

Dear Family Members,

We all have so many things in common with each other on our journey. Some things are obvious and other things are, well, less obvious. One of the things that's "under the surface" and we'll talk about at the meetings is, "What can you do now that you couldn't do early on". It's a time for us to intentionally stop and collectively reflect on our how far we've come on our individual journey. I've written about it upon occasion and, like at the meetings, I feel it should be recognized. It helps us keep our perspective. I feel we can lose that because we're with ourselves 24/7 and while we don't forget the early moments we can look at our successes as "just doing the best we can". But this time I'd like to go one step deeper and look at what's gotten us this far. My thought is that we're still deeply connected to our loved one no matter their age or "no age" when we lost them. I think we can all agree that the love we still have in our hearts is the number one connection. It never goes away and *can* grow. I was surprised when I realized that my love for my daughter, Ashley, actually had grown over the years after her death. There are the tangibles, too. Those things we can see and touch. It's also the People, Places and Things. For some of us there are more of those than for others. It can depend on our loved ones age, where they lived, our relationship with them and so many other variables. The people: We have a special bond with those that shared moments of our loved ones lives as well as those who knew we were going to experience a new life and it never came to be.

Occasionally I still see the folks that knew Ashley and me together. For a brief moment my daughter lives again. It's also the people I've met, sharing who I've become *because* of the gift of my daughter and her love. The places: It can be the hospital or other location where we got the news. It can be all of those places we wanted to or were actually able to go and experience with our loved one. While I'll rarely think about the places we didn't go I still visit Ocean City and see the friends I knew with Ashley. I just do things differently. I'm also thankful for the new friends I've made throughout my life because of my daughter and who I've become of her.

Recently I was asked to call someone because he was really struggling with losing his wife after battling cancer for several years. We agreed to meet at a local diner. When we started talking, through his tears, he said that they used to come here, pointing to their favorite booth. I told him that Ash and I used to come here, too, sharing that it brought me comfort to continue going to the places we used to go to and sometimes seeing the same people. He said he understood. When I asked if he wanted to go somewhere else he said he was "Okay" and he really meant it. The Things: It can be the knit hat that never got worn home from the hospital, the favorite piece of clothing we still have that takes us back to a wonderful memory or the items from a home we never wanted to clean out. We hold on to those things because it belonged to them or *should* have belonged to them. Maybe they touched the "this" and holding it brings us closer. Maybe we were going to use the "that" to make all of our lives better. After 12 years I recently found Ashley's last Chapstick! I really gasped when I found it. My heart began to beat faster as I held it so tight. It was an unexpected gift and connection I never thought I would have. I pulled of the top. I could tell it was as moist as the last time it touched her lips just by the aroma. I looked at it and wondered..."Should I?"

Garrett Tollenger
Chapter Leader



The Compassionate Friends

of Greater Baltimore Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

P.O. Box 2103
Ellicott City, MD 21041-2103
410-560-3358; www.baltimoretcf.com

Summer/Fall 2013 Newsletter

Dear Compassionate Friends:

As we approach the holiday season, we are often blindsided. Maybe it's the commercial for the toy your child wanted, or the ornament you hang that was your child's favorite, or the dreidel still in the kitchen drawer, the favorite dish you no longer make at Thanksgiving--it's the big things and the little things. For me, now a hard-to-believe almost five years later, time sometimes makes the loss feel more profound. How could it be so long? How has the world gone on so long without him? As the holidays creep closer, I know there will be days when that are just impossible, and that's okay. It's during these times that I am so very grateful for this sacred group and the safe space it provides for me to just be sad, or angry, or even laugh. The Compassionate Friends are here for you.

We really want this newsletter to be a reflection of our children. Please send us articles, poems, pictures, writings, or special memories of your child that you would like to share for inclusion in future newsletters. Please send all correspondence to:
newsletter@BaltimoreTCF.com

Thank you.

