

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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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 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 8, 2024— 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, November 30.

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**

Katherine Noel Holmes
Anthony
 December 21
 Daughter of
 Micki Holmes

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

Alex Morgan
 December 1
 Son of
 Karen Bloch

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

Brooke Jasmine Murphy
 December 14
 Daughter of
 Elaine Murphy

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

Kevin Tolentino
 December 30
 Son of
 Sarah Tolentino

**A Love Song**

*The mention of my child's name may bring tears to my eyes
 But it never fails to bring music to my ears.*

*If you really are my friend, please don't keep me
 from hearing the beautiful music.
 It soothes my broken heart and fills my soul with love.*



And in the month of their deaths, we remember them-

Evangeline Anacker
December 8
Daughter of
Brooks and Griselle
Anacker

Katherine Noel Holmes
Anthony
December 5
Daughter of
Micki Holmes

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

Jaden A. Clark
December 11
Son of
Tricia Clark

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

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

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

Benjamin David Hardesty
December 23
Son of
Theresa Hardesty Heimer

Kyle Edward Kemper
December 17
Son of
Vanessa and Edward
Kemper

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

Mack Lewis Page
December 23
Son of
Michael Page

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

Mark Elliott Reischman
December 23
Son of
Bill and Jean Reischman

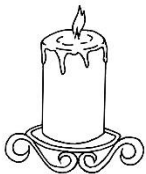
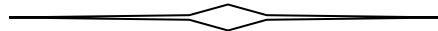
Jacob Federman Smiley
December 9
Son of
Troy and Susan Smiley
Brother of Rachel

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



Heather Ann Willis
December 13
Daughter of
Tom and Margaret Loose



WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit on December 8th, 2024 at 7:00 pm local time, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL), 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. TCF's WCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance and has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance.

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.

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

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

*Martha Davenport
in Loving Memory
of her granddaughter,
Lauren Kristina O'Saile*

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

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

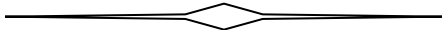
*Marsha Vick
in Loving Memory
of Daniel Vick,
son of
Marsha and Wayne Vick*

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

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

*Deanie Gregory
in Loving Memory
of her son,
Darby Felts
and her nephew,
Phillip Sanders*

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.



*You once did something for me
more meaningful
than the greatest of deeds;
you held me in your arms
and let me cry."*

Bonnie Jison
TCF Topeka, KS



Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can't reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

- Accidental Death**Mike and Paula Childers
615-294-4959
- Illness**..... David and Peggy Gibson
615-308-2520 or 615-504-4307
- Infant**..... Jayne Head
615-264-8184
- SIDS**.....Kris Thompson
931-486-9088
- Suicide**.....Ron Henson
615-789-3613
- Alcohol/Drug Overdose**.....Ed Pyle
615-712-3245

Little Boy Blue

*The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair,
And that was the time when our Little Boy
Blue Kissed them and put them there.*

*“Now, don’t you go till I come,” he said,
“And don’t you make any noise!”
So, toddling off to his trundle-bed
He dreamt of the pretty toys.*

*And as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue —
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true!*

*Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place —
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face.
And they wonder, as waiting the long years
through
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue
Since he kissed them and put them there.*

Eugene Field
(1850-1895)

(Ed. note: This old favorite was submitted in 1999 by our faithful TCF Nashville member, Lamar Bradley, whose own “Little Boy Blue,” Christopher, was almost five years old at the time of his death in 1992. In his attached note, Lamar says: “We still have boxes of Christopher’s toys that the girls and I boxed up when Christopher died. It is still difficult to go through them.... Bereaved parents can relate.”)

The Letter

It was almost Christmas, but there was no feeling of joy in Marian’s home. She remembered other Christmases when there had been. That was when Daddy had come home from his work in the dead letter section of the post office with a happy smile on his face as he greeted her, her little brother, and Mummie. All of this was before her little brother suddenly become sick and then quickly died before anyone could help him. It seemed to Marian that, in a way, her daddy had died too, because he never smiled anymore nor told her stories, nor greeted her with a hug and a kiss. He didn’t seem to care whether she and Mummie were even around. It wasn’t easy to write such an important letter all by herself. When it was finished, Marian addressed it to the North Pole and posted it in the corner mailbox. The letter said:

*Dear Santa Claus,
We are sad at our house. My little brother went to heaven last spring. You needn’t mind leaving me anything, but if you could, give Daddy something that would make him like he used to be. I so wish you would. I heard him say to Mummie that only eternity could cure him. Could you bring him some of that?*

*Love,
Marian*

It was more than a coincidence that the letter reached the dead letter desk of Marian’s father instead of being checked by some other man in the department.

