



Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

# The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter December 2021

## Worldwide Candle Lighting

Please join us Sunday, December 12 for our Annual Candle Lighting as we remember our children, grandchildren, and siblings 'gone too soon.' It will be virtually like in 2020 and 'their light may always shine' via Zoom. Please have a candle to light in the comfort of your own home; there will be directions when to light it. Throughout the program your video and microphone will be off so all you need is to hear and see the computer (or phone) screen.

Around 6:15pm, join the Zoom meeting and our program will begin at 6:30 PM. It consists of special videos, readings, and the slideshow of our children, grandchildren and siblings. You will have an opportunity to type your loved one's name in the zoom chat; directions will be explained prior to 6:30 if you need guidance.

To log on by clicking through this website, click this link [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83969828110?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83969828110?pwd=aExwVXJWUVZvZHNDcUs4bjdKR1JaUT09)

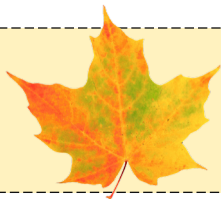
[pwd=aExwVXJWUVZvZHNDcUs4bjdKR1JaUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83969828110?pwd=aExwVXJWUVZvZHNDcUs4bjdKR1JaUT09)

If you receive the newsletter in the mail, you can log onto the candle lighting by doing the following (There is not any software to download):



- 1) go to <https://zoom.us/>
- 2) look at the top of the page for the blue text, "Join a Meeting"
- 3) Click on it.
- 4) A prompt will appear and you will enter the "meeting ID number" - 839 6982 8110
- 5) click "join"
- 6) The password is candle
- 7) If you get a prompt to "launch Zoom," click okay or yes.

*Please check your spam folder if you cant find the email*



If you are reading this newsletter and do not receive emails from the chapter, and would like to, please email [contact@tcfquakertownpa.org](mailto:contact@tcfquakertownpa.org) to be included on the email list. Be sure to include your name!



As our membership grows costs are rising to mail paper copies of the newsletter each month. Please consider receiving the newsletter by email, or Facebook, or our website. Please contact us with your email address!!! Thank you for helping us SAVE funds!!! email or scan -----> [contact@tcfquakertownpa.org](mailto:contact@tcfquakertownpa.org)



Quakertown Chapter  
PO Box 1013  
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website: [www.tcfquakertownpa.org](http://www.tcfquakertownpa.org)

Please give some thought to volunteering with The Compassionate Friends. Our Chapter is growing and we need helping hands to continue to help others that are new to this path of grief. We need not walk alone.



# The Compassionate Friends

## Quakertown Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

### Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



#### About Our Chapter

Chapter Leader – Barbara J Reboratti

Chapter Treasurer – Sherri Albro

Chapter Secretary – Gail Blase

Assistant Secretary -

Mary Anne Macko

Newsletter Editor/Webmaster –

Linda Stauffer

Membership Outreach-

Ginny Leigh Manuel

Social Media Coordinator & Sibling

Coordinator – Crystal Hunter

Memorial Garden Chairperson –

Theresa Sitko

Committee members – Bob Albro,

Dianna Cox, Diane Gurecki, Lisa

Dechant and Lynette Lampman

#### TCF National Office:

877-969-0010

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

The Compassionate Friends is a nationally renowned 501 C (3) non-profit organization with 700 chapters in the US. All donations are tax deductible.

We were put on this earth *to love them*

for as long as WE live... ○

not for as long as THEY lived.

- Alan Pederson

#### Self-help Program

The Compassionate Friends, Inc. is a mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they go through the grieving process. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

#### To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain!. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

#### To our Members who are further down the "GRIEF ROAD"

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK - what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF "veterans" to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, "your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!"

