

# The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

## Livonia, Michigan Chapter



**October 2016**  
**Volume 28, Number 10**

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

### **Chapter Leader**

Joyce Gradinscak  
Catherine Walker  
Sally Cassidy  
734-778-0800

### **Newsletter Editor**

Brenda Brummel  
10531 Calumet Trail  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
231-585-7058  
bbwriter59@aol.com

### **Treasurer**

Rhonda Temple  
25164 Hanover St.  
Dearborn Heights, MI 48125

### **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:**

**NEXT MEETING -October 6-**  
Regular meeting - First time table,  
topic table, sibling table. Topic: Re: Do  
you wear an invisible mask when you  
are around some people? Why?  
**Craft Day - October 29th - see page 8**

**September 18th** -TCF Dinner-at  
Brann's Steakhouse (39715 6 Mile,  
Northville, MI) sign up at meeting  
or call Kathy 734-306-3930 or  
katjrambo@wowway.com.

## Halloween

It is here, this day of merriment  
And children's pleasure.  
Gremlins and goblins  
And ghosties at the door  
Of your house.  
And the other children  
Come to the door of your mind.  
Faces out of the past,  
Small ghosts with sweet, painted faces.  
They do not shout.  
Those children  
Who no longer march laughing  
On a cold Halloween night,  
They stand at the door of your mind –  
And you will let them in,  
So that you can give them  
The small gifts of your Halloween –  
A smile and a tear.  
*By Sascha Wagner,  
From her book "Wintersun"*

## October

The month of October brings with it  
a smorgasbord for the senses. We can  
hear the crunching and crackling of  
the leaves under our feet. We can see  
the brilliant reds; oranges and yellows  
splash the earth. We can feel the magi-  
cal approach of winter in the air.  
October is also the month for Hallow-  
een, a date synonymous with masks. As  
bereaved parents we have, at various  
times, worn many and varied masks.

We have masked our feelings of de-  
spair, sorrow and anguish for the sake  
of our loved ones, friends and co-work-  
ers. We have masked our feelings of  
anger and bitterness for the traditional  
belief that a kind God would not do  
this to innocence. Most importantly, we  
have masked the person we are becom-  
ing, the person living through the death  
of our child.

Let us celebrate the month of October  
by beginning to take off some of our  
masks. A very positive and helpful way  
to begin this process is to attend the  
next Compassionate Friends meeting.  
Share your sorrow, your fears, your  
bitterness and disappointment. Above  
all, share your progress and triumphs  
through the journey of grief. When you  
enter a room full of caring and support-  
ive people who have shared your grief,  
there is no reason to wear your mask.  
*TCF Greenville SC*

## Touch of Love

I would straighten your tie,  
smooth your collar,  
pick a bit of lint from your sleeve  
before you left for your day's affairs  
and I turned my attention to mine...  
Today, I brushed off a leaf  
that had fallen on your name.

