



# The Compassionate Friends

June 2020

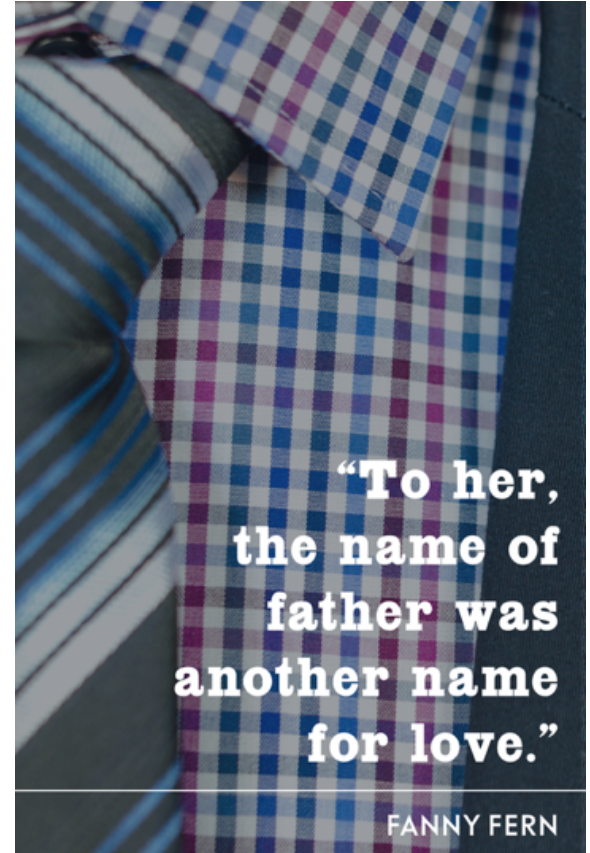
*Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties*

## Virtual Meeting Scheduled

We will again be having an online virtual support group meeting that gives us the opportunity to give and receive support in an audio visual way on Tuesday, June 9 at 7:30 PM. Chapter leadership will lead the meeting and you may talk or choose to simply listen.

Prior to June 9th, please download the video conference app **ZOOM** ([zoom.us](https://zoom.us) - you do not need to make an account) either on your smart phone or computer. If you have trouble downloading Zoom, please contact us so we can help you.

- We will host an "Intro to Zoom" session at 7pm that night, but the meeting will be from 7:30pm-9:00pm.
  - You do not have to talk so even if you have not attended an in-person meeting, we welcome bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents.
  - Very Important: Please be in a private area during this meeting to keep other people's stories confidential. Using headphones are highly suggested.
  - 24 hours prior to the meeting, the zoom URL code will be sent via email and posted in our private Facebook group. If you don't have access to either, please email or call us (before June 9th!) to get the code.
  - On June 9th, you will click that link from your smart phone or laptop. You will be admitted into the meeting once someone from Leadership can verify your identity.
- If you have any questions, please see our contact information below to reach out to us.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/123802347679381/>  
Our private facebook group

**We talk. We listen. We share. We care.**

Our Support Group Meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month at St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital, 1021 Park Ave., Quakertown, in the Taylor Conference rooms A & B on the ground floor of the professional wing. Meetings are 7:30 - 9 PM.

No need to register. No fees or dues. Just come as you are.

Quakertown Chapter  
PO Box 1013  
Quakertown, PA 18951  
Chapter Info Line: 484-408-7314  
[contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org](mailto:contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org)  
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  
Annual Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release has been cancelled**



# The Compassionate Friends

## Quakertown Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

### Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



#### About Our Chapter

Barbara Reboratti, Chapter Coordinator  
& Chapter Delegate to National  
Ginny Leigh-Manuel-Membership Outreach  
Crystal Hunter, Social Media Coordinator &  
Sibling Outreach  
Sherri Albro, Chapter Treasurer  
Gail Blase, Chapter Secretary  
Mary Anne Macko, Assistant Secretary  
Linda Stauffer, Chapter Newsletter &  
Website Creator & Maintenance  
Theresa Sitko, Memorial Garden Director  
Lynette Lampmann, Hospitality  
Mary Catherine Nederostek, Hospitality  
Diane Guerecki, Remembrance Cards  
Lisa Dechant, Remembrance Cards  
Dianna Cox  
Bob Albro  
Carol Graham

