

Join with us as we honor the memories of our children!



**Our Wake County 2022 TCF
Candle Light Memorial Service**

**White Deer Park Nature Center
2400 Aversboro Road
Garner, NC 27529**



**The Compassionate Friends
Worldwide Candle Lighting....
that their Light may always shine**

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 11th, 2022 at 7:00 pm local time, it creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone, around the world. This is a very moving service, in a season that many bereaved families find difficult (holidays). We encourage you to attend, either virtually or with a TCF chapter near you.

The Compassionate Friends Wake County chapter will hold a Candle Lighting at the White Deer Park Nature Center, **2400 Aversboro Rd.**, in Garner, at 7pm on Sunday, December 11th. Please arrive fifteen minutes early, so we can begin promptly at 7, and bring a framed photo of your child (that will stand upright on a table). You may bring a small votive candle, or we will provide one. If you wish, you may bring a snack or dessert to share after the ceremony, perhaps something that your child enjoyed. Face masks are optional.

The national TCF organization will also be holding a virtual candle lighting for those who would prefer to attend virtually. They will have four programs in the Eastern, Central, Mountain and Pacific time zones.

Register at compassionatefriends.org for your time zone.

A Candle

*A candle to burn with a glowing flame
To symbolize your face and name
A holiday season, an annual strain
We try to be joyful and play the game.*



*So we'll rekindle our flame of love
For you, on this special night.
We love you, son, and the special
Lit candle, that now burns bright*

Ed Kuzela, TCF Atlanta GA



A Story About John

As Christmas time nears, we who have lost a child only have our memories to carry us through. My mind has been reeling with memories of years past. But there was one that I will always remember.

It was a cold snowy December that year in 1976. Frigid temperatures had me piling more and more wood into our wood burner in the living room. Andy wanted to go outside and build a snowman. I told him no, it was too cold. He then wanted to go over to "John's" trailer and visit. I said no. John lived on the adjoining property. An elderly man who never had any children of his own, he took a shining to my son. Every time Andy was outside playing, I could hear his giggles over at John's house as they planted a garden outside in summer, or Andy "helped" John work on some project he was doing. John didn't have much. His trailer was old and ragged looking. Andy didn't see the "old" trailer. He only saw a man who loved kids and a man who could bring a smile on a child's face daily. Andy didn't notice the tattered clothes John wore. But I did. Andy didn't notice the hands that were calloused from years of hard work, only I did. And yet, I still didn't want Andy to go over to John's house. Maybe I was afraid he'd pick up germs. Maybe I was afraid John's shabbiness would rub off onto Andy. How wrong I was. How blind, I, as an adult, was that cold snowy winter.

It was Christmas Eve Day

when the knock came at the door. I was baking cookies so Andy went to the door. I heard his squeal of "JOHN" as he opened the door. John had never been to my house before and I wondered why he was there standing with his hat in his hand, head bowed in a blinding snow storm. I went to the door as the old gray eyes looked up at me and his voice said, "I've made something for Andy for Christmas." Behind him, in the snow, sat the most beautiful wood crafted toy box on wheels that I'd ever seen. Andy jumped out the door and hugged John's neck. I helped John bring the toy chest into the house. I noticed how smooth the corners were sanded. I noticed how much work was put into making the box being a wood crafter myself. I knew John had spent hours making the toy chest.

The three of us sat down as I offered John a piece of cake and a glass of milk. I saw the old gray eyes lovingly look at Andy, and I saw the love and admiration in Andy's eyes as he looked up at John. It was Andy, after John left to go back home, that went into his room and dug out a piece of wood he'd painted and told me he wanted to give it to John for Christmas. I watched as my little boy trucked through the snow to John's trailer to share the true meaning of Christmas with his friend. It was a month later on January 22 when another knock came at the door. Andy opened the door to see John standing there holding a cake he'd made with crooked

letters on it saying, "Happy Birthday Andy and Andy's mom." I offered to have him come in and we'd share the cake, but he declined. He handed Andy a paper sack and hugged him before he left. I will always remember Andy reaching in the bag and pulling out the finest crafted little car I'd ever seen.

