



Upcoming Events

November 17th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
December 11th - Candle Light Memorial - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
December 15th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAINÉ ASARO-ANDERSON
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

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

SC MEMBER

LEONIE CRAMER
Son, Julian Anthony King

SC MEMBER

DIANNE McLAUGHLIN
Son, Kevin Hardman

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Any of these members may be contacted to talk about your loss:
All telephone numbers are 719 unless otherwise indicated.

CHAPTER LEADER

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

MULTIPLE LOSSES

LORI DARBY 464-4703

MOTORCYCLE DEATH

STEVE SEIFERT 331-6455

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.

**Steering Committee Member*



Let us give thanks for the time we had with our child for our lives have been enriched beyond measure.



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 November 17, 2016.

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.compassiontefriends.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!



We are always looking for material from our chapter members to include in this newsletter. It is the perfect way to share your child, grandchild or sibling with all of us. Tell us about the special things you did in their memory or simply tell us the special things you will always remember and keep close to your heart. It is a beautiful way for us to get to know more about your loved one. It unites us as a bereaved family and it will help us all to become closer. Where there is unity, there is strength, strength that we can give to and draw from one other.

We would also welcome any book reviews. If you have read a book that has helped you on your journey please tell us about it. There are many, many grief books out there. Some will be more healing than others. It is so helpful to be guided to the right ones. Please forward any writings, poems, book reviews etc. to Stew Levett PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com or you may use the U.S. Mail and send it to me at 160 El Dorado Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80919.



Thankful vs. Thankless

This is the time of year when many bereaved parents start saying out loud what newly bereaved parents have been thinking for weeks and weeks – “I really am dreading the holidays.” And why not? When your grief is so new, you haven’t had the necessary time to accept life as it is for you now.

On the other hand, there are those of us who have had that necessary time and the proper support who are able to observe the holidays in a less painful way. We have kept some of the old traditions that warm our hearts and thrown out those that are either too painful or meaningless now. We have created a life that doesn’t include someone who was a vital part of who and what we were. We’re different now, doing different things because losing a child forces you into that position if you are to survive in an emotionally healthy way.

The words thankful and thankless follow one another in my dictionary; so close together in a book, yet so far apart in meaning. When you think about it, the difference between the two words is full and less. Though those of us who have had more time do, like the more newly bereaved, have less in the way of family, our lives still do have a fullness because we have learned to be thankful and appreciate that which we have left in the way of people and memories – more so than we ever thought possible.

As you approach this Thanksgiving, if you haven’t yet been able to make your adjustment, I hope you will feel what you must for now because whatever you are feeling is okay. It isn’t until you have reached the place in your grief where the ability to make good choices returns to your life that you can make some important changes in how you approach the holidays. I hope the transition from thankless to thankful will be soon in coming for you, for that will mean some peace has returned to your life. Above all, I do wish you peace during this holiday season. I wish you more of the same in the New Year.

By Mary Cleckley~Lawrenceville, GA

JUST FOR TODAY

I could try to live through this day only
Not deal with all life's problems
Just for today
If just for one night
I could feel not sad and lonely
Not be my own life's problem
Just for one night
If just (for) today
I could try to live through this day only
Not deal with all life's problems
Just for today



If just for one night
I could feel not sad and lonely
Not be my own life's problem
Just for one night
Just for today
I could try to live through this day only
Not deal with all life's problems
Just for today, Just for today

Words by George Harrison



Welcome New Friends.

Malcolm Matthew - Son Jake Matthew

Joseph Becker - Daughter Courtney Marie Becker

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable.



Chaela Christianson - In Loving Memory of Damon Vincent Christianson

Chaplain Gene Steinkirchner - CSPD

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

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different we really do understand. You are not alone.

TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting the pain will not always be this bad it really does get better with wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.



Button, Button, We'll Make Your Button!

