

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

Livonia, Michigan Chapter



November 2020
Volume 32, Number 11

The Compassionate Friends is an international self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents and siblings.

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Meeting Information

When: First Thursday of
each month. 7-9 p.m.
Where: St. Timothy's Church
16700 Newburgh Road, Livonia,
East side of Newburgh, 1/4 mile S. of
Six Mile

Coming Events:

November 5th- see info about meeting
on this page.

No Craft Day

November 17th - 6:30 pm - Chapter
Dinner: TCF Dinner-at Richard's
Family Restaurant, 39305 Plymouth
Rd., Livonia 48150.
Call Kathy 734-306-3930 or
katjrambo@gmail.com
See info about Annual Candle Lighting
on page 7

A Note from our Chapter Leadership

Our next meeting will be on November 5th!

We will have a virtual meeting via Zoom* starting at 7 pm.

Our meeting place, St. Timothy's Pres. Church, is still limiting our group from using the church. *Please contact Gail (angel4gail2016@gmail.com) if you are interested in being included in our Zoom meetings. Your email addresses will be kept on file to use on any future Zoom meetings.

Our December meeting will be on December 3rd.

We are going to have a Candle Lighting at the church in the parking lot starting at 7:00 pm and will last about an hour. Restrooms will not be available since we cannot meet in the church.

Just a reminder: We will be meeting in our Michigan December weather so please dress accordingly.

We know that this Holiday season is hard on all who are grieving and double hard with the Covid 19 situation and we are here to show support to those who need it.

Please take good care of yourselves ... and be safe.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE, WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE

First Thanksgiving

The thought of being thankful fills my
heart with dread.

They'll all be feigning gladness, not a
word about her said.

These heavy shrouds of blackness
enveloping my soul,
pervasive, throat-catching,
writhe in me, and coil.

I must, I must acknowledge,
just express her name,

so all sitting at the table,
know I'm thankful that she came.

Though she's gone from us forever
and we mourn to see her face,

not one minute of her living,
would her death ever replace.

So I stop the cheerful gathering,
though my voice quivers, quakes,
make a toast to all her living.

That small tribute's all it takes.
*Genesee Bourdeau Gentry, from Stars in
the Deepest - After the Death of a Child*

Thanks For a Little While

Thank you for life, for its good times
and bad.

Thank you for love, even when I can't
feel it.

Thank you for the love (we used to
share)

(Continued on page 4)

Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

This month, we remember the children who are so deeply and sadly missed. Please take a few moments to place them and their parents in your thoughts.

Let Us Remember Them Always

Child Parent, Grandparent, Sibling Date Age

Names available to membership



Let Us Celebrate Their Births

*Softly ... may peace
replace heartache
and cherished memories
remain with you always on
your child's birthday*

For the arms that held me tight.
Thank you for my family
In faraway places,
In different times.
Thank you for the songs we sang,
For the dreams we saved,
For the smiles we shared.
Thank you for the strength that eludes
me just now.
Thank you for the weakness that sends
me to my knees.
Thank you for the searching, the
reaching, the hoping.
Thank you for the bonds of memory
that hold me in place,
Even when I don't believe in it any-
more,
Or...forget what it is all about.
Thank you most of all,
For having been blessed with the love
I have known,
Even now when I fear I will forget it.
Thank you for memory and
For filling it full measure for me.
It wasn't nearly long enough, but it
will have to do.
Thanks for the moments we danced.
Thanks for the little while.
Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D

Looking for Your Gift

Bereaved families often face the holidays with fear and trepidation. Just the fact, holidays continue to go on, can cause outrage. Our sadness is monumental, and causes our bodies to resist moving on. We need to be gentle with ourselves; we are going through an emotional rehabilitation. Holidays often renew our grief, even if we are a distance from fresh grief.