Maura

Your Children

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They come through you, but not from you, and though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love, but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies, but not their souls. For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. ~Kahlil Gibran

Monthly Meeting Information

Baltimore County-The First Wednesday
Brown Woodbrook Memorial Presbyterian Church
6200 N. Charles St. Baltimore
7:30-9:30 PM

TCF Chapter Contact Information

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The Sibling Corner

Our Towson chapter meeting hosts a sibling group, which coincides with our regular meeting time. There are so many special issues that occur when you lose a brother or sister. This group will offer a safe place for you to share your challenges, concerns and successes when walking this path. Siblings age 16 and over are welcome and encouraged to attend. This will be facilitated by siblings for siblings.

To Our New Members:

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. We do understand.

To Our Seasoned Members:

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick.

TCF is here to welcome you, share your grief and encourage you.



Mark Your Calendars!

It's time to mark your calendars now for the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting which will be held at Brown Memorial Church beginning at 7:00 p.m. on December 8.

If you have not attended before, this is a very moving and uplifting experience. During the service a family member will read the name of their loved one. During the reading of name(s), each family will light a candle for their child(ren). Families are invited to read a story, a poem, sing a song or play music in honor of their child. Families are also invited to create a decorative butterfly with their child's name on it. Bring your special butterfly to be included in Madeline's Butterfly Garden. This precious garden was inspired by the following true story and is dedicated to Abigail and Madeline.

If you would like to include your child's name in the program or request to speak, read a poem, play a song, etc., please email (with "Candlelight" in the subject line) to candlelight@baltimoretcf.com by December 1.



Madeline's Butterflies

Every year TCF has a memorial service in December to honor and remember all of our children. Last year (2003), I brought my daughter Madeline who was two years old. We were going to remember her twin sister, Abigail, who was stillborn.

We were running late, as usual, and were the only ones walking down the hallway to the chapel. The hallway had bare white walls with no decorations anywhere. As I was rushing to get inside the chapel, Madeline stopped in the middle of the hallway and said, "Mommy, look at all the butterflies." I asked her where they were, and she said they were everywhere.

I know she was seeing the spirit of her sister and of all our children who are always with us. It's comforting to think that they all know each other as well. I like to think that they can look out for each other in the same way that my TCF sisters and brother look out for me.

Sharon, mother to Abigail and Madeline

Gifts of Love

A love gift is a gift of money to The Greater Baltimore Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but it can 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 help in the work of the chapter. Some people contribute in memory of other's children...this is a wonderful way for others to say, "I am remembering your child." Other "Gifts of Love" are evident by all other compassionate and giving volunteers we have within our TCF Baltimore organization. If you would like to support the work of The Greater Baltimore Chapter of The Compassionate Friends by making a love gift, please send your check to: The Greater Baltimore Chapter of TCF, P.O. Box 2103, Ellicott City, MD 21041-2103. Please indicate to whom you would like your gift dedicated. All gifts are tax deductible.

All chapters within TCF are totally dependent on funds from our families. We DO NOT receive funds from the National Office. Everything we need to operate our local chapters is paid directly from our local resources and our local family contributions. Thank you to all who contribute and support your local chapters.

On Seeing Many Orange-Colored Butterflies in September

Time between summer and winter,
Time under changing skies -
Muted and heavy with foresight,
Or endless blue, smiling at butterflies.

Time between summer and winter,
Time between laughter and tear-
Harvest of beauty remembered
And voices (where are you?) to hear.

Time between summer and winter,
Thoughtful and painful and wise-
Muted and heavy with losing,
But also - smiling at butterflies

Sascha Wagner

From her book "The Shadow and the Light"

Our Many Special Days

The beginning of the school year each fall seems to signal the coming holidays. The commercial market starts stocking school supplies just after the Fourth of July; shortly thereafter, by late summer the school supplies are crowded out by all the paraphernalia of Halloween! A glimpse of Thanksgiving whizzes by and it is an all out affront on the Christmas season. After the death of our child we stumble around each year looking for the appropriate way of handling these seasons that once had so much joy to them.

But the calendar holidays are far from the only "Special Days" that bereaved parents face. Our child's birthday and death date are especially hard days but also are the days relating to their illness or other events that relate to their death date and funeral or memorial. The most obvious days are not always the only hard days to live with. Rainy days, snowy days, starry nights can all trigger tugging emotions. Tuesday for laundry day may be the hardest day all year long.