#### Information Regarding Our Meetings

PLEASE don't stay away from a meeting because the topic scheduled does not interest you. We are here to discuss whatever is on your mind, we don't stay on the topic only. This is YOUR group and we are here for each other. You do not have to talk at meetings. We welcome your participation in our group but it is not a requirement. Coming to listen to the others is Okay too. Re-member also that our meeting is open to adult siblings, grandparents, or adult family members such as aunts or uncles.

#### Support Group Meetings

We are so sorry for the cause that brings us together. It takes courage to attend a Compassionate Friends support group meet-ing. We understand how it feels to walk into a room of strangers and share personal feelings, especially when you are in so much pain. At your first meeting, we hope you find care, support, understanding and a group of friends to share with. Truly, there are no strangers among compassionate friends.

As a reminder to families that would like to attend a support meeting. Please allow yourself at least 3 or 4 meetings of attendance to determine if they are for you. It may take a few meetings before you're able to talk about your loved one and that is understandable. What you say at our meetings is kept in the meeting, you can cry, hug, talk about how you are feeling freely. Our meetings are for parents, grandparents and siblings in grade 9 or above and adult siblings.

#### Your Friends at TCF Quakertown Chapter

#### Library Books

We have a nice library of books for our members to check out and read and return them back to our library. A problem we currently have is that some books have not made their way back to our library and our library is shrinking. If you have checked out a book or magazine from our library and are done reading it won't you PLEASE return it to us at our monthly meetings. If you are not able to make the meeting you may mail it back to us or have someone else return it to us. Also, if you have any books that would help other grieving families through their journey and would like to donate them to our library please give them to our librarians.

#### Newsletter Errors and Omissions

For any errors or omissions please contact Linda via email at [kt4ever@mac.com](mailto:kt4ever@mac.com) with the error and the correction for the next month newsletter. Please remember we are all volunteers and grieving

#### About This Newsletter

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by email: [newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org](mailto:newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org)  
PLEASE NOTE: If you are moving or your email has changed please notify the newsletter editor so that we can update your information and you continue to receive the newsletter. If the newsletter is returned to us either via mail or your email bounces back and you have not notified us you will be removed from the mailing list.

#### Newsletter submissions:

Submit articles and poetry to the editor by the 15th of the preceding month. Include the author's name & your contact information. You may mail to our PO Box 1013, Quakertown PA 18951 or email as a pdf file or word document to: [newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org](mailto:newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org)





# *Grief and the Holidays*

Bearing sorrow  
in a season of joy

Sometimes, life is about perspective, about the lens with which we view our stories and our circumstances.

In the world of parents who have outlived their children, we have to learn quickly about perspective. In order to truly keep living after the breath has left our children's lungs, we are forced to choose the lens with which we'll see their life, their story, and our lives and our stories when everything is seemingly broken.

This world of parents who have outlived their children— it's both a heartbreaking and extraordinary world.

In it, you are in the presence of warriors, of men and women who have been given one of the most sacred tasks and missions. You are in the presence of men and women who were chosen, not chosen for pain, but chosen to be the only people in the world to parent their precious children. Parenthood, in and of itself, is a sacred task. It's true. But parenting a child, parenting children, when you can no longer reach out and touch their faces, hold them in your arms, watch them grow, that is one of the greatest, most sacred tasks you can be given.

Out of every person in this world, you were chosen to be his or her parent. Out of every person in this world, you are the ones who were chosen to know him or her, better than anyone, to be theirs, to have your souls tied together for eternity. Out of every person in this world, it was you. It is you. It always will be you.

We can choose to view our circumstances strictly through the lens of sorrow, of sadness, of pain, or we can look at it through a different lens, one that acknowledges the pain but doesn't see exclusively through it. It notices the broken places, but it holds fiercely to hope. It aches and it hurts at times, but it holds ever more tightly to purpose, to good, to redemption.

You, your children, their stories did not end. They continue to be written every single day that breath is held in your lungs. This is your sacred task.