We need to selectively choose what traditions are important to our family. If we over commit, we set our selves up for a let down when we cannot meet our goals. If you have some traditions that are very important and you are not physically up to doing them, you will find friends and extended family will feel honored if you ask for their help. Most people want to help you get through the holidays, but don't know what to do. Give them the opportunity to feel they are helpful in your healing.

Grieving cannot be put on the shelf until the holidays are over. We need to take time to feel our grief, and express our sadness. We also need to take time to try and put a bit of normality in our lives. We must remember it is not disrespectful to laugh. I'm sure our loved one would want us to surround ourselves with caring people who can help us through the holidays. A caring supportive person is one who encourages us to be the best we can be, not one who expects us to be as we used to be.

Our healing will eventually cause our pain to move out and make room for our loved ones memories. We learn to make a new life for ourselves. Holidays get better and we learn how to live again.

We tend to think of life's richest moments as being the joyous, fun filled, carefree days prior to losing our children and siblings. But, as I search for the most meaningful things that have given me strength and a real appreciation for life, they certainly do include the pain, overcoming my despair, losing my son, grandson, and six siblings. We cherish the friendships that doesn't always demand a smiling face, and those with the warm touch that says, "share your pain, let me be a part of your grief, don't worry about making us uneasy with tears, we have all been there." Much healing can take place through sharing as we learn to be very honest and courageous with our feelings, which helps us to find hope. Hope helps to restore our love for life, and gives us the strength to survive.

This holiday we will all miss our loved ones, who are no longer with us. Though it has been through much pain, you probably have never been so close to your child or sibling, or shared such a large part of your life with them. We hope the memories that ache with pain, can also bring you thoughts of love. For those of us who are further removed from our early grief, who can look back and appreciate the strength for our struggle, the compassion from seeing other's pain, wanting to become functional human

beings again so we can contribute to making a better world, are gifts our children and siblings have given to us for our survival. These gifts are greater than any fancy bow tied box can contain. Look for your gifts and cherish them.

*Marie Hofmockel
TCF Valley Forge, PA*

WHY ME? - The Unanswerable Question

Most of us have pondered this question at some time in our lives, especially since the death of our children. It resurfaces periodically in discussions with the newly bereaved. I have never been completely satisfied with the responses given and have gone away considering "Why me?" to be an unanswerable question.

That was until recently when an article was brought to my attention. The writer states that no one is immune to disaster. "Whatever else separates us, suffering is the common bond of our humanity." He told the tale of several people shattered by great losses, including the death of a child, each searching for an answer to "Why, why me?" They came together in their suffering. Though unable to prevent the pain, these fellow grievers found that by sharing their hurt, standing together and supporting one another they could endure devastating losses.

"Why me?" is a singular and lonely question, but it doesn't have to be. Together we can give hope to the hopeless and comfort to the suffering. All we need to do is reach out, then maybe the "Why me?" will answer itself.

*Polly Moore
TCF Nashville, TN*

Thanksgiving Prayer
I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful
To think of losing you.

Death can't claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.

Time can never bring you back.
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.

To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow.
I pray you find with faith and time The
blessings of each tomorrow.

Charlotte Irick
TCF, Idaho Falls, ID

Your Compassionate Friend

I can tell from that look, friend that
you need to talk,
So come, take my hand and let's go for
a walk.
See, I'm not like the others, I won't
shy away,
Because I want to hear what you've
got to say.
Your child has died and you need to be
heard,
But they don't want to hear a single
word.
They tell you your child's "with God"
so be strong.
They say all the "right" things that
somehow sound wrong.
They're just hurting for you and trying
to say,
They'd give anything to help take your
pain away.
But they're struggling with feelings
they can't understand
So forgive them for not offering a
helping hand.
I'll walk in your shoes for more than
a mile.
I'll wait while you cry and be glad if
you smile.

I won't criticize you or judge you or
scorn,
I'll just stay and listen 'til your night
turns to morn.

Yes, the journey is hard and unbear-
ably long,
And I know that you think that you're
not quite that strong.
So just take my hand, 'cause I've got
time to spare,
And I know how it hurts friend, for I
have been there.