No bereaved parent will have the same feeling of a special day or have the same special day because our children were different people to each person. Because of this, like in everything else in our grief work, we have to allow space for each other's "bad" days.

Each passing year after the death of our child finds us relating to special days differently each year. It is a continuing process never to return to that which used to be. As the years pass and we work hard at our "grief work" we will heal but that does not mean being like we were or doing the things we used to do. We are an evolving new person learning to live again.

Gerry Hall; TCF South Central, MO

In Memory of Daniel William Beckenholdt

Your heart is in my heart
I carry it with me wherever I go
I am never without it
My darling Danny, my only son, my precious boy.
Until we are united in Heaven, I remain your loving mother.

~Mary Beckenholdt

Managing Grief Around The Holiday

Posted: December 13, 2009, *The Huffington Post*
By: Dr. Tian Dayton, clinical psychologist and author; [Editor Note: I reprint this article each year as it receives a lot of positive feedback.]

The holidays are a time of heightened reality. A time to reaffirm bonds of friendship and family. The general merriment of the season can make what we have in our lives resonate wonderfully with a sense of abundance and plenty, but it can also highlight what feels missing or never had a chance to be.

Holidays make our senses come alive. Through treasured tunes, time honored rituals and the familiar sights, sounds and smells of the season, memories are called forward. They arise from deep inside of us; from our emotional/sense memory system, our "limbic brain" in other words, or that basic, human part of us that holds the vast and varied emotional and sense impressions that ground us in reality and give shape and meaning to our lives. That part of us that sees, hears, touches, smells and feels. These "limbic" memories are roused into consciousness by the many and memorable sights and songs of the holidays. They are "triggered" by the familiar flavors, scenes, sounds and scents that are part of the season of celebration. And each taste, each song, each sight, has accompanying emotion double coded right with it, woven alongside the mental and emotional meaning we have made of the whole, holiday gestalt throughout our lives. The holiday season is one, massive emotional trigger; it goes straight into our limbic system and catches us off guard, making us feel and "remember" whether we want to or not.

Factoid: The limbic system actually sends many more messages to the prefrontal cortex than the prefrontal cortex sends to the limbic system, this means that feelings out power thoughts. Because of the pervasiveness of the limbic (read: sensorial/emotional) system, because our whole body is essentially wired to feel and sense, these recollections can push their way past our "thinking" brain and make us feel things we may have forgotten were even there.

Holidays can cause us to experience emotion in the extremes. We can be drawn toward both exquisite pleasure and exquisite pain; our emotional bells so to speak, are triggered into high gear. Because limbic memories have such unconscious strength and because much of their feeling content can be at least partly unconscious, they can present a challenge for the person who is trying to stay physically sober or emotionally sober.

Holiday Grief Triggers

Understanding what can trigger unconscious grief reactions can help us to figure out why we might be struggling emotionally or psychologically during the holidays. It can enlighten us as to where our free-floating sense of anxiety, irritation or depressive thoughts might be coming from so that they don't fuel disturbing feelings, body sensations or negative behavior without our awareness. Following is a list of common life/holiday situations that can trigger grief reactions.

Holiday/ "Anniversary" Reactions: Because holidays are a time of traditional ritual gatherings, they can heighten our awareness about what is missing or what has changed. Try: Creating some

new holiday "memories" that "feel good". Code in some new sensorial and emotional impressions to counteract the old ones and be patient, the idea isn't to create the perfect holiday but to (slowly, slowly) create some new limbic "memories" with more positive meaning attached to them. Decorate your home, play your favorite holiday music, have a holiday spa day, cook foods that bring you a sense of pleasure and even purpose and connection (you can give it away or share it). Become willing to enjoy the sights, sounds and flavors of the season.

Seasonal Reactions: Change of seasons can stimulate grief or be unconsciously associated with a loss, thus causing a type of depression during a particular season. Try: Remember what this season stimulates in you and do extra self care. Self care may take the form of more meetings, appointments with a therapist to process reactions, massages, sports or rest and relaxation. Or all of the above.

