

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NEW MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. Box 8283 • Hermitage, TN 37076 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823) •

Nashville Website: [www.tcfnashville.org](http://www.tcfnashville.org)



Chapter Leaders: Justin and Tracy Brewer, (615) 812-1504, e-mail: [tbrewer395@gmail.com](mailto:tbrewer395@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Melanie Bell, (615) 513-5913, email: [melaniebell2210@gmail.com](mailto:melaniebell2210@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Ed Pyle, (615) 712-3245, email: [edpyletaxlaw@gmail.com](mailto:edpyletaxlaw@gmail.com)

Regional Coordinators: Polly Moore, (931) 962-0458, email: [lolly39@aol.com](mailto:lolly39@aol.com)

Dana Young (931) 581-7090

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 P.M. on the second Sunday of each month at the ABC (Associated Builders and Contractors of Greater Tennessee) Building, 560 Royal Parkway, Nashville, TN 37214 (**SEE NEW MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE**).

We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

## Candlelight Memorial Service

December 10, 2023— 3:00 p.m.

(Please arrive by 2:30)



All family members are cordially invited to join us  
as we honor our children during this  
beautiful candlelight service.

Following the service, we invite you to remain for fellowship and refreshments.  
If you wish, you may bring a dessert, but other finger foods and drinks will be provided.

The birthday table will be set up for all who wish to share their child's December birthday,  
or if you'd prefer, you may do so in January.

**Information and Photo Submission Form are on Page 7.**

**PHOTO SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Friday, December 1.**

The service will be held at Citipointe Church, 7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211. The location is off Nolensville Road (Highway 31A) about a mile south of where Bell Road (Old Hickory Boulevard) crosses Nolensville Road.



May the memories of this season  
Come on gentle wings  
To bring you love and peace.

**ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM--****In the month of their births**

**Taylor Nicole Barton**  
December 2  
Daughter of  
Alan Barton  
and Stella Stephens

**Matthew Lance Chitwood**  
December 10  
Son of  
Jim and Connie Chitwood  
Grandson of Margaret  
Chitwood-Watkins  
Brother of Clayton

**Clayton Lee Chitwood**  
December 28  
Son of  
Jim and Connie Chitwood  
Grandson of Margaret  
Chitwood-Watkins  
Brother of Matthew

**Alex Stephen Cook**  
December 26  
Son of  
Jean Cook

**Taylor Martin Davies**  
December 14  
Son of  
Roy and Barbara Davies

**Nigel James Duke**  
December 8  
Son of  
Fred and Latresa Duke

**Susan Edwards**  
December 27  
Daughter-in-Law of Charles  
and Ruth Edwards

**Darby Felts**  
December 10  
Son of  
Deanie Gregory  
Nephew of Jean Porch

**Tristan Ray Fillpot**  
December 9  
Son of  
Lorenzo and Floy Wilson

**Chad Flatt**  
December 7  
Son of  
James and Ann Flatt

**Jennifer Lee Friedmann  
(Jena)**  
December 25  
Daughter of John and  
Mignon Friedmann  
Sister of  
Dr. John Friedmann

**Daniel Lee Henson**  
December 13  
Son of  
Ronnie and Darlene Henson

**Briana Leigh Kulesza**  
December 5  
Daughter of  
Larry and Donna Kulesza

**Jeremy Seth Lunceford**  
December 15  
Son of  
Jane Lunceford  
Brother of Aubrey, Shelby  
and Brittney

**Lindsay Carole Miller**  
December 19  
Daughter of  
David and Rebecca Miller  
Granddaughter of  
Roy and Carole Renfro

**Arianna Marie Mitchell**  
December 27  
Daughter of  
Christopher Mitchell and  
Heather Evans  
Granddaughter of  
Frank and Brenda Nelson