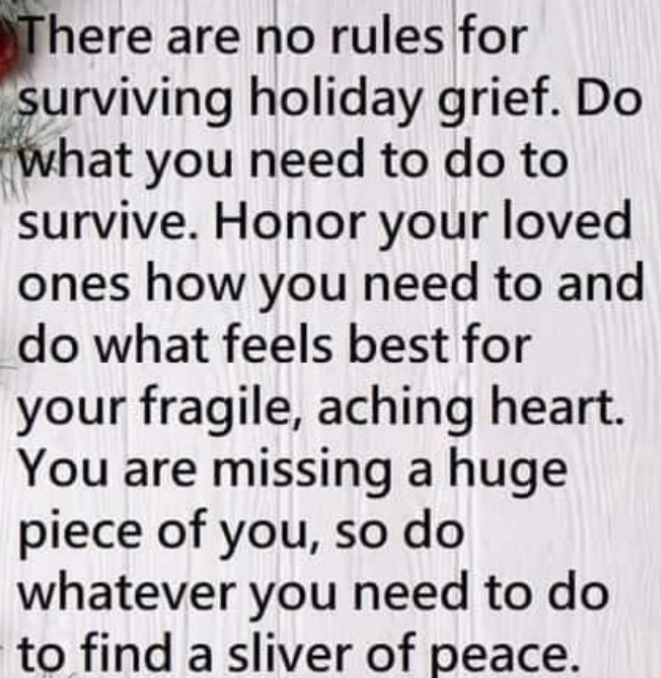
Their story is not over. We carry them. But listen here: your story, my story, our stories are not over either. No matter how much you wished you could have stopped breathing when the breath left their lungs, no matter how hopeless your life seems, no matter how deep down in the pit anxiety or depression or PTSD have taken you. No

matter how weak, how small, how fragile you may feel, you are not.

You are brave. You are fierce. You have been given a sacred task, and you are the person for the job. Your story is far, far, far from over.

Few people in this world meet someone who so intricately and radically changes their lives simply by entering it. Few people have their lives split into such a powerful before and after. And while it may be so easy to look at our before and afters through the lens of deep pain and sorrow, you have been given a sacred gift: to know a love so pure, so raw, that it extends across world, through time, and death cannot even touch it. You've been given a sacred gift, a second chance, an invitation to never be the same from this point forward simply because they existed, you were chosen to be theirs, and you are tied together, eternally, your love a force greater than life itself.

You are theirs. They are yours. For eternity. Press on. ~ by Lexi Behrndt  
Scribbles & Crumbs



**There are no rules for surviving holiday grief. Do what you need to do to survive. Honor your loved ones how you need to and do what feels best for your fragile, aching heart. You are missing a huge piece of you, so do whatever you need to do to find a sliver of peace.**

– Angela Miller

# Christmas Through the Years

Your child is gone, Christmas is coming, it is the first year

We know they are with us in our heart and their spirit is near  
Now it's the second year we still hurt so much and still feel all alone  
But it is the hardest because reality sets in, you know they're not coming home.

Each Christmas they're not with you, sometimes you wonder how you go on  
You just don't want to believe that your child really is gone

No one knows the pain and the sorrow each year you go through  
You try to be happy for others but so much love is gone from you.

Then five years have gone by, you can still feel the loneliness in your heart  
You still cannot get into the Christmas spirit, you still feel torn apart

But things get a little softer and you try to do your best

So many who love and need you never seem to let you rest.

Now ten years is coming up but you cannot forget them you know

They will always be with you no matter where you may go

You look at their picture and think of them as each day goes by



No matter what Christmas it is you still sit there and cry.

Christmas is here once more and you're twenty years down the road

In your heart and your mind you still have that heavy load

That your child should be with you at Christmas and each holiday

They should not be in Heaven they should have been here to stay.

Now thirty years of Christmas' have gone by, your child will always be with you

You do a lot of things different now than you used to do

But you still think of all the happiness that you used to have each year

Your child will always be with you, they will always be here.