*Doris Alsup,  
TCF Burlison, TX*

# 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**

<i>Child</i>	<i>Parent, Grandparent, Sibling</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Age</i>
Jenifer Lynn Tisch	Connie Bagalis	October 20	39 yrs
Idones	Jettowynne Barnes	October 26	37 yrs
Jeffrey	Kris Barry	October 03	4 yrs
Christopher Paul Bonnici	Sharon Bergeron	October 26	29 yrs
Anthony	Debra Blackledge	October 28	39 yrs
Amy Louise	Gregory Blackwood	October 11	24 yrs
Michael Gagnon	Mary Bodnar	October 27	23 yrs
Christopher	Jerry Bonnici	October 26	29 yrs
Amy Louise Blackwood	Beth Bouchard	October 11	24 yrs
Jacob Robert	Molly Brink	October 23	19 yrs
Ronald	Yvette Broda-Kaczynski	October 03	22 yrs
Jeffry Kucharski	Mary Burkett	October 25	31 yrs
Michael	Jerry and Nancy Burton	October 05	26 years
Mitchell	Doug and Amy Butler	October 05	14 yrs
Ian	Al and Michelle Clemens	October 25	17 yrs
Nicholas E. Cocora, Jr.	Flora A. Cocora	October 03	53 yrs
Adam Sebastian	Kristine Connell	October 12	15 yrs
Alec	Tom and Gina Cunningham	October 22	15 yrs
Zachary	Michelle Darling	October 21	14 yrs
Christen	Mike and Sheryl Edwards	October 13	20 yrs
Brian	Denise and Christopher Falzon	October 01	19 yrs
Jeff	Doug & Nancy Fortier	October 28	26 yrs
Jeff	Lindsay Fortier (sister)	October 28	26 yrs
Christopher Paul Bonnici	Frank & Michelle Foster	October 26	29 yrs
Lori	Bob and Mary Ann Furca	October 25	32 yrs
Michael	Mike and Mary Hartnett	October 05	18 yrs
Courtney Nicole	John and Brenda Hernandez	October 02	18 yrs
Dan	Dave and Linda Houghtby	October 30	17 yrs
Kimberly Erin Welch	Chris & Patty Ibbetson	October 07	31yrs
Andrew	Roman and Monica Imielowski	October 10	26 yrs
Mark Richard	Veronica & Arthur Juarez	October 24	52 yrs
Mark Richard	Wendy Juarez	October 24	52 yrs
Sara	Eileen Kolodin	October 30	34 yrs
Jillian White	John and Shelley McDermott	October 17	15 yrs
Wiley Garrick Moss	Lisa Moss	October 01	22 yrs
Gabe	Elizabeth & Gabrio Mulatti	October 03	42 yrs
Steve Nagle	Kirk and Suzanne Nagle	October 21	24 yrs
Matthew	Judy Nesler	October 02	3 days
Jenna Kay	Laura Neumann	October 25	20 yrs
Jennie	Julie Pack	October 18	24 yrs
Steven	Hal and Lynn Pape	October 10	18 yrs
Alisa Sumner	Louis Randall	October 30	44 yrs
John David	Debbie Ross	October 04	28 yrs
Navi	Harvinder and Jaspinder Sahi	October 14	21 yrs
Lucas	Dawn Serven	October 23	1 1/2 yrs
2 Paul	Brian and Cindy Shuster	October 14	26 yrs



Jessica R. Hanna	Sue Spalding	October 14	16 yrs
Justin	John and Kathy Spieker	October 29	28 yrs
Kristy Spence	Sharon and Jim Stanek	October 08	29 yrs
Allison	Linda Thompson	October 22	16 yrs
Sarah	David and Carol Thurmond	October 08	20 yrs
Joseph	Barbara and Gerald Valley	October 14	47 yrs
Jillian White	Robert White	October 17	15 yrs
Lucas Joshua Serven	Debra Wright	October 23	1 yr
Belal Safah	Laurie Ziolkowski	October 25	29 yrs

***Let Us Celebrate Their Births***

Charles	Mary and Charles Brant	October 17	40 yrs
Scott, Jr.	Scott and Laurel Cashero	October 19	19 yrs
Danny	Roger and Sally Cassidy	October 29	21 yrs
Nicholas E. Cocora, Jr.	Flora A. Cocora	October 01	53 yrs
John Strasser	Walt & Judy Dever	October 21	30 yrs
Danny	Carol Gains	October 27	19 yrs
Sara Marie	Peggy Gniewek	October 28	25 yrs
Shaun	Pat and Dorothy Hagler	October 03	24 yrs
Raisha E. Grace	ShaRonda Henry	October 30	23 yrs
Steven	Najwa Hillawi	October 01	35 yrs
Christopher David	Troy Horton	October 27	17 yrs
Chad Mitchell	Tom and Donna Howard	October 07	22 yrs
Michaela Noam	Adam & Gabriella Kaplan	October 18	6 yrs
Christian	Louis and Julia Kistic	October 19	23 yrs
Rebecca	Kay Krajewski	October 30	32 yrs
Max	Jim and Gail Lafferty	October 20	18 yrs
Bradley	Jennifer Lashbrook	October 10	18 yrs
Elaine	Mary Lou Levitan	October 09	29 yrs
Anthony Connolly "Tony"	Kristin Livingston	October 09	18 yrs
Stephen	Maria Elena Lopez	October 18	42 yrs
Chelsea	Chris and Kathie MacLean	October 27	16 yrs
Ryan	Connie McCann	October 26	23 yrs
Morgan	Renee McGregor	October 17	20 yrs
Travis	Bill and Tammy Miklaski	October 13	12 yrs
Kelli	Bob and Kay Mountford	October 01	20 yrs
Todd Muschott	Barney and Nancy Muschott	October 30	43 yrs
Michael Anthony Conn	Myrna Payton	October 16	19 yrs
Robert Joseph	Cindy & Mike Polesky	October 22	20 yrs
Eric	Cheryl Putz	October 22	21 yrs
Jason Perry	Teresa Reynolds	October 19	n/a
Greg	Greg and Sue Riley	October 25	34 yrs
Anthony Connolly	Lois Rodgers	October 09	18 yrs
Shaun Zemsky	Diann Romanek	October 01	29 yrs
Mark	Betty Scofield	October 23	58 yrs
Ashley	Christie Siegel	October 06	11 yrs
Jennifer Anne	Doug & Anne Sordyl	October 10	35 yrs
Justin	John and Kathy Spieker	October 18	28 yrs
Symphani Sykes-Wiliams	Lakesha Sykes	October 26	7 yrs
Ian	Brian & Kristina Taylor	October 21	17 yrs
Jeffrey Bartels	Elaine Urban	October 01	n/a
Dennis Bushnell	Linda Wall	October 22	45 yrs
Darla Elizabeth	Evan and Rebecca Warrenchuk	October 30	21 days
Jason	Jim and Cathy Whitfield	October 02	17 yrs
Reggie Williams	Franco Williams	October 16	34 yrs

