



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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The F-M Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
127 2ND AVE E
WEST FARGO, ND

Please enter on the West side. Our meeting is in the Fellowship Hall - lower level, west side.

Upcoming Meetings

June 9th
July 14th

Meeting Subjects:

June - Balloon Release, everyone is welcome

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on June 23rd @ Fry'n Pan
TCF National Conference - Scottsdale, AZ
July 8-10, 2016
TCF FM Chapter's 10th Annual Walk to Remember - July 30, 2016

LOVE GIFTS

Tjaden & Andrea Sinclair in memory of their daughter, Lola Elise Sinclair

Lisa Beach in memory of her niece, Ashley
Arlene Wiger

Lori & Larry Wiger in memory of their daughter, Ashley Arlene Wiger

Anne & Carrie Snyder in memory of their son, Adam Joseph Snyder

Lyle, Tammy, Justin, Stacy, Hunter, Jersey, Jamie & Jordyn Helgson in memory of their son/brother, Jared Helgeson

Jim & Phil Nelson in memory of their daughter, Jane Nelson Snyder

Madonna Sweeney in memory of her sons, Patrick Sweeney & Timothy Sweeney

Karen Boyes in memory of her daughter Kelly Boyes

We are deeply grateful for the LOVE GIFTS given this month. Our chapter and all chapters, are financed solely through your Love Gifts. Donations make this newsletter, postage, books, tapes, etc. possible.

Thank you for your tax deductible gifts.

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS. ©2007

"When our special sadness comes to call, when we remember more than we can bear, when courage falters – shadows everywhere: Then let us reach and touch and share, we, who are friends." ~ Sascha Wagner

Our Mom's group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fry'n Pan restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are very informal as we meet to talk about our children, books, recipes, jobs and whatever else comes up in conversation. We all have times when we need the listening heart of another mom or grandma. Please join us this month on Thursday June 23rd. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylcvi3@msn.com.

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 lightning 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.

~ Lorraine Bebeau, TCF/St. Albert

THE LOSS OF A CHILD

The grief of parents following the death of a child is one of the most profound forms of bereavement there is.

What Is It Like to Lose a Child?

Every bereavement is unique. Even when you are two parents grieving for the same child, you will grieve differently and at a different pace. At a time when you most need each other for support and understanding, your preoccupation with your own loss may make it difficult for you to help your partner. Or you may both take on the role of protector and try to "be strong" for the other, concealing your own pain for fear of adding to the other's distress. This situation is impossible to sustain and can lead to misunderstanding, even a breakdown in communication. You may find yourself saying, "He doesn't seem to feel anything", or "I can't seem to get through to her any more". Sexual intimacy, which once gave life to the child, may now be unbearable for one or both of you.

In the early months you may feel overwhelmed, helpless, disoriented, frightened and exhausted. It is not uncommon to imagine that you see or hear the child you have lost, and while this can be comforting at the time it can also seem to confirm your fear that you are going mad. You may, perhaps, wish for death because life no longer seems worth living or in the hope that you will be reunited with your child. Many partnerships suffer after such a loss. Far from bringing parents together, a child's death can threaten the stability of even the best relationships.

The View from Outside

Family and friends may urge you to pull yourself together or they may avoid contact because they too feel helpless and afraid of inadvertently causing further hurt. They may even feel threatened - if your child can die, they worry that so too can theirs.

It is at this point that many bereaved parents, feeling abandoned, seek outside help. But to seek help is also to have to acknowledge the reality of the loss, which some people understandably try to resist, often for several months. You may function on "automatic pilot" by going through the motions of a safe and familiar routine until you feel able to experience the full anguish of your grief. Sometimes it is not until the first year has passed that bereaved parents really begin the task of grieving, although some will still try to avoid directly facing up to their loss. After the second anniversary of the death, however (or the second missed birthday, Christmas, Mother's or Father's Day), your grief may erupt violently because avoidance and denial are no longer possible. Unfortunately, by this time others may expect you to have recovered from your loss and so the help you need may not be immediately available.

