



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

We will be social distancing during our meeting. Please wear a mask when entering the building and continue to wear it during the meeting

Upcoming Meetings

July 8th
August 12th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on July 22nd @
Denny's
TCF FM Chapter's 15th Annual Walk to
Remember - July 31, 2021 10:30 am

LOVE GIFTS

Emma Huelsman in memory of son, Kevin G Huelsman
Lynn & Donna Mickelson in memory of their daughter and family, Aaron, Allison, Brielle, & unborn Baby Deutscher
Dan & Carol Winter in memory of their son, Matthew Winter
Pat & Denny Wateland in memory of their daughter, Tracy Ann Wateland
Sherry Lassel in memory of her daughter, Jayme Lassel
Linda Bartsch in memory of her son, Brent Bartsch
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

Walk to Remember Event – July 31, 2021 @ 10:30 a.m.

This year our Walk to Remember event will be different than previous years as we are unable to have it at our normal location of Oak Grove Park due to construction. Instead, we will gather at Trollwood Park located at 3664 Elm St. N in Fargo. Here are a few reminders for this year's event:

- 1) There will be no actual walk as Trollwood Park is too far from Island Park for it to be feasible.
- 2) There will be no potluck, but we are planning to provide a catered picnic-style lunch.
- 3) We will not be able to have a balloon release because Trollwood Park is in the flight paths for Hector International Airport.
- 4) We WILL have a butterfly release.
- 5) We WILL have games/activities for the kids (and the adults too).
- 6) There are 3 playground areas and a basketball court near the Trollwood main shelter.
- 7) We will have a speaker.

You can register for the event online through our website at <http://www.tcffargomoorhead.org/> or by calling Kara at 701-491-0364 or Sheryl at 701-540-3287.

Can It Really Be a Year Already?

Funny, it's been a year! I can't believe it! Last year on July 26th, I thought the world had stopped—I guess I was wrong.

It was a hot July day and I was at my friend's house helping her with a chore. We were laughing like kids when her phone rang and my husband told her to tell me to come home—that he needed me. Driving the short distance to our farmhouse, I wondered why he had wanted me to come home. Was he sick and needed to go to the doctor? Was there something at home he needed me to help him with? Had he accomplished something he wanted to share with me?

He came out and started walking towards me as I pulled in next to the front door. Looking back in time, it seems as if he was walking in slow motion, and the closer he got, the more I didn't want him to reach me. Somehow I knew it was bad news, and I thought, "If he doesn't tell me, then it hasn't happened." I will remember the next few words that were spoken until I die -- "It's Kyle, isn't it?" "Yes, he's dead." "Oh, my God." "He shot himself—he committed suicide."

The ultimate sorrow—the ultimate tragedy—the death of a child. Funny, I still call him a child, yet he was 29 when he chose his own time to die. All those who have experienced the death of a child know what the next few days and months were like for me. I sat in a chair for days on end; my chest ached where my heart had been; the lump in my throat was enormous; it felt like someone was sitting on my back 24 hours a day. Worst of all, I kept dreaming he was still alive—that he was only playing a bad trick on me. I did crossword puzzles to keep my sanity; I drank too much; I ate too much; my health worsened by the day. All I cared about was finding the answer to "Why?" Nothing else mattered. I had to know!

I did do some things right, only by luck. I had been a Hospice volunteer for several years, so I did know the importance of reaching out for help, "even though I didn't need it." Many of us have to look outside the circle of our family and friends to get the kind of help we need. Was it only three weeks until I attended a Compassionate Friends meeting; four weeks until I attended a Survivors of Suicide meeting; three months until I started grief counseling? People told me I "was so brave," but they couldn't hear me screaming inside; they didn't know that I wished them dead instead of my son. I didn't realize it then, but all these positive things were but stepping stones on my path back to a world that was moving on without me.

One morning I woke up not with a feeling of dread nor of happiness. I was somewhere in between. But I was different. I still hurt, but the pain was manageable. I still thought of my son every hour, but somehow I had incorporated the sadness into my whole life as yet another facet of living. I decided it was time to take back the responsibility for my health and well-being. Who else should have that job? I came to understand that if my son had the right to pick his own time to die, then certainly I had the right to pick my own time to live as I wanted to live. I started affirmations; I started to eat sensibly and healthily; I started to exercise my mind and body; I started to realize I was never going to "be over it," but decided that "it" was not going to have a hold over me.