No matter how many years have gone by, their thoughts are still there

Sometimes you wonder if they still look the same as when they were here

You look back on so many years and you've kept their spirit alive  
They will always be in your heart,

that is what has helped you to survive.

As life goes on holidays get a little softer in time  
But the thoughts of your child are always on your mind

All the memories of your son or daughter still brings tears

You can look back on your happiness on Christmas through the years.

By Dee and Jack Heil NE Philadelphia Chapter

## Holidays in Heaven

By Dan Bryl

TCF Lawrenceville, GA

In Memory of his daughter, Jessica

The Holiday season is just not the same,  
A smile is missing when saying one name.

For parents who've lost a daughter or son,  
Nothing can bring back the delightful fun,  
Of watching them talk, laugh, or just run.

The memories are all that we do have now,  
We do go on.... Only God knows how.

A New Year comes as midnight arrives,  
Our Angels still a big part of our lives,  
If only we could trade the presents we receive,

For one more day with those whom we grieve!

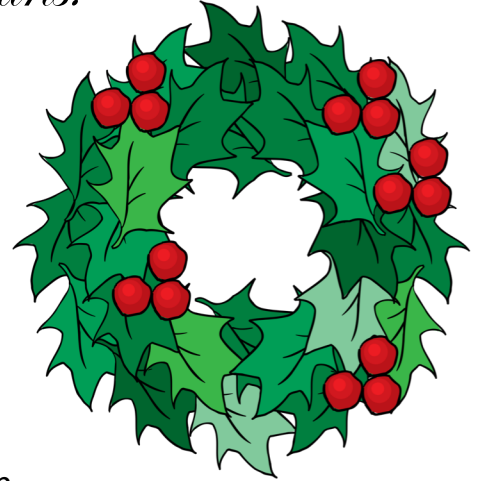
But nothing can bring back our beloved child,  
The one that laughed, cried, and often smiled.

They are together in a much better place,  
Watching us cry... touching our face!  
Although we miss them on Holidays to share,  
Be assured their loving presence fills the air.

At home, in church, at New York's Times Square!  
So celebrating the Holidays are now hard to do,  
But always remember they are thinking of you, too.  
Wishing you happiness and showing their love,  
Not on this Earth, but from Heaven above!

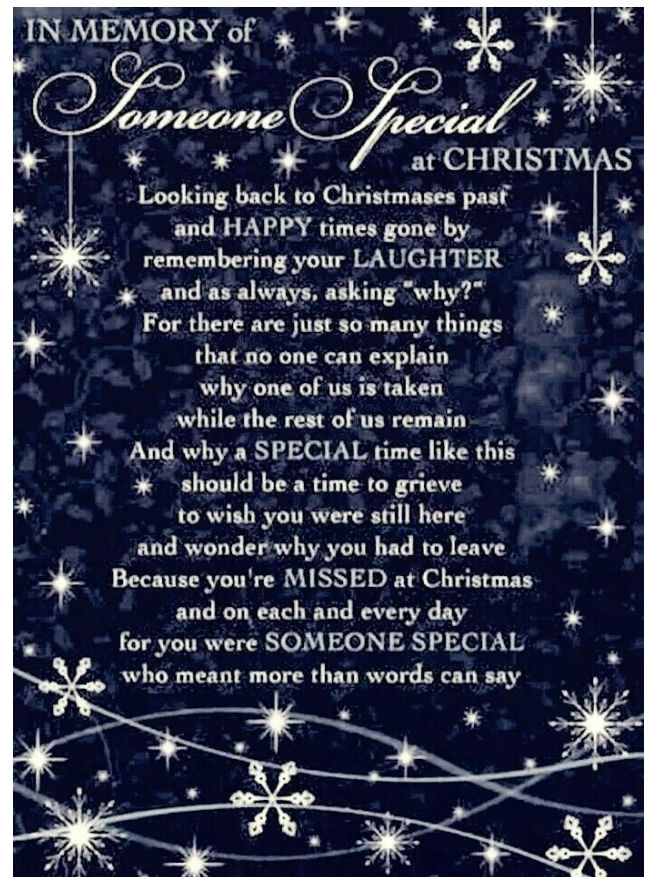
*“Our Children Remembered on their December Birthdays  
Always Loved, Missed and Forever in Our Hearts.”*