But the loss of a child is lifelong. You are likely to be reminded of the child you have lost when you see children of a similar age or appearance and, as you watch other children growing up, you will be reminded of what your own child would have been like and what you are missing. In time you may find some new purpose in living, but you do not ever forget the child you have lost. That child is, and will remain, part of you.

Why Parents' Grief Is Different

When your child dies, you feel as if you have failed in your role as protector, and this sense of failure can result in strong feelings of guilt and low self-esteem. You may also become over-protective towards any surviving children. At the same time, it is possible that in the early stages of your grief you will be preoccupied with the dead child to the exclusion of your other children, if you have them. It is the dead child you want and who embodies for you all that is ideal. The effect on the remaining children, who cannot replace the dead child or compete with this "perfect angel", is likely to be profound.

If the dead child was your only child, you lose your identity as a parent, and if you lost your first child through miscarriage, or the baby was stillborn, or died soon after birth, you may feel a sense of inadequacy and failure. In a number of ways children embody parents' hopes for the future. Their death means that they will not be able to care for you in old age when the protective, caring roles are reversed.

Your child's death also deprives you of your claim to immortality. The characteristics that have made you what you are will not now be passed on to future generations.

All parents struggle to find a meaning for their loss. Your sense of what is right and fair is deeply shaken, and you seek a purpose for the death which will restore meaning to your life and the belief that your world is still basically safe - for, after all, if a child can die, anything can happen.

Trying to Understand

Anyone who may be trying to understand what it feels like to lose a child might find it helpful to remember what one bereaved mother said in reply to someone who thought she should be "over it" after two years. "Which one of your children could you do without".

Jan McLaren, Director and Senior Counselor of the Laura Centre In Leicester, a centre that has been established specifically for bereaved parents. Submitted by **Kathleen Leeper**, mother of **Shaun Leeper** 1974 - 1996

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT

"Human pain does not let go of its grip at one point in time. Rather, it works its way out of our consciousness over time. There is a season of sadness. A season of anger. A season of tranquility. A season of hope. But seasons do not follow one another in a lockstep manner. At least not for those in crisis. The winters and springs of one's life are all jumbled together in a puzzling array. One day we feel as though the dark clouds have lifted, but the next day they have returned. One moment we can smile but a few hours later the tears emerge . . . It is true that as we take two steps forward in our journey, we may take one or more steps backward. But when one affirms that the spring thaw will arrive, the winter winds seem to lose some of their punch."

~ Robert Veninga in *A Gift of Hope: How We Survive Our Tragedies* (Little Brown & Co., 1985)

Helping a Father through Father's Day

Father's Day has become a traditional holiday celebrated by many with gifts, cards, family gatherings, and perhaps even a special dinner out just for daddy. Stores begin advertising for Father's Day weeks in advance of the actual holiday. The scenes in advertisements and cards always depict a loving father with a child snuggled close to that special man called daddy.

Many fathers, however, have experienced the devastation of losing a child, and there seems to be an almost nonexistent recognition of the fact that fathers suffer from feelings of lost dreams, loneliness, failure, and loss of identity when a child has died. Very rarely are comments of support made to the father in a family when a child has died. For some reason, our society seems to be more in tune to the feelings of the pain a mother experiences during child loss. Fathers are somehow expected to be stronger emotionally, and they are expected to heal much sooner.

What can be done to show support on Father's Day to a father who has experienced the deep pain of losing a child? Probably the most appreciated gesture of support would be to acknowledge the fact that the father is still a father even though his child is no longer living on this earth. Refer to him as a father, and express your genuine sorrow for his loss. Fathers who have lost a child as early as miscarriage should certainly be included among the group of grieving fathers. Often, fathers of miscarried babies are never given any recognition of being a father.

Finding a Father's Day card specifically for fathers who have lost a child can be next to impossible. If you cannot find a card with an appropriate verse, choose a blank card and write your own message from the heart. "Sharing in your sorrow this Father's Day" or "Blessings to you this Father's Day as God watches over your heavenly angel" will show a tremendous amount of compassion and support to a father who is grieving the loss of a child on Father's Day.