Music-stimulated grief: Music can act as a doorway to the unconscious. It activates the right brain, drawing out associations and feelings that get stimulated by a particular song or sounds ("sleigh bells ring?"). The holidays are full of musical memories that carry a plethora of images and emotions in their wake. Try: Playing music that you know makes you feel calmed, cozy, uplifted or in the spirit.

Ritual-Stimulated Grief: Significant shared rituals can stimulate grief if there has been a loss of some kind. For example, family dinners or gatherings can be a sad time for those who have experienced divorce or losses through addiction. The holidays are full of the kinds of family rituals that can bring back both memories of wonderful holiday moments or pain filled, empty or turbulent ones. Try: Creating your own recovery rituals. Start simply, whatever you feel will bring you pleasure, whether it be going out to a theatrical event, eating out with friends or cooking and having a holiday gathering. Attend your local faith institutions and participate in the wonderful celebrations of the season. Create new rituals to counter the old one, even if you have to push yourself in the beginning. Over time it will feel natural and these rituals will come to have meaning for you and for those around you, you'll be forming new, positive "holiday memories" to counter old ones.

Smells and Scents: Smell is associated with the oldest part of the brain, the olfactory sense, and acts as a powerful stimulant of memories that are associated with a particular scent. The holidays surround us with every sort of aroma and most of them are associated with some memory or another. Turkey, cranberries, cookies, pine needles, holiday cakes; even the smell of cold air can all be part of the holiday aura. Try: This one is easy; fill your own home with the smells that you

enjoy from the holidays be it cookies, cranberries, tree or turkey, enjoy making the foods of the season and surrounding yourself with sweet smelling decorations!

This year put yourself on your holiday list! Give yourself a present; wrap your personal world in the simple sorts of holiday pleasures that bring you particular satisfaction and contentment, only you know just what these are. Now is a good time to practice self care and self love and to then share it with others. Get extra rest, stay relaxed and don't fight those "sentimental" feelings when they come. If you have a melancholy moment, remember, it will pass. Sometimes by feeling the grief that blocks the joy, we're giving ourselves a real holiday gift, a present that allows us to be more present to life. See the holidays as a time when grief is part of the gift, it can be hard to get to unconscious pain so that it can be felt and released. If the holidays stimulate old, painful emotions that are in the way of your serenity, surrender. Let the feelings of longing happen and then release them and allow yourself to heal at the holidays.

Open Letter to Our Siblings

Dear Sibling,
How can I possibly tell you how much I miss you? But of course you probably know - since you knew me better than anyone. No matter how much time passes, I still wish you were here to share our lives and the future I expected us to have together.

Even though we fought and at times neglected each other, I just assumed that you would always be there. That we'd grow old together and remember stories of growing up and laugh at each other as we looked and acted more like our parents. That we'd share our joys and setbacks, and adore each other's children.

Your death has rocked me harder than I could imagined I'd survive. Ultimately, there are no answers to my questions. There is no replacing you and there is no solace for my grief.

There is only the simple choice I make every day to live on in the honor of your memory and the love we shared. To strive to carry on the best of who you were. To cherish the brief time we have with others. To celebrate the opportunity to be alive. To have compassion for the pain of others as well as my own. To have the courage to love fully as I have loved you and to remember that you would want me to go on and find joy again.

You gave me so many gifts while you were alive and I continue to discover the gifts in this loss. I am so thankful you were born my sibling. I would not have traded our time together for anything. You are always with me because you are a part of me.

~Mary Lamourex
TCF Marin County, CA

In Remembrance

March Birthdays

Virgil Maupin
Conor James O'Sullivan
Austin Damond Remines
Brandon Nowlin
Lydia Shirazi
Tanise N. Ervin
Julio Salgado
Sarah Alexandria Hinton
Margret Kelly Lane
Casey Santana Butler
Michael Orien Colotti
Lance Locklear
Kimberly A. Hummel
Deborah Ann Tipton
Matthew J. Lewis
Michael Cipres
Richard Frank Galentine
Stephanie Sanzone
Daniel Keith Richardson
Steven Gregory Radford
Angela Cheek-Barnett
Martin Barry Sollien
Christopher Stephen
Michael Ryan Atkins
David Franklin Howell, Jr.
Alexia Jo Bock
Angela Lyonna Amaya Jones
Michael James McQuaid
David Alexander Stratton