It was two months before Christmas in 1977 as I sat in a funeral home, my heart broken, as my little boy lay in the casket. Oblivious to whom was near me, only knowing I could not go on without my son, I didn't look up when I felt hands rest on my shoulder. And yet they stayed there. I remember turning my head to see John standing there, those gray eyes filled with tears as he looked at me. John lost his little friend that day. I had once been blinded by the love between a little boy and an old man. And yet, that little boy taught me to look beyond tattered clothes and old shabby trailers. He taught me to see real beauty, in an old man's eyes. For on that day, I saw love, genuine love, from the heart of an old man who loved my son. John joined Andy in heaven the following winter.

God Bless you John. Take care of my little boy for me until I get there.

Love, Andy's mom
Sharon Bryant

"In memory of Andy Dunbar"
January 22, 1972 - October 24, 1977

I'm his mom and he's my angel forever.....



The Compassionate Friends

Wake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

December
2022



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If this is your first Newsletter:

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us it might be helpful for you. We also invite you to our monthly meetings at Hayes Barton Baptist Church. At these meetings you may talk or choose not to say a word. There are no fees or dues. We are sorry you have had to experience the death of a child (or children) but we are here for you. We, too, are on this journey of grief and extend our hearts and arms to you.

Our Wake County Chapter of TCF meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday nights of the month at 7:00pm in Room 224 at Hayes Barton Baptist Church, 1800 Glenwood Avenue (at the corner of Glenwood Ave and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points) in Raleigh.

December Meetings

**Tuesday
December 13
7:00pm**

**Tuesday
December 27
NO MEETING TONIGHT**

'Twas the Night Before Christmas ~ FOR BEREAVED PARENTS ~

'Twas the month before Christmas and I dreaded the days that I knew I was facing — the holiday craze. The stores were all filled with holiday lights, in hopes of drawing customers by day and by night.

As others were making their holiday plans, My heart was breaking — I couldn't understand. I had lost my dear child a few years before, And I knew what my holiday had in store.

When out of nowhere, there arose such a sound I sprang to my feet and was looking around, Away to the window I flew like a flash, Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The sight that I saw took my breath away, And my tears turned to smiles in the light of the day. When what to my wondering eyes should appear, But a cluster of butterflies fluttering near. With beauty and grace they performed a dance, I knew in a moment this wasn't by chance.

The hope that they gave me was a sign from above, That my child was still near me and that I was loved. The message they brought was my holiday gift, And I cried when I saw them in spite of myself.

As I knelt closer to get a better view, One allowed me to pet it — as if it knew — That I needed the touch of its fragile wings, To help me get through the holiday scene.

In the days that followed I carried the thought, Of the message the butterflies left in my heart — That no matter what happens or what days lie ahead, Our children are with us — they're not really dead.

Yes, the message of the butterflies still rings in my ears, A message of hope — a message so dear. And I imagined they sang as they flew out of sight, "To all bereaved parents — We love you tonight!"

~by Faye McCord, TCF Jackson, MS



**IN MEMORY
DECEMBER LOVE GIFTS**
Given In Loving Memory Of Children



David and Helen Gardener
In Loving Memory of Our Son
Curtis "Curt" Gardener

Don and Rebecca Jones
In Loving Memory of Our Daughter
Amanda Wall

Please send Love Gifts to: Love Gifts—Wake County Chapter, TCF, P. O. Box 6602, Raleigh, NC 27628-6602.
Send pictures & articles to Pattie Griffin at pattie.grif@gmail.com or 30 Shepherd Street, Raleigh NC 27607.

ATTENTION: On December 13th our group will meet at 7:00pm in Room 224 at Hayes Barton Baptist Church (1800 Glenwood Avenue at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points in Raleigh).

MASKS ARE OPTIONAL



In Memory of
Amanda Wall



Your Loving Parents
Who Miss You and Love You
Always and Forever
Rebecca and Don Jones

*...there is no more ridiculous
custom than the one that makes
you express sympathy
once and for all
on a given day to a
person whose sorrow
will endure as long as his life.*

*Such grief, felt
in such a way, is always
"present", it is never too late
to talk about it,
never repetitious to
mention it again.*

