



# The Compassionate Friends

## Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jan-Feb 2025

Volume 26 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, daughter, brother, 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, regeneration and beauty.

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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 meeting are:

**Jan. 9, 2025**

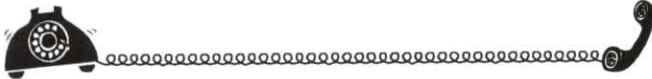
**Feb. 6, 2025**

**Please note, January's meeting is the second Thursday of the month!**

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING **Bethlehem SCV**

PLACE: **27265 Luther Dr. Room 5 (Second Driveway & through the gate)  
Canyon Country, CA 91351**



**FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISENER,  
PLEASE CALL:**

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-373-5070  
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Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)  
Joanne Campos (Remembrance Secretary)  
Steve Crittenden (Webmaster & Treasurer)  
Jeanne Crittenden (Button & Angel Board Manager)  
(661-478-2948)



### Dark Day

On a very dark day in winter:  
when your eyes have forgotten  
the color of apple trees...  
On a very dark day in winter,  
count the days until spring.

On a very dark day in winter:  
when your mind can't remember  
the color of memories...  
On a very dark day in winter,  
reach for the healing kindness of time.

*~Sascha Wagner  
From the book: "For You From Sascha"*

*Gifts our loved ones have given us  
can't be measured by the years they lived.  
These gifts are measured by the  
love we shared with them.*

*~Pat Loder*



## The New Year: A Time of Hope

Another New Year has slipped into our lives, radically changing some things and leaving other things to evolve naturally. For bereaved parents a new year marks another year on the calendar without their precious children. It is a new year, but not much has changed since the old year. Why is that?

We act as the catalyst of change for ourselves. We choose to help our selves; we choose to stay in a specific place of grief. We choose to reach out for hope or we choose to withdraw into the familiar and postpone facing life and hope another day. There are no set rules or specific timetables in bereavement. We are each unique in our grief.

Eventually we all find hope. We find it in different ways and in different times. There will be no one moment of epiphany for bereaved parents. Instead, there are a series of minutes, hours, weeks, months, and often years until we realize that we can truly say we feel the power of hope coming alive from deep within us. This moment will come for each of us. It will come in its own time and its own way.

Even those of us who have found hope and who shine its light on the paths of newly bereaved parents, still regress and withdraw into the dark sadness of our loss. And that is as is should be. For we have lost the most precious gift of our lives...our children's presence with us and their future in this life. Our child live in our hearts and our memories and our dreams. They do not share this place with us. It is normal and it is good to think of our children often and to shed some tears for all that has been lost. These aren't setbacks as much as sweet memories that bring cathartic tears.

The element we find in these memories is a closeness to our child and our child's life. This, too, is healthy. An often-express fear is that our children will be forgotten. Worry not, gentle parent, your child will be remembered for all your days and many days thereafter. You will never forget your child. Others who knew your child will never forget. The proof of this is in our memories....sweet memories that take us back to another time when our child was with us.

So this New Year's, whether you are a few months, a few years or many in your grief, think about hope. You have not forsaken your child when you reach for hope. Your hope brings your child back in a positive way that will warm your heart. As you move forward in your grief in the New Year, reach for hope. Your child will still be with you. And one day you will find your child's presence is sweeter when hope is within you.

*~Annette Mennen Baldwin  
In Memory of her son, Todd Mennen  
TCF Katy, TX*

*Another year is approaching...  
and I will carry you  
with me into it...  
your story never ends.*

*~Alice Wisler,  
Daniels' Mom*



## Winter's Night

The January moon shines down, through the winter night giving the earth glow with a soft silver light. It's beams creep in the window, and lights the darkened room chasing away the shadows from my cozy womb. It softly falls on your picture, giving off a heavenly glow and I drift off to sleep, dreaming of you, and times we loved so. In my dreams of slumber, I see you as in times before and tears and heart aches are never more. Your laughter is like a song, melody so sweet and we gently dance across the sky, on swift and happy feet! And then with the sun shines down, giving off it's light as I sit and watch anxiously for the coming night. When dreams of you come, to warm me and ease my aching heart. With you in my dreams, these winter nights are not so long and dark.