March Heaven Days

Danny Beckenholdt
Rickey Donnell Henry II
Kenny Klingmeyer
Jonathan Paul Daily
Charles Dean Saenz
Jagger Lee Crawford
Kelly Nicole DallaTezza
Tanise N. Ervin
Diane Marie Isella
Christopher William Diehl
Robert William Biondo
Ryan Michael Sheahy
Michael Leo Swift, III
Kathy Ermatinger
Phillip Holmes
Richard Frank Galentine
Natalia Erin Miller
Martin Barry Sollien
Christopher Stephen
Brennan Michael Doll
Daniel Scottodifrega
Christopher Gregory
James Stallings
David Alexander Stratton
Sallie Pattillo

April Birthdays

Erik Vincent Summers
Earl John Kohlhepp
Joseph Edward Belcher, Jr.
Miracle Cassie Evans
Samantha Lynch

Kenny Klingmeyer
Brendan James Huber
Joseph Sanfilippo
Robert Lee Johnson
Marcie Elizabeth Warch
Ashlyn Marie Sutherland
Alexander Gregory Fee
Jonathan Paul Daily
Jagger Lee Crawford
Nicole Harlow
Lauryn Marie Little
Hayden Bradley Hoffman
Julie Ann Webster
Joseph Miranda
Channing Lane Wiles
Isabella Sue Pennel
Dillon James Shelton
Chelsea Rae Propper
Alan Scott Greenbaum
Genevieve Wilson
Gene Rossmark, Jr.
Daniel Scottodifrega
Amelia Panuska
Joseph Edward Benham
Steve Posedenti, Jr.
Yves Hugo Cubillos
Bob Palese
Carmen Odessa Dixon

April Heaven Days

Mark D. Sokolik
Virgil Maupin
Miracle Cassie Evans
Esther Ann Brown Adler
Michael Vincent Manieri
Judah Ahiva Blakeslee-Ringer
Brian McBride Morris
Corinne Palo Ferguson
Tyler H. Kahn
Beth Szczepanski
Hugo G. Jeffery Orbach
Hayden Bradley Hoffman
Ramie Lamont Mays, Jr.
Channing Lane Wiles
Garrett Nelson
Matthew Jonis Johnson
Isabella Sue Pennel
Rowan Grace Maisey-Brownfield
Paul J. Schmitt
Evan J. Weichert
Mason Griffin Medicus
Steve Posedenti, Jr.
Christopher Ryan LePore
Cathi Faye Horst
Jonah Alexander Respass
Galen Harig-Blaine
Michael James McQuaid
Joshua Matthew Belanger

May Birthdays

Tom Sawyer
Aiyana Clime Coates
Chester Kirk Drew, Jr.
Rickey Donnell Henry II
Erica Jane Green

Ashley Paige Tollenger
Louis Ashok Lowenthal
Frank Woodrow Hughes
Parker Michael Willoughby
Kelly Murphy
Joshua Clark
Daryl Maurice Augustus, II
Belicia Hirsch
Angelina Hirsch
Eric Nolan Ramey
Tracy Lee Freeman
Anthony Sorrentino
Devon Maryl Jagler
Daniel Frederick Reed
Dahlia Katherine Osman
Bryan Bolster
Ryan Michael Sheahy
Lillian Naomi Johnson
Anthony Brannock
Ian Brannock
Taavon L. Brown
Kevin Michael Ryan
Ramie Lamont Mays, Jr.
Stacey Lurn Gregg
Jessica Brower-McGonigal
Jenne Elynn Gans
Karie Rebecca Dietz
Kyle Brandon Rembert
Dimitra Y. Whittington
Marie Kamara
Tiffany Renee Russell
Shannon Lynne Van Gilder
Brooklynn Wilhite
Ali Muhammed
Keteylan Garner
Mateo Brannock
Danny Lee Gruzs
Wanda Louise Lulu Huester

