



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Oct / Nov / Dec 2021

FEELINGS

We feel sad,
For what we have lost.

We feel happy,
For what we have had.

We feel poor,
For the empty spaces.

We feel rich,
For we have each other.

We will cry,
For what we can't have.

We will laugh,
For our memories abound.

We will hurt,
For the love we can't give.

We will rejoice,
For the love we have received.

We will be restless,
For our lives are not whole.

We will be peaceful,
For we know it is not forever.

Annette Hamilton
TCF Prince George, BC

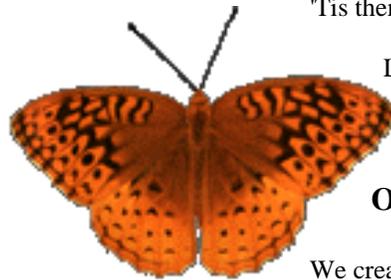
"I no longer believed that all grief was the same--that is to say, that all deaths yielded the same reaction in the grieving process. Some may disagree, but as far as I am concerned, the greatest loss any human can sustain is the death of a child."

Rev. Greg Hubbard

AUTUMN

In the fall
When amber leaves are shed,
Softly—silently
Like tears that wait to flow,
I watch and grieve.
My heart beats sadly in the fall;
'Tis then I miss you most of all.

Lily de Lauder
TCF Van Nuys, CA



OUR LOVE

We created you, With our love...
We cared for you, With our love...
We nurtured you, With our love...

We honored you, With our love...
We buried you, With our love...
We remember you, With our love.

Alice & Otto Weening
TCF Cincinnati, OH

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, October 7

Thursday, November 11

Due to the Candle Lighting Ceremony to be held Sunday, December 12, we will not have our regular monthly meeting in December.

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

THANKSGIVING

Our time together was too brief,
Your life on earth numbered in but
days.
Yet, how could I have loved you
more if I had
Held you through the seasons of your
life?
When does love begin?
For me the day you first moved within
me
Wrapped me in such warmth that it can
still keep
Out the cold as here I stand missing you
and all
That we could have shared.
Death has robbed me of your softness and of all
The dreams I had for you,
But not of my love.
Not even death can take that from me – from us.
And for that, I am thankful.

Karen Nelson
TCF Box Elder County; Brigham City, UT

RENEWED HOPE AND FAITH

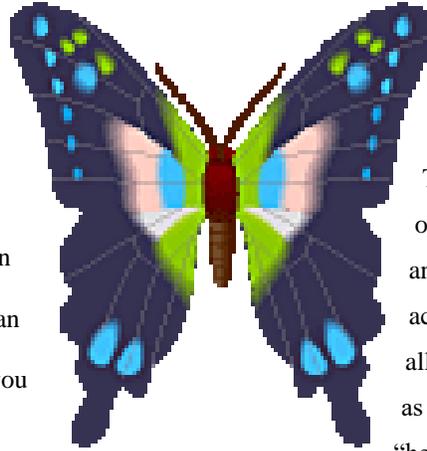
“I have cried my tears
I have asked my whys
I have mourned the future that may not be
I have planted my hope in the God who made me
He is my refuge in this storm”

Betty Stallings
In loving memory of her sweet child, David

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



WHAT IS A COMPASSIONATE FRIEND?

The dictionary definition is, “a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to help alleviate the suffering.” Friend is defined as “a supporter or sympathizer.” My “heart” definition of a compassionate friend is someone who “gets it” and never, ever forgets it. The power of a compassionate friend’s empathy in the face of the tornado of agony that is the newly bereaved parent’s life can be critical to their healing. If we, as healing bereaved parents, are willing to step in to the role of caregiver for the broken soul of another bereaved parent, it’s important not to lose touch with our pain. Not to lose touch with that kick in the stomach we felt when we first learned of our own child’s death. As our hearts heal, it can be easy to fall into the role of a teacher where we start to advise or pass judgment on how another bereaved parent grieves. If we want to help others heal, we must continue to relate to that instant that our child died. Love has undeniable power when given with a clear and pure heart, where nothing is expected in return and in a compassionate, caring way. In other words, like a compassionate friend.

Rob Anderson
Sugar Grove, IL
excerpted from Grief Digest, Vol. 2, Issue 3

TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

~for Bereaved Parents~

'Twas the month before Christmas
and I dreaded the days,
That I knew I was facing –
the holiday craze.
The stores were all filled
with holiday lights,
In hopes of drawing customers
by day and by night.

As others were making their holiday plans,
My heart was breaking - I couldn't understand.
I had lost my dear child a few years before,
And I knew what my holiday had in store.

