



Upcoming Events

January 15th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAPTER LEADER - ACTING
LARAINÉ ASARO-ANDERSON
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE
JANE & STEVE GABRIEL
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

SECRETARY
LEONIE CRAMER
Son, Julian Anthony King

TREASURER
YVETTE THOMPSON
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR &
EMAILINGS**
STEWART LEVETT
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR
BOB THOMPSON
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

SC MEMBER/LIBRARIAN
CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON
Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

SC MEMBER/WELCOME PACKETS
LETA LEVETT
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Any of these members may be contacted to talk about your loss:

CHAPTER LEADER - ACTING

LARAINÉ ASARO-ANDERSON * 351-7653

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS
STEWART & LETA LEVETT * 531-5488

TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON * 573-2743

LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL * 282-1924

ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH

CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON * 687-6688

SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD 596-2575

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON (303) 814-9478

*Please feel free to contact any of these Steering Committee members if you can not reach our Chapter Leader. **

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS

TCF National Office
P.O. Box 3656
Oak Brook, IL 60522
630-990-0010 or toll free 877-969-0010



EMAIL: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

WEBSITES:

Pikes Peak - www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org
Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TCFPikesPeak>
National - www.compassionatefriends.org





Welcome

Our support group meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are open to the parents, grandparents and older siblings of your loved one. We meet at the **First Baptist Church** downtown at 317 E. Kiowa. We understand your pain; won't you let us help you through your grief?

Our next meeting will be on January 15, 2015.

The death of your child is probably the most traumatic, life-changing event that you will ever experience. The Compassionate Friends is an organization of parents who have also lost a child to death. Each of us has experienced the deep, searing pain that you are feeling now. Each of us has turned to other parents who were farther into their grief journey for guidance, support and understanding. This is done through our monthly meetings, our newsletter, our website, our Telephone Friend program, our library and our e-mail program. Each month parents find our meeting to be a safe place where they can talk about their pain and problems with others who are uniquely qualified to understand; bereaved parents offer gentle suggestions or often simply listen. We invite you to bring a friend to your first few meetings until you feel a level of comfort with the group. Do not be surprised if we talk about the happy times with our children, the wonderful memories and the various methods we have created to keep our children close to us. It is here that many bereaved parents find hope as those who are more seasoned in their grief shine the light of experience to help illuminate each grief path. We have no dues. We are self-sustaining through donations and the generosity of so many in our community.

You Need Not Walk Alone.

Support Resources

TCF Online Chat Groups:

www.compassionatefriends.org/resources/online_Support.aspx

- For questions, please contact Diana Jorden, 925-432-3854, who moderates the general grief and suicide loss rooms on Friday nights and Sunday. TCF online offers several specialized chat rooms, all moderated by moms who have been in chat for at least 2 years or more. We offer a sibling-only chat, loss under 1 year, loss over 2 years, loss of only child, suicide survivor, infant/pregnancy loss, and every night (and Monday mornings) there is a general loss room open to parents, step and grand, and siblings.
- You can sign up for the online TCF National newsletter at www.compassionatefriends.org
- You can reach our TCF National Facebook page through the link on the same home page of our national website. You will be asked to join Facebook if you are not already a member, and we hope you'll find our Facebook page as interesting as do the more than 11,000 fans who have already found us!



Why We Attend a Support Group:

Because we never want the world to forget the name of our loved one. Because when we reach out to help someone else, we also help ourselves. Because someone was there for us when we needed it most. The best way to say "thank you" is to pass it on by being there for others. Because here we have found better friends and closer bonds than we ever thought possible. Because here we can cry and not even know someone's last name or what they do for a living and it doesn't matter. Because few people are qualified to say to a newly bereaved person, "I know how you feel." Because we, too, need to talk, to remember, to share. We may be further along than many here, but we never forget. Because our presence might help newly bereaved understand that they can survive and live a happy and productive life—one that is different than our life before, but more compassionate and dedicated to offering help to those in need.



The Story Behind “Precious Child”

by JOE MUDD on DECEMBER 21, 2009

While searching for information about the Worldwide Candle Lighting I stumbled upon the song “Precious Child.” Or maybe I should say I was grabbed by the song. It really had a strong affect on me. Because this song had such a strong affect on me, I went searching for the artist. “Precious Child was written and performed by Karen Taylor-Good. While at her website I left a message on her guestbook. Well, I was surprised the other day to find a message from Karen in my email box. Karen wrote a very nice note. She told me the story of how she came to write this powerful song. I asked her to let me post that message here and she gave her permission.

