

# 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 temporarily in the Citipointe Church, 7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211 (See Mailing address above.) Park and enter at the rear of the building. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

**February 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting to be held in our new temporary meeting place:**  
**Citipointe Church,**  
**7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211**

## February Program: What's In A Name?

As grieving parents, we know that the precious sound of our child's name is balm to the heart. As the birth of your child drew nigh, you probably gave careful consideration to choosing this great gift: his or her given name.

This month, our program will consist of an open-mic session allowing you a chance to share the choosing of your child's name and maybe a quick story of how it affected their life, short though it was. This program will give life to our memories through sharing and help us know each other's children a little better.

Please join us for this program and our regular sharing tables to follow.



**Announcing:**  
**TCF 45<sup>th</sup> National Conference**  
**Houston, Texas**  
**August 5-7, 2022**  
**Marriot Marquis**  
**1777 Walker Street**

### 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 615-646-1333

**Suicide**...Ron Henson 615-789-3613

**Alcohol/Drug Overdose**...Ed Pyle 615-712-3245

**SIDS**...Kris Thompson 931-486-9088

**AIDS**...Joyce Soward 615-754-5210

**Illness**...David and Peggy Gibson 615-356-1351

Attending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group, offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. We need not walk alone.



*We remember our children with love and gratitude. We miss their faces,  
their voices and their smiles. And we do not forget--*

***In the month of their births—***

**Brock Wyatt Blick**  
February 8  
Son of  
Mark and Jeri Blick  
Grandson of  
Jerry and Bonnie Buckner

**Marcus Dean Lynn Brown**  
February 7  
Son of  
Ricky Brown and  
Deanna Brown

**Logan Stratton Brumit**  
February 24  
Son of  
Charles and Kathy Brumit

**Elizabeth Osborn Cheek**  
February 8  
Daughter of  
Ross and Libby Cheek

**Baby Edward Elberson**  
February 28  
Son of  
Harry and Winnie Elberson

**Abigail Rhea Little (Abbie)**  
February 12  
Daughter of  
Rhea and Marie Little

**Heather Marie Robinson**  
February 7  
Daughter of Carol Green

**Tony Scott**  
February 18  
Son of  
Eldon and Margi Scott



**Thomas Clayton Walker**  
February 8  
Son of Jeffrey and Jeanne  
Bradford and Jerry Walker

**Heather Ann Willis**  
February 26  
Daughter of  
Tom and Margaret Loose

***And in the month of their deaths***

**Glenn Thomas Allen, Jr.**  
**(Tommy)**  
February 7  
Son of Ann McKee  
Step-son of Wilson McKee

**Taylor Christian Brewer**  
February 11  
Son of Justin and Tracy Brewer  
Grandson of  
Don and Sherry Eakes and  
Penny Waters

**Charles Michael Brown**  
**(Charlie)**  
February 7  
Son of Dan and June Brown  
Brother of Katherine



**Marcus Dean Lynn Brown**  
February 7  
Son of  
Ricky Brown and Deanna Brown

**Kelsee Nicole Corbitt**  
**(Princess)**  
February 7  
Granddaughter of  
Cheryl Carney

**Baby Edward Elberson**  
February 28  
Son of  
Harry and Winnie Elberson

**Mark Bwyane French**  
February 15  
Son of Jennie Reeves

**Paula Lynn Groves Griffin**  
February 15  
Daughter of Sue Cooper  
Step-daughter of Jim Cooper

**Arianna Marie Mitchell**  
February 19  
Daughter of  
Chris Mitchell and  
Heather Evans  
Granddaughter of  
Frank and Brenda Nelson

**Keith Pringle**  
February 2  
Son of  
Jim and Margaret Pringle

**Gregg Alan Swayze**  
February 10  
Son of  
Michael Swayze and  
Carole Swayze

**Joseph Tanner Wray**  
February 23  
Son of  
Bobby and Amy Schisler  
and Keith Wray

***Heavenly Snow***

*I thought you might like to know  
And I have it on good authority,  
That in heaven there is snow.  
God, Himself, ordered it to be.  
Snow swept by gentle winds,  
That drifts by the stirring,  
Of gossamer angels' wings,  
That sound like kittens purring.  
Snow forever crystal clean,  
Just waiting to be molded  
By little angel hands unseen  
By those whose arms they once enfolded.  
Snow angels are a common sight*



*And snowmen of every size...  
They're all there beyond the light,  
Where nothing ever dies.  
Where our angels play,  
There is no pain or tears.  
Only joy fills their days,  
Only laughter fills their ears.  
High above the azure skies  
A glorious wonderland gleams.  
This beautiful Heavenly spot...  
Created to fulfill our angels' dreams.*

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux  
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## 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.

