



November-December 2022

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS-CHAPTER 2358

CO-LEADERS: Susan Fletcher, Lesa Hartranft & Scott Higgins

SIBLIG CO-ORDINATOR: Courtney Langdon

NEWSLETTER: Susan Fletcher

PHONE: 980-938-4589

E-MAIL: tcf.clt@gmail.com

WEBSITE: WWW.CHARLOTTETCF.ORG

Facebook Page: [Compassionate Friends of Charlotte, NC](#)

MONTHLY MEETING

Meeting place: St. Matthew Catholic Church, 8015 Ballantyne Commons Parkway, Charlotte, NC - Room 234-235

Meeting Time: 3rd Tuesday of Each Month at 7:00 pm
Meetings will also be available via Zoom.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Worldwide Candle Lighting Event

Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 at 7:00

St. Matthews Chapel

Please join us for this uplifting event. It will be followed with food and fellowship in the Community Hall. Please bring a covered dish, side dish or dessert to share.

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Regional Coordinators for NC and SC: Donna & Ralph Goodrich

Phone Number: 980-938-4589

E-mail: iluvu2lauren@gmail.com

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NATIONAL OFFICE

The Compassionate Friends
(877-969-0010)

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

Website:

www.compassionatefriends.org

online private closed facebook pages:

<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/find-support/online-communities/>

TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!!

We congratulate you on having the courage to walk through our door for the first time. Please give our meetings at least 3 tries before deciding if they are right for you. We hope, with the resources available through TCF, you will find the right person or the right words to help you. You Need Not Walk Alone, We Are The Compassionate Friends.

TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS:

We need your encouragement and support. TCF continues because of YOU. You give hope to the newly bereaved - hope that they too can eventually find joy in life again. Please attend when you feel you are able to reach out to another bereaved parent, grandparent or sibling.

Did you know that TCF Charlotte has its own Facebook page? Just search in facebook groups for - Compassionate Friends of Charlotte, NC

LIKE our Facebook page and please post any article, quote or personal musings that you feel may help another member. All information for meetings and special events will be listed on our facebook page.

PLEASE VISIT US ON OUR WEBPAGE!!

WWW.CHARLOTTETCF.ORG

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF TCF CHARLOTTE STEERING COMMITTEE?


We need your help. Volunteering to be on our Steering Committee is a wonderful way to give back to the organization that helped you when you were starting your grief journey, and what better way to keep your child, grandchild or sibling's memory alive? Contact any of the leaders at our meetings if you would like more information. We need YOUR help to ensure our Chapter is as successful as possible in helping others. This is YOUR Chapter - help us make it a welcoming and caring place for bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings to come to for help.

Our Chapter survives by donations only. There are costs associated with the Chapter, i.e., supplies, books, refreshments, food and supplies for our annual events, and our fee for our website. PLEASE help support our Chapter!!! Please consider donating to your Chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling on their special days or during the holidays. What better thing to do in their memory than to pay it forward for the help you have received from TCF.

You can also help your chapter by being a Steering Committee Member. Just contact one of our chapter leaders. We have lots of different areas that we need help in.

Please Mail All Donations to Our TCF Charlotte Treasurer at The
Following Address:
Carolyn Patton
5902 Rimerton Drive
Charlotte, NC 28226-8227

26TH ANNUAL WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING DECEMBER 11



The Compassionate Friends
Worldwide Candle Lighting

Join us on December 11, 2022

"...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, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL), a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's WCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance and has since swelled in num-

bers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held, and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes, as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died and will never be forgotten.

TO OUR MEMBERS

If there are any errors in dates or names in our listing of our children's, grandchildren's or sibling's, please let me know. We are trying to get our database as accurate as possible. Many of our loved ones names do not have a last name listed. In these cases, we assume it is the same as the parent, grandparent or sibling who is listed as a member in our database. If this is incorrect, please let me know. There are many names that do not have a birth date or a death date listed. We know this can be very difficult to list, especially in the early days of grief. If you feel like adding those dates, just email them to me at: fletcher1mom@gmail.com. We are only human so we do make mistakes, but I have tried to be as accurate as I possibly can. Thank you for understanding.