May Heaven Days

Aiyana Clime Coates
Chester Kirk Drew, Jr.
Erica Jane Green
Drew William Putzel
Gregory Thomas Le Sueur
Brendan James Huber
Daryl Maurice Augustus, II
Belicia Hirsch
Angelina Hirsch
Shawn Michael Fischer
Anthony Sorrentino
Jewel Donte Thomas
Daniel Frederick Reed
Sarah Marie Stebbins
Nicole Harlow
Julio Speedy Gonzalez, II
Anthony Brannock
Ian Brannock
Mackenzie Helen Caudell
Rebecca Hild Caudell
Taavon L. Brown
Connor Elliott King
Daniel Anderson Bowling
Angela Cheek-Barnett
Alan Scott Greenbaum

Amy Marie Adams
Genevieve Wilson
Mateo Brannock
Angela Iyonna Amaya Jones
Yves Hugo Cubillos
David Culbertson
Reece Taylor Stevens
Jesse Hollen Elkins
Matthew John Payne

June Birthdays

Robert Meader
Corey Alexander Springmann
Sherry Latrece Montgomery
Brittany Leigh Ey
Ashlie Lynn French
Daniel Carl Torsch
Meghan Ann Murphy
Tyler Hamrick
Christopher William Diehl
David Michael Kappes
Rachael Marie Wade
James R. Cullum
Anna Marie Stickel
Kelsey Elaine Brown
Daniel James Russell, Jr.
Chip Carroll Wyrde
Rowan Grace Maisey-Brownfield
Larry Schultz, III
Paul J. Schmitt
Heather Anderson
Christopher Black
DJ Knight
Jacob Edward Ramos-Grey
Matthew Sam Young
James Walter Babcock

June Heaven Days

Erik Vincent Summers
Tracy Renee Wood
Mark Christian Gardner
John Ohmann, III
Joshua Matthew Eisner
Kelly Murphy
Jerry Cooper, Jr.
Jennifer Nicole Schissler
Zakary Aaron Osiris DeGross
David J. Houck
Tyler Hamrick
Wayne Granger
John Christopher Adams
James R. Cullum
Michael Orien Colotti
Christina Lee Boles-Fitch
Daniel James Russell, Jr.
Nelson Yargar, III
Emily Ann Higgins
Benjamin Thomas Huxtable
Steven Gregory Radford
Kayla Anna Boone
Stephen John Schultz, III
James Theodore Smith
Stephen J. Schultz
Aubrey Christina Wiseman
Daniel Vincent Staib

Jamshid Ghannad
July Birthdays
Casey Robert Leavitt
Megan Richardson
Mark Christian Gardner
Raquan Demetrius Ali Campbell
Travis Anthony Jenkins
Chase Smith
Corinne Palo Ferguson
Brearah Karli Stevens
Wayne Granger
Amanda Kay Arnold
Amelia Gresham
Sunshine Marie Royston
Phillip Holmes
Joe Harlee
Hope Lorden
Marcel Mitchell
Stephen John Schultz, III
Wyatt Duff
Aiden Joseph Johns
Stephen J. Schultz
Jonah Alexander Respass
Jesse Hollen Elkins
Rachel Lynn Orr
Trenton B. Reightler
Chamara Ashby

July Heaven Days

Casey Robert Leavitt
Corey Alexander Springmann
Jack Levee
Irina Goslin
Julius McGee
Robert Lee Johnson
Marcie Elizabeth Warch
Ashlyn Marie Sutherland
Kallie Lynn Esquer
Julie Ann Webster
Jason Robert Kuzniarski
Joseph Miranda
Amelia Gresham
Michael Cipres
Stephanie Sanzone
Andrew Alton Dowley
Hope Lorden
David L. Murphy
Amelia Panuska
Brooklynn Wilhite
Ali Muhammed
Wyatt Duff
Keteylan Garner
Jose Luis Perez, II
DJ Knight
Aiden Joseph Johns
Jacob Edward Ramos-Grey
Tiffani Rose Wiberg
Jason D. Verfaillie

August Birthdays

Jerry Cooper, Jr.
Zakary Aaron Osiris DeGross
Emily Elizabeth Blische
Anna Treseder Bettenhausen
Alex Elste

