

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.*

January 11th Meeting:

Ask it Basket

Bereaved parents are often plagued with questions regarding their grief. If there is something bothering you, bring your questions for the basket. This meeting will provide an especially good opportunity for those of us who are farther along in our grief to give the benefit of our experience to those who are just beginning their sad journey by addressing the questions. We invite our old-timers to come and lend a hand. Together we can find the support we need. Our regular sharing sessions will follow this program.



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
Suicide	Ron Henson 615-789-3613
Alcohol/Drug Overdose	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245

There will be a Steering Committee meeting following our January meeting, weather permitting.



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.

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

Lisa Allgood January 14 Daughter of Harold and Betty Allgood	Misty Whitney Ambrose January 14 Daughter of Michael and Treva Ambrose	Evangeline Anacker January 21 Daughter of Brooks and Griselle Anacker	Ashleigh Nicole Blough January 20 Daughter of Deana Malone
William Barcal (Billy) January 8 Brother of Kat Barcal	Pamela Sue Chaiken January 17 Daughter of Lionel and Sandra Chaiken Sister of Stephanie	Matthew Johnson Brooks January 14 Son of Mike and Sherry Brooks	Jeremy Wilson Christy January 20 Son of Wilson and Jenny Christy
Cedric Lamar Collier January 13 Son of Greg Collier	Jonathan Lee Collins January 12 Son of Charity Collins Grandson of Jennie Reeves Nephew of Kristanna	Kaitlyn Kimberly Cook January 30 Daughter of Jim Cook and Sylvia Bosma Sister of Aaron and Zander	John Calister Davidson (Buddy) January 4 Son of Steve and Telese Davidson
James Wesley Evans (Snowman) January 31 Son of Brenda L. Nelson Brother of Heather Evans	Robert Black Faison, Jr. (Pete) January 15 Son of Robert Faison and Kimberlee Daus	Samuel Christopher Hagens January 14 Son of Christopher and Pamela Hagens Brother of Luke and Caleb	Matthew Kent Hensley January 13 Son of Kenneth and Kathy Hensley
Justin Bruce Hensley January 13 Son of Denise Jones	James Edwin Hinesley January 7 Son of Steven and Sue Hinesley	Miles Kirkpatrick Henry January 5 Son of Oliver and Heather Henry	Mary Grace Hodsdon January 14 Daughter of John and Mary Hodsdon
Cam Mantle January 9 Daughter of Jack Mantle and Vicki Little	Shawn Patrick Martin January 4 Son of Annie and Michael Martin Brother of Austin	Lauren Kristina O'Saile January 23 Daughter of Don Davenport Granddaughter of Martha Davenport	Matthew Douglas Pate January 10 Son of Melanie Pate
Travis David Pate January 9 Son of Melanie Pate	Mariah Rhodes January 29 Daughter of Sara Robinson Granddaughter of Anita Brown	Tristan Walker January 23 Son of Tamara Brown	Shelby Noelle White January 10 Daughter of John and Wendy White

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



Brittany Athey
January 15
Daughter of
Marcus and Tracy
Cushman

**Patrick Jonathan Bruce, Jr.
(Jon)**
January 7
Son of
Patrick and Pam Bruce

Gavin Bell
January 31
Son of
Jeniste Bell

Brock Wyatt Blick
January 8
Son of
Mark and Jeri Blick
Grandson of
Jerry & Bonnie Buckner

Jeremy Wilson Christy
January 4
Son of
Wilson and Jenny
Christy

Matthew Lance Chitwood
January 1
Son of
Jim and Connie Chitwood
Grandson of
Margaret Chitwood-Watkins
Brother of Clayton

Cedric Lamar Collier
January 21
Son of
Greg Collier

Roy James Davies
January 13
Son of
Roy and Barbara Davies

Susan Edwards
January 21
Daughter-in-Law of
Charles and Ruth
Edwards

LaTorra Fayne
January 12
Daughter of
Helen Fayne

Kamden Joseph Hayes
January 30
Grandson of
Laura Buchanan

Tina Haven
January 6
Sister of
Teresa Umphrey

Nathaniel Line
January 22
Child of
Kevin and Beth Line

**John Mallard, Jr.
(Jay)**
January 26
Son of
Mary Mallard

Cam Mantle
January 25
Daughter of
Jack Mantle and
Vicki Little

Marissa Montecalvo
January 13
Daughter of
Kim Montecalvo

**Christopher Javon
Patterson**
January 20
Son of
Stacy Patterson

Heather Marie Robinson
January 14
Daughter of
Carol Green

Shane Tanner Scruggs
January 22
Son of
Don and Joan Johnson
James and Lisa Scruggs