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS - NOVEMBER

Justin Ferdinand 11/25
Michelle DiBernardini 11/19
Tim Boyer 11/22
Nolan Brantley 11/18
Colleen Louise Brooks 11/15
Dylan Burke Hahn 11/24
Eric Carlson 11/19
Joseph Caterino 11/24
Trenton James Scott 11/15
John Cory Foil 11/9
Josselyn Giebeler 11/4
Caitlin Taylor Patton 11/14
Diana Phillipi 11/19

Tommy Ishee IV 11/1
Ian Christian Lampkin 11/27
Christopher Lloyd 11/22
Morgan Madsen 11/21
Michael Mahoney 11/23
Cory Flynt 11/29
Ryan Monfeli 11/15
Kyle Bodord 11/10
James O'Keefe 11/6
Justin Zuk 11/25
Matthew Lee Puckett 11/2
Hannah Quinton 11/11
Sadie Schuster 11/14
Loren Silva 11/9
Kennedy Troutman 11/24
Bill Twaddell 11/30
Xavier Brown 11/1

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR ANGEL DAYS -
NOVEMBER

Stephen Benish 11/28
Michael Rodas 11/12
Joseph Caterino 11/24
Brian Courtemanchie 11/9
Lauren Ehele 11/30
John Cory Foil 11/9
Madelynn Charlotte Golbach 11/2
David Haney 11/24
Garrett Howison 11/21
Matthew Jackson 11/3
Ian Christian Lampkin 11/27
Chad Langdon 11/27
Morgan Madsen 11/21
Anthony McLain 11/12
Jeanna Norton 11/3
Billy Patton 11/11
Kiara Pearse 11/14
Jameel Pearse 11/14

Matthew Lee Puckett 11/16
Michael Schexnayder 11/9
Amaani Ariana Shah 11/14
Greg Moore 11/8
Shemar Sheets 11/15
Kennedy Troutman 11/25
Bill Twaddell 11/17
Jeremy Sprague 11/30

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS -
DECEMBER

Ayanna and Lewis Addison 12/8
Christopher Brown 12/9
Nicholas Daniel 12/4
Creed Campbell 12/3
Thaddeus Cash 12/10
Luna Eve Hobbs 12/20
Kendall Hope 12/10
Tommy Horton 12/23
Isaiah Pinkney 12/31
Brian Michael Kirchner 12/3
Chad Langdon 12/22
Hannah Strickland 12/6
Michael McKinley 12/23
Lance Ferguson 12/21
Kelsey Morris 12/4
Eric Lemarier 12/12
Adam Mashburn 12/22
Jason Christopher Roberts 12/7
Silje Rowell 12/27
Heath Graves 12/28
Nicholas Simonette 12/15
Matthew Wright 12/30
Billy Trahey 12/25
Greg Vitiello 12/5

Jason Walters 12/10
Denis Anthony Giacobbe 12/31
Angela Harper 12/15
Lindsay Jerdo 12/16
Jonathan Holt Whitlow 12/26
James Davis 12/1
Amanda Jean Ziegler 12/28
Abigail Sadowski 12/20

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR ANGEL DAYS -
DECEMBER

Cory Abernathy 12/1
John Joseph Gabriel, Jr 12/12
Vincent Chandler Edmond 12/13
Jennifer Eanes 12/12
Jasmine Anderson 12/16
Christopher Hall 12/25
Luna Eve Hobbs 12/20
Ashley Hurte 12/22
Jeremy Jenkins 12/7
James Lovell 12/22
Jasmine Thar 12/23
Ayriel E. Moore 12/6
Brian David Palmer 12/4
Malik Robinson 12/29
Tim Roddey 12/31
Sadie Schuster 12/7
Nicholas Simonette 12/29
Chris Taylor 12/10
Kekoa Teonkina 12/17
Lindsay N. Jerdo 12/24
Jason Lucas Armstrong 12/25
Jamaal Miller 12/14
Jack Altieri 12/6