It is almost July 26th again! I can't believe it! The year has gone so fast! All those firsts—the first Thanksgiving without him, the first Christmas without him, the first Mother's Day without him. I still don't know "why?" But I have accepted I will not know the answer to that question until I next meet my son. I am so thankful that I have my memories, good and bad, to call upon in my mind's eye—the child flying down the soccer field booting the ball in front of him, the teenager going to his first formal dance, the car accident that almost took his life when he was 16, the young father holding his small son with pride.

Funny, it's been a year, and I am learning to live life again. My world is moving on and I have chosen to move on with it.

Thanks to all of you who have been my stepping stones along the way.

Sharon Mehler, TCF, Kitsap County, WA

TCF National Newsletter July 2006

TCF "Online Support Community" Offers Opportunity for Grief Sharing

The Compassionate Friends offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions.

The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org, select "Find Support" and click "Online Support" in the Online Community column.

MON	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 8 am	First-Time Chatter Orientation 8:45 pm	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 9 pm
TUE	Loss to Substance Related Causes - 7 pm	First-Time Chatter Orientation 7:45 pm	Bereaved Less than 2 Years - 8 pm Bereaved More than 2 Years - 8 pm
WED	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 9 am	First-Time Chatter Orientation 7:45 pm	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 8 pm
THU	No Surviving Children 7 pm	First-Time Chatter Orientation 7:45 pm	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 8 pm
FRI	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 9 am	Pregnancy/Infant Loss 7 pm	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 8 pm
SAT	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 8 pm		
SUN	Suicide Loss 7 pm	Parents/Grandparents/Siblings 8 pm	

Please, don't ask...

Please, don't ask us if we're over "it" yet.
We'll never be over it.
Please, don't tell us they're in a better place.
They aren't with us.
Please, don't say, "At least they aren't suffering".
We haven't come to terms with why they had to suffer at all.
Please, don't tell us you know how we feel
unless you have lost a child
Please, don't ask us if we feel better.
Bereavement isn't a condition that clears up.
Please, don't tell us, "At least you had them for a time".
What year would you choose for your child to die?
Please, don't tell us, "God never gives you more than you
can bear".
Please, just tell us you are sorry.
Please, just say you remember our children, if you do.
Please, just let us talk about our children.
Please, mention our children's names.
Please, just let us cry.

~ Rita Moran

An Uneventful Pregnancy

They said her birth defects were a surprise
after an "uneventful" pregnancy.
was it uneventful the day we knew
she was there inside—growing?
How about the day we saw her little body
on the ultrasound screen
and fell in love with her?
Was it uneventful the first time
I felt her kick?
Or the second?
What about the day we chose her name—Meg?
All those days we dreamed and hoped and loved her.
Those were the happiest days of our life with her.
Don't tell me it was uneventful. Please.
~ Felise Freeley-O'Brien, TCF/Hingham, MD

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

Our children were a part of our lives and no matter how brief or
how long their life span, we shared in their lives as we anticipated
their arrival, shared their entry into the world, or grew with them
as they grew.

They existed, they were, and they will always live in our hearts
and in our memories. No one can ever take away that specialness
of having been allowed to give life to our children, who, in
death, have given the miracle of life more meaning.

What if we had not had them at all?

~ JoAnn McAilley, TCF/Dothan, AL

FIREWORKS ARE LIKE THE LOVE IN OUR HEARTS

July brings Central Oregonians lingering blue skies, lazy
afternoons and the Fourth of July celebration, complete with the
grand fireworks finale bolting from the top of Pilot Butte. This
was one of my son's favorite holidays. When he was six I asked
him why fireworks were so special to him. He said, "The lights
explode in the dark and make the whole sky light up!" That was
obvious. I said "Hum?" he gave me one of his "Oh Mom" looks,
then went on to say "The fireworks are like the love in our hearts,
we should always try to spread our love out to others." I know
then and I still am aware today that profound wisdom comes from
the lips of our children. From that summer on, in my mind,
fireworks have been a triumphant testament of love's enduring
power and wonder. I miss my son, Joshua, terribly. I comfort
myself knowing that his wisdom and kindness were precious gifts
in my life.

Wherever you are on the Fourth of July, I hope that the
splendor of sparkling fireworks might comfort as you
acknowledge that the love you hold dear for your child is the light
that is able to shine through you. We all have known grief well,
yet as compassionate friends we need not walk alone in the
darkness. We can lighten the path for others.

Grief can cripple and destroy us, but as we gather to share
each other's burden, we are able to gain strength. Love for our
children is our common flame, sharing and caring keep the flames
afire. I look forward to our next meeting and the opportunity to
hug and listen to my comrades.