*Barbara Davies  
Through Nationwide  
Workplace Giving Program  
In loving memory of  
her stepsons,  
Roy James Davies and  
Taylor Davies  
Sons of Roy Davies*



*Barbara Chazen  
In loving memory of  
her son,  
Geoffrey Chazen*

*Fred and Latresa Duke  
In loving memory of  
their son,  
Nigel James Duke*

*Don and Sherry Eakes  
In loving memory of  
their grandson,  
Taylor Christian Brewer  
Son of  
Justin and Tracy Brewer*

*Green Family Charitable Fund*

*Received from the Kroger Plus Community Rewards Program \$131.38 12/17/21\**

*Each month, Allegra Print & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, 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.*

### *Some Special Ways to give*



*\*To benefit TCF, go to the [Kroger website](#) and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to TCF. It’s a free and easy way to support your chapter.*

If your employer supports the [United Way](#), you might have the option to “designate” your donation. Every dollar you contribute through your payroll deductions goes to the organization you designate. TCF Nashville is an approved organization with the United Way. Please consider designating your United Way donation to TCF Nashville.



### *Time Heals*



*They told me that to comfort me  
When my child died.  
Four years and two children later  
I think maybe they lied.  
Friends and family tried their best.*

*God sheltered me under his wing.  
Still, the mother inside me  
Cries for that child,  
And time hasn't changed a thing.*

*The gaping wound granulated to a scar.  
The tears are now slower to spill,  
But deep in my heart there's an empty hole  
That only that child could fill.*

*No, I don't really think that it's true about time, For I  
know that the love bond remains.  
Time never heals the loss of a child,  
You just learn to cope with the pain.*

Marsha Fredrickson TCF, SD



## How Long Does It Take?

As long as it takes; that's how long it takes.

It's not about forgetting. It's about hurting.

And I know that if I am alive twenty years from now, and I happen to look at a blue sky with puffy clouds and think of my son, Fred. And figure how old he'd be, what he'd be doing, and what his children would be doing—I'll hurt.

And know that if I can switch my train of thought from what is not, to what was, a happy memory,  
I'll be able to smile through the tears.

We don't stop hurting, ever. But so many things occur each day.  
So many events and thoughts and happenings intervene, that our focus is shifted.  
The death of our child changes from the main concern in  
our life, to one of many.

A life may stop; but the loving goes on. To love deeply is to be vulnerable.  
For all our days.

Joan D Schmidt  
TCF Central Jersey Chapter, NJ




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## On the Death of a Child

When a child dies, a light goes out in the world, never to be replaced. We are overcome by pain and heartbreak which is beyond measurement, and completely unable to comprehend any meaning behind such a tragedy. The loss of such a young life, the finality of it, can hardly be fathomed. We search in vain for an answer to why a life so full of promise and unfulfilled potential has been torn away so prematurely.

Our grief and anguish is unrelenting and unyielding in its intensity. Although we know that death can come quickly, with no warning to any living creature, never in our wildest dreams did any of us imagine that one of our children should be taken—a reversal of the natural order.

At first it seems as if our lives, our souls, the very innermost substance of our being have been shattered, never to be resurrected again. Our tears, our anguish, conceal any legacy that remains of the child's existence. It is as if we are enveloped in a cloud of darkness and deep despair. The reality of the death is as unforgiving as the sky, the sea, the earth and all eternity.

The inevitability of birth, life and death blankets us with a feeling of futility about the uselessness of it all. It is hard to remember that during the child's short and transitory time on earth, he or she contributed a unique essence of life, imprinting an image on all those who were touched. Therein lies the child's legacy—the only bridge connecting the chasm between the living and the dead. For each of us the legacies left by our children differ in detail, yet at the same time are similar with respect to the precious memories, which are all that remain to provide comfort.

At first, we are inconsolable, but gradually the reaching out of heart and hand by those who understand and can respond to such a loss touches the soul, helps soothe the unbearable pain and intense suffering. Only a parent who has lost a child can give such a gift to another bereaved parent.

As in any event, there is a lesson to be learned. An opportunity emerges from the sorrow—an opportunity to sort out trivia, old resentments, to perceive with clear vision that in our lives which is truly important. The tragedy we have experienced somehow enables us to establish new and more meaningful priorities, to love and to value those who are close with a renewed sense of appreciation and awareness. If any meaning is ever again to exist in our lives, it will develop as a result of newly found sensitivity, love and compassion for others.

Chris Moon  
TCF, Rio Linda, CO

## A Valentine for Mom

As we grow older, we find that the simple reflections of our children are often the best memories we have. One such memory most mothers have is a valentine, maybe many valentines. These special valentines were made by our children just for us. They were made when mom was the most important person in their world.