#### 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.



#### 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. Remember 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 meeting. 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)

# *Our Children Remembered for June Birthdays*

6/2 – **Dennis Harris**, son of Linda Lepo

6/2 – **Matt Trauger**, son of Mary Anne Macko and Mike Hamilton; son of Jim Trauger; grandson of Dolly Bibic

6/2 – **Shannon Frederick Rodgers**, son of Cindy Rodgers

6/3 - **Jessica Gallagher**, daughter of Robyn & Ron Gallagher; sister of Ronnie & Jaclyn Gallagher

6/4 – **Andrea Clutter**, daughter of Alyssa Sandt

6/7 – **Michelle Dusza**, daughter of Steve & the late Darlene Dusza; sister of Jenn Geib

6/9 – **Adrian Paul Pfitzer**, son of Joyce Mann & Kurt Pfitzer

6/9 – **Sean Dawson**, son of Roger & Becky Dawson

6/10 – **Crystal Cordero**, daughter of Linda & Rich Ervin

6/10 – **James Donnelly, Jr.**, son of James & Alice Donnelly

6/10 – **Christine McGhee**, daughter of Dawn McGhee

6/12 – **Natasha Michelle Dechant**, daughter of Nancy Dechant

6/13 – **Wyatt Gansz**, son of Marc & Melissa Gansz

6/14 – **Skylar Kauffman**, daughter of Heather & Eric Kauffman; granddaughter of Pam Gebhard, Carol & Spencer Kauffman

6/14 – **Joey Acker**, son of Anne Marie Acker

6/15 – **James Gabriel Geib**, son of Jim & Helen Geib

6/15 – **Keith Heckler**, son of Emma & Lamar Heckler

6/15 – **Courtney Isabella**, daughter of Anthony & Michelle Isabella

6/15 – **Colleen O'Connell**, daughter of Jay & Barbara Keeley

6/16 – **Anna Nicole Fowler**, daughter of Rita Armstrong; sister of Nick Penecale

6/16 – **Eric Stillings**, son of Kirt & Joyce Stillings

6/17 – **Nick Campellone**, son of Johanna Goodwin

6/17 – **John Patrick Sharkey**, son of Maggie O'Donnell

6/19 – **Kevin Marc Bannon**, son of Jan & Kevin Bannon, brother of Aimee Bannon

6/23 – **Joseph Vincente**, son of Christine & Donald Vincente

6/23 – **Donald Vincente II**, son of Christine & Donald Vincente

6/24 – **Randy Angstadt**, son of Paul & Barbara Angstadt

6/24 – **Brandon Gilbert**, son of Susan Gilbert

6/24 – **Katie Stauffer**, daughter of Carl & Linda Stauffer; sister of Chrissy Stauffer

6/26 – **Brett Stebulis**, son of Barbara & Leonard Stebulis

6/27 – **CalliMae Derstine**, daughter of Lucy & Mike Derstine

6/29 – **Peter Angstadt III**, son of Peter & Lynette Angstadt

6/29 – **Randy Freed**, son of Bonnie Freed

6/30 – **Joey Reichman**, son of Tacey & Stephen Reichman, brother of Tami

## **Just For Today I Will ...**

Just for today, try to live through the next 24 hours.

Just for today, remember my child's years of life and not the day of death.

Just for today, forgive family and friends who didn't help the way I needed them to. .

Just for today, free myself from the self-inflicted burden of guilt.

Just for today, honor my child's memory with a random act of kindness.

Just for today, offer my hand in friendship to another bereaved parent.

Just for today, smile without guilt.

Just for today, allow myself to be happy without guilt.

Just for today, accept that I did not die when my child did.

