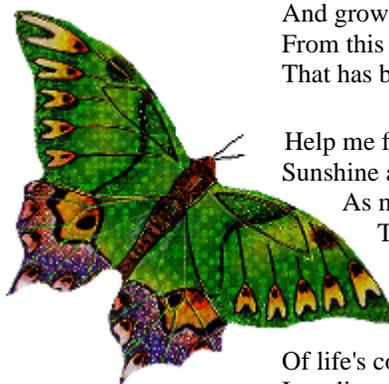
### **EASTER THOUGHTS**

One more winter overcome,  
one more darkness  
turned to light and promise.

Winter is the price for spring.  
Struggle is the price for life.

Even in sorrow, remember  
to prepare your heart  
for celebration...  
next spring perhaps.  
Or the spring after that...

Sascha Wagner  
TCF Des Moines, IA



### **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.

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  
TCF Vancouver, Canada

### **In Loving Memory**



**Dianne Bruscato**

**September 24, 1942 ~ April 19, 2022**

### Monthly Meetings

**Thursday, April 7**

**Thursday, May 5**

**Thursday, June 2**

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

## A MOTHER'S DAY GIFT TO GOD

Lord today is Mother's Day,  
but our hearts are split in  
two  
Half is with the child still  
here, the other with the child  
that is there with you.

All the lovely presents are a  
nice surprise  
But the one thing we want  
most is missing, and tears  
fill our eyes.

We know when you sent  
them Lord, you didn't  
promise how long they  
would stay  
All you said was to love them and treasure each and  
every day.

But Lord it crushed our hearts, when you called for  
their return  
We feel like half a Mom, as we ache weep and  
yearn.

But Lord tell them we love them just as much as we  
did before  
And could you please make a window, so they can  
see through heaven's floor.

Let them see that they are missed and thought of with  
each breath  
And that a Mother's love begins before life, and does  
not end with death.

So on this Mother's Day the greatest gift we give to  
you  
For Lord we know you missed them, and you love  
them too.

Sheila Simmons  
TCF Atlanta Online

## FATHER'S DAY

Father's Day...not a big holiday, but one that holds a  
lot of meaning to those to whom it applies. For first  
time fathers, it brings a sense of joy and pride. For a  
long time dad, it is a reminder of the fulfillment,  
which children have brought to his life. For those



men who have lost a child, no matter what the  
"child's age, Father's Day can be a painful time. It  
can be a horror for those  
who must endure their pain  
in secret and silence, due  
either to their desire for that  
approach or society's  
expectations that they be  
strong and controlled. We  
wish to acknowledge the day  
because the death of a child  
does not negate the  
parenthood of a dad who  
loved him/her. We wish that  
all bereaved fathers  
experienced a taste of good  
memories and remember  
love for your child.

Cape Fear Chapter  
TCF Wilmington, NC

## 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

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

*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.*

*And I choose to go on living, making the most of the time I have,*

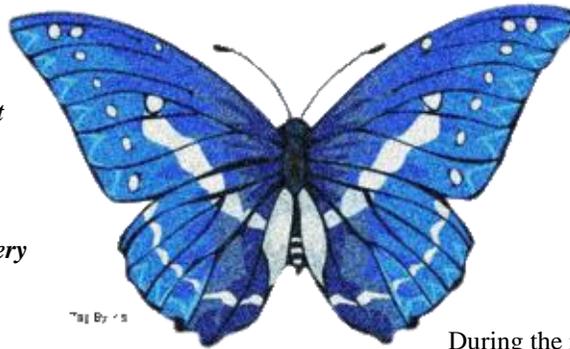
*Valuing my family and friends in a way I never experienced before.*

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

## 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



During the months of May and June, as we navigate Mother's Day and Father's Day with the absence of our children facing us at every step, we wish you many gentle days and peaceful nights, moments of tranquility, and the awareness that you do not walk alone. We hope the thoughts in this newsletter will help at least a little.

Salem TCF Steering Committee

### Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith  
Luann & James Butler

### Steering Committee

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

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## MEMORIAL DAY

Many choose not to celebrate Memorial Day, or to set it aside as a day to honor the war heroes. My son is my hero; I'm sure you feel this way about your own child. I will take flowers to the cemetery this Memorial Day. But at some point, memorials and rituals need to be more personal – closer to home. There are those who feel that memorials hold us back in our grief process. One article talked about someone 'getting well' because he no longer needed to have a picture in a certain spot; that he no longer needed to look at it all the time.