**Lauren Paige Moore**  
December 30  
Daughter of  
Mac and Polly Moore  
Sister of Darrell and Paul

**Brooke Jasmine Murphy**  
December 14  
Daughter of  
Elaine Murphy

**Michael Stanley Overcash**  
December 6  
Son of  
Mike and Jean Overcash  
Brother of Kim and Steve

**Philip G. Sanders**  
December 8  
Son of  
Jean Porch  
Nephew of Deanie Gregory

**Kevin Tolentino**  
December 30  
Son of Sarah Tolentino



*The holiest of all holidays are kept by  
ourselves in silence and apart—  
the secret anniversaries of the heart.*

Longfellow

## And in the month of their deaths



**Evangeline Anacker**  
December 8  
Daughter of  
Brooks and Griselle  
Anacker

**Elizabeth Osborn Cheek**  
December 9  
Daughter of  
Ross and Libby Cheek

**Clayton Lee Chitwood**  
December 28  
Son of  
Jim and Connie Chitwood  
Grandson of  
Margaret  
Chitwood-Watkins  
Brother of Matthew

**John Calister Davidson  
(Buddy)**  
December 11  
Son of  
Steve and Telese Davidson

**Nigel James Duke**  
December 25  
Son of  
Fred and Latresa Duke

**Roy Paul Ellis**  
December 14  
Son of  
April Ellis

**Jared Ensley**  
December 26  
Grandson of  
V.G and Karen Banta  
Son of  
Tim and Ann Banta

**Benjamin David Hardesty**  
December 23  
Son of  
Theresa Hardesty Heimer

**Robert Jason Heflin  
(Jason)**  
December 31  
Son of  
Eddie and Kay Heflin

**Joshua Allen Kebert**  
December 15  
Son of  
Greg Kebert and  
Susan Whitaker

**Kyle Edward Kemper**  
December 17  
Son of  
Vanessa and Edward  
Kemper

**Abigail Rhea Little  
(Abbie)**  
December 6  
Daughter of  
Rhea and Marie Little

**Robert Bryan Parrish  
(Bryan)**  
December 12  
Son of  
Marvin and Debbie  
Hampton

**Mark Elliott Reischman**  
December 23  
Son of  
Bill and Jean Reischman

**Jacob Federman Smiley**  
December 9  
Son of  
Troy and Susan Smiley  
Brother of Rachel

**Daniel Wayne Vick**  
December 14  
Son of  
Wayne and Marsha Vick

**Janessa Dian Wellman**  
December 19  
Daughter of  
Timothy and Debra Pharris  
Granddaughter of  
Glen and Dian Wellman

**Hunter Cole White**  
December 8  
Son of  
Ronnie White and  
Stephanie Carpenter

**Heather Ann Willis**  
December 13  
Daughter of  
Tom and Margaret Loose

*Each month, Price Printing, 615 360-3339, donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF. Deanna Brown and her family assemble, label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of her son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate so much these people and their generosity to all of us.*

*When we are deep in despair,  
we must choose to expect a twinkle of hope.*

Pamela Hagens  
TCF, Nashville, TN

## GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE

*We are deeply grateful for the voluntary gifts of love that make it possible for The Compassionate Friends to offer comfort to those families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.*

*Don and Sherry Eakes  
in Loving Memory  
of their grandson,  
Taylor Christian Brewer,  
son of Justin and Tracy Brewer*

*Linda Black  
in Loving Memory  
of her son,  
Christopher William Black*

*Marsha Vick  
in Loving Memory of  
Daniel Vick,  
son of Marsha and Wayne Vick*

*John and Mignon Friedmann,  
Dr. John Friedmann Jr.  
in Loving Memory of  
their daughter and sister,  
Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena)*

*Jerry and Loretta Winters  
in Loving Memory  
of their son,  
Don Bruce Winters*

*Mike and Jean Overcash,  
Kim and Steve Stanford  
in Loving Memory  
of their son and brother,  
Michael Stanley Overcash*

*Robert and Cynthia Daugherty  
in Loving Memory  
of their granddaughter,  
Laura Abigail "Abby" Czirr,  
daughter of  
Steve and Paige Czirr*