Kevin Tolentino
January 28
Son of
Sarah Tolentino

**Joe Vick
(Joey)**
January 10
Son of
Kay Bogle
Brother of
Angie Hoffman

Trinity Rhodes Steagall
January 1
Son of
Rose Steagall

Gregory Allen Totty, Jr.
January 19
Son of
Janie Totty

Shelby Noelle White
January 24
Daughter of
John and Wendy White

The Sharing of Grief

I cannot carry this burden alone; the road is too steep and the pain too great. I shall only get to the top of the hill if I am able to lean on a firm shoulder whose strength lies in the reality of the feet which bear its weight. The sharing of grief is the only solution to the crisis that surrounds bereavement in our age. To share a person's sorrow is to accept their reality and to acknowledge the fact that none of us is immune from death.

Rev. Dr. Simon Stevens
Founder of The Compassionate Friends

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.

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

Mike and Jean
Overcash
in Loving Memory
of their son,
Michael Stanley
Overcash

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

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

John and Mary
Hodsdon
in Loving Memory
of their daughter,
Mary Grace Hodsdon

Wayne and Kassandra
Pack
in Loving Memory
of their son,
Andrew Morris Pack

Fred and Latresa Duke
in Loving Memory
of their son,
Nigel James Duke



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

*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.*

Answers?

*The memories are
bright and far away,
because
in all those grieving years
the pain has calmed.
The mind has learned
that life and loss are brothers,
that death tells nothing
when we ask him "why."*

*The memories are
deep and long ago.*



*Here,
after all those grieving years,
the songs we sang,
the thoughts we shared,
the morning kisses,
and the mystic evenings,
remain alive in us
and unforgotten.*

*Now Love holds answers,
though we ask her nothing.*

New Year's Wishes for Bereaved Parents

To the newly bereaved:

We wish you patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.

To the bereaved sibling:

We wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.

To those who are single parents:

We wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone, with your loss.

To those experiencing marital difficulties after the death of your child:

We wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.

To those who have suffered the death of more than one child:

We wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life.

To those of you who have suffered the death of an only child or of all your children:

We offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such an inspiration to the rest of us.

To those of you who are plagued with guilt:

We wish you the reassurance that you did the very best you could under the circumstances, and that your child knew that.

To those of you who are deeply depressed:

We wish you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadows."

To all fathers and those of you unable to cry:

We wish you healing tears and the ability to express your grief.

To those of you who are exhausted from grieving:

We wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.

To all others with special needs that we have not mentioned:

We wish you the understanding you need and the reassurance that you are loved.

Joe Rousseau
Former TCF President



Anger-Work

*Death can make us very angry.
We can be angry at life,
angry at God,
angry at the one who left us behind.*

*Anger is often only
a reflection of our helplessness
in the face of death.*

*Be aware that anger denied
is an enemy of healing.*

*A shift away from deeper sources of our anger
may seem easier to manage,
but such a shift will only increase
the strain and confusion
in a griever's overburdened life.*

*By trying to see our feelings clearly,
we can at least temper
the mental and emotional stress
which anger always carries.*

Sascha

Footnote from Sascha: It is important to remember again that we should not be impatient if our anger needs time to be resolved. Anger-work is part of grief-work. And grief-work always takes longer than we think it should.

Ah, this beautiful world! Indeed, I know not what to think of it. Sometimes it is all gladness and sunshine and heaven itself lies not far off; and then it suddenly changes and is dark and sorrowful and the clouds shut out the day.

In the lives of the saddest of us there are bright days when we feel as if we could take the great world in our arms. Then come the gloomy hours, when all without or within is dismal, cold and dark. 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.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The Passage of Time

I have always been sensitive to the passing of time. What lays behind me, what lies ahead. Crying and weeping at the big moments of change like when my babies stopped nursing, or when they walked, or even when they moved out of the crib.

There was this feeling that's very difficult to describe except it's maybe a little like sand falling through your fingers when you grab a handful. It escapes even when you try to hold on to it, especially when you try to hold on to it. Yes, time is like that. When Tori died 19 years flashed before my eyes in rapid fire frames. As I watched the coroner wheel her away in a body bag it felt like everything I was made of was like the sand and instantly started spilling all over the place. Reality and time were warped.