Hey, guess what? We have purchased a photo button making machine and we are ready to start making your picture buttons. So, bring 2 copies (In case we make a mistake) of the SAME picture to your next meeting and we will have it ready for you the following months meeting.

Please bring your pictures to any of our monthly meetings. We will need a 3"x5" or 4"x6" photo of your child but would prefer NOT using the original photo. We suggest using Walgreens who can quickly make good 4"x6" copies from your original.

For best results make sure the photo of your child is centered and not too close to the edge or the results may not turn out as expected.



We are initially requesting one photo button per family to get us started. Thereafter we will be able to make additional buttons for each member of the family as time and labor allows. This is still new to us so we request that you bring two pictures just in case we make a mistake with the first one. Also, for those who have lost more than one child, we will gladly make a button for each child.

JUST FLOW WITH THE SEASON AND TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

We're well into November and it's almost time to take the "January pill". After Tricia died I decided I'd invent a pill you could take the week before Thanksgiving and when you came to, it would be January! I'm still working on the invention. In the meantime, I know many of you are already dreading the approaching holidays.

The true spirit and meaning of Thanksgiving and Christmas are not necessarily exemplified by some of our "traditions". You are re-evaluating many aspects of your life so let this also apply to the coming holidays. You will not always feel as you do now. You will find joy in holiday activities, but maybe not in all the things you once thought so very important.

Flow with the season and with your sadness, knowing strength will come as you work with what you can do without overtaxing yourself. Resolve to be as generous with your energy as you can and as selfish as you have to be to protect the emerging person you will become as a result of your loss. This person can be truly beautiful and loving because of what you have learned through grief. You will miss your child; no magic potion can wipe the pain away. Enjoy what you can—you deserve some pleasure. And may some measure of peace overtake you before this year ends.

Elizabeth B. Estes - TCF Augusta, GA



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - November

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Robert Howie	Nov 1	Annette Howie
Rebecca Ann Reynolds	Nov 1	Ken & Barbara Reynolds
Chloe Faith Gafford	Nov 3	Brian & Jocelyn Gafford
Dylan Sagraves	Nov 4	Lance & Terri Hill
Patrcia Elliott	Nov 4	Connie & Dave Elliott
Nick Naples	Nov 4	Laurie Naples
Michael Keeney	Nov 6	Charlotte Keeney
Carlos Martinez	Nov 6	Marilyn Martinez, Vicki Struckle
Nicole Johnson	Nov 7	Sherry Turner
Kristie Diaz	Nov 7	Julie Diaz
Vinnie Franz	Nov 8	Barb Franz
McKenzie Boutin	Nov 9	Colleen Boutin
Kimberly Ann Hayes	Nov 10	Patty and Patrick Hayes
Judy Gambill	Nov 13	Andrea Gambill
Colin Peter Baerman	Nov 14	Paul & Kerry Baerman
Daniel Stafford Gettman	Nov 14	Louise Gettman
Clay Cline	Nov 14	Arlene Robush
Clara Johnson	Nov 15	Julie Sanchez
Eric Cowles	Nov 15	Doug & Leah Cowles
Scott Lauther	Nov 16	Marte Lauther
Shannon Diane McMahon	Nov 17	Robert & Jeanette McMahon
Joshua W. Lewis Gohlke	Nov 19	Karen Swank
Travis Grimmer	Nov 20	Mary Lou Grimmer
Richard "Richie" Petras	Nov 21	Richard Petras
Evan Carara	Nov 22	Cindy & J.D. Carara
Leah Ann Trutna	Nov 22	Steve & Phyllis Trutna
Branden Howland	Nov 23	Julianne Howland
Patrick Roger Pennington	Nov 24	Roger & Joan Pennington
Savannah L. Burke	Nov 25	Herman & April Burke
Danae Lynne Marie Mannon	Nov 26	Art Mannon
Mark Van Matre	Nov 27	Patricia Van Matre
Michael Christopher Rushmore	Nov 28	Bob & Carol Rushmore
Jalynn Cameron	Nov 28	Jessica Cameron
Paul A. Behr	Nov 29	Cynthia & Steve Behr