Recognize the fact that fathers go through emotional upheavals during the grief of child loss. Fathers grieve differently than mothers, so they might not want a lot of special treatment on Father's Day. Men are generally less apt to talk about their feelings of hurt and loss than women, but those feelings are still there and need to be recognized. Father's Day without a child can be just as emotionally heartbreaking for a father as Mother's Day is for a mother without her child. We need to be sensitive to the needs of fathers, too!

Special holidays stir up many different emotions for fathers, and Father's Day is a particularly difficult holiday to go through following the loss of a child. With help and support from family and friends, a father can move forward in his grief. By letting a father know that he has not been forgotten on Father's Day, you will validate his identity as a father, and you will allow him the special privilege of once again being called that most cherished name of all—daddy.

Finally, find some way to validate the fact that a father is still a father even though his child is not living. Fathers are by nature "fixers" and the loss of a child is one loss that cannot be fixed. This fact is often very hard for a man to accept. By giving a card and a personal word on Father's Day, you will help validate to the father that he is still honored among that special group of men called fathers on Father's Day. Validation of fatherhood on Father's Day is one more step forward in this process we call grief.

Clara Hinton | Jun 08, 2003-Brief Encounters Online Newsletter-
www.briefencounters.org

When Fathers Weep at Graves

I see them weep
the fathers at the stones
taking off the brave armor
forced to wear in the work place
clearing away the debris
with gentle fingers
inhaling the sorrow
diminished by anguish
their hearts desiring
what they cannot have--
to walk hand in hand
with children no longer held--
to all the fathers who leave a part
of their hearts at the stones
may breezes underneath trees of time
ease their pain
as they receive healing tears
...the gift the children give.

~ Alice J. Wisler, for David, in memory of our son Daniel

Summer Thoughts

Summer is a time when things naturally slow down, a time when many are waiting for the orderly routine of their lives to begin again. For those of us in grief whose lives are already in limbo, it can seem endless if we let it. Seeing children, babies, and teenagers is not easy for us, and we see them everywhere from shopping centers to beaches. Everyone is out living, loving, enjoying carefree activities with their children, and we want to scream, it's not fair! I was sitting on my patio one evening at dusk recently listening to the shouts of children playing and I was crying as I remembered the sounds that my child used to make. I became very depressed as I thought what a long summer this was going to be.

In my reverie, I was reminded of a recent comment that I had heard at a TCF meeting: My child was such a loving, giving person. He would not want me to waste my life being bitter. I also remembered a good friend telling me to count my blessings and naming all the things I had to be grateful for. I was furious at the time. Nothing that I had to be grateful for could compensate for the fact that my child was dead.

Now, sitting in the twilight of this early summer evening, I began to see things differently. I was determined that this summer would not be an eternity; I would not let it be. I decided first of all to stay busy. I know I can find plenty to do if I only take the time to look. I am also going to try to enjoy the simple things that used to give me so much pleasure, like working in my garden, and flowers. I then decided to try to be truly grateful for the blessings that I have, like my husband, my surviving children, my job, friends, etc.

It has been almost five years for me, and I know that last year this would not have worked. Of course, I still have times of sadness. I know I always will, but I have decided that in the process of grieving, we close so many doors that the only way to recovery is to reopen them gradually at our own pace.

I know I will never be the same person I was before the death of my child but I hope eventually in some ways I will be a better person because suffering can be beneficial if we learn and grow through it. A year ago I didn't feel this way, and I know I still have a long way to go, but in the meantime, I know the greatest tribute to my child will be to enjoy this summer as he would have done.

~ Libby Gonzalez, TCF/Huntsville, AL

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
RILEY MARK DAHLBERG.....	13	BLAKE & CHRISTINA DAHLBERG
DAVID MICHAEL HELFTER.....	48	MARK & HELLA HELFTER
JARED SCOTT HELGESON	33	LYLE & TAMMY HELGESON
RYAN W JENSEN.....	37	LARAE JENSEN
JEFF KADLEC.....	56	FRANK & MAXINE KADLEC
GAIL DIANE LARSON	58	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
JACOB RIEDMAN	23	KASEY & JON SKALICKY
CHERYL L SAMSON	53	DUKE & PATRICIA SAMSON
CRAIG A SCHEER.....	48	WILLIAM & ELAINE SCHEER
DOUG E SCHENCK.....	52	HAROLD & IRENE SCHENCK
DUANE SCHMITCKE	58	MARY ANN SCHMITCKE
LOLA ELISE SINCLAIR	1	ANDREA & TJADEN SINCLAIR
ADAM JOSEPH SNYDER.....	33	ANNE SNYDER
JANE N SNYDER.....	55	JIM & PHILOMENA NELSON

