



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

March-April

Volume 27, No. 2



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 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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MEETINGS

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

March 5, 2026
April 2, 2025

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:

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The Butterfly

As love falls down from the sky,
It lands on the wings of a butterfly.
The butterfly sings its songs and rhymes
And flies through the air,
No concept of time.
It is the messenger of patience and change,
From flower to flower, it's odd, and it's strange.
The butterfly can transform its world
And give way to new beginnings, unfurled.
It is the keeper of transformation,
And flies on faith and imagination.
The butterfly has no fear of change,
It bravely escapes it's homemade cage.
To change, it knows is necessary,
For all the burdens we need not carry.
The butterfly soars and merrily sings,
For without change,
It could never grow wings.

~Author Unknown

*Those we love we never loose.
For always they will be,
Loved, remembered, treasured.
Always in our memory.*

~unknown



Reflections On March

In March, it is as if the higher powers know we need to be shaken out of the lethargy of winter, awakened, prepared for growth.

Winter is again almost behind us although the hardwoods very stubbornly hold onto the last leaves of autumn. Is there a power of nature that knows that the trees, the plants, and we humans are still within our lethargy, fixed in modes of inactivity, semi-dormant, and like all sleepers, resentful of rough disturbance?

Is there a knowledge that remembers the need for all things to bend, lest they break? "March comes in like a lion" and leaves like a lamb". Perhaps we have a primordial need for the shake the month gives us each spring, and the ensuing lamb is only a resting lion, all work done for this period of renewal.

Suddenly the peaceful quiet of winter days is much disturbed by violent wind gusting! Stark limbs are pushed to strive and snap back against a still gray sky. The hangers-on, the last dead leaves, are torn from their resting places, as if the stark trees are told there must be room for new growth! Neighbors complain as the wind moves all trash, seemingly deposits it where it knows it will be cleared. March is not a gentle month, but perhaps it is the most playful of all months, a very young month! March is as playful as an adolescent child, a big friendly puppy, an awkward kitten.

What message does an ancient tree receive when its limbs are flung against the sky, repeatedly exercised, threatened with severe harm, and small wounds cause the flow of healing juices? What happens to the roots in their winter sleep when shaken by the wind-flung tree? March roars in like a lion, but no great harm results. March rages like an upset mother, but we know she loves us. March is playful. March rests, and storms again in case we again sleep. March cleans the trees, moves the dead leaves, rearranges all trash, and knows we will complain and clean it all again. It takes will, caring and health to complain. March laughs, and all of us who forgot how to laugh are reminded. Laughter is healthy. Playful is cheerful. Confusion awakens us. Storm threats alert us.

Every year March rages, rests, upsets, moves, surprises and repeats its lively repertoire; adolescents, out of sequence, full of surprise. Bare trees flail against the sky. The waters of the lakes are roiled. New plants are rudely pushed about. Old ones are roughly awakened by the boisterous of nature. March is the exuberant one of all the months. March ensures that, ready or not, we will greet the renewal of nature, new growth, new challenge. We are simply not allowed to hide in our comfortable "rut." March is the month that refuses to be ignored. We are thrown out of the comfort of the winter shell. March's message seems to be "Ready or not," it's time to be alive again.

We, Compassionate Friends all seem to go through a period of dormant life and growth as we struggle to assimilate

our great losses. With the passage of time, there is then a period of renewal, of interest in life, and an ability to accept new growth, new tasks, and life's challenges, awareness that we can leave some of our cold winter behind us.

Even in deep grief we, too, seem to come out of our lethargy and be cheered by the renewal so apparent in spring. We hope that you, this year, will enjoy the gusting winds of March and be stirred and cheered by March's playful prelude to the coming spring.

~Dayton Robinson
TCF Tuscaloosa, AL

Spring Waiting

Winter's end is almost here,
Crocus struggle in the snow.
Sunlight has a softer glow.

-Is the winter long this year?

Spring waits, watching for a cue
not to rush your grief away.
But to be there, when you say.

-Spring is waiting, friend, for you.

~Sascha Wagner



Newly Bereaved...

Such a beautiful day...why am I crying? This is a question that comes up every spring, particularly from the more newly bereaved. Perhaps it is because we see this beauty unfolding, and our children are not here to share it. The fact that the world seems to go on just as if nothing had happened when our world seems to have stopped seems impossible to comprehend.

What we tend to forget is that although the seasons change, where we are in our grief is what controls our feelings. Just hold on to the fact that spring is the rebirth of what seems dead...as dead as you feel now. It is true, you will never stop missing your son or daughter; however, hold on to the hope and belief that your spring will come again, too. When it does, it will be different. Just as the trees and flowers aren't the same, you won't be either. But their beauty is still there and as you start to come back to life...again, you will find joys in life again.