Here is her note to me:

Dear Joe,

I want to thank you so much for taking the time to write to me about “Precious Child”.

I read many of the entries on your website....and want to tell you how very sorry I am about the loss of your son, Richard. He sounds like an amazing young man.

I’ve only witnessed what it’s like to be a bereaved parent from the sidelines....my nephew Paul was murdered when he was 21, and I watched my sister go through that tremendous grief. I know that only those of you who’ve been through it can understand it, or have any idea what it’s like.

Bonnie, my sister, became involved with the Compassionate Friends, and was helping them plan their meeting in Nashville several years ago. She asked me if I would come and sing something.

We both wondered what I would sing....we thought about my song “How Can I Help You Say Goodbye”, but although it’s about loss, it’s pretty “mother” specific. I asked her to give me a few days to see if anything came. I was up at the Waffle House the next morning, with my husband Dennis. In the middle of breakfast, I started hearing the song.....in all of the 500+ songs that I’ve written, this has NEVER happened before...or since. I asked Dennis to please stop talking, I grabbed a pen from our waitress, a waffle house napkin, and I wrote down the song.....using numbers for the notes....the whole thing just came.

I recorded it a week later, and we passed it by her “committee”.....who wondered if I had used the words “precious child” too many times.....and a couple of other nit-picky things that I said....”nope...not changing it” to.....but then, they asked if I would change this line....to account for the many varying beliefs of all the parents who might hear the song:

What I HEARD and what I wrote down was:

.....God knows I want to see you, feel you, touch you....and I KNOW there’s a heaven and some day I will again.....

This is not particularly my belief....I have no real, set religious beliefs....I’m open to many ideas....not so open to many others.....but this is what I heard.

They asked me to please change it....so I did....to “MAYBE there’s a heaven....”

Just thought it was important to share that with you, dear Joe....not that it could possibly make your grief any less.

I am honored that the song is speaking to your heart. I know that I was simply used as an instrument to get it out to you, and to my sister, and to other bereaved parents.

My love to you and your family....

Karen

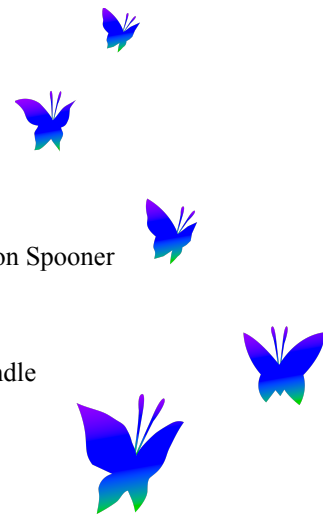
Having talked to Karen a few times now via email, I find that she is not only very talented, but a generous and nice lady as well.

Thanks Karen.



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Robbie Rickman	Dec 1	Jean Rickman
Joshua Aaron Munkirs	Dec 1	Dana & Laura Munkirs
Abraham Daniel Boukhari	Dec 2	David & Deborah Woodrow
Dwayne Stoppel	Dec 3	Pearl Stoppel
John Walther	Dec 8	Joseph Walther
Zachary Nathaniel James McClary	Dec 9	Gloria & James Olsen
Matthew Stockwell	Dec 11	Mark & Sally Stockwell
Daniel J. Whisler	Dec 11	JoAnn Mowdy
Trinity Sumlin	Dec 11	Sheryl Sumlin
Kristen Amanda Teran	Dec 12	Donna Loughridge
Rachael Samulenok	Dec 12	Megan Samulenok
Kristopher Lohrmeyer	Dec 13	Dan & Lori Lohrmeyer
Gavin Perez	Dec 14	Shannon Paolini
Noelle Pearl	Dec 15	Michelle Fleming
Chris Reiter	Dec 18	Sharon Reiter
Nathaniel Hughes	Dec 19	Jim Hughes
Timothy Patrick Shea	Dec 22	Joe & Paula Shea
Nicolas Jay Broughton	Dec 23	Rose Broughton
Katie Kennedy	Dec 23	Van & Kathy Kennedy
Trevor "T.J." Franks	Dec 24	Penny Franks
Robert (Robby) George, Jr.	Dec 25	Robert & Margaret George
Sheri Cavin	Dec 27	Susan & Alan Cavin
Megan Lane	Dec 28	Sandra Gail Lane
Joshua Samuel Shelton	Dec 28	Cherie Berglund-Hensley
Kyle Hill	Dec 28	Ursula Hill
Anthony Anselmo	Dec 28	Vicki & Frank Anselmo
Chelsey Ann Kear	Dec 29	Tami Kear
Lindsay Jean Morris	Dec 30	Linda Morris
Ernest Price Hurst, Jr.	Jan 2	Nancy Hurst
Adam Roy Hodges	Jan 3	JoAnn Ewing
Addie Marie Vande Stouwe	Jan 4	Shawn Roberson
Alyanna Livingston	Jan 5	Kirstin Klinkerman
Jamie Jackman	Jan 5	Sherry Jackman & Knelson Spooner
Ramon E.G. Lucero	Jan 6	Diana & Kimber Michael
Nicole Megan Yagi	Jan 6	Jackie & Dennis Yagi
John Daniel Ringo	Jan 8	Paul Ringo & Angela Randle
Klye Snyder	Jan 9	Adderall LuAnn Walters
Ronald Eugene Peterson	Jan 9	Ron Peterson
Tyrone Binnebose	Jan 11	Natasha Binnebose
Terry A. Shank	Jan 11	Carol Vierling
Seth Fieser	Jan 17	Megan Fieser
Jaelyn Williams	Jan 20	Sandy & Rob Williams
Brody Richard Cisneros	Jan 21	Julie & Will Cisneros
Adriano Bermudez	Jan 22	C.J. LaPointe
Mallory Paulene Hendrickson	Jan 22	Celine & Gary Hendrickson
Jody Elizabeth Houtz	Jan 23	Jane & Chris Houtz





Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Corey Reynolds	Jan 23	Barb Reynolds
Eric Evans	Jan 23	Linda & Dick Evans
Kade Riefenberg	Jan 24	Andy Gibson
Sarah Sunshine Wedekind	Jan 25	Lorry Pearson
Stephen Lucas Tyler	Jan 25	Catherine Tyler
Kevin Michael Burns	Jan 27	Stan & Willie Burns
Aaron Lee Gallob	Jan 27	Lou & Erma Gallob
Joshua Cesar Menendez	Jan 28	Dianna Castellanos & Julio Menendez
Sean O'Connor	Jan 28	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor

Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Mia Allyson Gardiner	16 years	Dec 4	Peri Gardiner
Eric Sutton Skinner	19 years	Dec 4	David & Gail Skinner
Lisa Marie O'Briant	22 years	Dec 5	Gary & Mary O'Briant
Renee Lee Seiberlich	1 year	Dec 5	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
Jackson Ahrold	9 years	Dec 12	Doug & Tina Blenkarn
Marc Darby	12 years	Dec 12	Lori & Steve Darby
Joseph Gentry Richardson	1 year	Dec 13	Miriam Gentry
Mallory Jane Hooper	25 years	Dec 13	Bill & Beth Hooper
Isaac Sartain	12 years	Dec 14	Gregory Sartain
Logan Riley	0 years	Dec 17	Heather Claypool
Ember Maria Arthur	30 years	Dec 17	Jeanette Newville
Samuel Hesselberg	17 years	Dec 18	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Audrina Elyse Escano	18 years	Dec 20	Chris & Christina Pearson
Anthony Anselmo	22 years	Dec 21	Vicki & Frank Anselmo
Tyler Glicken	19 years	Dec 22	Ginger Jones
Patrick Niedringhaus	18 years	Dec 22	Leah & Dave Niedringhaus
Robbie Rickman	21 years	Dec 25	Jean Rickman
Henry Rael	37 years	Dec 26	Isabelle & Ron Rael, Maria Real
Chris Reiter	28 years	Dec 27	Sharon Reiter
Kristen Amanda Teran	23 years	Dec 28	Donna Loughridge
Ariel Allen	3 years	Dec 29	Judy Allen
Rebekah Cano Moore	20 years	Dec 29	Janis Cano
Mary Hope Burton	7 years	Dec 30	Jim & Betty Burton
Julian King	21 years	Dec 31	Carl Reese & Leonie Cramer
Matthew Flint	26 years	Dec 31	Cathy Flint
Michael Zwirlein	25 years	Dec 31	Chris Zwirlein
Susan Gordon	17 years	Jan 4	Mr & Mrs Arthur Gordon
Savannah L. Burke	6 weeks	Jan 12	Herman & April Burke
Judy Gambill	17 years	Jan 12	Andrea Gambill
Michelle Howie	32 years	Jan 12	Annette Howie
Fred Chavez	32 years	Jan 14	Annette Atchison