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - November

Child's Name	Forever Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Michael Williams Greist	12 years	Nov 1	Judy Greist
Jaden Alexander Founds	1 month	Nov 3	Kimberly Founds
Chloe Faith Gafford	1 day	Nov 3	Brian & Jocelyn Gafford
Justin William Winner	13 years	Nov 5	Dale & Rosanne Winner
Scott David Stiegelmeyer	21 years	Nov 7	Betty Stiegelmeyer
Seth Fieser	9 months	Nov 8	Megan Fieser
Dwayne Stoppel	45 years	Nov 8	Pearl Stoppel
Alexander Pegler	3 years	Nov 9	Eric & Lisa Pegler
Emma Renee Younger	0 years	Nov 9	Adam & Mindy Younger
Robert Howie	13 days	Nov 12	Annette Howie
Mike Mozo	27 years	Nov 12	Valerie Kirchhofer
Lindsay Yvonne Davis	26 years	Nov 18	Susan & Jerry Davis
Michael Keeney	45 years	Nov 18	Charlotte Keeney
Stephen Merle Schmoker	39 years	Nov 19	Shirley & Ralph Greer
Sean Michael Benjamin	34 years	Nov 20	Kathy Benjamin
Tyler Schmidt	23 years	Nov 20	Valerie & Jeff Schmidt
Omar Amaya	21 years	Nov 21	Oscar & Juana Amaya
Aaron Lee Gallob	28 years	Nov 21	Lou & Erma Gallob
Susanna Jeanette Scruggs	23 years	Nov 22	Patricia Beard
Joseph Michael Chavez	29 years	Nov 22	Herman & Patty Chavez
Tommy Kinslow	20 years	Nov 22	Pam Kinslow
Conri Lee Barber	8 months	Nov 23	Sean & Cherie Barledge
Sid Shell	33 years	Nov 23	James Selvig
Kimberly Benson	16 years	Nov 24	Debbie Diekman
Wade Lehman	19 years	Nov 24	Lori Lehman
Joyhanna Benford-Grimm	28 years	Nov 25	Linda Benford
Jonathan Ell-Duncan	17 years	Nov 25	Dan & Becky Duncan
Michael Ornelas	2 months	Nov 27	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Adriano Bermudez	19 years	Nov 29	C.J. LaPointe
Sheldon Pasca	20 years	Nov 30	Norma Watkins



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

Finding Gratitude While Grieving

It has been so dark in the mornings for the past couple weeks. I know that this happens every year as the season changes, but this year seems to be harder somehow. In the mornings, I crave staying in the warmth of my bed and not functioning. The lack of daylight, the cold, the incoming barrenness in the landscape... it all can weigh on a person's mood. When you are grieving, it only makes it more difficult to keep moving. And that is without even taking into account the stress of upcoming holiday functions that are so often filled with expectations that make us lose track of those things that we are still grateful for in our lives.

This month we look at ways to get through the holidays with gratitude in mind. We start with an article from Angela Miller about the possibility of being both grateful and grieving. Then we revisit an article that Pat wrote a few years back on how to cope with family gatherings in times of grief. Finally, we share a thanksgiving grief activity that is great for kids (of all ages), courtesy of the creators of What's Your Grief?, a website that focuses on all the many faces of grief. We hope these articles will help you navigate the upcoming holiday season.

From *Grief Watch* - Nov. 1, 2016



HEALING WORDS

Thanksgiving Marks Beginning of Holiday Madness and Sadness

In our society we have turned the holidays into a never ending round of parties, shopping, cooking, preparations for guests or travel and stress, lots and lots of stress. It begins in October with the not so subtle reminders from our friendly retail stores. Most of us dread this time of year because as members of Compassionate Friends, we have one more item on our list and it invariably is at the top.....my child is gone.....how can I handle the holidays?

