



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

November/December 2018

Volume 19, No. 6



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a self-help, nonprofit organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to families grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause. When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family. The butterfly signifies a new life for our lost children and a different life for ourselves. It is a symbol of hope, rebirth, and regeneration and beauty.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

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MEETINGS

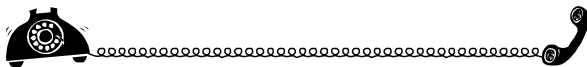
We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month.

Our next meetings will be **November 1 & December 6.**
Candle Lighting Program Dec. 9, see pg 3.

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

MEETING **Fellowship Christian Church**
PLACE: **26889 Bouquet Canyon Rd., Ste. C.**
Saugus, CA 91350

(Take the side street next to the Goodwill store and make a left behind the store, the church is located in that building. Entry to the church is the double glass doors.)



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-252-4654
Alice Renolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374
Carol Costin (Treasurer) 661-670-0395
Linda Stout (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638

'Tis the Season



It is trying to be
A warm and loving time,
With kindness and light,
And a feeling of hopeful renewal.

Find what blessings you can.
Help your heart to remember
That the children who died
Are about us, everywhere,
Trying to make this,
Even for you,
A warm and loving time.

~Sascha Wagner

*May your holidays be filled with
reasons to be thankful.
Having loved and been loved is perhaps
the most wondrous
reason of all.*





*May the beauty of fall
surround you,
be a source of comfort and healing.
May these affirmations remind you of
the joy that your loved one brought into
your life,
a gift that is yours forever.*

~The Compassionate Friends 2000



Holiday Healing

It's been almost two years now, another holiday season rolls around. The second Thanksgiving without you is this week. It's just a stupid day, a day where people eat Turkey and watch football why should I care?

There is no one to visit me this year; there is no one here who cares. The numbness is creeping in. The pain so deep, I can't breathe, I can't think, I can't stand it. All day long I think of you, but why? Why is today any different than any other day?

Is it holiday traditions lost? Is it knowing millions of parents everywhere will be with their children this week but I won't be with you? Is it remembering the closeness and laughter on this day throughout the years? Why do the tears fill my eyes and my heart hurt so?

Maybe somewhere deep down inside I am asking myself what am I thankful for and this question is so very hard since you are gone. When someone first told me to be thankful for the years I spent with you or to be thankful I had you in my life I wanted to punch them and scream leave me alone you don't understand!

But now I understand because I am eternally grateful for those years. Today almost two years since you left this place, my second Thanksgiving without you here I am thankful for all the love we shared. I am thankful for the gift of Motherhood you each gave me, the greatest gift of all.

On the good days now, which two years since you left this place there are more good days than not, but on the good days, I can't begin to count how many things I am thankful for. But if I had to pick just one thing on Thursday as I say my prayers, I would have to say I am most grateful for each day I spend with both of you tucked safely in my heart!

*~Deana L. Martin
In Memory of my children,
Amanda Suzanne Mills & Logan Robert Mills*



Thanksgiving Prayer

I am 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*



I Never Believed...

I never believed I would see another season change with gladness. I never believed I would see the world again without the haze of tears. I never expected to actually laugh again. I never felt my smile would return and feel natural on my face. I never hoped for another day when I would not want to die. I never envisioned a world that could again be bright and full of promise. I believed that all that had passed from me the day he died and went away, never to return. But I was wrong, and I know that in the fullness of your grieving, you, too, will come to understand that life goes on...that it can still have meaning...that even joy can touch your life once more.

*-Don Hackett
TCF, Hingham, MA*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

November 1 - Decorate luminaries

Come join us as we decorate a luminary for the Candle Lighting Program (SEE BELOW) The back room will be open room for share as well.

November 24 - Deadline to send in photo for video presentation for Candle Lighting Program.