## But You're Absolutely Normal!

Grief is a normal reaction to loss, and it shows up in many ways you might not expect. If you've:

- Been angry with doctors or nurses for not doing enough
- Been sleeping too much or not enough
- Noticed a change in appetite
- Felt no one understands what you're going through
- Felt friends should call more or call less or leave you alone or invite you along more often
- Bought things you didn't need
- Considered selling everything and moving
- Had headaches, upset stomachs, weakness, lethargy, more aches and pains
- Been unbearable, lonely, and depressed
- Been crabby
- Cried for no apparent reason
- Found yourself obsessed with thoughts of the deceased
- Been forgetful, confused, uncharacteristically absentminded
- Panicked over little things
- Felt guilty about things you have or haven't done
- Gone to the store every day
- Forgotten why you went somewhere
- Called friends and talked for a long time
- Called friends and wanted to hang up after only a brief conversation
- Not wanted to attend social functions you usually enjoyed
- Found yourself unable to concentrate on written material
- Been unable to remember what you just read you

These are all common reactions to grief. They take up to two years (or more) to pass completely, but they will pass. You'll never forget the person who has died, but your life will again become normal, even if it is never exactly the same. Take care of yourself. You will heal in time.

*Joanne Bonelli TCF, Greater Boise Area,*

## A PhD In Pain

I didn't take an entrance examination.  
I didn't apply for admission.  
I didn't register for classes.  
I never completed any assignments.  
I didn't write or defend a dissertation.  
I didn't wear a cap, gown, or hood at graduation.  
I didn't walk to "Pomp & Circumstance." —  
I don't have this diploma framed on my wall.  
I don't have letters I use after my name.

But my son died five years ago... —  
So, I have a PhD in Pain  
...I never wanted one.

*Peggi Johnson*

*TCF Piedmont Chapter, VA*

## Opening Grief as a Gift

Some view grief as a dirty word. It's associated with pain, hardship, suffering, endless days of crying and never seeing the sun. It's hard— tough on the body, spirit and mind. No one wants to have to go through grief. All hope to avoid it.

The Oxford Dictionary defines "grief" as the media does — intense mourning. I know that's true because when Daniel first died, the agonizing pain was intense. It colored each aspect of every breath I took. To walk into a store was painful. Seeing my surviving children and knowing that from now on Daniel would not be with us on earth again crushed every nerve.

But the dictionary, like the media, fails to take the meaning of this word a step further. Grief is defined as though it is a process with an ending. This leads our society to believe that one day, you lose your grief, as you have lost your child. As the years have gone on, I am under the impression that my grief, and that of fellow bereaved parents, will hold no ending. As long as we live on this earth without our children, we will miss them, love them, mourn for what might have been and therefore, grieve.

Granted, grief may not be as intense. For this, we are grateful. If the rest of our lives would entail the fierceness of fresh grief, how could we ever breathe normally again or function as civilized members of society? No one can live on a wild out-of-control roller coaster of emotions for all of life. "I am functioning on my guts right now. Whatever I feel like doing, I do it. I'm in a no nonsense frame of mind, and I like it. It's empowering, and I can feel it's a direct result of loss and grief."