Marcel Proust (1871-1922)
from **Letters**

10 Tips for Living with the Holidays this Year



1. Remind yourself that you will survive. You will.
2. Think about what will bring you the most peace this holiday season.
 - a. Keeping all traditions intact?
 - b. Tweaking some traditions a bit and adding new ones?
 - c. Throwing out all the old traditions and starting new ones?
 - d. Flying to the Caribbean and completely skipping the holidays this year? It's okay to do that.
3. Don't expect anyone to mention your child by name. Believe it or not, that's your job. People will look to you to determine whether or not it's safe to talk about the person that died. A few subtle ways to do that:
 - a. Serve/bring your child's favorite dish to the holiday get-together -- talk about it!
 - b. Bring a favorite picture -- pass it around. Work it into the dining table centerpiece.
 - c. Bring a favorite memento -- a book, a poem, a toy, a video, an article of clothing -- share it after dinner.
 - d. Have your child's favorite music playing in the back ground -- tell the story!
4. Plan a special evening for close family and friends when you REMEMBER. Ask everyone to bring a favorite photo and write down a special memory. Set time aside to sit in a circle and share the photos and memories.
5. Remember that it's okay -- it's even healthy -- to cry.
6. It's okay to stay in bed.... you will get out, when you are ready and able.
7. It's also okay to smile or even laugh, a bit. You're not being disloyal.
8. Buy yourself a gift. Wrap it. Write a note -- to you -- from your beloved child.
9. Buy someone less fortunate than you a gift.
10. Light a candle.



Christmas Past



I am spending Christmas
In the past this year,
A time of laughter
And good cheer.

When the kids were all gathered
Round the tree with delight,
And my heart took a picture
Of this most perfect night.

A warm fire and some eggnog,
Hugs and big smiles,
My heart and mind race back
Through time and miles.

The laughter and fun
We all shared is still there.
The Christmas of the Present
Is just too bare.

So I choose Christmas
Of the past gone years,
The ones that were not filled
With heartache and tears.

And if you care to join me,
All you have to do
Is gently close your eyes,
Remember a time, and in a
Second you will be there too.

Remember the love
From the past is still here.
It does not leave us,
And is always near.

So no matter where you
Spend Christmas this year,
Be filled with the love
Of the past gone years.

by Sheila Simmons
In memory of her son,
Steve Simmons
3-24-1970 to 10-19-1999

Thoughts from the Chair

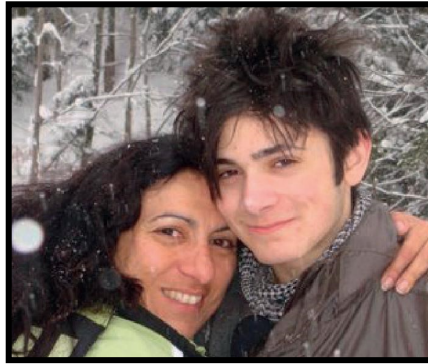
Dear Compassionate Friends

And so it has arrived again. The winter, the festivities that come with it, the hustle and bustle that accompanies this time of year; and all I want to do is hide under a duvet. You too? Yes, I thought so.

While the rest of the world appears to be getting ready for “the most wonderful time of the year,” we are bracing ourselves for the grief triggers to hit us and developing our coping strategies. What is it for you? I’ve ordered more wool than is seemly and will be knee deep in crochet projects for the duration.

The most common advice we hear is “Be kind to yourself. Do what feels right for you.” This, on the face of it, sounds like good advice, but how do you balance the conflicting needs and expectations of your family and friends with your own at such a complicated time of year? Or do you just escape? Is there any escape? In the second year, I was at the hairdressers and the topic, inevitably, turned to the Christmas plans. I said that I would like to escape the whole thing if that were possible but I couldn’t see how. Bless her, while my hair was being treated, the kindly girl went off to her phone and googled “escape from Christmas” and came back, very pleased to give me a list of places that I could go where Christmas wasn’t celebrated. “I’ll come with you if you like”, she said. Her kindness and thoughtfulness touched me. Of course, there is no escape really is there. All we can do is navigate it as best we can.

I was contemplating whether I could give any realistic advice on the things that people are troubled by the most at this time of year. Do you accept that kindly meant invitation? Do you make a polite excuse and decline? Do you satisfy the needs of those around you at the cost of your own? Do you stick to old traditions or do you do it completely differently? Cards or no cards? How do you sign



them? Do you include your child’s name or not?