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Jim Eley	43 years	Jan 19	Judy Eley
Sara M. Losasso	14 years	Jan 19	Cindy Losasso
Joshua W. Lewis Gohlke	20 years	Jan 19	Karen Swank
Jacob Sanchez	3 months	Jan 22	Denise Langhorst & Janine McDonough
Nicholas Ryan Nelson	23 years	Jan 22	Marley Nelson Rhoad
Mark Van Matre	46 years	Jan 24	Patricia Van Matre
Megan Lane	18 years	Jan 27	Sandra Gail Lane
Gregory Randall Davis	18 years	Jan 29	Cora Davis
Ernest Price Hurst, Jr.	44 years	Jan 30	Nancy Hurst
Amy Mae Lugenbeel	2 years	Jan 31	Terry & Barb Lugenbeel
Juan Marine	29 years	Jan 31	Pamela Marine

Love Gift Donations

A "Love Gift" is a wonderful way to remember your child, while also helping our TCF chapter "reach out" to bereaved families. There is no charge to attend meetings, use the library, or receive the newsletter. We depend solely upon these gifts, monetary or gifts-in-kind, to support our chapter. You may choose to donate a tax deductible "Love Gift" at any time. Let us be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. A Love Gift is money donated to the chapter in memory of your child who has died. If you feel a Love Gift is an appropriate way to honor the memory of your child, please consider a donation, large or small. Please fill out the form located in this newsletter and mail it to the address listed. All pictures submitted will be returned unless you specify for us to keep them and place them on our Child Remembered board displayed at monthly meetings.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

\$50 or more - Newsletter Sponsor. May include a full page for printing. Please remember to send your page "Copy Ready" as you would like to see it printed in the newsletter.

\$0 to \$50 - A picture, if available, and dedication to be listed in the newsletter. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Yvette Thompson whose address is listed on the Love Gift Donation Form. *Wouldn't you like to make a dedication to your child and help our chapter?*

⇒ **Send Love Gifts to Yvette Thompson, 5012 Rocking R Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80915** ⇐

Thank you for contributing and supporting the work of our local chapter!

LOVE GIFT DONATION



Costs are rising. We need your Love Gift to support our chapter & newsletter! If you can, please help.

I would like to make a donation in Memory of a Chapter Gift

In loving memory of: _____

Love Gift Donation: \$ _____ Please make check payable to: The Compassionate Friends

Cut and mail this form with your Love Gift to: Yvette Thompson – 5012 Rocking R Dr. – Colorado Springs, CO 80915

Contributor Name & Address: _____

Relationship: Son Daughter Grandson Granddaughter Friend Other

Photo Enclosed: Yes No

Photo To Be Returned: Yes No



The Hidden Anger Inside

I had a wonderful Christmas yesterday, really I did. Dinner with friends, some nice gifts and the opportunity to talk at some length with friends I don't get to see very often. I got into a discussion with a woman I've known for many years. The conversation started initially about not wanting to anger God, fearing God, being rejected by God and whether it was even possible with a loving, compassionate God. Our talk twisted and turned much like a mountain road and then settled on the subject of losing a child. She asked me whether I felt saddened, angered or jealous when I see friends with children being honored, celebrated and blessed when I no longer had the opportunity?

I said "yes" without giving the question much thought and then it hit me. I came to a realization that I had never had before; my life is interrupted and I resent that fact.

As most of you know, when you lose a child your mind is consumed by thoughts of that child constantly. These thoughts over time diminish but, not a day will go by that there isn't a thought or memory that invades my brain. They have a nasty way of sneaking up on you when you least expect. Does with me anyway. I don't find these thoughts unwanted and I find that I actually need and welcome them as a reminder of the life that was, the love I had and the loss of a loved one never to return. Though I need these interruptions I do resent them. But this is not the case for others. I resent that too. Does this make sense?

So, while I'll live out the rest of my life daily being bombarded with bittersweet memories often catching me off guard, others go about their merry way as if nothing happened. Their world didn't end, their world doesn't stop and they continue without the emptiness and pain that I feel... every day.

I don't fully understand this though I know it is probably very common and most likely a healthy reaction.

My thoughts of anger and resentment are internalized towards people I know, people I love, with great kids doing great things. What's with that? It must be because they are fulfilling something that I will never see fulfilled or cannot be repeated by my child.

So, I pull up my boot straps, smile and try to enjoy the occasion though there is turmoil secretly churning inside.

Is this you? Is this how you feel? Tell me I'm not the only one. Let's have a great 2015.