Nan Tanner, editor of *Inspired to Journal* and who has suffered the loss of her father, put it quite well. I know that feeling of boldness that new grief can give you. Nan says she feels like steel. It is amazing to me that while we are crushed by grief, we are also empowered by how it can make us determined to stand up more for what we believe in, not take any slack from anyone and be in that no-nonsense frame of mind. Is this a gift? Could it be that grief, with its endless component, is really a gift to be opened and dealt with, and used for our benefit?

Recently, just before Daniel's would-be-tenth-birthday, a college friend who knows that since Daniel's death I have collected watermelon objects, sent a box filled with dishes and other items — all with the red, green and white motif. Being able to cry when I opened my watermelon package was a gift. Writing a poem later that week in memory of Daniel and using the watermelon theme, was an added bonus. Sending the poem to friends and other bereaved parents was a tribute to Daniel. Praise for the poem and remembrances of Daniel were given to me.

People establish funds, scholarships, start newsletters, write books and plant trees — all in honor of some loved one who has died. Mourners put their grief to work in order to honor and carry on the love they hold for the one they can no longer embrace. Grief is not always in the obvious and expected form of tears. Some might think that a person no longer with tears is no longer in grief. Many tears do not reach the eyes 4

but are forever present in the heart.

So what is grief? It is a mixture, a hodge-podge, a collection of emotions that range from one end of the scale of human feelings to the other end. Grief causes us to act and react.

As I listen to the crickets and bullfrogs near Daniel's memorial tree, I pen some of my thoughts on what grief has been for me:

- Grief is laughing with your children and wishing for the absent one to make the circle complete.
- Grief is crying in your car at stoplights.
- Some days grief makes you brutally honest; other days, grief muzzles you.
- Grief reconstructs your heart.
- Grief is sadness, hope, smiles and tears – rolled tightly like a snowball.
- Grief makes you search past the stars and the moon for Heaven.
- Grief strips you of everything you were pretending to be.

- Grief gives you new priorities.
- Grief opens hidden treasures from deep within your soul.
- Grief allows you to empathize more deeply with others who ache.
- Grief makes you unapologetically bold.
- Grief is a daily companion, best dealt with by admitting you do walk with it, even after all these years.
- Grief is the price of love; grief is a gift.

Allow yourself time to listen to the sounds of the night and write what grief is to you.

*Alice Wisler*

*The bond among grieving parents is close. It is unfathomable. It cannot be entered into by outsiders, but it is known to each of us. A quick look, an acknowledgment, and we know immediately the agenda suffering we have in common and that there is no fact of our lives more important than this, "I had a child who died".*

## The Miracle of You

Who could have known the exquisite difference your brief life would make upon mine?

Who could have known a tiny baby would show me the beauty of a sunrise, or the wonder of a rainbow, or the pain of a tear?

Who could have known that an innocent little child would take away my fear of death, and point me in the direction of Heaven?

Who could have known that you would succeed where so many others have failed?

*Dana Gensler,*

## Love Gifts

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, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to make a donation to help in the work of the Livonia Compassionate Friends. The money from Love Gifts is the main source of income for the Livonia Chapter, and allows the chapter to send out newsletters, rent meeting space, and reach out to those newly bereaved. See new Love Gift form on back page.

PLEASE FORWARD LOVE GIFTS TO: THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS,

C/O: RHONDA TEMPLE, 25164 Hanover St., Dearborn Heights, MI 48125

- ♥ Jeri Baron Feltner "In loving memory of my twin brother Larry. Honoring his fifth angel year 8/16"
- ♥ Matt & Cindy Stevens "In memory of Justin. We love you & miss you so very much Justin"
- ♥ Judy Cappelli "In memory of Christopher. Not a day goes by that I don't think if you son, I miss you."
- ♥ Mike & Mary Hartnett "In memory of Michael. Michael, it is so hard to believe you have been gone 2 years. We love & miss you so much! Mom, Dad, Katie, Dakota and Brooklyn"
- ♥ Jim & Diana Owens "In memory of Timothy. Sending lots of love"
- ♥ Jim & Cathy Whitfield "In memory of Jason. Jason, we miss you everyday"
- ♥ Chris & Denise Falzon "In memory of our son Brian. Happy 42nd Birthday Brian! If dreams could come true we would be celebrating with you here. Miss you so much. Love, Mom and Dad"
- ♥ Patricia A. Michael "In memory of Matthew Mullins. Happy Birthday my smiling son. Xoxo Mom"
- ♥ Tom & Connie McCann "Happy Birthday Ryan "Ryfro" 10/26. We love you & miss you"
- ♥ Tom & Connie McCann "In memory of our sons Ryan "Ryfro", Tom Jr & Bryan "Bryfro" Soupis considered a son by our family & Mark "Sparky" Abbott"