~ Jane Oja, TCF/Central Oregon Chapter

The Strength of Butterflies

They didn't want to change. Their lives were full. The
caterpillars crawled happily through the green leaves, played and
rested in the sun, and ate their fill. Yet, through the darkness and
quiet mystery, they did change. Their luminous beauty now lights
the skies, their colors are vibrant, their airy flight is delightful.

They didn't want to change. Their lives were full. They
laughed and worked and sang and played; our children loved their
lives. Yet, through the darkness and quiet mystery, they did
change. Beyond our own imaginings they now live in
indescribable harmony and perfect joy. Their new lives are a color
invisible to us, but it is the color of eternity.

We didn't want to change. Our lives were full. We cared and
nurtured and disciplined and laughed and mothered and fathered;
we loved their lives and them. Yet, through the darkness and quiet
mystery, we have changed. Though fragile in our forever-longing
for them, we are gifted with a growing strength of spirit called
HOPE. We are a resilient and enduring new color as well, held
close to our children by unbreakable threads of love that keep us
tethered for awhile yet between earth and heaven.

~Mary Sue Zercher, TCF/Marietta, GA

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
SANDRA DIANE CASELLA	53	RICHARD & DIANE MACGREGOR
ANNE CLEMENSON	64	MARVIN & DOROTHY CLEMENSON
AARON DEUTSCHER	44	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (In-laws)
BABY DEUTSCHER	9	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (Grandparents)
JUSTIN L DIETRICH.....	36	TRACY & CAROL DIETRICH
WHYLIX EDWIN DITCH	2	LANCE & TASHARA DITCH
HOLLY KAY ELLESTAD.....	46	WENDY BLAKENSHIP (Sister)
RACHEL ELIZABETH ELLINGSON.....	39	PATRICIA & ERIC MONSON
JARAD NILLES	37	CAROLYN NILLES
ZANDYN LARRY MALHEIM OLAFSON	11	BILLY OLAFSON & SHANDRA MALHEIM
NATE OLSBY	37	NANCY DODD
MATTHEW ALLEN OLSON	46	RICHARD & LINDA OLSON
LOGAN F RINKE.....	31	PAULINE RINKE
SHERYL ANN TOBAR	57	ANGIE SCHLICHT
AUSTIN WAYNE WAGAR	26	JAMIE & SCOTT OLSON

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
JESSICA MARIE BALSTER	5	CARRIE BALSTER
BRENT M BARTSCH.....	6	LINDA BARTSCH
KASIE JOANN BERG	1	KIMBERLY FOLSTROM
HALLIE CLARE BJELLAND	16	ANDY & RHONDA BJELLAND
ZANE SHANNON BUCHHOLZ	4	STEPHANIE DETZEN
AARON DEUTSCHER	9	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (In-laws)
ALLISON DEUTSCHER	9	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON
BABY DEUTSCHER	9	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (Grandparents)
BRIELLE DEUTSCHER.....	9	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (Grandparents)
MARC T HENDERSON.....	3	TOM & LINDA HENDERSON
CLEO CAROL JORGENSEN	3	FRAN LEINGANG
SUE ELLEN LARSON.....	39	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
JAYME ELIZABETH LASSLE	11	SHERRY LASSLE
MICHAEL L LIVDAHL.....	8	ROBERT & TANYA LIVDAHL
ZANDYN LARRY MALHEIM OLAFSON	11	BILLY OLAFSON & SHANDRA MALHEIM
NATE OLSBY	4	NANCY DODD
KENT ALAN PETERSON	2	DEWAYNE PETERSON
RAND LOREN PIERSALL.....	7	PERSYS PIERSALL
ANNIKA LORRAINE QUALLEY	7	RHONDA & MICHAEL QUALLEY
ANNIKA LORRAINE QUALLEY	7	MARLYS KESSEL (Great grandmother)
NICHOLAS J SADEK.....	16	JOHN & TAMMY SADEK
DOUG E SCHENCK	17	HAROLD & IRENE SCHENCK
JENNIFER SCHUMACHER.....	3	ANTHONY & LORETTA SCHUMACHER
ADAM JOSEPH SNYDER.....	8	ANNE SNYDER
TRACY ANN WATELAND	28	PAT WATELAND
TRACY ANN WATELAND	28	SHARON WATELAND (Godmother)
MATTHEW ALLEN WINTER.....	8	CAROL & DAN WINTER

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.

