



# The Compassionate Friends

## Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

January-February 2022

Volume 23, No. 1



**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 age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides 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 reparation and beauty.

#### THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

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#### THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

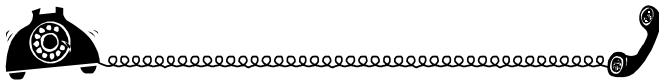
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#### MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month The next two meetings are:

**January 6, 2022**  
**February 3, 2022**

TIME: **7:00 PM**  
 MEETING **New Life Assembly of God**  
 PLACE: **27053 Honby Ave.**  
**Canyon Country, CA 91351**  
**(Please note) This is our new location for meetings and the meetings are held in the Admin building.**



#### FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-252-4654  
 Alice Renolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374  
 Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450



Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)  
 Ellena Cates (Remembrance Secretary)  
 Steve Crittenden (Webmaster)  
 Jeanne Crittenden (Button & Angel Board Manager)



## The New Year

The new year comes when all the world is ready for changes, resolutions - great beginnings. For us, to whom that stroke of midnight means a missing child remembered, for us the new years comes more like another darkness. But let us not forget that this may be the year when love and hope and courage find each other somewhere in the darkness to lift their voice and speak: let there be light.

~Sascha Wagner  
*"The Sorrow and the Light"*

  
 The truth is, that hole in your heart  
 Shaped exactly the size and shape of your child  
**WILL NEVER, EVER GO AWAY.**  
 But the *love* that oozes from it has  
*More power to change the world*  
 Than anything I've ever known.  
 ~Angela Miller  


## Memories



Unique as snow flakes,  
impossible to hold for a moment,  
yet when one is gone  
there is another gliding  
down upon the first  
until they become blankets  
of protection against the  
storms of loneliness.  
Memories, gentle memories.



~Marcia F. Alig  
TCF Mercer, NJ



## Is Winter Paradise in Disguise?

Love paints the sky with sunshine and cradles the aching heart and fills the empty arms. We did love and so we shall again...in some other place, some other time. But only if we learn to slip and slide across the icy spots of our grief and practice falling and getting up again and again.

There is a purpose to winter. It is that time when the earth slows and the days grow short, so we huddle inside, safe against the icy blasts. Winter is that time when we allow memory to rise to the surface and we must claim and confront our fears, our aches, our hurts, our griefs. We've run out of places to hide. Grief finds us no matter where we are in winter. It is time to live through this part of the journey too.

So, bundle up, lay in a good supply of chocolate and tissues, and let the memories skate across your mind. Curl up with scrapbooks, put on the music, and let the tears flow. Claim it all, for we have earned it all. We could not understand light if we had not known dark. We could not sing sweet if we had not tasted bitter. We could not laugh if we had not cried.

Winter...perhaps it is Mother Nature's Way of inviting us to live through the pain to get to the other side, that place where memory doesn't hurt and the magic of love warms us from the inside. Drift away to those moment's of paradise, when love was full and the heart knew no past, present or future. It is and was ours to hold. It will be again-someday-but only if we let winter come and learn its lessons of time spent in the memory place. We cannot hide. It is time to remember and experience again the depth of love given and received.

Is winter paradise in disguise? Perhaps it is, but no one should have to endure frozen Jell-O...

~Darcie Sims  
TCF, *We Need Not Walk Alone/Winter 2021*

The late Darcie Sims wrote hundreds of articles over the years on grief and loss which have been extremely popular and shared in hundreds of TCF publications.



## This Is Another Year Just Beginning

This is another year beginning - afresh with new days, new opportunities, new challenges. It occurs to me, however, this is a very difficult task to keep from concentrating on past years and the sadness we endure just because it is a new year and the calendar has flipped the page.

Moving on to a brighter tomorrow and letting go of the pain of yesterday is a gradual process. We cross that threshold one step at a time - a small one at first, faltering and stumbling and stumbling - but somehow getting there.

With patience, effort, and persistence, once again we will be able to celebrate life as the year stretches on before us, putting behind us our sadness, our guilt's, our failures and our pain.

We will be able to smile again. We will be able to remember our precious children in life rather than death. We will recognize in our days many little blessings and will be able to share our joys with others. Whenever that "New Year" begins for you, I celebrate with you that marvelous accomplishment, and wish you great peace, courage, and comfort.

Happy New Year!  
Alice Weening



## Carrying Memories Into The New Year

With the church bells' ringing  
The new year enters  
Echoing the days of yesteryear  
Memories of happiness  
The smiles of our children  
The sunlight within each face  
Who will remember these dear ones  
Far from our yearning arms  
Who remembers all they were  
The way she danced, the hat he wore  
With the old year gone,  
will they no longer be known?  
We will remember them, each one  
We will hold them in our hearts  
As we carry memories  
Into this new year.  
We will allow the memories to  
Make us laugh, to make us sing.  
Their lives will fill the air  
As the church bells ring.