Late that day when Daddy came home, it was almost as if Christmas had already come to their home, for as he opened the door, there was a wide smile on his face. He paused for just a moment, then opened his arms wide, just as he used to do and took both Mummie and Marian into them.

A true story retold by Lucile C. Reading
The Children’s Friend (1970)

Where Did The Sugar Plums Go?

Mary Cleckley
TCF, Atlanta, GA



It is your first Christmas or Hanukkah without your child (or maybe even your second but seems like your first) and you are finding the traditions that once brought comfort and joy, you now approach with a dreadful anticipation. It is overpowering. Visions of sugar plums no longer “dance in your head.” Having just gotten past Thanksgiving, Christmas comes roaring in on the back of magic reindeer, complete with holly, mistletoe and silver bells, cloaked in a costume of red and green. The air is heavy with music that follows you everywhere. There seems no way to escape it. It intrudes on your grief, causing your pain to intensify and making your loss seem more poignant. Can you cope, you wonder? Will you survive this special family-oriented time when one of your blessings is missing?

Well, you can and will survive. Like those of us who have observed other holiday seasons without our child or children, you will need to make choices about the best way for you and your surviving family to observe this first one. Please know there are no rules about what your choice must be. Run away and ignore it all, stay home but alter your routine, go about observing it as you always have, or anything in between that seems the most comfortable way for your family. Talk it over with them. Get input from each and every one and try to accommodate as many needs as you can. This takes flexibility, but a caring family can work it out.

If I tell you it will be easier in the coming year, will you believe me? I hope so, because it’s true. I won’t tell you it will be the same as it once was, but there is a lot of space between where you are now and where you used to be in celebrating the holidays. You will use the coming years to find a more comfortable spot within that space.

Don’t be afraid of your emotions. They’re normal for what you are going through. Feel what you must, looking ahead with a justifiable hope for better days.

Instead of wishing you Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah or Happy New Year, I wish that we all will be able to have the visions that now dance in our heads become more peaceful ones in the coming year.

IF

*If I can concentrate
on the moral and spiritual
aid of the holidays.*

*If I can absorb
the love and warmth
that was the beginnings
I can give love back.*

*If I can share
the grief and the love
that is in me
through these holidays*

I can start a new year.

Tom Spray,
Semi Valley, CA

In Memory of Eric

*Another Christmas here and gone,
Another Holiday without you.
Time passes slowly from year to year,
Yet it seems only yesterday you were here.*

*Our life goes on, but not as before.
You touched our lives and hearts
In a way that only you could.
Yes, Christmas would have been better
If only you were there to share,*

*But each year gets a little easier to bear.
You gave us so much love while you were here
That it spills over on us still.
That’s what keeps us going year after year.*

Charmaine Myers,
TCF Southwestern, WI

Holiday Gifts for Children Needed

Every year for the past 18 years TCF Nashville families have generously donated toys and gifts to the children of Youth Villages in Middle Tennessee 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 8 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 average amount to be spent on each child is \$150. To be a Holiday Hero to a child in need, please contact Greg Schott at (615) 250-7262 or email 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 8, 2024

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 Saturday, November 30.

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 lamarbradley1951@gmail.com

Be sure to include your child's name in the e-mail.

Instructions: A computerized process (PowerPoint) 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 2024

Progress Handling Christmas

It was the third holiday season after my son died and I was not yet sure what kind of Christmas it was going to be for me. As I stood in a department store line waiting to pick up a package, behind me in line, two women, strangers to each other, struck up a conversation having to do with the usual complaints that surface around the holiday season.

Each laden with packages, the two women began complaining (but not really) about how much too long their children's lists were, as usual. They compared how hard it had been to find "it" - whatever the in thing was for boys and girls that season, about how tired they were, and about how different it was going to be next year. Their complaints were superficial, and you knew next year would be no different, as they went about trying to fulfill as many dreams as possible.

Had this been the year before, or the one before that, these mothers would probably have regretted being in line behind me, for I would have had a need to punish them for their innocence and good luck, to remind them, unnecessarily, I'm sure, how fortunate they were to have their children alive to buy for. I would have made them feel guilty for having done some good-natured complaining. Instead, this year I realized, as I listened quietly, that although I envied them their innocence and complacency, I had no need to punish them for my misfortune. Can you see how far I had come in a year? Some of my anger and frustration had subsided, and I didn't need to punish.

As I left, I wished them both a Merry Christmas and silently thanked them for helping me to discover what kind of Christmas it was going to be for me. I had made progress, but it had taken a year and this particular scenario for me to be able to judge it. I still missed my boy, but I was getting better.

If you don't have any progress to recognize this year, maybe next year?? I hope so.

Mary Cleckley
TCF Atlanta, CA