- 12/3 - Sundai Marie Peters**, daughter of Arlene & Phil Peters
- 12/8 - Ashley Doyle**, daughter of Brian Doyle
- 12/8 - Matthew James Stewart**, son of Rosemary Stewart
- 12/10 – David Cohen**, son of Hilary Cohen
- 12/15 – Christopher Dixon**, son of Steve & Kim Dixon
- 12/15 - Arthur Ucci**, brother of Joan Ucci
- 12/17 - Ryan Strauch**, son of Dave & June Strauch
- 12/19 - Thomas Onraet**, son of Ruth & Maurice Onraet
- 12/19 - David Curran**, son of Barbara Santaniello
- 12/20 - Rich Hollabaugh**, son of Linda & the late Wayne Hollabaugh
- 12/24 - Kiana Alvarenga**, daughter of Tina & Jose Alvarenga
- 12/25 - Allison Fawcett**, daughter of Anne & Bernie Smith
- 12/28 - Michael Bolan**, son of Jennifer Bolan, sister of Bridgette



Only December  
Feelings heavy, tears and tears. Will the darkness last?  
Or is it –only December?  
Hadn't past months brought peace and hope? Where is the  
strength of October –and November?  
Lights, carols, ornaments on trees, cards from friends,  
happy times in seasons past. We remember.  
We remember.  
Will January bring light at last?  
Will we be stronger then, for making it through this December?  
When people ask how I'm doing I say,  
Well . . . you know . . . it's December.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry from Stars in the Deepest Night-  
After the Death of a Child



*Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary  
of Their Death Loved, missed and always in our hearts*