The perplexities are endless, and sorry, but this next paragraph doesn’t contain the answers to those questions. We all do it differently and we may change our minds from year to year. One year, you may feel more robust and find that you can cook a big meal and have a family day of sorts. Another year you may not be able to face it and retreat to your own space for a while. It is, quite literally, a movable feast.

The important thing to remember is that it doesn’t matter. There are no rules. In the bigger picture, the only thing that matters, surely, is that we find a coping strategy that gets each of us through this time and out the other side. Most of us have done it before and will do it again.

But what advice would I give those for whom this is the first time? I remember my first Christmas. The pain was tangible and I found that I could barely breathe. I hadn’t yet found The Compassionate Friends and looking back on it, (what I can remember for it is a bit of a blur really) I was quite literally lost. I remember thinking that I should try. That people would expect things from me. So I did. I went to a shopping center and broke down sobbing in a department store. I might not remember much about that first Christmas, but I certainly remember the assistant trying to help me in that shop and how painful the whole experience was for me and must have been for her too. Why did I put

myself through it? To comply. That can be the only explanation for what I was doing. Placing myself in a busy shopping center buying gifts for people when all I wanted to do was scream. Why? Who needed a gift that badly for pity’s sake? But, I wanted to be what everyone expected me to be and I was hurting myself in the process. I still can’t explain why I thought I could achieve such a mammoth task. I guess it was because I didn’t give myself the freedom to “do what’s right for me”. I didn’t give myself permission to “do it differently” and I certainly wasn’t “being gentle on myself” because no-one had told me I could or should.

I resolved then that things needed to be put into perspective. That I needed to find a way to balance the needs of others against my needs and to be proportionate. That’s one piece of advice.

The other is the one I live by the most. Don’t be quick to take offence. Remember, the non-bereaved speak a different language to us and a lot of what they say can get lost in translation. They also don’t have the same knowledge as we do so they don’t really know what to do for the best. So, for what it’s worth, my advice is to take deep breaths and shrug your shoulders. I’ll give you an example.

We used to get hundreds of Christmas cards before. Then, the year that James died we got 6; one of those said “chin up” and another said “we hope that you are feeling better now”. As if we were recovering from a cold! It really isn’t worth getting upset about these things. People need educating, yes, of course. That is why the work we do here at The Compassionate Friends is so important. We can inform people but of course what they do with that information is really a matter for them. As for us, the bereaved? Well we have enough to cope with with-

I Am Your Sister and Always Will Be

"I am your sister and always will be." That's how Susie signed her cards to me. After a while, she shortened it to, "I am..." And of course I knew the rest of it. Susie was two and one-half years younger than I. She was alive one evening talking on the phone to Mom about the Oscars and to Dad about moving. The next day she was found. Whatever it was—it ended her life and changed mine forever.

There was a wonderful side of my sister that I didn't pay enough attention to. She was a kind and loving person, always ready to shelter lost animals and lost souls. When she was in a good mood, her smiles warmed my heart. Yet I spent most of my life wishing that things were different: wishing that she thought more of herself, wishing that she would take my advice, wishing that she were happier, wishing that we could accept each other.

Now, for two years, I've done nothing but wish she were here so we could have another chance to work at our relationship. Now, I wish that I had been able to give her my unconditional love and support. (She needed it and deserved it.) Now, I wish that I could have been with her that night so she would not have been alone. Now, I wish that I would have held her in my arms and told her how very much I loved her. Because, Susie, I am your sister and always will be.

Michele Walters TCF Baltimore, MD
(In Memory of My Sister, Susie)



Candles in December

My sadness seems reflected in the music that I hear....
Every young one's glowing face reminds me you're not here.
Shoppers crowd the festive stores; emotions all run high
This world I was a part of once, before that sad July.

This season's meant for happy times: for love, warm hearts, and cheer.
But grieving families 'round the world remember those not here.
We struggle through the season, lighting candles to proclaim
Our children aren't forgotten, 'round the world our candles flame.

I slowly pass through gates thrown wide one clear, cold Christmas Day.
No toys or playthings do I bring — those gifts of yesterday.
I carry with me just a polished heart of granite made
And walk with grief to where she lies in a silent, silvered glade.

"Merry Christmas, love," I whisper — the quiet words seem so forlorn.
"I've brought my heart for you to keep, my gift this Christmas morn.
It is filled with all my love, though this one's carved of stone....
I'll place it here — it will be near — you'll never be alone."