See, I owe a debt you can help me
repay
For not long ago, I was helped the
same way.
As I stumbled and fell, thru a world so
unreal,
So believe when I say that I know how
you feel.
I don't look for praise or financial gain
And I'm sure not the kind who gets
joy out of pain.

I'm just a strong shoulder who'll be
here till the end –
I'll be your Compassionate Friend
Steve Channing TCF Winnipeg
In Memory of my daughter, Kimberly
Susanne Channing

Some Suggestions for Thanksgiving

Throughout our lives, expectations
of things to come are based upon past
experiences. If, in the past, you had set
a glorious table and were the perfect
host or hostess, it is very possible that
friends and family will expect more of
the same this year. They may not be
aware that you are not looking toward

the holidays with a fun and games
attitude. They probably do not know
that in anticipation of Thanksgiving,
Christmas and Hanukkah, you may
feel anxiety and fear. They are prob-
ably thinking this year will be differ-
ent and some sadness will accompany
it, but I don't think they are aware of
your anguish, especially if it's been
"awhile."

I would like to suggest to you that
in fairness to yourself you need to be
honest about your feelings and, just as
important, you need to communicate
these feelings to those around you. I
really don't think it is necessary for
you to believe that because you set a
tradition and always made the turkey,
fried the latkes, and always had the
family over, you need to feel obligated
to do it again this year. Perhaps you
would like to tell everyone:

* Someone else will have to do dinner
this year.

* You want to make dinner in your
home, but you need lots of help be-
cause you don't have the energy to do
it.

* You want to go to the parties, but
you are afraid you may break down
and cry and you want them to know in
advance this is really okay.

* You want to tell them it's okay to
talk about your child. Not to, makes it
very uncomfortable.

The list goes on, but the point is that
to pretend everything is "just fine" is a
lie, and that's not fair to you or to the
people who you love.

Diane Zarnkoff
TCF, Simi Valley, CA

Let Us Celebrate Their Births

SIBS

A Unique Grief

The loss of a sibling in adulthood can have many meanings. It is the loss of a brother or sister who shared a unique co-history with you. This person was an integral part of your formative past, for better or worse. Your brother or sister shared common memories, along with critical childhood experiences and family history. When death takes your brother or sister, it also takes away one of your connections to the past. That brother or sister knew you in a very special way, unlike those who know you now as an adult. Consequently, a constant is gone. This can make you feel insecure, for although you may or may not have had frequent contact with your sibling, at least you knew

another member of your family was there. Your sibling holds a symbolic place in your life even if your brother or sister did not have an impact on your current day-to-day activities. This brother or sister's death can make you feel older and indicate that your family is dwindling. Because you likely have the same genetic background, the death of a sibling may increase concerns about your own mortality. And in some cases, the death of a sibling may suddenly make you an only or the eldest child — creating a profound shift in the role you may have held for all or most of your life. This new role, when combined with your natural grief, can make it difficult to wade through the many complicated emotions that arise when a sibling dies. Some adults who have lost an adult sibling experience a

change in their relationship with their parents. Since siblings often feel their grief isn't fully acknowledged and their parents are focused on overcoming their loss, they can feel abandoned by their parents. At a time when they need them the most, their parents are disabled by their own grief. It's critical that surviving siblings get the support they need from others in their family or community. This will help meet not only the surviving sibling's needs, but also temper any feelings of resentment or abandonment.

healgrief.org

Remember Me

To the living, I am gone,
To the sorrowful, I will never return,
To the angry, I was cheated,
But to the happy, I am at peace,
And to the faithful, I have never left.

I cannot speak, but I can listen.
I cannot be seen, but I can be heard.
So as you stand upon a shore gazing at a beautiful sea,
As you look upon a flower and admire its simplicity,
Remember me.

Remember me in your heart:
Your thoughts, and your memories,
Of the times we loved,
The times we cried,
The times we fought,
The times we laughed.
For if you always think of me, I will never have gone.