Excerpted from "Such a Beautiful Day? Why Am I Crying?"
~Mary Ehmann
TCF Valley Forge, PA

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

Mar 5 - Meeting, "Emoji Me" Use an emoji to describe how you are feeling and why.

April 2— Meeting, "Healing Flowers" - Planting & Sharing. Our grief process helped by nature, butterflies and gardening. **Please bring a 4" potted flower to be used in a plant exchange at the end of our meeting.**

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 is:
Carolyn Conrad, Mother of Christopher



IMPORTANT!!! Newsletter Renewal Time

You should have received your newsletter renewal letter by now. Please fill it out and return the form by **March 6** if you would like to remain on our mailing list and continue receiving our newsletters, Birthday & Angel cards. **If we don't receive it by that date, this newsletter— Mar/April will be the last one you will receive!** Thank you to all of our members who have already returned it!

Thank you, Alice Renolds,, Editor



49th TCF National Conference 7/2 - 7/5

The TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope & support, as well as strategies for coping with grief, all while making friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild.

Some of the conference highlights include, a Candle Lighting Program, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Speakers, and a Walk To Remember on Sunday Morning.

This year's conference will be held in Baltimore, MD. **There is a special opening registration rate for the conference, but it ends March 6th.** Go to nationals website www.compassionatefriends.org for more info and link to register and hotel info.



Thank you so very much for your generous Newsletter Renewal Donations, they are greatly appreciated!

David & Laurie Millard in memory their daughter, Brianna
Bobbie Mathers in memory of her sons, Eric & Peter
Nancy Rickhoff in memory of her son, Kevin
Lex & Emily Malan, in memory of their sons, Christian & Zayne
Marie Whitehead, in memory of her son Michael
Carol Lock, in memory of her son Darren
Doris Van Dyke, in memory of daughter Melissa
Barbara Rawson, in memory of her son Christopher
Joe & Debbie Roberto, in memory of their son Dustin
Kirk & Dianne Mueller, in memory of their daughter Melissa
Patricia Vassallo, in memory of her son Sean
Irene Frenes, in memory of her grandchild Monique



Dear Compassionate Friends,

With a heavy heart and much sadness, after 25 years I am announcing that I will be stepping down as co-leader and editor of our chapter of the Compassionate Friends in June.

Some of you may know that I had some pretty serious health issues last May and I am still trying to recover. I am hoping that some of our members will step up and take over the jobs that I do for the chapter. My assistance and support will be available to who ever needs it and I will be happy step in if I am needed when ever!!

With Peace & Hugs,
Alice Renolds



April Showers Bring May Flowers

April is a month known for rain, which is a necessary component to bring out the flowers in May. It is a step that cannot be skipped or done away with. Although at times bleak and dreary, this rainy season is a time of rejuvenation for the ground and prepares the soil to be able to nourish the plant life that will soon come.

The death of a loved one creates a personal "rainy season" that lasts much longer than a single month. The days become figuratively dark and gloomy with menacing clouds hanging overhead. This too is a necessary component for personal healing. So many people I see grow (understand-ably) tired of their "rainy season"; full of sudden outbursts of tears and thunderous pangs of pain. These emotional storms cannot only come quickly, but may linger un-mercilessly as well.

In April, with storms coming at the drop of a hat, I know that if I want to manage the amount I get wet, I need to stay prepared. I will keep an umbrella in my office, in the car, at home, and with me wherever I go. Likewise those who are weathering "emotional storms" can also prepare themselves. Suggested supplies to keep on hand are many and may vary from person to person. First and foremost, keep tissues on you at all times. Grief is often unexpectedly triggered in the most inconvenient of places. For many, eating is completely thrown off balance. Keep a snack near you as well for times when you suddenly realize you have not eaten all day and feel like you may pass out. Also, it is nice to have something cold to drink to replenish yourself after having a "good" cry. In addition, keep a small notebook and pen handy and write down anything important that you need to remember. People who are grieving are supposed to have no memory when it comes to appointments or grocery lists. These things take a back seat (if that) to mentally reconstructing one's own life after a death.

As you continue to weather your own storms, remember that the tears you shed are not wasted. They are necessary and healing, preparing you for your coming springtime when the flowers bloom once again.

*~Stephanie Elson,
reprinted from Tears to Hope Newsletter of the
Amelia Center, A place for hope & healing for grieving
children, parents and families. Birmingham, Al.
www.ameliacenter.org*

*It may take years before green shoots of hope begin
to appear in your life.*

Be patient and keep looking for them.

They will reappear after your long winter of grief.