We parents don't forget, my love; this month we will unite
To honor all we'll light a wall of candles through the night.
The world will know our memories glow with love that's deep and true.
We'll stand as one, and 'fore it's done the Heavens will know, too.

Please keep my gift, beloved child, close to where you lie,
And know my love surrounds you 'til the day I too shall die.
On the tenth of December my candle's flame will light
I pray you'll see the love we'll free into the starry night.

Sally Migliaccio

Thoughts from the Chair *(Continued from last page)*

out worrying about some Victorian traditions and how people apply them to us in our fractured world. Breathe, and shrug your shoulders.

Above all, hold on. We are all in this together and we will get through it together. The Facebook groups and Forum are good places for support and the Helpline stays open even on Christmas Day thanks to the dedication and commitment of our army of

volunteers. If you need us, we are here for you.

Lastly, and most importantly, find some space for you. Allow yourself to lean into the grief, the missing, and the longing for your child. Honor them and keep them close. We don't need to pretend. Who are we pretending for? The memories of Christmas past may sustain you in Christmas present. Let them come crashing

in and allow yourself a smile remembering those happy times. We need them.

One moment, one breath, one memory at a time.

I hope that the coming weeks are gentle on you all and I send you my sincerest wishes for a peaceful Christmas holiday season.

Maria (James's mum)

The Good Fight

Before our son's death turned our lives upside down, I cannot recall spending any time in cemeteries. Two elderly relatives, who had lived out their span, are in cemeteries now, and their loss is felt at holiday gatherings. When I was a child, our Sunday School class took a tour of the pre-Revolutionary War cemetery behind the historic old church I attended. I remember being shocked at the number of tiny markers for the very young who, our teacher said, were so susceptible to diseases in those colonial days. We were simply told that people had large families then because they knew illness would take some of the children. We were never exposed to the notion that this was a tragedy to these real people so long ago.

Many years later, when my grandmother was in her 80's, she told me that the child born before her had died at the age of three. At the age of 13, Grandmother was stunned to find her mother caressing this child's clothing and weeping in the attic of their home in the rolling hills of Kentucky. I was a parent then and I thought, "well, of course Grandmother's mother was sad, but she had other children". I didn't know, did I? Who among us did?

Now, when I go to my son's marker, I examine the other headstones carefully. Did everyone in the family live to an acceptable age? When I find one that clearly indicates the death of a child, I study the parents markers closely. How long did they have to live without their child? Sometimes the number of years takes my breath away. I am to learn from this. Others 'made it'. So can I. Without Compassionate Friends I wouldn't have had a clue as to HOW they made it, and probably would have given up the effort.

I read the inscriptions on these older markers to see if they provide any clues as to what helped those before me carry on. I found one that summed it up. It read:

"LIVING, YOU MADE IT GOODLIER TO LIVE"

"DEAD, YOU MAKE IT EASIER TO DIE"

So — we are to endure. We do know what it was to live, but now we have the added dimensions of courage, love and steadfastness. And, though we no longer hope for our own death as a release from the pain, we, unlike most "other people", will not fear it when we have finished fighting the good fight.

~ Pat Kuzela, TCF Atlanta



Pictures on a Mantle

**As I wake each morning, the first thing that I see
Your picture on our mantle smiling down at me.
I whisper good morning, I Love You Forever,
Make a wish that can never be.**

**Here's your picture as an infant, sitting on my knee
Now you're a toddler, how daring you could be
First trip on the bus, your first day of school
All the new friends you met.
Your first dog, first trip to the beach
How much better could it get?**

**There's your soccer team, your baseball team
Oh the pride you made me feel
A bases clearing triple to end the game
Could this be for real?**

**Out of grade school, on to high school
Your innocence almost gone
Your first car, your first prom
A young man you've become**

**A bumpy road in high school
Trouble we couldn't see
Lots of jobs, two years of college
An Associate's Degree.
At last, you were close to being
The person you wanted to be.**

**When you left that fateful night
You said, "Dad, I'll see you then."
How could I have ever known
That I would never see you again?**

**I know you're out there somewhere
In a place we cannot see
Your picture on God's mantle now
Smiling down at me.**

Tom Murphy

Greater Cincinnati TCF - East Chapter, OH

TRADITIONS: WHAT TO KEEP AND WHAT TO LET GO

Traditions are very important to our families, and we may share large and small ones throughout the year. Some may be in conjunction with significant events like a graduation or a wedding, and others occur annually on birthdays and holidays. Traditions are passed down through generations, creating comforting experiences and memories that provide a sense of belonging. After our child, grandchild, brother, or sister dies, however, what once was comforting can be painful and intolerable.

