

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.org



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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 NEW MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE**).

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

November 13th Program:

Tips for Handling the Holidays

End of the year Holidays can be a traumatic time following the loss of a child. Much of the focus of these holidays is on children, family, and giving, and many times one's sense of loss is so overwhelming that the joy of the season is lost. Some parents have said, "I would just rather do without the holidays, but I don't have that option." Others have said, "I just want some way to survive the holidays."

So, how do grieving parents cope with the holidays? Join us at 3:00 for a panel discussion on tips for handling what can be a very difficult time of the year for grieving parents



Candlelight Memorial Service Scheduled for December 11

This is a very moving and powerful program. All family members, siblings and friends are invited to join us. 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.

It is important that **everyone** wishing to have their child's photo in the memorial service follow very carefully the instructions on page 6 of this newsletter.

**PHOTO SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
Friday, December 2.**

We would like for all of you to enjoy this opportunity to see your child on the big screen! If you have not previously attended the candlelight memorial service, we encourage you to do so.

**Information and Photo Submission
Form are on Page 6.**

***The 2022 Candlelight Memorial Service will be Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 p.m.
at Citipointe Church, 7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211.***

***The location is off Nolensville Road (Highway 31A) about a mile south of the
intersection of Bell Road (Old Hickory Boulevard) and Nolensville Road.***

*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—

Christopher William Black
November 23
Son of Ray and Linda Black

Taylor Christian Brewer
November 2
Son of Justin and Tracy Brewer
Grandson of Don and Sherry Eakes and
Penny Waters

Eric DeWayne Brown
November 18
Son of Sharon Brown

John Roaten Cheadle, III
(Ro)
November 29
Son of John R. and Nancy Cheadle

James Austin Garcia
(Austin)
November 3
Son of Danny and Sherri Garcia

Tucker Jordan Griffin
(T.J.)
November 9
Son of Jason and Angela Griffin

Jacob Alexander Griffin
November 5
Son of Karen Griffin

Max Hillman Harris
November 10
Son of Becky Harris
Brother of Will Harris

Cole Hanson Kilgore
November 14
Son of Henry and Kathy Beeler
Nephew of Kacey Gant

Cami Leigh Parrish
November 19
Daughter of Debbie Hampton

Mark Elliot Reischman
November 2
Son of Bill and Jean Reischman

Shane Tanner Scruggs
November 7
Son of Don and Joan Johnson
James and Lisa Scruggs

Joe Vick
(Joey)
November 6
Son of Kay Bogle
Brother of Angie Hoffman

Lindsay Ware
November 16
Daughter of Scott Ware



And in the month of their deaths—

Rosemary Aud
November 15
Daughter of Stephen and Trish Aud

Taylor Nicole Barton
November 25
Daughter of Alan Barton and
Stella Stephens

Jacob Sylvester James Bell
November 30
Son of Mike Bell and
Michelle Dodrill

Daniel Matthew Bledsoe
(Matt)
November 11
Son of Dan and Barbara Bledsoe
Brother of Jason and Kaci

Stephen Joseph Donlon
November 24
Son of Pat and Ellen Donlon
Brother of Katy, David, John, and
Elizabeth

Jayce Montez Easley
(Bucky)
November 11
Son of Heather Jarrett

James Wesley Evans
(Snowman)
November 24
Son of Brenda L. Nelson
Brother of Heather Evans

Stephen Christopher Gould
November 18
Son of Herb and Susan Gould



Rylee Grace Honeycutt
(Roo)
November 18
Daughter of Anthony and
Magen Honeycutt

Cami Leigh Parrish
November 19
Daughter of Debbie Hampton



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.

Sherry and Donald 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

Thanks to you,
Kroger shoppers,
we received from the
Kroger Plus Community Rewards
Program
\$133.14 on 9/27/2022 (see below)*



Each month, Allegra Marketing (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.

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 our 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.

Memories

If you have memories, and if your memories are beautiful, you have a gift that is the most worthy of all. For when your morning finally comes after the darkness has lifted, you can look back and see that the darkness was not as complete as you thought. For there in the darkness will wink and glimmer the light of your memories—like fireflies on a summer night.

Judy Dickey
TCF, Greenwood, IN

What the TCF Veterans Know

Are you new to The Compassionate Friends? We want to welcome you, but somehow that word isn't right—this is not a group anyone wants to join. All of us wish no one ever had to walk through that door or receive this newsletter. So, when we say welcome, perhaps what we really mean is we're so sorry—but we are glad you've found us and hope you will find support at TCF.

Many members of TCF were hesitant to attend that first meeting. We didn't know what to expect. Would we be forced to talk about our child? Did we have to make a donation or commit to anything? The answer to all those questions is no. We'll listen if you wish to talk; we are members of all faiths and none; there is no cost; and you may attend as often as you wish and stay for as long as you wish. Just come.