*Shirley Rich-Brinegar  
in Loving Memory  
of her son,  
Bert Rich*

*Roger and Deborah Wiseman  
in Loving Memory  
of their son,  
Ryan Lee Wiseman*

*John and Betsy Koomen  
in Loving Memory  
of their son,  
Benjamin Bedell Koomen*

*Margaret Chitwood-Watkins  
in Loving Memory  
of her grandsons,  
Clayton Lee Chitwood and  
Matthew Lance Chitwood,  
Sons of  
Jim and Connie Chitwood*



### *Presents for Me*

*A hot cup of tea on a cold afternoon,  
shared with a friend in a warm sunny room.  
A new pair of slippers all snugly and warm,  
the old ones were faded and tattered and torn.  
A call to a friend when there's shopping to do,  
someone to talk to and see the job through.  
A quick walk 'round the block when feeling forlorn,  
all empty and barren like a picked field of corn.  
I'll do something for me,  
one small thing each day,  
until I get used to your being away.*

Karen Howard  
excerpted from Handling the Holidays

### *Hope*

*It is the gift of hope which reigns supreme  
in the attributes of  
The Compassionate Friends.  
Hope that all is not lost.  
Hope that life can still be worth living and meaningful.  
Hope that the pain of loss will become less acute  
and, above all else,  
the hope that we do not walk alone,  
that we are understood.  
The gift of hope is the greatest gift  
that we can give to those who mourn.*

Reverend Simon Stephens  
TCF Founder

## Helping Yourself Through the Holidays

The stores and malls are already filled with many of the signs and sounds of the holidays. Each year the frenzies of buying and selling seem to begin earlier and earlier. The merchants want to get as much as possible out of this time of the year so the world is bombarded with the “sights and sounds” of the season.

Most individuals look forward with a certain amount of anticipation to Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas. The one who has lost a sibling or a child this past year or even years before looks to this time of the year with great dread and even fear.

They wish, in a way, that they could go to bed on November 1 and wake up on January 2 of the next year.

The first holidays after the death of a loved one may be especially difficult for the survivors. If you or someone you know is facing the holiday season and dreading feelings of emptiness, there are a number of things you can do to cope. Don't be afraid to grieve if you need to and set aside time to be alone if you want. You can also relive the happy memories by talking about your loved one to those who care.

It has been suggested that people do what they want to do, whether that means staying home, going to religious services or visiting family or friends. If you seem to enjoy this time or a special event, don't feel guilty. Experiencing joy is giving and receiving. This doesn't mean that you have forgotten your child or sibling or that you loved him or her any less.

The griever enters this time of the year with a number of questions about their grief. They have a number of fears and concerns. Let's look at some of them so we can get a better understanding of what the griever sees in most cases:

First, there is the anticipation of the pain of the holidays—the pain of facing “the first” holiday without that very special child or sibling. Then there is the fear and pain of other people being happy and joyous when you are not and are very alone. We live in a family society and while everyone else will be with family, you will be alone or missing a family member!

Solution—Try to plan ahead to be with someone and spend the day or a few days with those you love. Don't make it a taboo to talk about your loved one and balance your time with others with some time alone for yourself.



Second, the fear of preparation for the holidays, Grief is very tiring and taxing. It drains those who are grieving. The holidays are also a very busy and tiring time, as we all know. The sending of cards, the buying, wrapping, cooking and giving of gifts. The holiday parties and even the special holiday music and programs seem to make the griever not have any energy at all. They want to be alone and not be involved.

Solution—No one says that you have to do any of those things. If it makes you feel good to cook and bake and buy, do so—if it doesn't, don't. Don't allow others to put you into their mold.

If you decide to do things, make a plan and work it. Send out a few cards a day, buy a gift at a time, not all at once. Pace yourself—don't overdo it! It is most important that you don't impose things on yourself that you can't do.

You might want to use special ways to memorialize your loved one.