This holiday time of the year is often particularly hard for managing different needs within our bereaved families. Whether a few months have passed, a few years, or decades, the empty chair that belonged to our child, sibling, or grandchild, requires us to re-evaluate how traditions feel. Trying to keep a tradition that fit our “before” family may not feel the same or as good.

It is especially important to recognize the differing needs of siblings and parents when deciding what to keep and what to let go. For a parent, trying to continue a tradition as it was but with one less child can be very heartbreaking. For a bereaved sibling, losing a tradition that they came to depend on can feel like they’re losing even more and have less to count on than ever. When one sibling remains, it can feel overly burdensome to be the sole daughter or son who carries those traditions.

What can we do to manage such deep and personal needs that differ in a family after substantial loss? Here are some steps that can help.

- Sit down together and discuss how everyone is feeling about the upcoming holidays.
- Allow everyone to share how continuing each tradition

makes them feel and which may be prohibitively distressing this year.

- Listen compassionately to one another, understanding that needs can vary widely within any loving family unit.
- Work hard to compromise. Try to differentiate what might be difficult for a family member to continue from what would be unbearable.
- Eliminate the ones, for now, that would bring more harm than benefit to any family member.
- Reduce holiday expectations so that each family member has a chance to cherish a tradition that is meaningful and grieve what has been lost.
- Keep traditions that are too upsetting for anyone until another year. Individual and family needs change year to year, and there may be room for those another time.

Having these challenging discussions can be surprisingly valuable as they prompt deeper sharing that can bring us closer. Even long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings can find decision making about what to keep and what to let go of painful at different stages. Allow the flexibility to change when something doesn’t feel right since we may be surprised by painful triggers. As we remain open and flexible through each year that passes, we help our families keep some traditions, modify others, and cherish what remains.

SHARI O’LOUGHLIN



French Toast



I stand here before the stove. All the ingredients are here. The eggs, the milk, vanilla, cinnamon, and sugar. The frying pan is heating slowly, melting the butter, and still I stand in my robe and slippers.

I pick up an egg to break it in the bowl, but I just can’t do it. I want so much to fix French toast because my husband loves it so. Just like my son did all his life, right up until he died. I’ve lived this scene so many times since then, always with a tear and a sigh.

We’d had French toast at least once a week for more years than I can remember. How they ate! I’d laugh and complain because I had to cook so much.

Once, in Florida, when we had French toast for breakfast in a restaurant with friends, he said. “This is ok, but you ought to taste my mom’s!” I can still hear him saying it.

Now I just can’t do it, I cannot cook French toast! My husband never asks, and while I stand before the stove and weep he pretends not to notice. But I know he understands. I just can’t cook French toast... **NOT YET.**

—Fay Harden, “Songs from the Edge”



LOVED & ALWAYS REMEMBERED
OUR DECEMBER CHILDREN
Birthdays



Billy Elmo Brantley, Jr.	Son	Inez Brantley
Kyesha Brown	Daughter	Sharon & Zerroke Jones
Ayden Champion	Son	Mechelle & Eric Champion
Drew Winstead	Son	Gwynn Winstead
Matthew Cossa	Son	Bill & Amy Cossa
Patrick Lee	Son	Cheryl Lee
Davis Peacock	Son	Kim Hasty
Lily Jane Thorton	Daughter	Elizabeth Jeffress
Gena Kuchyt	Daughter	Tiffani & Patrick Kuchyt
Dana Elizabeth Rabeler	Daughter	Lawton & Valerie Rabeler
Austin Wiggs	Son	Beth Davis
Caleb Woodlief	Son	Sandra Woodlief
Brent Upton	Son	Melanie and Bruce Upton
Stewart Scarborough	Daughter	Lynn & Emerson Scarborough
Dillon Jeffreys	Son	June Jeffreys
Brian Darnell	Son	Pam & Pete Harris
Brent Damery III	Son	Lou Frickman & Stephanie Damery
	Son	Brent & Andrea Damery
Cameron Nash	Son	Melissa Nash
Hannah Victoria Pearce	Daughter	Lisa Pearce
Jenifer Heintzelman Rice	Daughter	Richard & Constance Heintzelman
Christopher Alan Brothers	Son	Ronda & Rank Marshall
Hannah Claire Bolton	Daughter	Sherri & Bob Bolton
Joey Goolden	Son	Pam Goolden
Mehdy Hazheer	Son	Mir & Hafsa Hazheer
Justin Moore	Son	Barbi Moore