*~ By Barbara J Reboratti, Quakertown Chapter of The Compassionate Friends*



When we lose our children, we don't just lose them at the stage they were when they passed. We lose them at every stage we missed, and our hearts will forever ache with that knowledge.

L Behrndt

— [sayinggoodbye.org](http://sayinggoodbye.org)

## MAKING FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Here are a few hints to help you through these days after the loss of a child.

Pamper yourself-this is a special day in your life. You are a parent forever and your child is your child forever.

Do what you need to do-what helps you. Grieve your way.

Be with those who surround you with love, not demands or advice.

Plan ahead-do things that make you feel good or give you a moment's peace.

Start new rituals to make new memories.

Share your thoughts with family members; decide together what the day should include. (If you are alone, find a good friend.)

Join with another bereaved family to honor this day and have mutual support.

Start a garden or add to a special garden in memory of your child.

Use this day to plant spring flowers so you can always see your child in each bloom and each bouquet that you cut.

Visit the cemetery if that helps your heart on this day.

Plant a flower or shrub that will come to bloom this time of year.

Do something special for someone else or something special in your child's name (helping Cancer Care, MADD, a Compassionate Friends' Chapter, Scouting, a nursing home, etc.)

Listen to music that makes your heart feel good.

Cook some favorite recipes that your child enjoyed or cooked for you .Buy a present for yourself from your child and enjoy the comfort it brings you.

Write a poem or article in memory of your child, sharing memories or whatever has helped you.

Attend a family gathering of relatives – their love and support can give you a lift on this day.

Make a booklet of favorite poems that help your heart, and give copies to dear relatives and friends in memory of your child.

Set aside some special time to grieve, unloading all the frustration and sadness that can envelop you on such a day giving you time to meditate alone.

Write a letter to your child, telling what's in your heart (perhaps some unfinished business or some new blessing that has enriched your life). Allow the tears to flow- crying is healing and allows a release for your feelings.

Think of a way to "share your child with the world"-making sure his or her memory lives on through scholarships, writing, good deeds.

Give and get plenty of hugs.

~ Elaine Stillwell, TCF Rockville Centre, NY

SILENTGRIEFSUPPORT.COM

My child brought light  
into this world.  
I will never let that  
light go out.

CLARA HINTON

# *Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of Their Death*

Loved , missed and alway in our hearts

6/2 - **Christopher Bennetsen**, son of Catherine & Steven Bennetsen, grandson of Hilda Bennetsen

6/2 - **Jake Guzewicz**, son of Bill & Rhonda Guzewicz

6/2 - **Peter Plant**, son of Steven & LouAnn Wilkinson, brother of Rachael

6/4 - **Aaron Young**, son of Perry & Susan Young 6/4 – **Jonerick “EJ” Perullo**, grandson of Suzanne & Tom Kwan

6/9 – **Christopher Reed**, son of Sally Reed

6/10 - **Scott Naber**, son of Anje Naber

6/10 – **Allison Perno**, son of Cathy Perno

6/11 – **Steffan Orazewski**, grandson of Crystal Kay

6/12 - **Eric Smith**, son of Ross & Mary Smith, brother of Ashley

6/13 - **Katey Blase**, daughter of Gail Blase, sister of Hillary Blase

6/14 - **Wyatt Gansz**, infant son of Marc & Melissa Gansz

6/14 - **Roger Jones**, brother of Sara & Bert Jones 6/16 - **Scott Smakula**, brother of Shawn Smakula; grandson of Naomi Shaw

6/17 - **Donald Hockenberry**, son of Richard & Sharon Hockenberry, brother of Richard & Jill Hockenberry, Susan & Tim Buehrle

6/18 - **Benjamin Martin**, son of Kristine Fallows, brother of Rachel Whitely

6/18 - **Steven Schrader**, son of Michele & Gary Schrader

6/18 - **Alexus Quay**, daughter of Mary Dickinson 6/20 - **David Bentz III**, son of Kimberly Geonnotti