When out of nowhere, there arose such a sound,
I sprang to my feet and was looking around,
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

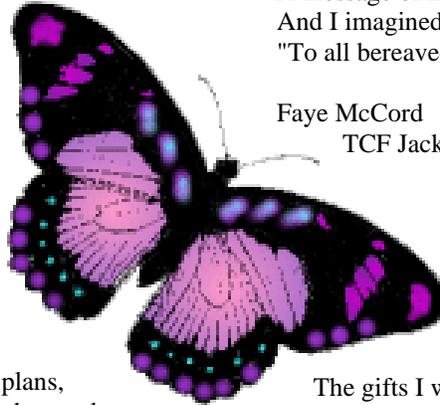
The sight that I saw took my breath away,
And my tears turned to smiles in the light of the day.
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a cluster of butterflies fluttering near.
With beauty and grace they performed a dance,
I knew in a moment this wasn't by chance.

The hope that they gave me was a sign from above,
That my child was still near me and that I was loved.
The message they brought was my holiday gift,
And I cried when I saw them in spite of myself.

As I knelt closer to get a better view,
One allowed me to pet it - as if it knew -
That I needed the touch of its fragile wings,
To help me get through the holiday scene.

In the days that followed I carried the thought,
Of the message the butterflies left in my heart -
That no matter what happens or what days lie ahead,
Our children are with us - they're not really dead.

Yes, the message of the butterflies still rings in my
ears,



A message of hope - a message so dear.
And I imagined they sang as they flew out of sight,
"To all bereaved parents - We love you tonight!"

Faye McCord
TCF Jackson, MS

GIFTS I WOULD LEAVE FOR YOU

The gifts I would leave beneath your tree
Aren't those you could touch or see.

Not wrapped in Christmas tissue gay
But a gift of life to live each day.

The gift of love, warm and true
And health your whole life through.

Smiles, and happiness, and cheer
To keep us happy through the year.

These are the gifts I'd leave for you.
Though I know your life is through

Even if my heart has no song
I feel you here to guide me on.

Jeffrey E. Meredith
Twin brother of Scott Meredith

[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

TEN TIPS FOR SURVIVING THE DIFFICULT HOLIDAYS AFTER YOUR CHILD DIES

Patricia Loder, executive director of The Compassionate Friends submitted these ideas in 2005 as a way to help families who have lost a child and are struggling with how they can simply survive to see the new year. Mrs. Loder, whose two young children died in a car crash in 1991, says there are many tips that can help a grieving family prepare for the holidays.

- 1) Plan ahead. Realize you will not be able to do everything with everyone. Decide what is truly important to you and your family.
 - 2) Don't be afraid to ask friends for help. Tasks which may normally take little effort can feel overwhelming, whether it's fixing a meal, cleaning the house, or putting up decorations.
 - 3) No one expects you to string rows and rows of lights just to prove you have the holiday spirit. If you don't feel up to past efforts, you may simply want to place an electric powered candle in your window in memory of your child.
 - 4) Just because you've hosted holiday gatherings in the past doesn't mean you're obligated to this year. Others will understand.
 - 5) After a child dies, old traditions are often left behind and new ones that incorporate the child who died can take their place. Honor the memory of your child in unique ways that have meaning to you.
 - 6) Surviving children should be included in your plans. They too mourn their sibling, but need a normalcy the holidays can provide.
 - 7) If you don't get everything done that you plan, be easy on yourself. Grief is tough work and you should never feel guilty for not getting everything done.
 - 8) If you must shop for others, find a time when the stores are not extremely busy..like early morning, order through the internet or ask others to shop for you.
 - 9) Participating in a memorial service, such as The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting, the second Sunday in December, can be very meaningful. This can be done in a formal service with others or through a short private candle lighting in the privacy of your home.
 - 10) Remember that the fearful anticipation of an approaching holiday is usually worse than the day itself.
- "Many people believe that they can escape the holidays by leaving home on a vacation," adds Mrs. Loder. "This rarely helps because grief can never be left behind and it is important to have the support of relatives and friends. Talking with others who have also lost a child can help those facing grief to understand they are not alone. Others have survived the holidays and they will too."

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS Northeast Louisiana Chapter

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Join with us as we honor the memories of our children.

In loving memory of our children who are no longer with us, The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana extends an invitation for you, your family, and friends to join us for our annual Candle Lighting Ceremony.



**When: Sunday, December 12, 2021
at 6:30 pm**

**Location: Grace Episcopal Church
1400 North 4th St. at the corner of
Glenmore Ave.**

We do this . . . that their light may always shine!

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting® is held every year on the second Sunday in December at 7pm for one hour local time in each time zone around the globe – a 24-hour wave of light in memory of all children who have died.