Our few rules are simple ones and designed to ensure that TCF is a safe and comfortable place for those grieving a child's death. We request that members maintain confidentiality within the group, and we ask that you respect everyone's right to their individual beliefs. We don't tell each other how to grieve; we just walk together along this most painful of journeys.

Having made the difficult decision to attend, some of us old-timers remember being surprised or disappointed at what we found there. Perhaps we were hoping our grief would begin to ease but instead we woke the next morning feeling even worse. Already overwhelmed with our own pain, now the grief of others weighed on our mind. The parent who was sadly remembering a daughter's death ten years ago frightened us: would we still feel so sad after all those years? And what about those folks laughing and drinking coffee? How can they seem so carefree?

Perhaps talking about the death of a child isn't such a good idea after all. But thousands of TCF members would say it is a good idea, just not an easy one. Many forced themselves to

attend at first, remembering the leader's recommendation that it takes three meetings before a new member should make a decision about TCF. Others wished there were a meeting every week. Everyone is different.

Those of us who continue to participate, sometimes for a year, sometimes forever, slowly discover what makes TCF work for us. First, it is good to know you're not losing your mind even though it may feel like it. It's strangely comforting to know that others understand your confusion and face similar difficulties. Sharing our own stories and listening to the stories of others eases the isolation that many bereaved families experience.

As the months pass, we learn that while the experience of grief has some universal components, each of us will grieve as individuals with our own timetable. Many of us who thought grieving had a distinct beginning and end, with definable stages along the way, find that our theory doesn't make much sense in the real world. Grief is more like love; loud at times, quiet at others, with a truth that can and will live on forever.

One day we look at the parent who cries for the daughter who died ten years ago with new understanding. His everyday life is no longer eclipsed by pain; we visit with him regularly at the coffee table. But TCF is the place he can bring his memories and his grief and talk about the child he will always miss and love. The thought that we, too, may want to be involved with TCF for many years does not seem so frightening as it did those first months we hesitated before walking in the door.

It isn't easy getting here, of course. But we don't hesitate anymore. We unlock the door and stand there, hoping that the newly bereaved family arriving will know that they—and we—need not walk alone.

Mary Clark
TCF Sugar Land, TX

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

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
- AIDS**..... Joyce Soward
615-754-5210
- Illness**..... David and Peggy Gibson
615-356-1351
- 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

Thanksgiving

I remember—

*the inability to chew or swallow
that first Thanksgiving
after Linda died;
the choked-back tears, the sick heart,
the hollowness, the painful memories
of Thanksgivings past, and the
blessed relief sleep brought to my pain...*

I remember—

*the busyness of working as a volunteer
that second and third Thanksgiving
after Linda died;
and the good feeling it gave me of
“running away” from it all, and the
blessed relief sleep brought to my pain.*

I remember—

*the inability to prepare any of her
favorite foods that fourth Thanksgiving
after Linda died;
the tears that fell at the smell of turkey cooking,
the parade, football games, the emptiness,
the incomplete family, and the
blessed relief sleep brought to my pain.*

I remember—

*awakening with a lightness and joy in
my heart that fifth Thanksgiving
after Linda died;
the thankfulness for having my remaining family together,
the beautiful memories of past
Thanksgivings, the “wholeness” of me, and the
blessed relief peace brought to my pain.*

Priscilla J. Norton
TCF, Pawtucket, RI

Gratitude.... The Key to Happiness

I am convinced that the real key to happiness is gratitude. I did not come upon this insight. I learned it from Dennis Prager, a wonderful and gifted man who is both author and talk show host for KNBC radio in Los Angeles. I give him all the credit. But I have thought a lot about this idea after my son, Mark, died five years ago tomorrow.

At first, I was offended by people who smiled or even laughed during The Compassionate Friends meetings. These were the people who seemed to have somehow re-entered the land of the living. How dare they greet each other with hugs. How dare they laugh. How dare they appear normal when their children have died. But over the last seven years I have learned three valuable lessons:

- Life goes on and we must too. Gradually the pain eases and the warm memories replace the sadness. Gradually we return to life. One day we find that it is 11:00 in the morning and we have not thought about our child yet. At first we feel guilt. But then we also realize we are going forward. We will never forget. But we decide that the loss of our child will not be the all-consuming factor in our life. We choose to enjoy friends again. We choose to go out to dinner again. We choose to laugh again. I am convinced that this is what our children would want for us. The pain does not bring our child back. It only makes us miserable without end.

- Become grateful for what we have, not focused on what we have lost. I see people in our chapter meetings who have gone through "every parent's nightmare" and want no part of life again. But, I ask that these compassionate friends also think about the ways they have been blessed, as well as hurt. In my experience, most people have more to be thankful for than they realize: health, other children, a loving family, a career they enjoy, financial security, life in a free country, a faith that works for them, a true best friend, a spouse who they love. Nobody has it all. But compared to most of the world, we have a lot.