Some of us have kept each little memento of our child's years, from the first little hand plaque to the handmade gifts and cards to the special gifts that our children purchased with their own money. Each one is a part of our child, a part of us and a part of our shared history.

My first valentine from my child was a handmade red construction paper heart glued to heart shaped white lace paper... On it he had written "Happy Valentine's Day to my MOM. I love you. Todd." Shyly he asked if I liked it. I told him I loved it, and that his valentine was the most beautiful valentine a mother could receive. It is a treasure I have always kept. "I just wanted to be sure," he whispered.

In my office I have a gift that Todd bought me five years ago. All grown up now with an MBA, bright future, important corporate job, family of four children, a beautiful new home, and major responsibilities, precious little time was available for finding the perfect gift for his mom. His life was busy; his free time was limited, but something special caught his eye and he thought about me. He decided to buy it. A few weeks later, he gave me a brightly wrapped package containing a beautiful plate picturing a Sioux Indian princess. "She's beautiful, just beautiful", I told him. "Do you really like it?" he asked.

The detail, the essence of her heritage and her outlook were captured perfectly. I told him, "I love it, Todd. I'll keep her in the office so I can see her every day. I think she is beautiful." And she is in my office today, another treasure I will always keep. "I just wanted to be sure," he whispered.

Much has happened since my three-year-old son gave me that handmade valentine and my adult son gave me that special gift. The years have raced by; my son has been dead for over two years. And so, this month I will open another special gift that my son bought me when he was still in college: my cedar chest.

I'd always wanted a cedar chest for the special keepsakes marking our lives. That cedar chest contains pictures, cards, handmade gifts and other things that only a mother could hold in her hands while watching the movies play in her head. There are many movies in that cedar chest, but only I can see them. That is the beauty of memories.

Each of us has our memories of our child. Whether our child was 5 days old or 55 years old, we have special memories that are as much a part of us as our faces. Valentine's Day was always a special day for our family. We exchanged valentines and sometimes give a special gift.

This Valentine's Day I will send my son a special handwritten valentine, carried on the wind to the cosmos. The message will be simple. "Happy Valentine's Day to my SON, Todd. I love you. Your Mom."

Annette Mennen Baldwin  
TCF, Katy, TX

### Our Valentine Cookies

*The Valentine's Day Cookies  
won't taste so good this year.*

*I stirred in the sugar, but you were not here.*

*Frosting – pink on the tip of your nose.*

*Days spun too swiftly – my biggest woe!*

*Did the time have to come so very soon  
When you weren't here to lick the spoon?  
My heart would dance and I would sing  
To feel you tug at my apron strings.*

*But instead I'll toil with the rolling pin,  
And rely on mind's eye for your silly grin.  
When the heart shapes are baked, mine will still ache.  
But I'll always love you, for goodness sake!*

Kathy Slief  
TCF, Tulsa, OK

### Valentine's Wishes

*I thought I heard your laugh today,  
While watching children run and play.  
You chuckled in that special way  
And then you were gone.*

*I thought I saw your gentle face,  
That look which time cannot erase.  
Then it was gone without a trace,  
And then I was alone.*

*I thought I heard your voice today  
And suddenly my world was gay.  
I thought I heard you softly say,  
"I love you, Mom,  
Happy Valentine's Day."*

*Oh how I wish ....*

TCF, North Hollywood, CA

## My First Five Years as an Only Child

I've been without my brother for five years. I guess the hard part is over now. Sometimes I think I've aged thirty years in the past five. In a strange way, these past five years have been the best and worst years of my life. I've accomplished the many things of a typical young adult—learning to drive, graduating from high school, going to college, and starting a career. Every one of my accomplishments has been clouded by the fact that my brother, George, is not here to share each milestone and is not achieving any more milestones for him- self. He was cheated of so many things. He will never graduate, get married, have children, or travel. He will never grow old, and I will never have a brother to grow old with. I'll never have nieces and nephews. The sibling relationship, usually the longest relationship of one's life, has been cut short for us. In these five years, although I've learned to accept that he's not coming back, the difficult part is dealing with it day by day.

My relationship with George ended just when we started to become friends. The childish fights and other annoyances of having a big brother were changing to real conversations and to having an occasional ally. I'm angry about all of the things that we've missed and all of the things that will never be, and I guess I always will be. Five years heals a lot of wounds, but the hurt will always be there, no matter how many years pass. In these past five years, I've been forced to grow up too fast. I've been forced into a new outlook on life. I've felt lonely and alone. I now realize that I will never be the same person as before. That person is locked away and is gone forever. Maybe I'm a better person now because of what I've been through. Five years ago, I never thought I'd survive, but I'm still here dealing with it every day. I don't know what the next five years will bring, but at least I've made it this far.