A Birthday Message

I can't call you on your birthday and sing Happy Birthday.

I can't see your wish list so that I can buy you a gift.

I can't give you a birthday hug and kiss.

I can't celebrate with you.

I can visit you at the cemetery.

I can hurt and long for you.

I can think about you.

I can share my sadness with whoever calls.

I want to do what I cannot and not what I can.

I Love you.

Happy Birthday.

(original by Phyllis Levine in beyond tears)





**LOVED & ALWAYS REMEMBERED
OUR DECEMBER CHILDREN
Anniversaries**



Denzel Russ	Son	Olivia Russ
Cameron Dow	Son	Tannetta van Vlissingen & Mike Bissict
Mark Grzyboski	Son	Jane Rockwell
Alex Flora	Son	Lynn & Alex "Butch" Flora
Wendi Rene Hutchins	Daughter	Margaret & Chip Hutchins
Angel Woods	Daughter	Ronette Wheeler
Gavin William Boyd Westover	Son	Ted & Patty Westover
Brent Damery III	Son	Brent & Andrea Damery
	Son	Lou Frickman & Stephanie Damery
Timothy Reedy	Son	Kelly Boutwell
Hannah Claire Bolton	Daughter	Sherri & Bob Bolton
Skyler Norris	Son	Carol Norris
LaTonya Ellis-Hoffman II	Daughter	LaTonya Ellis
Dr. Empres-Janeen Hughes	Daughter	Donald R. Hughes
Karen Jenks	Daughter	Carolyn Nelson
Kyesha Brown	Daughter	Sharon & Zerroke Jones
Alomaun Dunn	Son	Tomocus Alston
Blake Rosin	Son	Christine Rosin
Ariana Taylor Dawson	Daughter	Paul & Shelly Dawson
Amy Elizabeth Brinson	Daughter	Brenda Hoffee
Dustin Poe	Son	Sharon Poe
Ben Feldman	Son	Polly Feldman
Kittrell Travis "Kitt" Blake	Son	Sallie Summers & Keith Blake
Kemp Jefferson	Son	Lynn Morris
Nathanael Holt	Son	Terri & Bill Holt
Zachary Poisson	Son	Jean-Marie & Lani Poisson
Kevan Hill	Son	Beth & Mike Hill

The Reason For TCF Meetings:

One could ask, "Why go and listen to the woes of other people when it is easier to get wrapped up in our own? It is not to compare tragedies, nor assess the right or wrong means of grieving, nor to pressure or complicate or confuse a bereaved parent with timetables of grief. This is not the reasoning behind TCF meetings.

When a child of a family dies, the emotional pain can be intense. It is tempting at times to try to run either into solitude or avoidance. A balance is needed to survive and live more than a resigned existence. Finding a way isn't easy when the "rest of the world" rushes by, taking little notice that our life has changed.

The monthly meetings of The Compassionate Friends is a special time we can set aside to gain and maintain our balance. We need a lot of encouragement to endure and experience our emotions and to express ourselves while grieving. Coming to a meeting can help alleviate the feeling of being alone in sorrow. The environment of other bereaved parents offers a means of keeping in touch with reality, in which there can be a sharing and mutual understanding. There is sustained support knowing that others are willing to acknowledge that though a child's song might be over, the melody of memories will remain woven throughout the remainder of our lives.

— N.Hunt, TCF Sioux Falls SD



The Compassionate Friends

Wake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

**The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
Wake County Chapter
PO Box 6602
Raleigh, NC 27628-6602**



**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.
Wake County Chapter
PO Box 6602
Raleigh, NC 27628-6602**

Chapter Leaders
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& Hospitality

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