Suggestions may be:

- Give a gift in memory of your child, brother or sister.
- Attend a special memorial service and pay respect to those you love and miss.
- Make a special ornament and hang it on a tree in memory of your loved one.
- Do for others and it will make you feel good.
- Organize your shopping with a specific list and a budget.
- Divide responsibilities for meals, decorating or wrapping with your family.
- Take time for others—Contact your local churches or charities for information about serving food to the homeless or collecting gifts for needy children. This may be especially helpful if you're away from loved ones during the holidays.
- Take time for yourself—Enjoy the holiday season as best you can. The purpose of the season is to create happiness. And if you are happy, those around you will be, too!
- Be careful of “shoulds”—it is better to do what is most helpful for you and your family. If a situation looks especially difficult over the holidays, try not to get involved.

And don't forget: *Anticipation of any holiday is so much worse than the actual holiday.*

Keep a balance in your life and remember that you are loved.  
Lee Drake, Ph. D.  
From TCF National Newsletter  
1997 Holiday Issue

*I leave you the will to fight; the desire to live; the right to anger, to love...to joy,  
to transform silence into language and action. I leave you a litany for survival.*

Audre Lorde



**T**he 25th Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held this year on Sunday, December 10, 2023. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of the children. This is a very special and moving event, when bereaved families join together from around the world in memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 25th Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, it has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

## River of Light

*A river of light, flowing east to west  
lingering an hour then moving on.  
Like the children, here too short a time,  
lighting our lives, then too soon gone.*

*Gathering together, being here for each other  
on one special night this time each year.  
We light the candles with pride and sorrow  
reminding the world, they once were here.*



*They live on in us, the living,  
who hoard their memories like solid gold.  
To have them back for just one minute  
we would give a thousand fold.*

*Tonight we say they are loved,  
they're remembered, and they will always be.  
Like candle flames they warm our souls  
and light our lives and help us see.*

*A river of light, flowing east to west  
lingering an hour, then moving on.  
Like the children here too short a time,  
lighting our lives...then...gone.*

From *Catching the Light – Coming Back to Life after the Death of a Child*  
by Genesse Bourdeau Gentry

## Oh, How Beautiful!

**A**s twinkling lights begin to appear in December, I remember a particular occasion when our family was returning home from a holiday gathering. The hour was late, the sky pitch black and our three children were quiet and motionless in the back seat.

In the distance, I noticed a glowing dome of light above the treetops. Wondering out loud, I whispered, “What is that?” In a rural area there were no towns close by large enough to radiate such light, and the few houses we passed were mostly dark. It wasn’t until we rounded a curve that my question was answered.

It was a cemetery, alight with luminaries at each grave. As I stared in stunned amazement, our eight-year-old daughter, Lauren, gasped from the back seat, “Oh, how beautiful!” I was speechless. She was too young and innocent to realize the sorrow and sadness a cemetery holds...especially during the holidays, when families feel ever deeper their loved one’s absence. We rode home in silence, her words echoing inside my head.

Twelve months later, I knelt at dusk to light the luminary that sat beside our Lauren’s grave in that very same cemetery.

It has taken some time, but I have found the words I lacked that evening so long ago. Now when I round the curve this time of year, see that soft glow and hear Lauren exclaiming, “Oh, how beautiful!” I say, “Yes, Lauren, yes it is.”