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 OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Jeffrey H. Crawley	10/01/68	Ruby Crawley
Melissa Perkins	10/02/84	Sherry Lucas
Martha Mikel	10/05/53	Ruth Mikel
Jennifer Hale	10/05/84	Sheila Hale
Danny Morgan	10/09/67	Jeanie Morgan
Alyssa Neitz	10/11/00	Jennifer & Joey Neitz
Brandi Pearson	10/11/72	Layne Pearson
Trent Weaver	10/11/12	Donna VanVeckhoven
Lance Thomas	10/13/87	Connie & Danny Thomas
Jeremy Barnhill	10/15/84	Kathi & Terry Barnhill
Jace Rowan	10/18/20	Jill Rowan
Deborah Smith	10/22/58	Mary & Buddy Smith
John Dobbs	10/23/89	Maggy & John Dobbs
Chris Smith	10/25/91	Roxanne Smith
Kenneth Wall	10/26/59	Beverly & Charles Wall
Stephen Dupuy	10/30/68	Polly & Butch Dupuy, Jr.
Raymond Scott	10/30/80	Pam Lavender

OUR CHILDREN'S OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Shannon Scharf	10/01/98	Robert S. Green
John Bruscato	10/05/96	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Emerson Johnson	10/05/14	Sandy Johnson
Jenna Johnson	10/05/14	Sandy Johnson
Michael Woods	10/06/12	China Woods
Jon Bowman	10/09/06	Jill Puckett
Melissa Perkins	10/09/16	Sherry Lucas
Cole Brooks Hamilton	10/08/14	Laurie & Britt Hamilton
Wendi Janway-Jones	10/09/09	Rosalyn & Tom Janway
Wendy Williams	10/15/99	Nell Williams
Hope Bruscato	10/16/98	Gene Bruscato
Brad Hairston	10/16/11	Cindy & Lee Hairston
Corey Washington	10/18/07	Gracie Washington
Wendy Williams	10/19/99	Nell Williams
Beverly & Charles Wall	10/22/05	Polly & Butch Dupuy
Fred Page	10/24/03	Gloria Roye
Aimee McIlveene	10/26/01	Rhea & Danny McIlveene
April Mizell	10/27/15	Pam Spillers

OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Joe Block Barham	11/06/78	Janie & Andy Barham
Ben Brubaker	11/09/75	Jena & Ron Brubaker
David Moore	11/12/58	Barbara Moore
Gavin Simmons	11/12/01	Jennifer & John Shamblin
Brady Hairston	11/16/96	Cindy & Lee Hairston
Tonya Bell	11/21/97	Ann Smith
Justin Walker	11/22/85	Beverly Walker
Dustin Allbritton	11/22/78	Linda & Ronnie Allbritton
Corey Hayman	11/23/77	Linda & William Hayman
Autumn Henderson	11/27/82	Janet & Daniel Wyatt

OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Stephen Smith	11/07/99	Marilyn & French Smith
Jeffrey H. Crawley	11/08/16	Ruby Crawley
Jason Farrell	11/09/02	Sandra Garrett
Bo Best	11/09/07	Charlene & Steve Best
Michael Moreau	11/12/13	Bonnie & Ron Nay
Austin Thames	11/12/17	Kim Thames
Tytianna Jenkins	11/16/11	Beverly Jenkins
Joe Block Barham	11/19/03	Janie & Andy Barham
Justice Farrar	11/21/16	Martha Anderson
Kerry Alex	11/24/14	Regina Kenney

OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Luke Letlow	12/06/79	Dianne & Johnny Letlow
Trey Watson	12/09/70	Henrietta/Paul Watson
Michael Hollier	12/12/66	Lyn Hollier
Wendy Williams	12/12/53	Nell Williams
Janey Knight	12/16/59	Sandy Casteel
Brandon McGehee	12/16/77	Teddi & James McGehee
Carl Alexander	12/18/63	Valerie & Billy Matejowsky
Brittany Braxton	12/21/85	Ursula Braxton
Brian Perry	12/25/72	Clara & Don Perry
Kerry Alex	12/28/61	Joseph Alex
Krista Corrent	12/28/64	Anna Ruth Hill
Cedrick Hotard	12/31/74	Sharon & Steven Hotard

OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Rodney Hubbard	12/08/15	Claudine Vega
Katie Joyce	12/08/15	Kathryn & Jeff Joyce
Justin Walker	12/12/03	Beverly Walker
Kelly Chapman	12/19/10	Judy & Bennie Chapman
Autumn Henderson	12/20/10	Janet & Daniel Wyatt
McKenzie Hudson	12/23/14	Danya Hudson
Jennifer Hale	12/23/12	Sheila Hale
Michelle Putman	12/24/10	Gaye Laing
Randy Foote	12/27/16	Linda Foote
Robby Jenkins	12/27/16	Beverly Jenkins
Norman Craig	12/28/02	Pat Craig
Luke Letlow	12/29/20	Dianne & Johnny Letlow
Ben Brubaker	12/30/13	Jena & Ron Brubaker

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