Madison Summer Lynn Corcoran-Narup
Julio Speedy Gonzalez, II
Robin Tonette Thomas
Michael Leo Swift, III
Rebecca Hild Caudell
Jason Robert Kuzniarski
Vicki Gail Sears-Hube
Emily Ann Higgins
Elisa Guibas
Kareem Kelly Guest
Brandon Zoch
Michael-John Ludwig Heick
Jessica Stallings

August Heaven Days

Elizabeth Conway Nass
James William Day
Ellagrace Ann Garrison
Eric Montgomery
Eric Nolan Ramey
Brendan James Truffer
Anna Treseder Bettenhausen
Alex Elste
Carl Edward Palo
Sarah Alexandria Hinton
Nathan Krasnopoler
Lillian Naomi Johnson
Rachael Marie Wade
Lawrence Dunmore, IV
Nickolas Benjamin Phippen
Jordon Proulx
Shannon Lynne Van Gilder
Heather Anderson
Jeffrey Alston
Michael-John Ludwig Heick
Karlee Marie Andrews
Wanda Louise Lulu Huester
Ashley Paige Tollenger
Marc Rory Goldberg
Carmen Odessa Dixon
Jessica Stallings

September Birthdays

David Leavitt
Richard J. Curran
Michael Francis Gist
Brian McBride Morris
Beth Szczepanski
Robert William Biondo
Nathan Krasnopoler
Bryan Canter
Nelson Yargar, III
Matthew David Puccini
Melisa Rene Lisa Shamer
Nickolas Benjamin Phippen
Kayla Anna Boone
Jordon Proulx
Camryn Grace Wilson
Jeffrey Alston
Christine Kelly Enders
Nathan Patrick Fenchak
Joshua Matthew Belanger
Chad Petterson
Elijah Joseph Virago
Joseph Michael Ackermann

September Heaven Days

Tom Sawyer
Conor James O'Sullivan
Hannah Renken
Kyle Richard Canter
Shanae Nicole Griffin
Lydia Shirazi
Parker Michael Willoughby
Morgan Smith
Tracy Lee Freeman
Julio Salgado
Lauryn Marie Little
Robert M. Bryant
Robin Tonette Thomas
Andrew Dewey McQuade
Jeremiah DeMario
Sunshine Marie Royston
Matthew David Puccini
Chip Carroll Wyrde
Karie Rebecca Dietz
Larry Schultz, III
Kareem Kelly Guest
Michael Ryan Atkins
Irene Matthews
Camryn Grace Wilson
Christopher Black
Danny Lee Gruzis
Bob Palese
Jasmine Daye Bishai

October Birthdays

Danny Beckenholdt
Luke D'Antoni
Mark D. Sokolik
Elizabeth Conway Nass
Kyle Richard Canter
John Ohmann, III
Eric Montgomery
Michael Vincent Manieri
Hillary Fitzgerald
Jewel Donte Thomas
Brandon Rix
Michael Verleysen
Andrew Dewey McQuade
Jeremiah DeMario
Jessie Koch
Christina Lee Boles-Fitch
Garrett Nelson
Connor Elliott King
Benjamin Thomas Huxtable
Amy Marie Adams
Bruce Francis Vasil
David Knox
Gaebriel Patrick Kelly
Evan J. Weichert
Isaiah Eli Scott
Elise Nora Detterline
Christopher Ryan LePore
David Culbertson
Cathi Faye Horst
Jason D. Verfaillie
Andrew Wohlfort

October Heaven Days

Luke D'Antoni
Louis Ashok Lowenthal
Frank Woodrow Hughes
Sherry Latrece Montgomery
Brittany Leigh Ey
Alexander Gregory Fee
Travis Anthony Jenkins
Ernest Bo Neeko Gales, III
Brandon Rix
Brearah Karli Stevens
Kevin Michael Ryan
Jessie Koch
Vicki Gail Sears-Hube
Stacey Lurn Gregg
Jenne Elynn Gans
Elisa Guibas
David Knox
Isaiah Eli Scott
Elise Nora Detterline
Christine Kelly Enders
Andrew Wohlfort
Jeffery Van Wade
Joseph Allan Caskey, Jr.
Trenton B. Reightler
Joseph Michael Ackermann