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
CODY DEAN CONNER.....	4	DEBORAH & BRAD FRASER
DAVID GRAFSGAARD	9	ERNEST & BERDINE GRAFSGAARD
ALLEN HARRIS.....	6	DELORES HARRIS
RYAN DEAN NELSON	17	BECKY NELSON
LOGAN F RINKE.....	1	TIM & PAULINE RINKE
JOSEPH PETER ROEL.....	9	ROBERT & SANDRA ROEL
TOMMY ROESCH	2	DAVID & LINDA ROESCH
MICHAEL ROBERT SACKMAN	18	ROBERT & GLORIA SACKMAN
CHRISTIANA N SANDSTROM.....	3	ANDREW & SHAYNA SANDSTROM
JANE N SNYDER.....	1	JIM & PHILOMENA NELSON
KINLEY SNYDER	4	JEREMY & TERI SNYDER
TYLER JAMES THOEMKE	13	JAMIE, & SHERI THOEMKE
ASHLEY WIGER	2	LARRY & LORI WIGER

Please check out our Chapter website's page for 'Our Beloved Children' (www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourchildren.html). If you would like your child's picture and a poem or story posted on this page, please submit them to us at tcf1313@hotmail.com or mail them to our PO Box (listed on the back of the newsletter). Photos and poems/stories sent to the PO Box will be electronically scanned and then returned to you so please remember to include a return address

Do You Remember Me?

Do you remember me? I know my mom does...She cries every night when she goes to bed...I know she is sad...I had to leave. ..I was called home. ..She is afraid no one will remember me...No one mentions my name to her.. .They are afraid it will upset her.. .But she longs to hear my name from anyone else.. .Just to know they haven't forgotten I was here.. .I wish I could have stayed but that wasn't the plan for me. ..Just let my mom know you remember me. ..She may smile once in awhile, but I know the truth...She can fool a lot of people, but she cannot fool Jesus or me...We know she is sad all the time...Wishing for me to be back home...I watch over her all the time...I know she can feel me with her...She talks to me all the time...She is always telling me how much she loves and misses me...So please let her know you remember me. ..Ease her pain and mention me one in awhile...It would mean so much to her...And mom, I love and miss you too...We will be together again one day...I love you very much...

~ Veronica Gallegos, TCF/EI Paso, TX

SIBLING PAGE

THE EMPTINESS

The emptiness is what fills up inside of you when you give up hope.

The emptiness means different things to different people.
It is understood inside that person and that person only.

It is the cold sadness lurking inside.
Always there but seems to hide.

Covered up by happiness, but surely finds its way back inside.
The emptiness is not evil, it is only sadness.

The emptiness is the feeling you get when you have lost someone close to you.

The emptiness is when your heart aches.

The emptiness is when you feel you can't face another day.

The feeling you get when you are all alone.

When no one understands.

When your fate is in your hands.

You take a deep breath and face another day.

For that is what everyone expects.

That is the emptiness.

~ Christine Santoleri, TCF/Valley Forge, PA

Forever and Always

Every time I think of you it always eats away,
60 minutes an hour, 24 hours a day.

From the time I get up to the time I go to bed.

I regret the things that were left unsaid.

A simple I love you would have done just fine,
sadly to say there was not enough time.

You were taken too early or so we thought,
but God needed a guardian angel to watch over us
and it was you that He brought.

Not a word, nor a sentence can tell how I feel,
I still can't believe that this is all real.

The way that I feel I cannot explain,
the horrible emptiness, aching, and pain.

The way you were always there for me
no matter when, where or why,
now when I think of you it makes me want to cry.
I love you so much and will forever and always,
for the rest of my life, and the rest of my days.