Panic gripped me often in the following days, months, and years as I realized that the time I have with the rest of my family, the time I have left here on Earth could only be mere moments left. Right now, could be it. I cannot live in this constant state of awareness or I will be unable to function, but I slip back into this panic and awareness each time my children, my husband, or my family as a whole go through the next big change like seasons ending, sports coming to a close, or whatever our current endeavors are coming to an end.

It's inescapable that Tori's life and death shape what "time" looks like now. As I speak about anything I automatically relate it to before or after her death and as my family and I go through our lives without Tori here on Earth we sense the passage of time poignantly.

Even more than before, I weep and ache at the passage of time because Tori is not here for all these important moments. Now, I'm not only weeping because my boys are growing up, but I'm also weeping because they are doing it without their big sister here with them.

I have been a writer my entire life, words flowing freely from my mind through to my fingertips anytime I wanted or needed them to. This article has taken me several years to write and as I read it, I'm stricken with how much I didn't say. The words no longer flow freely. It has become appallingly clear to me that there will not ever be enough time left for me on this earth to collect all the pieces of myself that spilled everywhere when Tori died.

Amanda Nicks
TCF Nashville, TN

Thoughts on Winter

January...February...so-cold, so crisp, so leafless. Beginning a year...a new year...A NEW BEGINNING. You never lived in this year, and that is new. Sometimes new is painful. January is also the month of resolutions and the only resolution we must make is that we must learn to live without our child. What a profound sadness that is! To love them so deeply, so passionately, so completely...only to have us part.

My child, did I ever tell you enough how much I loved you? I've wondered. Do we tell those we love how very much their life has meant to us? Probably we do not. Somehow we just arrogantly believe that time goes on forever. It does. It's just the people do not. We fail to recognize how entirely too brief some lives can be. You were not supposed to die. Death is reserved for others. How could you have disappointed me? Didn't you know that I had such plans for you? I didn't want to face my own mortality. How cruel life was...using you to prove to me that we do indeed come to an end.

I don't want to accept your death...but what choice have I left? Have you any idea how angry that makes me? Oh, I'll mend...although mending sometimes means forgetting. I cannot put you aside, but already memories of you are fading. You know what I like best? When I'm given little tidbits of your life by those that knew you. What a bittersweet delight! Each piece of my jigsaw puzzle life will eventually fit together. You will be the only missing piece.

Dorothy Worrel
TCF, Palo Alto, CA



CHAPTER INFORMATION

Are you Moving?

Each time a newsletter is returned to us with an incorrect address, we pay to retrieve it in order to find out where you've moved; then we pay again to mail it back to you. This is in addition to the original bulk mail cost. It would help a great deal in both time and money if you would notify us immediately of any address change so your newsletter can reach you right away. You may call, write or email the chapter leaders or the newsletter editor. Thanks for your help.

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. Drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 8283, Hermitage, TN 37076. 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.

How You Can Help

Most people who attend TCF meetings never heard of TCF before they lost a child, and many bereaved parents still have not heard that there is an organization that exists to help them navigate their grief journey. If you know a family in the middle Tennessee area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you think they would benefit from finding out about TCF and possibly attending a TCF meeting, we will be happy to send you some information that you may share with them about what TCF is and what we do to support bereaved parents. If you have attended a TCF meeting, it might be helpful if you would invite them to attend their first TCF meeting with you. We also have a monthly newsletter that they can receive free of charge simply by asking for it.



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.

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. 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 an infant. The website is sharingmiddletn.org.

Survivors of Suicide

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

TCF Website —A Treasure for You

When you log onto the TCF Website at 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.

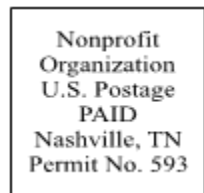
The Compassionate Friends

P. O. BOX 8283
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January 2026



A “Band of Parents”

After watching the TV series, “Band of Brothers,” on Veteran’s Day, I had so much gratitude for our armed forces defending our democracy during World War II. I was moved by how the soldiers in Easy Company in the 101st Airborne Division relied on each other during the horrific combat they experienced and formed bonds that endured long after the war.

Later, thinking back on our Compassionate Friends meeting last Sunday, it struck me that each one of us who’ve lost a child joins a club, bound together in sorrow. We join a bereaved “Band of Parents.”

Thankfully, we can forge deep bonds of comradery with understanding and support for each other. We’re also bound with our surviving children losing a sibling and our parents losing a grandchild. This shared experience can be a sacred blessing that can begin the healing and lead to our recovery.

Together we can learn to smile and feel joy once again and pay tribute to the time we had with our loved ones.

Mike Bell
TCF, Nashville, TN