The Circle of Love

Together, we shall join hearts and hands across the earth and decorate the world with hope and healing and remembered laughter. We shall remain forever linked through the love of our absent children, parents, husbands and wives, siblings, grandparents, friends — all of our loved ones who dance across the rainbows ahead of us. WE ARE A FAMILY CIRCLE — BROKEN BY DEATH, MENDED BY LOVE!

May this day, and every day, be days for us to laugh and sing, to dance and dream. May this day, and every day, be days of celebration and the chance to give one more hug, to say one more, "I love you". MAY LOVE BE WHAT YOU REMEMBER MOST!

by Darcie Sims

THANKSGIVING

The time draws near
And the calendar says
Thanksgiving is really here.

Time to reflect and time to gather
Thoughts of what to be thankful of.

Thankful? I think not.
My life is not full these days
And to be thankful is beyond my grasp.

But to give thanks? This, I believe, can be done.
Searching my soul deep within
Reasons to give thanks surface to the edge

Yes, I give thanks
For the memories of yesterdays,
The love, the laughter, the joy of each day when James was with us
The trials & tribulations of being an active parent,
The rewards & the challenges of raising a child,
The days of blissful ignorance when I thought tragedy would never visit our home,
The days when life was normal, even though I took it all for granted.
For the treasures of todays,
The sunrise, sunset, the changing of the seasons,
The tried & true friends who stand by me still,
The strong and everlasting love of my husband
The warmth of wet kisses from my canine companion & feline friend,
The encouragement & support, compassion & caring I give & receive as
I survive and help others survive.
For the hopes and possibilites of a peaceful tomorrow,
With faith, love, & perseverance as I struggle to move on
With James in my heart forevermore, spiritually guiding me with his new presence,
With sorrow and reluctance, each new day,
To yet, somehow, be open and loving,
Not to forsake what I've learned Because of what I've lost.

You see, it's not about keeping up with the Jones' having an SUV or two in the garage, having the largest beanie baby collection having so many CD's, video games, or the newest, most improved, latest and greatest new gadgets, not even being up to date with state of the art technology –

It's about love – it's about the gifts of yesterday, blended with the blessings of today to make meaning for tomorrow.

Meg Avery (James' mom)
TCF Lawrenceville, Ga

HANDLING THE HOLIDAYS

Christmas and Chanukah, two holidays rich in tradition and intimately connected with children, are often very difficult for bereaved families. What you do, or don't do, should be influenced, in part, by the ages of the children in your family. It is important that children experience at least some of the joy the holidays brought in the past.

Try to finish shopping well in advance so that you are not inundated by the holidays and music. You might want to shop by catalog or on the internet. Take advantage of the people who said to let them know how they can help. Ask them to shop or do holiday chores for you.

In consultation with your immediate family, decide which traditions you wish to keep and which you want to change. As you progress in your journey through grief, you may find that you are able to reinstate some traditions which you could not handle in the beginning.

Do things at different times or in different places if that works for your family. You may want to observe the holidays by yourselves, rather than take part in large gatherings. If you do take part in family or other gatherings, you might consider explaining in advance that this is a difficult time for you and that talking about your child or even shedding some tears are necessary for healing. Feel free to mention your child if you want to. If others are uncomfortable, it's their problem. Do not let them make you feel guilty for expressing your emotions.

Memorialize your child in some way. Light special candles; have a special Chanukah menorah or dreidel; fill his or her stocking with messages of love; have a special tree or decorate the tree with special ornaments; buy presents for a needy child of the same age; make charitable donations; volunteer to help others.