## Holiday Gifts for Children Needed

Every year for the past 16 years TCF Nashville families have generously donated toys and gifts to the children of Youth Villages in Middle Tennessee, an organization that works with children who are not living at home and are in foster care for the holidays. The children range in age from 6 to 18. For many of these children, these will be the only gifts they receive this holiday season. **If you would like to help this year, you may participate by bringing new UNWRAPPED gifts to The Compassionate Friends December 10 Candlelight Memorial Service. Below is a list of the most requested items.**

### Suggested gifts include:

Art Supplies and Craft Kits	Board Games (Monopoly, Life, Mouse Trap, Jenga, Uno etc.)	Nail Kits and Polish
DVD's (rated G, PG or PG-13)	Barbie Dolls & Accessories for Barbie	Action Figures / Superheroes Toys
Xbox / Play Station Games (Teen Rated)	Matchbox or Hot Wheels car sets	Jewelry and Hair Accessories
Remote Control Cars, Trucks or Planes	Lego Sets	Sports Equipment, Balls etc.
Journals, gel pens		Young Adult Books

Here are alternative ways to give to Youth Villages if you prefer not to bring a gift to the Candlelight Memorial Service:

- Make a monetary donation of any amount online by going to the website for Youth Villages Middle Tennessee.
- Be a Holiday Hero by signing up to sponsor a specific child. As a Hero you will receive a specific child's wish list (ages newborn to 23), shop for their gifts and return them unwrapped to Youth Villages' Nashville collection site. The amount to be spent on each child is \$150 to \$200. To be a Holiday Hero to a child in need, please contact Greg Schott at (615) 250-7262 or email [greg.schott@youthvillages.org](mailto:greg.schott@youthvillages.org).
- Purchase gifts from the suggestions above to be given to children who come into Youth Villages programs during the last two weeks before Christmas. Drop off your gifts in person at 301 Plus Park Blvd, Suite 110, Nashville, TN 37217.



## CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 10, 2023

Regardless of past participation, **EVERY FAMILY WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THE MEMORIAL SERVICE MUST RETURN THIS FORM.**

**We need to receive it no later than Friday, December 1.**

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND FORMS OR PHOTOS TO THE TCF P. O. BOX—it is important that they go directly to Lamar.**

**MAIL TO:**  
**Lamar Bradley**  
**4772 Cascade Drive**  
**Old Hickory, TN 37138**  
**or**

**You may e-mail your child's photo to [lamar.bradley@comcast.net](mailto:lamar.bradley@comcast.net)**  
**Be sure to include your child's name in the e-mail.**

**Instructions:** A computerized process (Power Point) is used to display our children's pictures on the big screen. An original 5x7 photo (no copies, please) may be used. If a 5x7 is not available, any size will do; however, the 5x7 or larger is easier to process.

The original photo will be returned to you at the memorial service while the image will be stored for use next year.

**Place a sticky note on the back of the photo with the child's name clearly printed. Do not write on the photo itself.**

**Child's name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Please print the name as you wish it to be read at the service along with phonetic pronunciation, if needed.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and am enclosing an original photo of my child. (First time in the memorial service.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and am enclosing a different photo of my child to be used in place of the photo you have from last year's service.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and would like for you to use the photo you have saved from last year.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and would like for my child's name to be called and I'll light a candle, but I will not have a picture shown.

**Your name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

# *The Compassionate Friends*

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Nashville, TN  
Permit No. 593

P.O. BOX 8283

Hermitage, TN

37076

Return Service  
Requested



December 2023

## *Today*

*Today's the day when we first met.  
I couldn't know then  
How much you would mean to me  
And how soon it would end.*

*Today's the day  
we walked to school  
In the stroller, on my back  
Then hand in hand we went.*

*Today's the day we built our house,  
In mounds of dirt you played.  
Your sister ever at your side  
With this our house was made.*

*Today's the day we took a walk,  
A fine fall day it was.  
We saw a dam,  
We spoke of trees,  
Of this are memories made.*

*Today's the day you won the race  
How proud was I of you?  
To you this wasn't so much fun,  
The spotlight not a thrill.*

*Today's the day you went to prom,  
Your smile brighter than the sun  
I felt the love between you two  
And knew that all was well.*

*Today's the day I walked with you  
Down the aisle one last time  
I held you in my arms and cried  
Your story just begun.*

*Today's the day I grieve for you  
Until the day is done.  
Tomorrow I will rise again  
And miss you till I'm gone.*

Stephen Aud  
TCF, Nashville, TN