Stew Levett - TCF Pikes Peak Chapter



Chaela Christianson
in loving memory of her son
Damon Vincent Christianson
5/30/1977 ~ 7/3/2010

Betty Stieglmeyer
in loving memory of
Jim & Scott Stieglmeyer

Chaplain
Gene Steinkirchner





HEALING WORDS

SOME WAYS TO HELP A GRIEVING SPOUSE

- ◆ Assign top priority to your marriage relationship.
- ◆ Cultivate transparency, openness, and honesty.
- ◆ Accept the pain that you feel. Be willing to share it and to listen to your spouse's expression of the pain he or she is feeling.
- ◆ Be patient with your spouse and with yourself. Recognize that your spouse is probably not at the same place in the grief process as you, and that is okay.
- ◆ Don't expect your spouse to be your only source of healing.
- ◆ Keep working at communicating. Give special attention to your affection for each other. Learn and practice the gestures of love. Remember to stay in touch physically; the importance of human touching and hugging is hard to over estimate.
- ◆ Allow or create space in your relationship. Everyone is entitled to a degree of privacy with their feelings, including their grief.
- ◆ Allow yourselves to enjoy life and each other. Be willing to laugh together, as well as to cry together. Work at finding some fun things to do together.
- ◆ Help each other to remember that life is more than this child who has died. As important as this child is to you, and as much as you feel pain over his or her death, your marriage relationship involves far more than this child.

Howard Cupp, TCF State Conference, Norman, OK

Tears Are The Proof Of Life

"How long will the pain last?" a broken hearted mourner asked me.

"All the rest of your life." I had to answer truthfully. We never quite forget. No matter how many years pass, we remember. The loss of a loved one is like a major operation; part of us is removed and we have a scar for the rest of our lives.

This does not mean that the pain continues at the same intensity. There is a short while, at first, when we hardly believe it. It is rather like when we have cut our hand, we see the blood flowing, but the pain has not set in yet. So when we are bereaved, there is a short while before the pain hits us. But when it does, it is massive in its effect. Grief is shattering.

Then the wound begins to heal. It is like going through a dark tunnel. Occasionally we glimpse a bit of light up ahead, then lose sight of it awhile, then see it again, and one day we merge into the light. We are able to laugh, to care, to live. The wound is healed, so to speak, the stitches are taken out, and we are whole again.

BUT NOT QUITE! The scar is still there, and the scar tissue, too. As the years go by, we manage. There are things to do, people to care for, tasks that call for full attention. But the pain is still there, not far below the surface. We see a face that has echoes, see a photograph in someone's album, see a landscape that once we saw together, and it is as though the knife were in the wound again. But not so painfully. And mixed with joy, too. Because remembering a happy time is not all sorrow; it brings back happiness with it.

How long will the pain last? All the rest of your life. But the thing to remember is that not only will the pain last, but the blessed memories will as well. Tears are proof of life. The more love, the more tears. If this be true, then how could we ever ask that the pain cease altogether? For then the memory of love would also go with it. The pain is the price we pay for love.

~ Author Unknown ~



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

TEARS IN SEASON

I was down,
all the way
below the bottom
of the bottom.
I don't know how
I got up.
I remember
weeping a long time,
until someone wept with me.
Then
my weeping stopped.

Marilyn Pheminster TCF, Rockford, IL

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.

Peggi Johnson TCF, Piedmont Chapter, VA

I Am Doing Fine

I said I'm doing good
Then I turned my head and cried.
I smiled and told my eyes to sparkle
Then I turned my head and cried.
I told a joke and laughed heartily
Then I turned my head and cried.

The Conversation

*As I stand above your grave
Sadness hitting wave by wave,
Wish I could have one more day
To speak things I want to say.*

*Rest easy Father for I'm here,
The times we had were so dear
We will never be apart
For I rest safe in your heart.*

*I never got to say good-bye
Day you were going to die,
My world became oh so dark
And my soul stitched with this mark.*

*Daddy can you not hear me
You would not need to see me,
I step behind you today
Those steps can no longer stray.*

*I still feel you in my heart
Of you I still have a part-
No matter sun, stars above
You are still the child I love.*

*Papa my love for you stays
Much longer than there are days,
My laughter in your ears still
Forget me you never will.*

Ron Agee - Pikes Peak TCF

I offered comfort and encouragement
Then I turned my head and cried.
I did what has to be done
Then I turned my head and cried.
Then I turned my head and cried.
And felt my broken heart.
Charlotte Roberts TFC/Montgomery



The Compassionate Friends
 Pikes Peak Chapter
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