This will be my third Thanksgiving without my son. We had 35 wonderful Thanksgiving celebrations together, and now it's just me. My only child is gone, my grandchildren now live solely in their mother's world. I am not a part of that world.

But I am learning to cope with this reality. I am learning that I can hold on to the traditions that don't cause me sadness and let go of those that do. As bereaved parents we fall into a unique category. As humans we accept that the loss of parents, spouses, aunts, uncles, siblings, friends and acquaintances is inevitable. But never, never, were we taught or conditioned to the idea that our children would or could precede us in death. The very notion of this shook us to our core.

Now we have lost our child to death. Nobody prepared us for this mind numbing loss. The rules have been broken. We have no coping skills. Our friends usually can't help. Our families try, but until one endures a loss of this magnitude, the ability to fully comprehend the never ending rounds of sadness is simply not there. We do have a support system.....we can choose to participate or simply be there, in the moment, at our Compassionate Friends meetings. Here we find our most meaningful and helpful connection with other parents.....parents who are walking the road we now walk. These bereaved parents are here to help us on this unfamiliar road. They cannot answer every question because the answers don't exist to most questions. When will this pain end? When will life go back to "normal?" There are different types of pain and new kinds of normal. We gather each month to help each other, to lean on each other, to find hope in each other's ability to function. From this meeting of kindred souls we do derive some solace, some peace and some hope.

I have watched the newly bereaved, raw in their sadness when they first attend a meeting. As the months move forward, I begin to see a change in these parents. Each changes in a different way, for each experiences their loss and their grief process in a different way. Some changes aren't apparent for months, even a year or two. Learning that we are not alone in the grievous burden of our loss is comforting. Learning that others have developed ways to cope with the holidays, the birthdays, the death anniversaries and other special occasions gives us the hope that we, too, will one day feel comfortable in our new "normal."

I have chosen to accept this group of gentle, kind and compassionate friends as an integral part of my life. The first holidays were horrible. I learned that I had to do what I felt was right. I learned to let go of the expectations of others and live in the moment. Even if I plan to do something and change my mind, I feel no guilt. I learned that those who truly love me understand. I have found that I am truly becoming myself....my new self. It is a slow process. There are setbacks.

Holidays are extremely difficult for every parent who has lost a child.....it matters not how long ago our child died. The pain is fresh, new and raw at this time of year. This is the season for leaning on our compassionate friends, for asking questions, expressing fears, anxieties, doubts, depression and anger and for finding the comfort, hope and understanding that each of us so desperately seeks.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF, Katy, TX



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

THANKSGIVING PRAYER

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful to
Think of losing you.
Death can't claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.
Time can never bring you back
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.
To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow
I pray you find with faith and time
The blessings of each Tomorrow.

Charlotte Irick TCF, Idaho Falls, ID

No Words Spoken

If I saw you again
I would just take every part of you in.
I wouldn't waste time with foolish words
For what words could I say?
I would study each feature
Of your beautiful face.
And take in the moment of
Standing face to face.
To just look in your eyes
And to feel your love.
To reach out and touch you
And give you a hug.
To be swept away by the
Happiness of you near.
And to communicate our love for each other
Without even one word!

Laura Rebick TCF, Central Jersey

Giving Thanks
I cannot hold your hands today,
I cannot see your smile.
I cannot hear your voices now,
my children who are gone.
But I recall your faces still,
the songs, the talks, the sighs.
And story times and winter walks, and
sharing secret things.
I know you helped my mind to live
beyond your time with me.
You gave me clearer eyes to see,
you gave me finer ears to hear,
what living means, what dying means,
my children who are gone.
So here it is Thanksgiving Day,
and you are not with me.
And while I weep a mother's tears,
I thank you for the gifts you were,
and all the gifts you gave to me,
my children, who are gone.
Sascha Wagner