SIBLING PAGE

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

MEMORIES OF YOUR FACE

I woke this morning
Finding everything in a haze
Wiping tears from my eyes
I saw your smiling face.
I reached out and touched you
Yet all I could feel was pain
You felt nothing
From your life within a frame.
I spoke. Receiving no reply,
I told you that I loved you
I asked you
Why?
I'll never have another
No one to take your place
All I have, little brother, are memories
And the picture of your face.
~ Lisa Walmsley, TCF/Sarasota, FL

SIBLING POEM

Will we ever meet again?
And what will be our first reaction?
Will we hug?
Or will we cry?
Will we laugh?
Or will we just hold each other?
Will you remember me as the last time you saw me?
Or will you try to imagine how I have changed?
Will we reminisce about the good old days?
And cry about all of the bad days?
The ultimate question is:
Will we ever meet again?
~ Jenny McDermott
In loving memory of her sister, Meggan McDermott
1976-1991

WHEN....

when we finally realize that you
are always going to be smiling
and dancing in our hearts,
then, our pain shall turn to joy.
~ Bob Walters, TCF/South Lake Tahoe, CA

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

MEMORIES

As I watched her leave there is a place
that we call Memory.
A province by itself which, though unseen,
is home and haven to the heart.
and there, in peace and beauty
waiting, are those with whom
we shared our yesterdays.
~ Nancy Cassel, TCF Holmdel, NJ

Searching...

Once again, my list has vanished;
It was here, but now it's missing.
Keys and glasses disappearing;
books and letters -- overdue.
I'm forever searching, searching,
they must be here, and I need them!
Could it be that what is missing,
What I want this very minute--
could it be that what I'm really
searching for, my child, is you?
~ Joyce Andrews, TCF/Sugar Land, TX

Waiting for Answers

Years ago I left my first meeting of The Compassionate Friends and drove home in tears. My son, Max, had died a few short weeks before and I had been anxiously awaiting this evening. These people must have some answers, I thought. With paper and pen in purse, I was ready to take notes and do as they prescribed. I would do anything to ease the ache in my soul. But when I walked out into the spring air later that night, I felt betrayed. I hadn't heard any answers. Instead of learning how to leave my grief behind, it had been confirmed, made more real with expression. I knew I would miss Max forever. Now I wondered if I would grieve forever. Would it always be this way, a flash of pain aligned with every memory? During the next months and years, I attended TCF meetings and conferences, read books, raged, kept busy, sometimes spent the day in bed. I wrote, cried and talked about Max. Slowly, I discovered the answers I had long feared were true: yes, I will grieve forever, and yes, my memories will often provoke tears. But some-thing had changed. My grief was now more forgiving, my tears almost sweet with memory. Max's life took shape again as the anguish of his death began to recede. If I would always miss him, I would also always have him with me in so many ways. I wanted to carry his memory into the future: the joy, the lessons, and the inevitable pain. How could I do otherwise? As I walked to my car after that first meeting, the TCF chapter leader caught up with me. "How can I stop this pain?" I asked. "Just do what feels right to you," she said, "Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too. Sometimes the best advice is none at all."

Mary Clark, TCF/Sugar Land TX

A Name for My Pain

I have given a name to my pain—
it's called "Longing."

I long for what was,
and what might have been
I long for his touch and smell of sweat;
I long to hold him one more time.
I long to look on his beautiful face
and impress it upon my memories and heart.
I long to return to the day before
and protect him from his death.
I long to take his place,
so he may live and have sons too.
I long for time to pass much faster,
so my longing and pain will lessen.
Will they?

~ June Williams-Muecke, TCF/Houston West Chapter

His Room

Sun splinters through the stained-glass unicorn
Still on the sill splattering black walls with color
Few things are as forlorn as a vacant room
Furniture gone, awaiting definition
Bare, yet there on the carpet imprints of chair and waterbed
And there is the hole he accidentally shot through the wall
And there and there and there nail holes that held pictures
and posters and eight-point antlers
And there... God, how can a place so empty, be so full?