Margaret Mead



Need to Talk to Someone Between Meetings Telephone Friends

The people listed below have volunteered to take your calls:

Linda Houghtby - Long term illness - (734) 591-3062

Catherine Walker - Loss of Only Child - (248) 921-2938

Charli Johnston - Suicide - 734-812-2006

Marlene Hofmann - Drug related death - 734-331-9919

Bob Vitolins - A father's grief - (313) 882-8632

Dana and Brandy Bumstead - Loss of an infant - (313) 447-8144

Kathy Rambo - Sudden Death - (734) 306-3930

Remember that our chapter has a Facebook page. It is a closed page, so you just need to search for The Compassionate Friends of Livonia, Michigan and ask to join.

TCF CHAT ROOM: www.compassionatefriends.org

The chat rooms are moderated and are open at different times. There is one open most evenings from 10-11 p.m. They are all moderated which means that all the chat rooms have a trained facilitator in them.

National Mailing Address: PO Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522; Phone: (630) 990-0010; Toll Free: (877)969-0010; Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

OTHER TCF CHAPTERS IN OUR AREA:

Ann Arbor: Mike Fedel: MikeFedela2@gmail.com; 734-998-0360 ; 3rd Sunday, 2:30 to 4:30 pm - First Presbyterian Church (Vance Room) 1432 Washtenaw, Ann Arbor

St. Clair Shores: 2nd Wed. Kathy Joerin ; 586-293-6176, kjmac21@aol.com

Detroit: Kellie West Outer Drive Methodist Church, 12065 West Outer Drive, Detroit ; 2nd Wed., 6:30 - 8:30; 734-660-9557.

Troy: St. Paul's Methodist Church, 620 Romeo, Rochester, MI 3rd Thursday 7-9; Tina@586-634-0239

South Rockwood TCF Chapter: Southwood United Methodist Church, 6311 S. Huron River Drive. South Rockwood, MI 48179; 3rd Tues. of month meeting - 7 pm; Sheri Schooley, Leader; Contact Karen 734-672-7469

Tecumseh TCF Chapter: First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. Chicago, Tecumseh, 4th Sunday of the month, 2-4 pm, Marsha & Jeff DiCenzo 517-918-5608 & 517-358-1883



PLEASE REMEMBER

Siblings are welcome to attend the Livonia Compassionate Friend meetings. We ask that you be at least

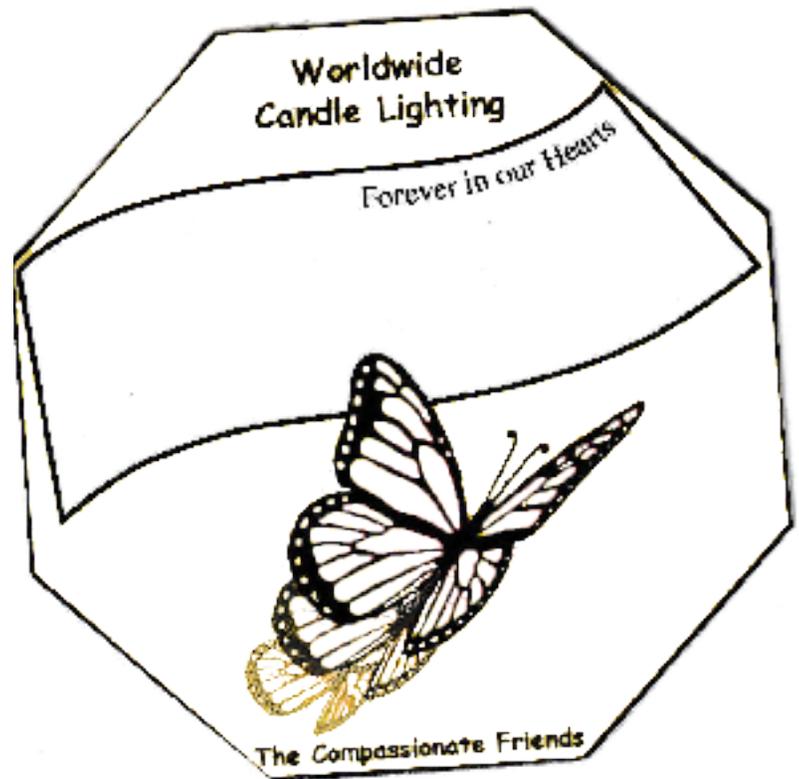
Livonia Chapter Page

Directions for making your own ornament:

You can use the ornament template provided as is, cut it out and decorate with your child's name, a picture, stickers and/or the year 2020. Please do not use any birth or death dates.

You can also cut it out, trace it onto different paper like scrapbook paper or cardstock, and then decorate as you like.

The next step is to laminate or use clear contact paper so that the ornament can be sealed and sustain our Michigan weather. Laminate and/or contact paper can be purchased at local stores and the office stores will laminate for you. You need to leave approximately ½" edge around the ornament so water cannot reach the ornament. Make a small hole at top on the laminate and put wire or string in the hole and attach it to the Memory tree.



UPDATE ON 24th WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING FOR OUR CHAPTER 2020

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting held 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 13th, 2020 at 7:00 pm local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Since the corona virus is still an issue, we will not be allowed to hold our Candle Lighting at Kellogg Park in Plymouth, Michigan this year.

"The Walk of Trees" will still be held by the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce in the park and our chapter will be a part of this as in prior years. We have decided to do the ornaments for the Memory Trees a little different this year. We will be asking any family who would like to have an ornament on the tree to make their own and place it on one of the trees. We will offer a template in our newsletter (page 7) and you can be creative with this template or design your own. There will be a size stipulation (no larger than 5"x 5") for the ornament and we can give some ideas. You may also purchase an ornament of your choosing, but remember the trees are in an open park and there is a possibility of it being removed. November 21, 2020 will be the first day you may place your ornament on the Memory Trees. Please be respectful of other families who will be participating in this new way of remembering our loved ones on our Memory Trees.

If you have any questions, please call one of the following: TCF # 734-778-0800, Joyce 734-560-6883, Mary 313-550-5410 or Cindy 734-837-3722.

A Love Gift is a gift of money to Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but may also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, simply a gift from someone who wants to make a donation to help in the work of the Livonia Compassionate Friends. Love Gift form on back page.

- ♥ Glenn & Carol Mead "Happy 37th Birthday Bobby. We love & miss you more & more each day. Forever in our hearts & thoughts. Love, Mom, Dad, Katie, DJ, Addison & Heidi"
- ♥ Greg & Sharon Black "In memory of our precious son Jordan. Missing you more each day. Love, Mom, Dad & Stephanie"
- ♥ Tom & Connie McCann "Happy Birthday Ryfro 10/26. We love and miss you"
- ♥ Tom & Connie McCann "In memory of our sons; Ryan "Ryfro", Tom Jr & Bryan "Bryfro" Soupis considered a son to our family & Mark "Sparky" Abbott, Joe Coffey, Jim "Jimmy" Vick"
- ♥ Lee & Rhonda Temple "In memory of our beautiful daughter Alyssa on her birthday 11/19. You are forever missed and always loved. May you be dancing with the angels on your birthday. We love you, Mom, Dad, Justin and Brandon"

TCF Livonia Chapter
Brenda Brummel
10531 Calumet Trail
Gaylord, MI 49735

November 2020

If any of you would be willing to get the newsletter via the internet,
please email me. Thanks, Brenda Brummel

LOVE GIFTS

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Love Gift Donation of \$ _____ in Memory of _____

Message: _____

Direct my gift to: _____ Outreach (Printing, postage, phone , web
_____ General Fund (90% local; 10% national)

Mail to: Rhonda Temple, 25164 Hanover St., Dearborn Heights, MI 48125