First Thanksgiving

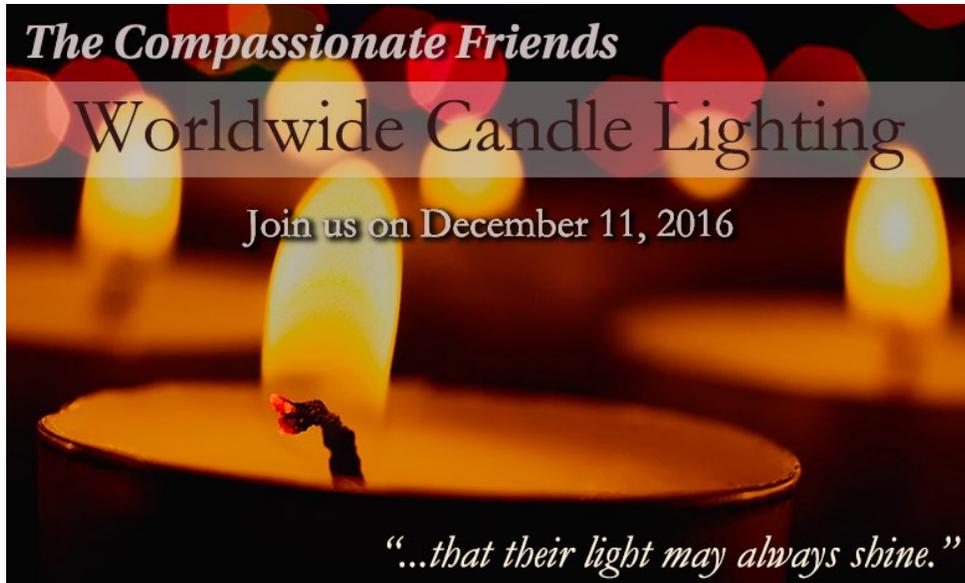
The thought of being thankful fills my heart with
dread. They'll all be feigning gladness, not a
word about her said.
These heavy shrouds of blackness enveloping
my soul, pervasive, throat-catching, writhe in me,
and coil.

I must, I must acknowledge, just express her
name, so all sitting at the table, know I'm thankful
that she came.

Though she's gone from us forever and we
mourn to see her face, not one minute of her
living, would her death ever replace.
So I stop the cheerful gathering, though my voice
quivers, quakes, make a toast to all her living.

That small tribute's all it takes.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
from Stars in the Deepest Night— After the
Death of a Child



**PIKES PEAK TCF CANDLELIGHT
MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Once again we request that you contact us to have your child's slide included in our memorial. Slides from previous years may be used again this year or you may submit new photos. Please limit your photos to (2) two along with a short dedication so everything will be viewable on the slide. Please remember, the better the photo you submit, the better your dedication will look.

Prior years' submissions will be read as a dedication if we don't hear back from you.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS SAT., DEC. 3rd.
To see a short sample of our Candlelight Service, go to this YouTube link:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g4uTWPbGCI>

We are quickly approaching December and with it our annual Worldwide Candle Lighting. The date this year is December 11th and once again will be held in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church at 7:00 p.m. Now is a good time to look through your photos to submit for our slide show. Old slides may be updated or a new one created for your child. More information about this special event will be forthcoming in next months newsletter or you may write to me should you have any questions at PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com.

Stew Levett - Editor



Send to: Stew Levett
160 El Dorado Lane
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Your Name _____
 Your Address _____
 Your Phone _____ Email _____
 Child's Name As You'd Like it to Appear _____

 Cause of Death (Optional) _____
 Child's Birthdate _____
 Child's Memorial Date _____
 Number of Pictures Included _____
 Dedication _____

 Please create my slide with information and pictures provided.
 Please use last year's slide. _____ Please return pictures when finished. _____

Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly - Return Service Requested

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November 2016

The Compassionate Friends
Pikes Peak Chapter
PO Box 51345
Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345



The Compassionate Friends
Worldwide Candle Lighting
Join us on December 11, 2016

"...that their light may always shine."