## New Members

We welcome new members. We are so sorry for the circumstance that has brought you here. Although we have no easy answers, we can offer you understanding through our common experiences. We also know how much courage it took for you to attend.

Doug & Anne Sordyl whose beloved daughter, *Jennifer Anne*, Born 10/10; Died 3/4; 35 years

# SIBS

## Sibling Speak Out

Having a brother or sister die creates a family crisis. Some of us have extreme reactions while others react as if we've never heard the news. Many things affect the way we behave, what we think, and how we feel. Some of us may know all the facts of what caused our sibling's death, while some of us may be confused by what we overheard. We may believe we were not included in what happened, or feel overlooked by the adults. We may wonder why this had to happen. We may even think we are to blame, even when others say we were not.

All of us have thoughts and feelings we are afraid to share. Other siblings have probably felt very much the

same way we do at times. Reading the thoughts below of other siblings may encourage us to talk with adults we trust, to attend a sibling support group meeting or write our feelings in a diary.

Siblings, see if you relate to any of the statements below:

- Children grieve too, in our own way, in our own time. We grieve differently from adults. Sometimes we appear not to be grieving at all.
- We do not want to be forgotten while our parents grieve. Parents often seem to emphasize the child that died instead of those of us who are living.
- We need to know we are loved as much as our brother or sister who died. Sometimes we wonder if we would be missed as much.
- We are afraid someone else will die. We want to be reassured but don't

know what questions to ask.

- Our relationship with our dead brother or sister was different from the relationship we had with our parents. We will not grieve the same as our parents will.
- We know our sibling was not perfect. We know that he/she did things that were wrong. Please do not make an "angel" out of her or place him on a pedestal.
- Just because siblings are not grieving or speaking openly doesn't mean that they aren't grieving in private. Often we talk with our friends or other adults.
- We will grieve when we are ready. Please do not rush us or tell us we aren't doing it right. When we are not willing to talk about our dead brother or sister, it may be because we are trying to protect our parents. We do not want to make our parents cry or hurt more.
- We are different people since our sibling died. Our parents are different people now too. We may think and act in new ways. Our personalities and values may not be the same as before they died.
- People may have told us to "be strong" for our parents. We may resent this or find this too difficult, so we may feel even worse.
- We may be overprotective of our parents after our sibling dies. Often, our parents are over protective of us. We just want to be treated as "normal" kids.
- We are not the same person as our sibling who died. Please do not compare us to them. Comparing children harms our self-esteem.
- We are concerned when our parents bottle their grief inside and refuse to talk with us about it. It makes things more frightening.
- Some siblings like to visit the cemetery; some do not. Avoid forcing us to go if we don't want to.
- We may not be ready to attend support group meetings. Listen to our answers when we are asked about going.

### *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

Dave and Charli Johnston - Suicide - 734-812-2006

Joe 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](http://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)969-1101; Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://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 Thursday7-9; Tina@586-634-0239

**Pinckney TCF Chapter:** The Christian House of Prayer, 9949 McGregor Road, Pinckney, MI; 2nd Monday of the month, 6 - 8 pm; Jimmy Batchelor - 734-277-9705

**Tecumseh TCF Chapter:** First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. Chicago, Tecumseh, 4th Sunday of the month, 2-4 pm, Rose Hatchett, 517-270-3308.



- Even though we had fights with them, we did love them and miss them. There is a big hole in the family now.
- Sometimes we believe we are to blame for their death. Maybe we could talk about it with an adult we trust. Perhaps someone can help us sort out what our responsibilities are.
- It is okay for our parents and us to talk about them together. It's also okay for us to cry together.
- We know our family will never be the same again. We wonder what it will be like in the future.
- Birthdays, anniversary, and holidays are especially hard to bear. Sometimes we act as though these days are not special. Sometime we pretend our family is the same way as before our sibling's death.