*~Remembering Steven  
Your love is my warmth in the winter, and ever  
blooming rose in spring.  
Your Mom, Sheila Simmons*



## January Warmth

Like a tree in the winter  
Which has lost its leaves  
We look ahead to spring  
For new growth and  
Warmth of the sun  
To heal the pain  
In our hearts.

Let us make January a time  
To reach out to each other  
And give that warmth  
From our hearts,  
And in return,  
We will all show new growth,

*~Pat Dodge  
TCF Sacramento Valley, CA*



# Chapter News

## Meeting Topics & Info

Jan 9- Meeting, "New Year-New Beginnings"

Feb 6 - Meeting, "Box of Love & Memories" Join us to decorate and fill a box filled with strips of your favorite memories to help you during those difficult times.

## 23rd Annual Candle Light Remembrance Program

On Sunday, December 8th our chapter held its annual candle lighting program indoors in the Worship area of Bethlehem SCV, the church where we hold our meetings.

We had 30 beautifully embellished luminaries lining the walkway into our program. The bags glowed with our beloved children, siblings, and grandchildren's faces and their names as they greeted us to our special night of remembrance.



We gathered together in this beautifully decorated area, many their first time at attending along with many long time familiar faces. We came together in friendship and love to

celebrate and remember our children, grandchildren, and siblings, when most are celebrating the holidays. We listened to poems and songs performed by two talented ladies. Then, new this year, lit our candles as their names



were called out loud and stood proudly holding that flickering light knowing this small little jester is our way of keeping their memories alive. The beautiful slide show with the song "Precious

Child" then began. We 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. 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.

Please continue reading in next column



(Continued from first column)

Thank you to Jeff & Tracey Mogg, Kathy Hilton, Jeanne Crittenden, Tom Reynolds, Bert Briones, the family of Aiden Lopez, Alison Lewis, Judy Unger, Andy Goldsmith and anyone else who lent a hand to help put this evening on. Also, thank you to all those who donated non-perishable food items to the church, they were very thankful for the large amount of items donated! 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."

~Alice Reynolds, Editor

## 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:

Isis Farrell, Mother of Michael  
Stephanie Kavoulakos, Mother of Max  
Mim Collins, Mother of Neil  
Collin & Lauren, Parents of Finley

## In The Glow of Freshly Fallen Snow



Last night, in the glow of freshly fallen snow,  
I felt for the first time in months a sense of peace.  
A feeling of wonder overcame me  
And I looked around to see if you were there.  
Later, I thought to myself—"Why did I need to look?"  
I know, as surely as I know how to breathe,  
That you are with me always.  
You are closer to me now  
Than ever before and the only difference  
Is that instead of opening my eyes to see you,  
Now I must open my heart.

~Sandi Goodman  
'Love Never Dies'



## The Wounded Heart

Children have preceded their parents in death for eons of time. We are not the first, nor will we be the last to enter the realm of Bereaved Parents. But for now, right now, it is OUR HEARTS that are freshly wounded and OUR HEARTS in need of mending. Wounded hearts must be allowed to mourn and lament their loss; to pour out their pain, agony, sadness, hurt, and anger; and to release their well of tears. Wounded hearts need to be wrapped in quietness, gentleness, and compassion, away from the turmoil of daily life.

A wounded heart, not allowed to mend from the depth of its agony, will be as an abscess to swell and undermine, erupting at a distant time. Or, suppressed, will slowly choke the spirit of its host. Only the bearer will know when his heart has healed. The wounded heart, encouraged and given the time and freedom to mend, will carry in its chambers the memory and shared love of a precious child.

~Nancy Green,  
TCF Livonia, MI



## Valentine's Day

It is that time again. February 14 is approaching. If your sad heart has been in mothballs, it's time to air it out and use it. We all miss the darling little valentines from our children and the buying of heart candies and the various ways we showed our love for each other. But we still have all those precious memories. You say you've lost the feeling, you feel nothing inside, Valentine's Day has lost its meaning for you. I remember the love I felt for my son. I still have the capacity to give love to someone else.

Love is still there waiting inside us, ready to give whenever the occasion demands it. It's selfish and self-centered not to use it. In fact, love has to be given from the heart to be replenished, just like blood; it comes right back! So if we don't continue to give it, we're filled with lonely feelings, empty thoughts, and NO valentines. Love begets love; it is that simple. Someone you care for would be delighted to receive your valentine. You know and I know this to be true. Go make your valentine list and send those love missiles flying in all directions!