~ Michael Oetken

YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

Yesterday

You were here and I took it for granted that you would always be here. Telling you I loved you and was proud of you seemed unimportant. There would be time for that when we were older - when we fought less and talked more.

Today

I know that time will never come, and I will never have the chance to say these things face-to-face. So I write them and think them and hope you know I mean them now and have always felt them.

Tomorrow

Each day the pain and regrets of things left unsaid get easier to deal with. I have begun to realize that you knew how I felt because you felt the same way. And as more tomorrows turn into yesterdays, I will find peace in that knowledge. Someday, somewhere, we will meet again and I will have my chance then.

-Shannon Odessa Stiener, TCF/Lowell, IN

What Is A Brother?

Brothers can be older or younger,
even if they are your twin.

Older or younger, with a brother,
you never seem to win.

An older brother likes to pull rank,
and show you whose boss.

But in times of trouble,
He will defend his younger siblings,
no matter what the cost.

A younger brother is noisy, pesky
and nonstop wants to play,
No matter what you do or where you go,
he is always in your way.

Who our brothers are, we don't have a choice,
So, we accept them with pride and just rejoice.
The role of a brother changes as he grows older,
His image of a sibling role model, becomes
more profound and bolder.

In a fatherless home, he would be
cool to have around,
role model image of a father,
through him could be found.

Your brother can be your confidant, young or old,
Many secrets, between siblings have unfolded.

When you are friendless and need a friend,
A brother is there to comfort and befriend you,
thru thick or thin.

A brother listens to your problems,
when he has the time and you feel the need,
Some good advice he can give--Yes indeed!

As a sister, don't have a problem with
a boyfriend, especially one he doesn't like,
His protective nature, will quickly tell that boyfriend to
"Go take a hike."

A brother can bring joy to a family,
good hugs, laughs and fun

I thank God that he gave me several
brothers and not just one.

Dorothy Martin © July 1998

WHEN MY SIBLING DIED I FELT:

- that a part of me died and that I was all alone
very angry at everything
my childhood had died, too
angry and sad that my family life as I had known it was over
terrified that I would lose someone else that I loved
cheated that I didn't have a brother
angry at how it happened
alone
afraid to get close and let anyone in
terrible
I wanted to cry
I felt angry, depressed, confused, drained, worried
why did it happen to him and not someone else
I wanted him back

~ Author Unknown

Grief is like weeding in a flower garden in the summer
You have to do it over and over again until the season changes.
~ Fay Harden, TCF/Tuscaloosa, AL

Grandparents' Grief – A Two Tined Fork

Grandparents' grief is like a fork with two tines -- one tine represents the loss of a grandchild and the other represents the pain of seeing your child suffer. Therefore, you have two tasks. The first is to work through your own grief and the other is to feel helpful to your bereaved child. There may be two parts, but you actually deal with them at the same time.

Many things determine how you grieve. We are all individuals in our personalities, experiences, ways of coping, and grief timetables. Your feelings will be the same as many other grandparents. At the same time, your grief and feelings will be uniquely and singularly yours. You may also experience some of these as well:

Sleep Problems - Most bereaved grandparents find sleep difficult for a time. Warm milk or a bath before bed, reading or using relaxation techniques or relaxation tapes, keeping a notebook by the bed to write out feelings and thoughts when you can't sleep may help. *Don't fight sleeplessness.* Accept the fact that this is normal and temporary, and that the rest you get by lying quietly can be almost as helpful as sleep. Be careful of drugs or alcohol. Neither produces normal sleep, and they may even delay your healing.

Appetite - A grieving person is seldom concerned with nutrition or a well-balanced diet, but proper nutrition is more important now than ever before. The quantity of food is not vital, but the quality is. Include something from the four food groups in each meal. Water, too, is important. You may want to pour eight glasses into a pitcher and be sure you drink it all during the day. Avoid caffeine and alcohol. It's a good idea to take a good, general vitamin daily. Adequate sleep and good nutrition are especially important for us because we're older. We don't have the physical resilience that our bereaved children have.

Constant Thoughts - In the early weeks, you may think about your grandchild and the death almost constantly. This is not unusual. It's your mind's way of sorting out what happened. Let yourself think. Contrary to what people might tell you, you are not "dwelling" on painful thoughts, you are processing. This will lessen as you begin to heal.