I feel that rituals in memory of our children get us through difficult times. Burning a candle or decorating a small tree at Christmas, sharing memories around the table at Easter, releasing balloons on birthdays, taking fireworks to the cemetery on the Fourth of July – these are some of the activities dedicated to our children that make us feel close to them.

Spring is, for many, a difficult time; everything is alive and blooming. One mother said she was so mad at the plants for coming alive when her son isn't ever going to live again that she wanted to douse them all with weed killer. But she has found a garden like the one she used to visit with her son. Perhaps her ritual for Spring could be to visit the garden when the leaves bud ... to feel her son there among the trees that they shared together.

I have been working industriously on Etienne's memorial garden. I want it to be ready for a Memorial Day picnic. I think about him each time I plant something. When I'm at the nursery, some plants "speak" to me of him. It's almost like I hear him saying, "Get the purple ones, Mom!"

One of our bereaved fathers proudly pointed out his daughter's memorial garden. Many friends and neighbors had contributed trees and plants in memory of his daughter. This was very meaningful to them, and must have given him a wonderful feeling of support at such a lonely, trying time.

If you have scattered the ashes of your child in the mountains, this might be a good time to take flowers to the spot, or to light incense or simply to be... quietly remembering.

Each Memorial Day, one bereaved family makes a wreath together. They go out on the Sound, where the ashes were scattered, and release the wreath. That evening they share their tears and memories.

The point is that remembering your own hero on Memorial Day, in your own way, can be very beautiful, and useful.

Participating in memorial rituals can provide a warm fuzzy tool for processing different aspects of your grief, which often leads to the realization that, even in grief, you can choose your own destiny. The love you have for your child is empowering. Spring can be difficult, and memorials, and rituals created especially for your child can welcome the season and help you to cope.

Love is for always. Through our memories and expressions of love, our children live on. No matter what the season is, in our hearts, they are immortal.

Lois Enger  
TCF Seattle, WA



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
Vince Pardue	04/28/81

## 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
Savannah Gray	05/20/90
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

## 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

## Parent(s)

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
Ann & Van Pardue

## Parent(s)

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
Stephanie Gray
Juanita Carr
Cynthia Machen
Mary & Buddy Smith
Frances & Jim Gregory
Nancy Oliver
Tammy Thompson

## Parent(s)

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 APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Holly M. Robertson	04/01/17
Chris Pauley	04/05/95
Michael Stephens	04/05/68
Krista Corrent	04/08/00
Pamela Ford	04/10/04
Tara Webber	04/10/22
Martha Mickel	04/13/84
Pamela Wimbish	04/14/16
Danny Morgan	04/18/16
Michael Johns	04/19/06
Jeffrey Moore	04/19/22
Courtney Cole	04/22/12
Mickey Loflin	04/23/73
Joe David Williams	04/24/18
Anne Barham	04/25/91

## OUR CHILDREN'S MAY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Mickey Loflin	05/10/05
Ashley Loflin	05/10/06
Shontavious Foster	05/12/13
Ethan Massey-Rydi	05/13/10
Lisa Giovingo	05/15/15
Leigh Ann White	05/15/05
Barry Kirby	05/18/13
Lance Thomas	05/18/08
John Dobbs	05/21/08
Stacey Gentry Morrison	05/22/15
David Webb	05/22/05
Justin Petty	05/26/01
Kellie Falgout	05/28/02

## OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Brant Surles	06/10/19
Melissa Blankenship	06/13/04
Kody Spann	06/14/07
Zoe Simpson	06/19/21
Terry Watson	06/21/13
Brandi Pearson	06/22/17
William Tousignant	06/27/18

## Parent(s)

Nancy & Joe Mulhearn
Sharon & Gary Pauley
Maggie & John Stephens
Anna Ruth Hill
Leona Upton
Janis & Bob Webber
Ruth Mickel
Pam Wimbish
Jeanie Morgan
Nell Book
Tammi & David Moore
Ann & Henry Cole
Katye Loflin
Dolph Williams
Pat Barham

## Parent(s)

Katye Loflin
Katye Loflin
Sarah Foster
Michelle Massey
Frances Giovingo
Janet & Ken White
Lisa Kirby
Connie & Danny Thomas
Maggy & John Dobbs
Sandy Kendrick
Paula Webb
Julie & Danny Petty
Patricia Falgout

## Parent(s)

Joy and Elvis Surles
Peaches Cathey
Cindy Spann
Katie Masters
Henrietta/Paul Watson
Layne Pearson
Gregg Tousignant

### **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