~Gloria Gersten  
TCF, Miami

## A Dozen Roses



If I had a dozen roses I know just what I'd do  
I'd give each one a name that reminded me of you

The first rose I'd name sunshine cause you brighten everyday

The second would be beauty the kind that never goes away

The third one would be priceless like those hugs you gave me

I'd name the fourth rose silly oh how funny you could be

Rose five of course is patience something you have helped me find

The sixth rose I'd call memories the precious gift left behind

The seventh and the eight rose would for sure be faith and grace

Nine would be unique because no one can take your place

The tenth rose well that's easy I'd simply name it love

Eleven I'd call angel I know you're watching from above

I'd think about that twelfth rose and I'd really take my time

After all these roses are for you my Valentine  
I'm sending them to heaven in every color that I know

So number twelve I'll name forever that's how long I'll love you  
so

~Alan Pedersen  
Past Executive of The National Compassionate Friends

## February

Let this cool and  
gentle  
month of the heart  
remind you  
not only  
of lost  
treasurers,  
but also of riches  
(past and present)  
in your life.

~Sascha Wagner





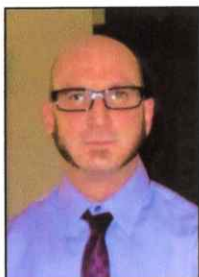
# Love Gifts



Were Received From:

*Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer*  
In Loving Memory of their son:

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



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

**Tim Renolds**  
3/17 - 2/17



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

This Angel date marks 25 years since that horrific night when our two sons were killed in a terrible car crash and left us so devastated. It is so hard to believe that it has been that long. This journey of grief has been a long roller coaster with many ups and downs, but after all these years we can finally look to all the beautiful and precious memories of the past left in our hearts to bring a smile to our faces.

Forever In Our Hearts  
Love You Always Our Precious Sons  
Mom & Dad

*Elaine McAlpine*  
In Loving Memory of her son:

**Daniel  
McAlpine**  
6/27 - 8/29



*Carlos & Ana Rodriquez*  
In Loving Memory of her son:

**Eric  
Rodriguez**  
8/11 - 1/20



*Mariacristina Leone*  
In Loving Memory of her son:

**Michael  
Leon**  
12/6 - 10/5



# *"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
Noah Carmona	1/02	David & Itzel		Edward Evans	2/28	Barbara Evans
Kevin Perlstein	1/9	Kathleen Lencki		Peter Spencer	2/5	Bobbie Mathers
Randy Pereira	1/22	Valerie Pereira		Brian DeCaro	2/27	Mary Yancey
Neil Collins	1/20	Mim Collins		Izaiah Baxter	2/14	Clyde Baxter
				Zayne Malan	2/24	Lex & Emily Malan
				Ezequiel Sanchez	2/20	Stephanie Sanchez
				Dustin Roberto	2/6	Deborah & Joe
				Christopher Morse	2/16	Lisa Moscheth
				Harrison Goodwill	2/17	Lisa Goodwill



## *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
Edward Evans	1/2	Barbara Evans		Timothy Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Travis Marton	1/1	Andrew & Ricki Marton		Jeanene Sykes	2/5	Ted Sykes
Eric Rodriguez	1/20	Carlos & Ana Rodriguez		Nigel Peddie	2/1	Bruce Peddie
Mindy Siefert	1/25	Debbie Gardner		Reese Stout	2/10	Linda Stout
Emily Mogg	1/30	Jeff & Tracey Mogg		Troy Covert	2/24	Melanie Miller
Emily Mogg Grandchild	1/30	Gary & Sandy Johnson		Danny Sullivan	2/8	Terasa Papa
Jason Fields	1/26	Renne Fields		Jordan Vargas	2/28	Carlos & Fabiola
Amanda Miranda	1/11	Patrice Madrigal				



### Hope in the Face of Death



Hope and beautiful memories. Hope brings us new possibilities. It opens dead-end streets, it allows for change, and in change it creates new alternatives. Hope encourages optimism. It assures us that, although situations aren't how we would like them to be, circumstances could change for the better. Hope has changed societies, developed science and enhanced life since the beginning.

Happily, the human mind has a way of storing beautiful moments...this forms a storehouse of memories that is always there to call upon, even at times of extreme despair.

~Leo F. Buscagila  
TCF South Bay, LA  
Jan/Feb 2003 Newsletter