**12/7 – Adrienne Heber**, daughter of Anna & John Heber

**12/7 – Randy Freed**, son of Bonnie Freed

**12/7 – Josiah Weigner**, son of Keith Weigner

**12/12 – Sean A. Ryer**, son of Pat Ryer;  
grandson of Diana Adams

**12/13 – Matthew James Stewart**, son of Rosemary Stewart

**12/13 – Michael Tondera**, son of Maria & Steven Tondera; brother of Yvonne Perrucci

**12/14 – Robert Kyle Rainey**, son of Lynne Rainey

**12/15 – Christopher Thomas**, son-in-law of Barbara & Eduardo Reboratti

**12/16 – Robert Marich**, son of Michele Callon.

**12/21 – Jacquelyn Dahms**, daughter of Don & Lorraine Croisette

**12/25 – Amber Eisenstein**, daughter of Ben Eisenstein

**12/26 – Ryan Barr**, son of Londonne & David Barr

**12/27 – Christopher Dixon**, son of Steve & Kim Dixon

**12/30 – Dalton Hunsberger**, son of Charis Hunsberger

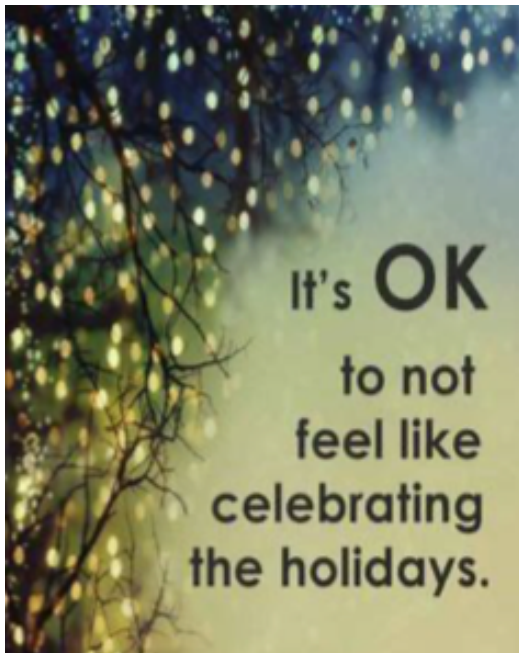


Was cleaning my house - I stopped in my tracks and sat down and just went down memory lane...All I can say is it wasn't pretty. I think I cried for over an hour with memories of what this time used to be for me and how it was filled with such love and anticipation - and now it brings back memories of the reality of emptiness and sadness.

So I would like to remind you that there are people for whatever reason are not looking forward to Christmas. Some people are not surrounded by large wonderful families.

Some of us have problems during the holidays and are overcome with great sadness when we remember the loved ones who are not with us any longer.

For many, it is their first Christmas without a particular loved one and many others lost loved ones at Christmas. And, many people have no one to spend these times with and are besieged by loneliness. We all need caring, loving thoughts right now.



## Special Thanks

A special thank you to Diane Guerecki, Lisa Dechant, Jenifer Pini and Crystal Hunter for the Remembrance cards that you receive. They do this in memory of their children/ siblings: An appreciated Thank You to our members for helping to set up and tear down for chapter meetings. Thank you to Linda Stauffer for supplying the ink and paper and printing our newsletter and creating and maintaining our website. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to Dianna Cox for addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. She does this in remembrance of her son Michael. Thanks to Barb and Bob Heimerdinger for applying the memorial Plaques to the wall in the memorial garden. They do this in remembrance of their son Ryan.

# Love Gifts

## **Sending a very special thank you to those who sent in love gifts this month:**

To Arlene & Philip Peters, in loving memory of their precious daughter, Sundai Marie Peters:  
"Mom, Dad and Adam miss you and love you so much."

To Jeanne Hofmann, in loving memory of her beloved son, Scott Silver, and dear grandson, Kyle Silver:  
"You both are loved and missed every day of the year, year after year. With all my love, till I see you again, Mom/ Meme"

To Carol & Albert Graham, in loving memory of their beloved sons Adam and Peter Graham.

To Carol & Don Mikesell and Wanda & Martin Renshaw, in loving memory of Greg Mikesell.

**Please feel free to use the Love Gift Form in the newsletter to include your special message.**

Our member's love gifts continue to support our chapter's ongoing expenses as well as the maintenance and beautification of our chapter's magnificent Memorial Garden in James Memorial Park, Sellersville.

Donations made in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling are always welcome, but more so this year. Due to COVID restrictions we had to cancel our biggest fundraiser, the annual Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release. Please help us help others. We Need Not Walk Alone.



## **LOVE GIFTS**

A Love Gift is a donation of money in support of our Quakertown Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Donations can be in memory of a child, sibling, or grandchild on their birthday, angel day or anytime. Your Love Gift will be acknowledged in our newsletter. Love Gifts are our Chapter's main monetary support. Anyone can donate and we thank you for your support of our chapter.

***We are a 501(c) 3 nonprofit, chapter #2053. Donations are tax deductible.***

**In Memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Death Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Check One:** Please use my gift for:

General Operating Expenses  Memorial Garden

**Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Love Gift Message** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to:**

The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter

**Mail to:**

PO Box 1013

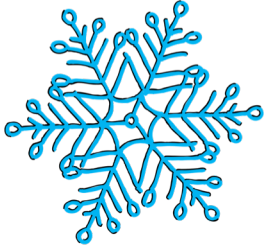
Quakertown, PA 18951





The Compassionate Friends  
Quakertown Chapter  
PO Box 1013  
Quakertown, PA 18951

## Support Group Meeting is Dec 14th 7-8:30 at "The Gathering Place"



### *The Compassionate Friends 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.