~Dennis L. Apple



The Angels Cry

Raindrops fall from the heavens, mimicking the tears falling down my cheeks. A torrent of rain is unveiled from the dark clouds above like the shadow on my soul. The angels, too, cry for my loss. Thunder and lightening are unleashed in anguish. The skies drum out my torment, until at long last I cannot cry anymore - today. The rain slowly tapers off to a gentle sprinkle, as my grief is spent. The clouds part; the sun comes out once more and dries away my tears. A robin lands nearby singing gleefully, reminding us that, with sorrow, there is also joy.

*~Lorrain Bebeau
TCF, St. Albert*

Passover

Counting the years,
Blessings and tears,
Counting the children
Who are gone
From this earth.

Counting the memories
Of times past and done.
Blessing the children
On earth in this day of life.

*~Sascha Wagner
From "For You From Sascha"*

Easter Thoughts

One more winter overcome,
one more darkness
turned to light and promise

Winter is the price for spring,
struggle is the price for life.

Even in sorrow, remember
to prepare your heart
for celebration -
next spring perhaps.
Or the spring after that...

*~ Sascha Wagner
From: Wintersun*





Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Robert & Juanita Arvizu
In Loving Memory of their son:

**Michael
Arvizu**
5/6 - 4/22



Tammy & Michael Gauld
In Loving Memory of their son:

**Bradley
McBurney**
4/22- 7/18



Carlos & Ana Rodriguez
In Loving Memory of their son:

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



Lora Wyatt
In Loving Memory of their daughter:

**Amber
Wyatt**
6/7 - 12/20



Ron & Melissa Ungerman
In Loving Memory of their son:

Zachary Ungerman
8/27 - 8/10



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 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!

Findings

*The greatest comfort at time of
grieving comes,
quietly from the love that lives
within ourselves.*

*~Sascha Wagner
From: Wintersun*

"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings



Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays

March

April

Name	Date	Member		Name	Date	Member
Timothy Renolds	3/17	Tom & Alice Renolds		Bradley McBurney	4/22	Tammy Gauld
Michael Rodriguez	3/7	Debbie DiCorrado		Walter Rodriguez	4/25	Carole Rodriguez
Jeanene Sykes	3/2	Ted Sykes		Reese Stout	4/30	Linda Stout
Melissa Matters	3/26	Kirk & Dianne Mueller		Kevin Rickhoff	4/30	Nancy Rickhoff
Colleen Brown	3/17	Keith & Lin Brown		Jacob Kaplan	4/1	Michael & Robyn
Bailey Haney	3/28	Myra Kulick		Emily Mogg	4/16	Jeffrey & Tracey
Kali Stanfiled <small>Grandchild</small>	3/30	Nika Johnson		Emily Mogg <small>Grandchild</small>	4/16	Gary & Sandy
Jax Markley	3/26	Matt & Daisy Markley		Erica Thomas	4/13	Lisa Monsour
Max Mehlbaum	3/5	Stephanie Kavoulakos		Nelson Vides	4/18	Lizzy Vides
Finley Drake	3/9	Collin & Lauren Drake		Daniel Johnson	4/25	Denise Johnson
Ryan Ludwick	3/9	Cathy Rusch		Eddie Meadows	4/27	Veronica Meadows
				Sky Schermerhorn	4/17	Robin Walker



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

March

April

Name	Date	Member		Name	Date	Member
Brianna Smith	3/30	David & Laurie Millard		Sammy Thomas <small>Grandchild</small>	4/10	Kay & Dave Thomas
Nicholas Colley	3/28	Scott & Jade Colley		Michael Arvizu	4/22	Robert & Juanita
Aiden Lopez	3/26	Cesar & Jessica Lopez		Daniel Johnson	4/6	Denise Johnson
Aiden Lopez <small>Grandchild</small>	3/26	Carmen Smith				
Melissa VanDyke	3/27	Doris Van Dyke				
Brian DeCaro	3/25	Mary Yancey				
Kali Stanfiled <small>Grandchild</small>	3/30	Nika Johnson				
Monique Gutierrez <small>Grandchild</small>	3/24	Irene Frenes				
Keith Drynan	3/10	Lisa Grose				
Max Mehlbaum	3/11	Stephanie Kavoulakos				
Randy Pereira	3/28	Valerie Pereira				
Jeremy Shymansky <small>Grandchild</small>	3/26	Debbie Shymansky				



Memories



The certain special memories
That follow me each day.
Cast your shadow in my life
In a certain way.

Sometimes the blowing wind
Or the lyrics of a song
Make me stop and think of you
Sometimes all day long.

Memories are good to have
To share and keep in my heart,
Just knowing that you're still inside
Makes sure we'll never part.

*~Collette Covington
TCF Lake Charles, LA*