December 1 - Deadline to send in order for luminary

December 6 - Holiday Potluck @ 6:30 (SEE BELOW)

December 9 - Candle Light Remembrance Program



Luminaries

During our November meeting we will be selling and decorating luminaries in memory of our children, siblings or grandchildren for \$10.00 each as a small fundraiser. All the necessary supplies will be available for you. This is the only fund raiser our chapter has. If you can't make it to this meeting, please send in page 7 of this newsletter (the order form) by Dec. 1 and we'll gladly make one for you. As this is a fundraiser, we would appreciate that you not bring luminaries from home or from past years to our ceremony. These beautiful, lighted luminaries will line the walkway to our program and then are yours to take home.

Also, please don't forget if your child's picture is not already on our video presentation and you wanted it included you will need to add it. Please email a digital photo to Alice at TCF.SCV@gmail.com by **Nov. 24**.

Holiday Potluck Dinner



December 6 @ 6:30

Our December meeting will be our Holiday Potluck Dinner. Please bring your favorite, or maybe your child's favorite dish to share with our group. **Paper goods, dessert and drinks will be provided.** Our meeting will begin at **6:30** instead of 7:00 for this special dinner meeting only.



*Thank you so very
much for your generous newsletter
renewal donations.
They are greatly appreciated!*

Mona Gonzalez in memory of her daughter Cyrena
Robert & Juanita Arvizu in memory of their son Michael
Veronica Garcia in memory of her son Francisco

Welcome New Members



Attending your first meeting takes courage and it is always hard to say "welcome" because we are so very sorry for the reason which made you eligible for our membership in TCF. However, we are glad you found us! We cannot take away your pain but we can offer our friendship and support, Do try and to attend at least 3 meetings so you have a chance to meet others who are bereaved and discover that special acceptance that occurs with new friends who truly understand.

New to our chapter are:

William Weiss parent of Matthew

Irene Frenes, grandparent of Monique



18th Annual Candle Lighting Remembrance Program

December 9 @ 6:30pm

We hope to see all of you at our Candle Lighting Remembrance Program on Sunday, December 9 beginning at **6:30PM** located at La Mesa Jr. High School, 26623 May Way, Santa Clarita, 91351.

This very touching evening includes music, featured, performers, video presentation, the reading of poems, and the lighting of candles (battery operated) which will be provided to all who attend.

We know that the holiday season is an extremely difficult time of year for families grieving the death of a child, grandchild, or sibling. This candle lighting ceremony is a symbolic way of showing the love we continue to carry for our children, even though they are no longer with us physically.

Please invite your friends, neighbors, and family to come and share with you this very moving celebration of all children who have died. If you can't be with us, be sure to light a candle at home so that...

"their light may always shine"

By the way, we are looking for volunteers to help set up & clean up after the ceremony. Let us know if you would be willing to help, Thanks!



Looking For Your Gift

Bereaved families often face the holidays with fear and trepidation. Just the fact that holidays continue to go on can cause outrage. Our sadness is monumental, and causes our bodies to resist moving on. We need to be gentle with ourselves; we are going through an emotional rehabilitation. Holidays often renew our grief, even if we are a distance from fresh grief. We need to selectively choose what traditions are important to our family. If we commit, we set ourselves up for a let-down when we cannot meet our goals. If you have some traditions that are very important and you are not physically up to doing them, you will find friends and extended family that will feel honored if you ask for their help. Most people want to help you get through the holidays, but don't know what to do. Give them the opportunity to feel they are helpful in your healing.

Grieving cannot be put on the shelf until the holidays are over. We need to take time to feel our grief, and express our sadness. We also need to take time to try and put a bit of normality in our lives. We must remember it is not disrespectful to laugh. I'm sure our loved one would want us to surround ourselves with caring people who can help us through the holidays. A caring supportive person is one who encourages us to be the best we can be, not one who expects us to be as we used to be.

Our healing will eventually cause our pain to move out and make room for our loved one's memories. We learn to make a new life for ourselves. Holidays get better and we learn how to live again.