November Birthdays

Alexandrea Chardonay Annetta Autry
Carlzell Chauncey Chavaz Connor
James William Day
Hannah Renken
Morgan Smith
Flavio Chery
Brendan James Truffer
Alexandra Ally Beaulieu
Samuel Ying Fu Pang
Kristin Rita Strouse
Jenna Katherine Miller
Irvin Bernard Lawson, Jr.
Joey Wayne DeHaven, Jr.
Matthew Jonis Johnson
William Michael Hogan
Ian Howard
Daniel Anderson Bowling
Irene Matthews
Karlee Marie Andrews
Justin Matthew Gregg
James Theodore Smith
Galen Harig-Blaine
Tiffani Rose Wiberg
Jeffery Van Wade
Kaia Morgan Moten Brown

November Heaven Days

Erik Pachino
Samantha Lynch
Flavio Chery
Tony Michael Richey
Brett Hofferberth
Chase Smith
Hillary Fitzgerald
Ashlie Lynn French
Kristin Rita Strouse
Janice Biondo O'Neill

Margret Kelly Lane
Aquil Abdullah
Casey Santana Butler
Kimberly A. Hummel
Kyle Brandon Rembert
Joe Harlee
Ian Howard
Gene Rossmark, Jr.
Marie Kamara
Tiffany Renee Russell
Kaia Morgan Moten Brown



The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

Siblings Walking Together (formerly The Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the

individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us. When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

Compassionate Friends Offers Grief Related Webinar Series

The Compassionate Friends is expanding its outreach to bereaved families by offering a series of free online grief related seminars. The webinars, to be held once per month, are on various grief topics and guests are well-known experts in the field.

Webinars have included such topics as "Handling Grief Through the Holidays," "Getting 'Stuck' and 'Unstuck,'" "Caring for Your Health While Grieving," and "Coping with Guilt During Bereavement."

These webinars were recorded and are available to view on demand on TCF's national website.

To reserve a seat for the next webinar or to view the previous month's webinar visit our [website](#).

Webinars are being archived in TCF's [Webinar Library](#).

Not in Color

I remember a Hollywood movie called *Pleasantville*. I don't recall many details about plot or premise, but one of the techniques used in the movie was the juxtaposition of color with black and white in the same scene. People could be in color or B&W; the backdrop could be in both, too.

I know I'm definitely in black and white. No color. The grass is green, the sky is blue, the flowers may be yellow or red or purple or whatever but I am in black and white. Trying to run my errands, accomplish my tasks, walk my dog. But doing so in black and white. Muted. Grey. Definitely not in color.

I live a world where people are in "Technicolor." I can see that they are. I can remember when I was. I wish I were still one of them.

But there's no tint or paint or photo app to make me "in color" again. I suspect if and when color returns, it will be subdued. Pastel. I doubt it will ever be vivid again.

At this stage, I'd take pastel.

Peggi Johnson
TCF Arlington, VA



Holiday Donation and Membership Update ***The Greater Baltimore Chapter of The Compassionate Friends***

Dear Friends,

*As we near the end of the year, we are asking you to consider making a contribution to The Greater Baltimore Chapter of Compassionate Friends. Our newsletter, phone line, website, outreach efforts and monthly sharing meetings are made possible by your generosity. TCF is a non-profit organization and **your donations are tax-deductible**. More importantly, they are vital to the continued operation of your group. All contributions will be recognized in Loving Memory of your child or children in our newsletter. If you choose to make a donation, please include the completed form below. Please help in whatever way you can. We are deeply grateful for your kindness. If you prefer to not make a donation, please fill out the rest of this form so we can update our contact information. This will assist us in keeping you updated on our Chapter events and activities. Please return this form no later than.....*

Yes, I wish to support the work of The Greater Baltimore Chapter of The Compassionate Friends and help grieving parents and their families by contributing the donation below:

_____ \$5 _____ \$10 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ Other

Thank you for your love gift. May your holiday be full of warm and beautiful memories, as you make new memories this season.

In Loving Memory of: _____

MAIL TO: **The Greater Baltimore Chapter of TCF**
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Ellicott City, MD 21041-2103