Try attending a TCF or other memorial service. While highly emotional, these services often allow you to express your feelings and memorialize your child in a caring and comfortable atmosphere.

Savor any moments of happiness as a special holiday gift. Honor your children by remembering them with love.

Stephanie Hesse
TCF Rockland County, NY

and TCF of North Palm Beach County, FL

Five tips to cope with grief during the holidays



Nancy Anderson, MA, LMFT

Posted December 20, 2020

Holidays, including any special day, can be an especially difficult time for people who have experienced the death of someone dear to them. It is often a time when the experience and feelings of loss is heightened.

As holidays approach, you may experience a sense of dread and wish you didn't have to face the arrival of the holidays at all. Rather than anticipating the feeling of joy, you may feel increased pain and sadness associated with memories of your loved one, even when the loss was not recent. Feelings of being "alone in the crowd" when the rest of the world seems to be celebrating are also common.

Tips for coping with grief

Below are five tips to help you cope with grief during the holidays and other special days.

1. Make a plan.

Create a plan about what you will do to mark the holiday and who you will be with (friends, family). Let go of what you or others think you "should do" and focus on what you need. A plan can help manage feelings of dread and help you feel more prepared. Make sure the plan is respectful of your energy and your feelings. A plan can include things you have always done or something different.

2. Consider the needs of children.

If there are children in your family, remember that they tend to rely on consistency, so even if a parent has died there might still be a way to celebrate the holidays. However you choose to observe the holiday, understand that it will never be the same as it was before. Grief will certainly be part of the experience.

3. Realize grief is unique.

Each person experiences grief in their own way. It's important to understand that family members may have different needs during this time. The actual day may or may not be not as bad as imagined. For some the anticipation of the day is harder, for others the aftermath is harder.

4. Stay flexible.

Keep your plan as flexible and as simple as possible. There may be times when you need to skip certain activities depending on how you or family members are feeling. In response to invitations, let people know that you will need to see how you're feeling on the day of the event as you may or may not be up for it. Don't feel pressure to over-commit yourself.

5. Make time for feelings and self-care.

It's important to acknowledge that you will need time and space for the feelings that are likely to arise. Be sure to include self-care in your plan—take a nap, warm bath or walk, eat nutritious food or use a journal to express your thoughts and feelings.

Ways to remember your loved one

Finding ways to remember your loved one during the holidays gives everyone permission to acknowledge the loss and provides a way to continue the relationship with the loved one. Some ideas include:

- set a place at the table or place flowers or a special object
- share stories of the loved one around the table or during a gathering
- light a candle for the loved one
- volunteer somewhere in their memory
- read a poem or story in honor of the person
- create a memory book or box with your children
- make a donation in their memory

Grief support

You will get through this time, even when it is painful. Joining a group or talking with a counselor can give you important support during this difficult time. One of the most important things you can do for yourself when you are grieving is to get support, whether from friends, family and/or outside support. Support groups or counseling can help you know that you are not alone and offer information about grief and loss that can help normalize the many feelings that arise.

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello Friends,

The cooler days feel wonderful, and the cold nights are grand for sleeping. With the cooler weather comes the string of holidays: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Kwanza, New Year's eve, that those of us who have lost a child, grandchild or sibling face with a multitude of mixed feelings. We experience everything from overwhelming sadness, anxiety and fear to joy and elation. Give yourself grace. It is

OK for you to feel all these feelings. Well-meaning people will give you advice on how to make it through the holidays. My advice is, "don't listen to any of them!" Don't be afraid to alter or change traditions or start new traditions. Again, give yourself grace and do what feels best or most satisfying for you.

I hope you will all join us for our Worldwide Candle Lighting event on December 11th. It is a moving and meaningful way to remember and honor our children, grandchildren and siblings gone to soon. The social gathering afterwards is a great way to meet and get to know other chapter members and their families. It's always a pleasant time!

Love and Peace'

Susan

Michael's mom