We tend to think of life's richest moments as being the joyous, fun filled, carefree days prior to losing our children and siblings. But, as I search for the most meaningful things that have given me strength and a real appreciation for life, they certainly do include the pain, overcoming my despair, losing my son, grandson, and six siblings. We cherish the friendships that don't always demand a smiling face, and those with the warm touch that say, "share your pain, let me be a part of your grief, don't worry about making us uneasy with tears, we have all been there." Much healing can take place through sharing as we learn to be very honest and courageous with our feelings, which helps us to find hope. Hope helps to restore our love for life and gives us the strength to survive.

This holiday we will miss our loved ones, who are no longer with us. Though it has been through much pain, you probably have never been so close to your child or sibling, or shared such a large part of your life with them. We hope the memories that ache with pain can also bring you thoughts of love. For those of us who are further removed from our early grief, who can look back and appreciate the strength for our struggle, the compassion from seeing other's pain, wanting to become functional human beings again so we can contribute to making a better world, are gifts our children and siblings have given to us for our survival. These gifts are greater than any fancy bow tied box can contain. Look for your gifts and cherish them.

*~Marie Hofmockel
TCF Valley Forge, PA*

Hanukkah Thoughts



At this season of life, we remember the light you brought into our lives:

The light of your laughter
The light of your wit and intelligence
The light of your love

May the time not be distant when the memory of these lights will illumine our hearts and minds and eradicate the darkness therein.

*~Stephanie Hesse
TCF Rockland County, NY*



How Many Stockings Do We Hang?

I began a tradition after that first dreadful Christmas blur of hanging my daughter's stocking up along with the rest of the family. Then each year I do something special in her memory...like take a name from an "Angel Tree" at the mall or where ever and buy a gift for a needy child in her memory. I put the angel note in her stocking. Things like that. As the years are passing, her stocking is filling up with good deeds done in her memory and things I know she would appreciate knowing were done in her name, my beloved "Carissa."

It helps refocus the heartbreak of missing her into something positive and helpful. The pain eases over the years but Christmas is always so hard to get through no mater what. God comfort you all as you face another Christmas without your precious children.

Peace and Hugs,

*~Debby, mom to angel Carissa
10/1994 - 10/1995
Lovingly lifted from the
TCF Atlanta Online 12/8/04 issue*

 *Love Gifts* 

Were Received From:

Andrew & Ricki Marton

In Loving Memory of their Son:

Travis Marton

10/15– 1/1



Michael & Robyn Kaplan

In Loving Memory of their Son:

Jacob Kaplan

4/1 - 12/24



Love Gifts



A Love Gift is a wonderful way to remember your child, grandchild, or sibling's birthday or angel dates or just to say I love you. What better way than to have their photo included in our newsletter along with a special memory, thought or message, article or poem from you.

If anyone would like to make a donation in memory of their child, grandchild, or sibling you may give it to Alice or Diane at our meeting or mail it to Alice at 27949 Park Meadow Dr., Canyon Country, 91387. You can also email the info to TCF.SCV@gmail.com Love gifts should be received by the 10th of the month to be placed in the up-coming newsletter. **But remember our newsletter is bi-monthly.** What a special way to share and remember your loved one!

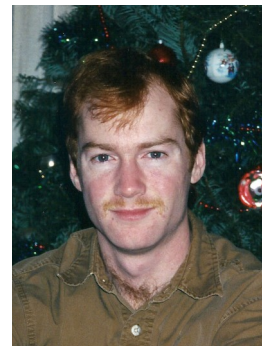
Our chapter exists solely on voluntary, tax deductible donations. We thank you in advance for any donations you may be able to give or send. Your donations help to pay the expenses of our newsletter, purchase books & brochures, coffee & refreshments, new member's packets, our rental space and other miscellaneous supplies. They also fund our annual Balloon Release and Candle Lighting programs. We sincerely appreciate your support!

Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer

In Loving Memory of their Son:

Eric Spencer

12/29 - 11/2



We love and miss you everyday.
Love Mom & Dad

“Forever In Our Hearts”

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings



Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays

November

Name	Date	Member
Justin Knopf	11/28	Jim & Susan Kirk
Michael Kelly	11/17	Kathy Kelly
Justin Hakola	11/9	Cheryl Landreth
Aurora Boehlert-Rubinfeld	11/16	Aaron & April Boehlert Rubinfeld

December

Name	Date	Member
Joshua Sparage	12/24	Bonnie & Gary Sparage
Eric Spencer	12/29	Bobbie Mathers
Sarah Carter	12/27	Shelly Carter
Anthony Tumasone	12/15	Brenda Tumasone
Casey Ray	12/5	Tracey Ray
Erica Findley	12/15	Kevin & Pam
Michael Leone	12/6	Mariacristina Leone



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

November

Name	Date	Member
Darren Bullock	11/19	Carol Lock
Eric Spencer	11/2	Bobbie Mathers
Justin Knopf	11/21	Jim & Susan Kirk
Jamie Knopf	11/21	Jim & Susan Kirk
Francisco Garcia	11/9	Veroncia Garcia
Melissa Mueller Matters	11/3	Kirk & Dianne Mueller
Colleen Brown	11/2	Keith & Lin Brown

December

Name	Date	Member
Anthony Amodio	12/26	Michael Olds
William Lemke, Jr.	12/18	Marilyn Lemke
Whitney Moore	12/12	Beth Moore
Kevin Rickhoff	12/09	Nancy Rickhoff
Jeremy Silverstein	12/16	Mel & Jeniffer
Jacob Kaplan	12/24	Michael & Robyn
Jaycie Stewart	12/15	Jason Stewart

Gently, Softly, Slowly, With Love



Tears stream down my face.
I repeat my mantra.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I give myself permission to grieve.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I yearn. I search. I cling.
My heart breaks.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I wail. I scream. I worry. I despair.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I listen. I read. I write. I pray.
Not often, I talk.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I remember. Your face. Your eyes.
Your smile. Your love.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

*I feel your presence next to me.
I reach out my hand.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.*

*I learn to care for myself,
as I once cared for you.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.*

*I face one more day.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.*

~Debbie Ortega, For Her daughter Angela Marsh
The Compassionate Friends
“We Need Walk Alone” Magazine, Spring 2008



The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Light a candle for all
children who have died

**Worldwide
Candle
Lighting®**

... that their light
may always shine.

**Sunday, December 9, 2018
7 PM Around the Globe**



Candlelight Remembrance Program

December 9, 2018 6:30pm

Photo Presentation & Luminaries

La Mesa Jr. High School

26623 May Way

Santa Clarita, CA 91351

*Sponsored by The Compassionate Friends
Of Santa Clarita*

Again this year we will have a video presentation of our children's, sibling's, and grandchildren's photos. You do not have to be a member of the Santa Clarita Chapter to have their photo included in this presentation. Photos must be received by **November 23** to be included in the video. A digital photo is preferred and should be emailed to our chapter at TCF,SCV@gmail.com. If you only have a hard copy of your photo, it can be mailed to Alice Renolds at 27949 Park Meadow Dr., Canyon Country, CA 91387. Please include your name, loved one's name, address, and phone number so your photo can be returned to you.

Also available for purchase are luminaries in memory of your child/sibling/grandchild as a small fundraiser for \$10.00. If you are unable to make our November meeting to come and decorate one, please fill out and mail in the order form below. We will take care of the rest for you and put it out on the walkway the night of the program! These luminaries are yours to take home at the end of the program. As this is a fundraiser, we would appreciate that you **not bring your own** luminary or **ones from past** years to our program.

The deadline for ordering a luminary is **December 1.**

# _____ of Luminaries with battery operated candle (\$10.00 each)	Total \$
Name(s) to appear on Luminary (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)	

Please mail order form and check (made out to The Compassionate Friends) to:

Alice Renolds
27949 Park Meadow Dr.
Canyon Country, CA 91387

Orders must be received by December 1, 2017