~Alice J. Wisler

Reprinted from Arlington, DC, Leesburg,  
Prince William & Burke-Springfield-Fairfax  
Virginia Chapters, Jan 2008 Newsletter

# Chapter News

## Meeting Topics & Info

**January 6** - New Year—New Beginnings

**February 3** - A Broken Heart Still Beats

## 20th Annual Candle Light Remembrance Program

On Sunday, December 12 our chapter held its annual candle lighting program in a outdoor grassy area of the church where we hold our meetings. It was nice to finally hold a program again after not having one last year due to Covid.



Almost 40 beautifully embellished luminaries lined the sidewalk into our program. The bags glowed with our beloved children, siblings, and grandchildren's faces and their names as the ceremony took

place and tugged on our hearts.

We gathered together in the cold winter night under the stars, so many - this their first time attending. We came to together in friendship and love to celebrate and remember our children, grandchildren, and siblings when most are celebrating the holidays. As we listened to the poems, songs, lit our candles and watched our loved ones faces float across the screen you could hear weeping and see glistening tears shimmering down our cheeks. But those tears signify the forever love we hold deep within our hearts for our children no longer here. Whether they lived three score and ten or never tasted earths air they are ours, now and forever. No longer being with us the way we want does not lessen our love for them in our hearts.



It is our hope that this program for just a short time helped you feel the warmth of your loved one's memories and presence in your heart and that you were given some small measure of peace for the holidays.

Thank you to the Steering Committee, Jeff Mogg, Kathy Hilton, Jeanne Crittenden, Linda Stout, Tom Reynolds, Kathy Kelly, the family of Aiden Lopez, and anyone else who helped to put this evening on. If you weren't able to attend, we hope you were able to light a candle from home, so that..."their light may always shine."

## 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:

Ceara Melton, Mother to Maddox

Dennis & Linda Morey, Parents to Cameron

Debbie & Mike McGee, Parents to Douglas



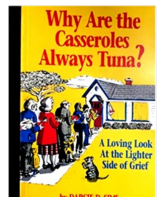
## They Call Me Newly Bereaved

They call me newly bereaved,  
It seems like time has stood still.  
They come with their stories,  
Their ideas, their gifts of hope,  
And we listen, and we cry, and we listen and we cry.  
I go home and think,  
I think about what was said at that special place,  
With those special people, and it helps.  
It helps put suave on my open wound,  
It helps to heal a heart that will never heal,  
But maybe one day it will not hurt so much.  
I am newly bereaved, but NOT alone.

~Nancy Fisher  
TCF, SB/LA



## Book Review



## Why Are The Casseroles Always Tuna? A Loving Look At the Lighter Side of Grief by Darcie Sims

This is a collection of thoughts about the needs of the grieving. If you are grieving, you know how important it is to find some comfort, joy and even some humor!



## A Valentine to All My Compassionate Friends

We who have had our hearts so badly broken know each other.  
 We have lost a child, grandchild, a sister or a brother.  
 It matters not if we've seen each other's faces.  
 We share mending hearts full of achy places.  
 At first our hearts feel shredded and torn.  
 We might even wish that we'd never been born.  
 We don't understand how our lives went so wrong.  
 Everyone tells us they're so glad that we're strong.  
 All we know is that we hurt to the core.  
 Because a child dearly loved is with us no more.  
 With time, patience, and understanding we begin to heal.  
 We begin to accept what is, and life starts to seem real.  
 Each time we tell our tale, each hug we receive puts a band-aid  
 on the hurting spots - and gives - us reason to believe.  
 That we will feel joy again, that life does go on.  
 Though we're never quite the same, since our child is gone.  
 Compassionate Friends teach us ways we cope.  
 Until we can live again and face life with hope,  
 So to TCF members, whether we've met or not, Thank you for  
 the band-aids on that bruised, healing spot.  
 I Love You All,

~Kathy Hahn,  
 TCF Lower Bucks, PA



## A Valentine Sent to Heaven

Angels come swiftly, hurry to our side  
 Carry our hearts back with you, to our children in  
 heaven now reside.  
 Carry them gently, handle them with care  
 And take them to their sides, and gently lay  
 them there.  
 Whisper to them of our love, and our longing hearts  
 All our lonely aching while we are apart.  
 Hold them gently to you, and let them see our love  
 Let them see this, our valentine to them above.  
 Reassure them of our love, that it is still the same  
 And gently hold us when we cry,  
 when we hear them whisper our names.  
 Let this exchange of love be our valentine  
 And whisper to them that our love will stand  
 the test of time.  
 Show them the memories are safely held inside  
 And with us they will always abide.  
 Let them see this day, a day filled with our love  
 As we shed our tears, and whisper their names,  
 to our Valentines above.