Constant Talk - You need to hear yourself say, out loud, what you are thinking and feeling. This helps you see the reality of the death. Talking about your grandchild, your feelings and the death is the most healing thing you can do. The problem is finding someone to listen to you. Your friends are likely to tell you it's not good to talk about these things. Others may simply be uncomfortable listening to your pain. No matter! Find someone who will let you talk. Talking with your bereaved child helps both of you. Some find that talking into a tape recorder helps. One grandfather, when told he was talking to himself replied, "Right! It's good to have a conversation with an intelligent person." Others find it helpful to write to their grandchild who died, saying goodbye and sharing their feelings. However you do it, remember, *talking is essential.*

Inability to Concentrate - This part of grief can be very disconcerting and uncomfortable. You may feel confused or as if your thinking processes have slowed down. You may find yourself in the grocery store staring for 5 minutes at the peas and carrots, forgetting which you were going to get. Some people feel this confusion for many months, while others experience little of it. Again, we are all different. You can handle the inability to concentrate in different ways. Muddle through it, write yourself detailed instructions or reminder notes, and eliminate as many jobs as you can. If you can accept this reaction as normal and temporary, you will be less bothered by it.

Your Body Grieves Too - Physical problems such as weakness, fatigue, infections, colds, stomach problems, increased blood pressure, headaches, are common to bereaved grandparents. Any chronic physical ailments you already have can be aggravated now. It's important to have a check-up but be sure your physician knows you are grieving and understands that grief is normal. It's a part of life, not a pathological or emotional illness. Unfortunately, many doctors still see grief as "sick" and will prescribe medication for "nerves". Hopefully, your doctor can prescribe medication that will lessen your physical problems. Just be extremely careful of allowing any doctor to try to alleviate the stress of your grief with mind or mood-altering chemicals.

Your reaction to your grandchild's death is likely to be different from that of your spouse or the other set of grandparents. Don't compare yourself with them or think something is wrong with you if you grieve differently. Many things in our personalities, cultures, religions, and our lives contribute to how we grieve.

We hope you take the suggestions here and allow yourself to openly express your emotions. It isn't easy to change old patterns, but try. You can't avoid or bury grief. You must *go through it.* Sadness must be expressed through tears. Anger and guilt must be talked out and looked at honestly. Lean into the pain and *allow yourself to experience it.* In other words, *allow yourself to be miserable when you need to be.* This is what working through grief means.

From www.healing heart.net

Grandparents are a Special Gift

Grandparents are a special gift...

God gives them to each child.

Their love outshines the brightest star...

Their love can never be defiled.

Oh, but when a child becomes an angel,

Grandparents feel the pain and sorrow.

Beyond any pain they've known in life,

Or will ever come to know tomorrow.

For a grandparent holds a special love

For the child their child has had.

And to lose what they hold dear...

Leaves them heartbroken and sad.

Their legacy is their grandchildren...

So how can they learn to survive?

Will the dreams of their tomorrows

Somehow be kept alive?

Yes, a grandparent is a survivor...

And life has taught them how to be.

Author unknown, TCF/Greenville, SC

When you hear about the death of a child, it is an unfortunate tragedy. When it is your child, the world stops, the loss is beyond understanding, and the pain can only be understood by those who have experienced it. A lifelong pain that a grieving parent learns to cope with, but never goes away. Anxiously waiting for the work on earth to be complete. Death becomes something looked forward to, so you could meet your child on the other side.

~ Javier Gallegos, in loving memory of Gabriel Jesus Gallegos

We must have your written permission on file to use your child's name in the newsletter. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

Your Name: _____

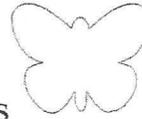
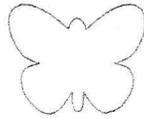
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

Date: _____

(Signature)

Please return to: The Compassionate Friends of F-M Area, P.O. Box 10686, Fargo ND 58106
(Please note that if you have already submitted a permission slip, you do not need to submit another one)



Butterfly Decals

"Butterflies are the heaven sent kisses of an angel." ~ Author Unknown

Butterfly decals are available to help personalize our trailer. The trailer is used to carry items to and from our Walk to Remember and other chapter events. It has also given us some visibility in the Fargo/Moorhead community. Each butterfly decal holds the first and last name of one of our beloved children.