~ Richard Dew

From *Rachel's Cry A Journey Through Grief*

KISSES TO HEAVEN

Today I sent a kiss to heaven
I'm encouraging all of you to try
For if I have shared this with you
You have had a child die
This kiss came from down deep inside
And I know that it truly was received
Right after I had sent my kiss
A calming breeze surrounded me
Not only that, a wind chime rang
From where I do not know
But I felt my child smile at me
And say he loved me so
Take a kiss within your hands
And look up at the sky
Release that kiss with loving care
Now please try not to cry
Once the kiss is off to them
To Heavens gate above
Just look for any single sign
Of your child's precious love
I felt my kiss returned to me
And yours will do the same
It might not be from the breeze or chimes
but in the trees, the sun or rain
Now smile up to your child
In the clouds way up above
But most importantly tell
Your child, that they are always loved

~ Author Unknown

GRIEVING IN PAIRS

How many times have people said, "Well, thank God you have each other." How many times have you felt "each other" to be entirely inadequate at meeting your needs?

Alarming statistics are available telling us of the rocky road parents encounter in their marriage after the death of a child. We sometimes see in ourselves a touchiness or quickness to become irritated that wasn't there before. It always seem that my "bad" day is my wife's "good" day or the day she wakes up crying was the day I had planned on playing tennis.

Or sometimes, even more difficult, we both have a bad day and find no help from the other in pulling things back together. How can one person hold up another when he is himself facedown in the mud?

Every person grieves differently. This is a rule that even applies within a family. And the needs of every individual are different. While you may need to talk and talk and talk, your spouse may need some time alone to reflect inwardly.

You have both been through the worst experience of your life. And while at times you can face recovery as a team, sometimes you must develop the patience to be able to wait out certain needs alone or with someone else. Realize that no matter how it is shown, your partner hurts too.

~ Gerry Hunt, TCF/White River Junction, VT

QUESTIONS

How do things look from your side of the rainbow?
Are the colors still the same? Are they dull or bright?
Are the clouds white or gray? What about the trees?
The grass? The flowers? Do you see me kneeling at your grave?
~ Mary Vandever, TCF/Long Beach, CA

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: _____

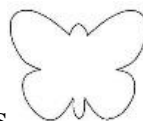
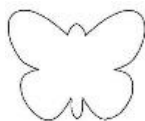
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

Date: _____

(Signature)

Please return to: The Compassionate Friends of F-M Area, PO 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 Paul and Kara Bailey 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.

LOVE

“...Grief is the price we pay for love. We did not lose our children. They died, taking with them our hopes and dreams for the future, but, never, never taking away their love. Though death comes, love will never go away. Hold it tight, the love our children gave us.

Hold it tight through the storms of grief and bring it with you into today. Love never goes away...” ~ *Darcie Sims*

Our Mom's group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Denny's restaurant, 4437 13th Ave SW, 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 July 22nd. For more information, please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or visit our website at www.tcffargomoorhead.org.

The Gate to Tomorrow

There is a gate that each of us has unknowingly passed through. This gate opens only one way... once we have passed through this gate we cannot return to the other side. Each of us stepped through the gate at a different time and in a different way. This gate opens to the world of parents whose children have died; it is their gate to every tomorrow.

There is no other place that compares with life in this world beyond the gate; there is no sorrow like the sorrow inside the gate. The numbing pain and perpetual agony we experience when first stepping through this gate are so overwhelming that we often don't immediately realize that there will be no return. But we will never return to life before the gate.

The new world inside the gate is populated with friends who are strangers and strangers who are friends.

Our perspective on life has changed forever. Few of our friends from life before the gate will linger with us now; these people are now the strangers. Our pain is all encompassing; they have lives to live, things to do, plans to make, happiness to capture. We are no longer part of their picture. Rare is the friend who stands by us inside the gate.....stands by us until one of us dies and leaves the world inside the gate.

The strangers who are now friends live inside the gate with us. Some have just come through the gate; others have been here a long, long time. But these strangers who are now friends share our experience; they understand our need to talk about our children, each life and each death. They applaud our tiny advances toward acceptance and serenity and peace. Although we can never go back to life before the gate, we now have our compassionate friends.....once strangers but now kindred souls who share our lives and our world.

Life will not be the same again, yet life can be good again. Inside the gate we will each find ourselves with the help of our compassionate friends. They listen carefully to stories about our child. They know our child's name better than they know our name. And that's how we want it to be....remember our children. Remember with us.

~ Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX ... In memory of Todd Mennen

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

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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	Paul & Kara Bailey701-491-0364	Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen..... 701-730-0805
Co-Chapter Leader	Lori Wiger.....701-781-3931	Newsletter Database	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich.....701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer701-298-2929	Initial Contact	Sheryl Cvijanovich
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:

- Sheryl Cvijanovich (son, 23 - illness) 701-540-3287
- Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident) 701-282-4083
- Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness)..... 701-730-0805
- Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage, son, 35-accident & son, 45-cancer)... 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.