~Sheila Simmons

Ever think how our lives are so much like the wind? One day it blows from one direction the next a different one. Our emotions are very much like that, one day we are going along then Wham! A change comes. Days will go on with a certain feeling, then it changes, we are so much like the wind, we never remain in one area.

## The Winds Of Change

The wind of change blows through our lives,  
 bringing many changes  
 The North wind blows icy winds, and our lives it rearranges.  
 The East winds blows turmoil,  
 bringing unsettled emotions to bear  
 The West wind blows moisture, with many tears to share.  
 But the South wind blows warm, a healing to our life  
 Easing up the pain of a broken heart of strife.  
 Wind from all direction brings a mixture into our lives,  
 blowing on the wind of change.  
 Some are gaunt and icy, some warm and healing,  
 they come in every range.  
 If the North wind blows upon your life today  
 Hold on, a wind of change is coming,  
 waiting to blow healing gentle winds your way.

Hoping gentle breezes for your day.



~Sheila Simmons,  
 Dallas, GA

## February



When February comes there is finally an end in sight to the long winter. Sometimes melting snow reveals the green tips of an early crocus or even an exquisite blossom itself, a soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of graying snow, biting wind and ominous sky - a small promise of new life to come.

My heart, grieving for my son who died, was like that image of winter. For somehow, even during the darkest, coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope would intrude. And as the hours and days and months dragged on, my heart finally learned once again to be open to the promise of new life. Painful forever dormant once again sprang forth from my heart. In living, hopefully and lovingly the seasons of the heart can change. The living memories of your special child, like the flower in the snow, can be the beginning of the end of winter.

~Morgan Kramer  
 TCF, Arlington Heights, IL



# Love Gifts



Were Received From:

*Bobbie & Dan Spencer  
In Loving Memory of their Son:*

**Peter Spencer**  
2/5 - 9/4



*Tom & Alice Renolds  
In Loving Memory of their Sons:*

**Timothy Renolds**  
3/17 - 2/17



**Danny Renolds**  
6/22 - 2/17



## 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.santaclarita@gmail.com](mailto:tcf.santaclarita@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!

### Unspoken Farewells

Farewell words were never spoken,  
No time to say goodbyes,  
You left us before we knew it,  
And the pain of your absence is unbearable.  
You were so loved by those you knew,  
One day we'll rejoice and know renewed joy,  
When we're once again with you.

~Sandra Hemstock

We love and miss you every minute of every day,  
Forever in our hearts,  
Love Mom & Dad

# "Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings



*Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays*

## January

## February

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Nigel Peddie	1/19	Bruce Peddie	Sammy Thomas	2/1	Dave & Kay Thomas
			William Lemke, Jr.	2/12	Marilyn Lemke
			Edward Evans	2/28	Barbara Evans
			Peter Spencer	2/5	Bobbie Mathers
			Sage Gallegos	2/22	Alex Gallegos
			Lloyd Sreden	2/13	Maxine Sreden



*Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates*

## January

## February

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Oliva Kares	1/12	Mike Kares	Daniel Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Sarah Carter	1/26	Shelly Carter	Timothy Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Edward Evans	1/2	Barbara Evans	Jeanene Sykes	2/5	Ted Sykes
Travis Marton	1/1	Andrew & Ricki Marton	Nigel Peddie	2/1	Bruce Peddie
Eric Rodriguez	1/20	Carlos & Ana Rodriguez	Reese Stout	2/10	Linda Stout
Mindy Siefert	1/25	Debbie Gardner	Nico Trogan	2/6	Amy Trogan
Emily Mogg	1/30	Jeff & Tracey Mogg			
Emily Mogg Grandchild	1/30	Gary & Sandy Johnson			



## If I Could Just See Hope



If I could just see hope. If I knew what to look for or how to act or feel. If only the pain would stop. But we cannot erase this pain; that is the price we pay for love. The pain of this darkness will always be with us. But it can change its intensity and its depth. It can change its color, but only with our efforts. No one can make this journey for us. We must travel this path ourselves, but perhaps we do not have to go alone.

So, come with me in search of hope. Perhaps somewhere within these words will be the flicker of light that you've been seeking. We are always in search of hope, in search of that magical moment when we REMEMBER FIRST THAT OUR LOVED ONE LIVED.

Hope isn't a place or thing. Hope is not the absence of pain or sadness. Hope is the possibility of renewed joy...it's the memory of love given and received. Hope is here, within the magic and the memories of your heart.

Hope is us...you and me and the person next to you and across the room and down the street and in your dreams.

WE ARE EACH OTHER'S HOPE.

*~by Darcie Sims  
Lovingly Lifted from  
TCF Front Range Chapter*