- The life we now lead will be better than it would have been. That does not make our child's death a good thing. It just means that our child's life mattered, and it has changed us forever. It means that in some small way the world will be better because our child lived, and we are the ones who can make it so. We have a new sense of priorities. We don't "sweat the small stuff." We know what matters because we know what is irreplaceable. And we know how deeply other people hurt because we, too, have been there. We "know how they feel."

And when our life is different and better because our child lived, then that child is never forgotten. Each of us would do anything in the world to go back in time, but we can't. It is up to us now to go forward, and we can.

Richard Edler
TCF South Bay/LA, CA
In Memory of my son Mark Edler

To Our Family and Friends

The "Holiday Season" is a time of family – festive gatherings, worshipping together, sharing love and gifts, and cherished memories. For the bereaved parent, these aspects of the season are precisely what makes us dread its arrival.

The absence of our child when the "whole family" gathers seems to accentuate our incomplete family. We are sorely reminded of "how it used to be" and don't want to accept what is now. We need patience and understanding of our family and friends to help us through the holidays as best we can.

We may want to change the way we spend Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Hanukkah. If the family traditionally gathers at one house, perhaps the gathering place could be changed, especially if the gathering home is that of the bereaved. If we do prepare the meal, be aware that we may not have the energy we have had in the past and will need a lot of help.

Perhaps we'll try to avoid the holiday altogether by going away for a few days. Whatever our thoughts are for coping with the day, please take our feelings into consideration when you make your plans.

For some of us shopping for gifts is a painful experience. The stores' festive decorations and music belie our mood, as we feel forced into participating in the "season." We think longingly about that special gift we won't be buying this year. Again, our depression saps us of the energy to do the things we have done in the past, and we need your understanding for the things that remain undone.

Perhaps the single most helpful thing you can do for us is to include our child in the holidays. We want to hear his/her name, to have you recall fond memories of their lives, to know that you, too, are feeling their absence and remembering them with love.

Getting through the holidays is a rough task for bereaved parents. We need to handle them in a way that we feel is best for ourselves and our families. We ask for your love and support during this especially difficult time.

Marge Henning
TCF West Orange, NJ



CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 11, 2022

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 2.

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
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** _____

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 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 11 Candlelight Memorial Service. Below is a list of the most requested items.**

Suggested gifts include:

Art Supplies and Craft Kits	Gameboy Games (Teen Rated)	Matchbox or Hot Wheels car sets
DVD's (rated G, PG or PG-13)	Xbox / Play Station Games (Teen Rated)	Lego Sets
Gift cards for Wal-Mart, Target, Amazon, GameStop, and iTunes	Remote Control Cars, Trucks or Planes	Hats, Gloves & Scarves
Current Rap music/Pop music CD's (Teen Rated)	Writing and keepsake supplies such as journals, gel pens, scrap booking items	Nail Kits and Polish
MP3 Player/iPod Shuffle	Board Games (Monopoly, Life, Mouse Trap, Jenga, Uno etc.)	Action Figures / Superheroes Toys
CD Players / Boom Box	Barbie Dolls & Accessories for Barbie	Jewelry and Hair Accessories
		Sports Equipment, Balls etc.
		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, <https://youthvillages.org/get-involved/events/holiday-heroes/middle-tennessee-holiday-heroes/> and choosing the 'Donate' tab. When making your donation, include "Holiday Heroes" in the "Leave a comment" box.
- 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 \$100 to \$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.

Give encouragement, and you give nutrients to a hungry and deprived spirit.

Pamela Hagens
TCF, Nashville, TN

Is it easing?

I heard your name today and my heart did not skip a beat, nor was my mind flooded with the emotion of losing you. I heard your name today and it did not bring back the terrible hurt feelings of when you first left me. I heard your name today with a calmness that surprised me. Many another child carries your name, and it had been torture hearing it and seeing the smiling faces on those little girls. But today I knew—I found out—what others in my footsteps found out and tried to tell me. The hurt will ease; but the memories, the love, the good times will never go away.

Phoebe C. Redman
TCF Bradenton, FL

The Compassionate Friends

P. O. BOX 8283
Hermitage, TN
37076

Return Service
Requested



November 2022

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

Giving and Receiving

The secret of The Compassionate Friends' success is simple. There is no line between being a helper and being helped. In the early months of membership, it seems that most of the time is spent absorbing ideas, crying, and letting the grief flow—and learning the ropes of being a bereaved parent. The next step is reaching out to others and helping them. It is not a big step, for listening to another person sort out his life helps us to sort out our lives too. But it is an important step, because it is the first point at which the movement is reversed. All the energy had been going inward. We felt so empty inside that we kept withdrawing into ourselves. But we turn around when we first listen to another, when we speak the words of comfort and hope, and share their pain instead of just feeling our pain. At that time, the real healing has started.

Dennis Klas
TCF, St. Louis, MO