*from www.bereavedparentsusa.org*

## The Fear of Forgetting

When my daughter died just after turning four years old, one of my biggest fears has been that she will be forgotten. But lately, I've been asking myself what does that really mean? What am I really scared of?

The idea that she will be forgotten is actually two separate fears. The first is that due to the notion of "out of sight, out of mind," friends and even family will stop thinking of her and, in essence, "forget her."

In reality, this is the natural course of life. I have beloved relatives and dear friends who have passed, and yet I rarely think of them. Does it mean they didn't exist, or had any less impact on my life? No. Nor does it mean I love them any less. What it does represent is that life goes on, and current matters occupy our minds. I think my fear is actually rooted in the reality of family and friends no longer talking about my daughter or – from my perspective – thinking of her, which feels as though it further isolates me from the "normal" world. It has been years since she died, and yet the pain is ever present and my daily thoughts are still filled with memories and

longing for my daughter. Other than the news sensationalizing death and destruction to grab our attention for ratings, our society tends to not want to talk about grief or the lingering pain of loss after the funeral is over. So I go about my business and lead two lives: the "normal" one that goes about living a "normal" life, and the "private" one where I still struggle to figure out how to work through the pain of grief while learning to once again embrace the love, joy, and adventures that surround me.

The second part of my fear has to do with me and my memory. With my daughter no longer physically here, memories of her have become precious commodities. Those few memories of specific moments captured in time allow me to momentarily remember not just who she was, but remember life before the pain of her death forever changed me and my world. But with every passing day, and with all the new information coming in, those memories tend to get crowded out and forgotten. All those everyday moments that I took for granted at the time have already faded into the abyss of memories lost to time. It makes me sad that her older brothers say that they have very few specific memories of her. It makes me sadder that her baby brother never had the chance to meet her, and will have to rely on our stories and descriptions of her if he ever wants to get to know her.

To combat this fear, I have tried to write down as many memories as I can – even if they are mundane. I keep them in a journal, and some I post to [www.aliveinmemory.org](http://www.aliveinmemory.org) to share them with others. This way I can refer back to them and share them with whoever is interested in reading them. Her brothers can read them and share them with their eventual families.

But lately, I wonder is my fear of forgetting my memories really necessary? Does it make me a bad mother that I can't remember more moments I shared with her? Of course not. Does it mean my love for her will fade with the memories? Absolutely not. While

I wish I could remember more specific memories of time that I shared with her, I will try to be content knowing that I will never forget how much I love my daughter, or how much she means to me. I will never forget her personality quirks, her vivid imagination, and endless creativity. And I will never forget how her life – and her death – have helped me grow tremendously in my understanding of this life and how best to live it.

*Maria Kubitz*

*TCF Contra Costa County, CA*

## Please Be Gentle

Please be gentle with me, for I am grieving. The sea I swim in is a lonely one, and the shore seems miles away. Waves of despair numb my soul as I struggle through each day. My heart is heavy with sorrow, I want to shout and scream and repeatedly ask, "Why?" At times, my grief overwhelms me, and I weep bitterly, so great is my loss.

Please don't turn away or tell me to move on with my life. I must embrace my pain before I can begin to heal. Companion me through my tears and sit with me in loving silence. Honor where I am in my journey, not where you think I should be. Listen patiently to my story. I may need to tell it over and over again. It's how I begin to grasp the enormity of my loss. Nurture me through the weeks and months ahead. Forgive me when I seem distant and inconsolable. A small flame still burns within my heart, and shared memories may trigger both laughter and tears.

I need your support and understanding. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. I must find my own path. Please, will you walk beside me?

*Jill Englar, Westminster, MD*

*From Bereavement Magazine*

## I'M HERE

*I cannot ease your aching  
heart,  
nor take the pain away,  
but let me stay and take your  
hand*

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

October 2016

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



October Craft Day

The October Craft Day will be on the 29th at St. Timothy's Pres. Church from 10 am to 1 pm. We will be etching on glass and will have different pictures to choose from, like butterfly, dragonfly etc. We will have examples at the October meeting and you can sign up then or if you have any questions, contact Kathy at 734-306-3930 or katjrambo@wow-way.com. All supplies are provided. Cost:\$5.00. We hope you can attend.