Butterflies are available in five colors (yellow, pink, red, blue and green). The cost is as follows: \$25 for 1 butterfly, \$50 for 2 butterflies, \$65 for 3 butterflies and \$80 for 4 butterflies. If you wish to purchase more than 4 butterflies please contact John Milligan at 701-491-0364.

Butterfly orders should include the child's first and last name (middle name is optional) and the color of the butterfly. Checks should be made payable to TCF of Fargo-Moorhead and the order mailed to PO Box 10686, Fargo, ND 58106.

You can see pictures of the trailer with butterflies on our website at www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourtrailer.html.

Daddy, Here I Am

The day unfolds from a sleepless night
of thoughts of you and me;
I struggle through the day,
Just a masquerade of smiles and small talk.
If anyone only knew,
My thoughts are all of you.
How I hide in fear of breaking down in front of
everyone
That thinks I'm so strong.
So, I carry on in a world that's gone wrong;
That's taken my boy from me.
But can't you see-he's here with me,
He's calling out "Daddy, here I am!"
"I'm in the air;
Can't you feel me in your heart?
I'm everywhere you are,
I've been there from the start."
The world can take the body
But the spirit will still stand.
God only knows I long to hear those words,
"Daddy, here I am."

By Lee Coon

Behind
Each dark flower of sorrow
Waits a memory
Of the blessings
You shared.

By Sascha Wagner, from her book *The Sorrow and The Light*

Empty Places

I drove the old way yesterday.
It'd been a while, you see.
And there, without a warning,
the pain washed over me.

I drove the old way yesterday
and sadness came on strong,
taken back by so much feeling,
since you've been gone so long.

Places seem to lie in wait
to summon up the tears,
to say remember yesterday,
those days when you were here.

Places where you laughed and played
are places where I cry.

These places hold the memories
that will live as long as I.

~ Genesse Gentry, TCF/Marin Cnty CA

Grief Is Not...

Grief is not a mountain to be climbed,
with the strong reaching the summit
long before the week.

Grief is not an athletic event,
with stop watches timing our progress.
Grief is a walk through loss and pain
with no competition and no time trials.

Author unknown

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
 OF THE F-M AREA
 PO BOX 10686
 FARGO ND 58106

NON-PROFIT
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 PERMIT #1625
 FARGO, ND

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**The
 Compassionate
 Friends**
Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

MISSION STATEMENT: 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, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

A SINCERE WELCOME TO ALL COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS...We are a nonprofit self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. We offer group support, understanding and friendship. Our purpose is to promote and aid parents and siblings in the positive resolution of the grief they are experiencing and to foster physical and emotional health. If you have questions or wish to talk directly to a member of the Fargo-Moorhead Compassionate Friends, please call any of the numbers listed.

FARGO-MOORHEAD COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS BOARD

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE BOARD AT ANY TIME!

Chapter Leader	John Milligan..... 701-491-0364	Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen 701-730-0805
Meeting Facilitator	Paul & Kara Bailey..... 701-261-0668	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich..... 701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer 701-298-2929	Newsletter Printing	Joyce at Olivet Lutheran Church
Initial Contact	Jamie Olson 701-219-3865	Mailing Committee	Contact Us to Join
Librarian	Contact Us to Volunteer		

LIBRARY INFORMATION: We have an extensive library available. Please feel free to check materials at our next meeting.

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

HAVING A BAD DAY OR NIGHT? Feel free to call and talk to any of the following:

- John Milligan (son, 25 - car accident) 701-491-0364
- Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident) 701-282-4083
- Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness) 701-730-0805
- Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage & son, 35 - accident) 701-235-9622

Love gifts must be received by the 15th to be included in the next month's newsletter. If you wish to give a love gift please complete:

Love gift given in Memory/Honor of _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 Relationship _____ Born _____ Died _____

NOTE: By giving a love gift, you are giving us permission to include your child(ren) in our monthly birthdays and anniversaries.