Kristina Steiner  
TCF, Staten Island, NY

### *To Our Surviving Children*

*And you were with us  
when the darkness came.  
You stood and grieved  
and kept yourself alive.*

**WE THANK YOU NOW**

*We have not always  
honored who you are  
and often did not tend  
your hidden sorrows.*

**FORGIVE US NOW**

*Because you loved us  
well enough to wait  
until we could*



*return to you and know  
with joy and hope and love:  
you are tomorrow.*

**WE CELEBRATE YOUR LIFE**

*And while we will remember  
always, always the one,  
the many souls who did not live,  
we see you once again  
for what you are:  
the wealth you are,  
the comfort  
and the promise.*

**WE THANK YOU NOW**

Sascha Wagner  
TCF, Des Moines, IA

**W**e are alike; at the same time we are very unlike. Our stories are different, our solutions are different, our ways of handling our grief are different, but we are alike in that we all hurt to the depths of our capacity to hurt. We experience many of the grief symptoms alike and we are alike in our need for help. While we cannot give each other definite answers or take away each other's pain, we can help each other by simply being there and listening to each other.

Dennis Klass  
TCF, St. Louis, MO

***Believe me, every heart has its secret sorrows,  
Which the world knows not;  
And oftentimes we call a man cold  
When he is only sad.***

***Longfellow***

## **CHAPTER INFORMATION**

### **The “Children Remembered” Listings**

If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed on pages 2 and 3 in The Children Remembered list, please let us know, printing the exact way you’d like the child’s name to appear, the child’s birth and death dates, and the parents’ names as they should be listed. You may call the database manager at 615 356-1351, drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at davidg14@bellsouth.net. We’ll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

### **CORPORATE DONATIONS TO TCF**

To benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page and designate The Compassionate Friends Nashville Chapter. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to our chapter. Also, when going to Amazon, type in “Amazon Smile” and designate The Compassionate Friends; then, each time you go on Amazon Smile a small contribution will be made by Amazon to our organization—both free of charge. It’s a free and easy way to support TCF.

### **We Need Your Help**

If you know a family outside the immediate Nashville area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you have access to the address (and phone number) of the parents, it would be most helpful if you would call us with that information. Our mission is to reach every bereaved family in Middle Tennessee, but we have to know about them in order to give them the support we ourselves have received. If you know the child’s name, birth date, date of death and cause of death, so much the better. Our outreach chairperson will send a warm letter of sympathy and information about TCF along with appropriate brochures and articles. We do not phone the family and all information you provide is confidential.

### **TCF Nashville Sibling Support**

We encourage siblings from teens to adults to come support one another at our monthly chapter meetings. Siblings face a unique and complicated grief journey and are finding hope and healing through our sharing groups.



## **BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES**

### **Alive Alone**

Alive Alone is an organization to benefit parents whose only child or all children have died. Visit their website at [www.alivealone.org](http://www.alivealone.org).

### **Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents**

For general information about grief support services and groups at Alive, please call the Grief Line at: 615-963-4732 or email [griefsupport@alivehospice.org](mailto:griefsupport@alivehospice.org). They offer eight-week groups, ongoing monthly groups, family group and Little Hearts Club for children who have experienced the death of a sibling. Services are in Franklin, Nashville, Hendersonville, Lebanon, and Murfreesboro.

### **Sharing**

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. They meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the Administrative Board Room on the first floor at Tri-Star Centennial Women's and Children's Hospital, 2221 Murphy Avenue in Nashville. The meetings are “open” and free. You can drop by as often as you like. The website is [sharingmiddletn.org](http://sharingmiddletn.org). Their informative brochure is found under “Contact Us.”

### **Survivors of Suicide**

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call [615 244-7444](tel:6152447444), or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

### **TCF Web site —A Treasure for You**

When you log onto the TCF Web site at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) you will find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter Web sites and numerous other resources.

# The Compassionate Friends

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February 2022

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## *Let's Go Home*

*Let's go home –  
My eyes pleaded to my husband.  
We don't belong here.  
This is crazy – these people are still hurting.  
Two, five years later and they are still coming here.*

*Let's go home. We don't belong here.  
We won't, we can't be like that. Perhaps –  
If I don't speak,  
If I don't tell them why we came –  
It won't be true.*



*But wait... Why are they laughing?  
They all lost children, yet they are laughing  
at something somehow.  
And wait... Why am I nodding at what he's saying?  
Why do I feel I must say something to that couple  
who are in this nightmare even less time than we?*

*They all seem to know what I'm feeling –  
without my even saying it –  
Just not flinching at my tears.  
That steady, endless stream of tears that seems to  
never stop.  
Perhaps – One day I'll join their laughter –  
Let's wait – Perhaps we shouldn't leave just yet.*

Sandy Fein  
TCF, Manhasset, NY