6/21 - **Jason Roeder**, son of Shirley Roeder, brother of Jessica Youtz

6/21 – **Amanda Burgess**, daughter of Glenn Burgess

6/21 – **William Young**, son of Barbara Young

6/22 - **Joshua Adair**, grandson of Lois Harner

6/22 - **James Gabriel Geib**, son of Jim & Helen Geib

6/22 - **Brandon Gilbert**, son of Susan Gilbert

6/22 - **Michael Patzuk Jr.**, son of Mike & Joesphine Patzuk

6/22 - **William R. Wilson, Jr.**, son of William & Genevieve Wilson

6/23 – **Lorraine Corbo**, daughter of Deb Goodman

6/24 - **Jamie Place**, son of Kathleen Place

6/25 - **Danielle Mesaros**, daughter of Sheila Haub

6/25 - **Christopher Parker**, son of John Parker, Jr.

6/27 - **Adian Bacchus**, grandson of MaryLou Miller

6/27 - **Christopher Trauger**, son of Mary Anne Macko & Mike Hamilton, son of Jim Trauger, grandson of Dolly Bibic

6/27 – **Michael Gurecki**, son of Diane & Stanley Gurecki

6/28 - **Glen German**, son of Albert & Betty German

6/29 - **Ashley Doyle**, daughter of Brian Doyle 6/29 - **Thomas Onraet**, son of Ruth & Maurice Onraet

6/30 - **Bradley Rapp**, son of Robert Rapp Jr.



## Leaving the Valley of the Shadow. Choosing Life

“It will never be the same. Never.” As a bereaved parent, you have often heard or said these words to express grief’s profound feelings of sorrow and disorientation. Your life has suddenly taken an unexpected course that appears both uncharted and endless. Bewildered, you vainly search for pathways back to your former life, until you confront the reality that there is no way back.

Your child is dead forever. It is then that you may say, “...never the same.” This is the aspect of grief that Simon Stephens calls “The Valley of the Shadow.” It is that very long time between the death of your child and your reinvestment in life. Between. It is not supposed to be a permanent resting place. Although some people do take up residence in the valley, it is a transition from the death of your child to life with renewed purpose.

The key to this transition is you. You must choose between life and the valley. And you must make that decision again and again, each day. Giving in to the hopelessness of the valley is tempting. Choosing to move on toward life requires work. You must struggle with the pain of grief in order to resolve it. It is a daily struggle full of tears, anger, guilt and self-doubt, but it is the only alternative to surrendering yourself to the valley.

Little by little you choose to move on. Little by little you progress toward the other side of the valley. It takes far longer than your friends or relatives suspected. Far longer than you had believed – even prayed – that it would be. When one day you find yourself able to do more than choose merely to live but also how to live, you will know you are leaving the valley of the shadow.

There will still be more work to do, more struggle and choosing. The valley, however, stretches behind rather than in front of you. When you have resolved your grief by reinvesting in life, you will be able to realize that nothing is ever “the same.” Life is change. Change has the promise of beginning and the excitement of discovery. Life is never the same. Life is change. Choose life!

By Marcia F. Alig  
TCF, Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey

The Leadership Committee has made the decision to cancel the Butterfly Release and Memorial Walk for June 2020. There is simply no way of knowing what will happen. We want to keep everyone safe and with grief, our immune systems are down. We will keep you posted on any developing information if we are able to reschedule.

## When Family are Nowhere to be Found

Waiting for family to circle the wagons seems to be a recurring theme, at least from what I have experienced, heard and read by bereaved parents.

I'm certain my own family loves me, but when my son died, they were nowhere to be found.

Here's what I think: everyone, even within families, handles grief differently, but we don't know this until it happens.

Please give everyone the benefit of the doubt.

In the end, we find that some never really knew how to care, some cannot find the words, and others have lives that they struggle to handle even on the best days. Still others are overwhelmed and do not want to burden YOU out of love for you. It's a kind of myth that families will always take care of each other.

My family lives 700 miles away. Many could not afford to make the trip when my son died.

You know what? I let go of any possible resentment.

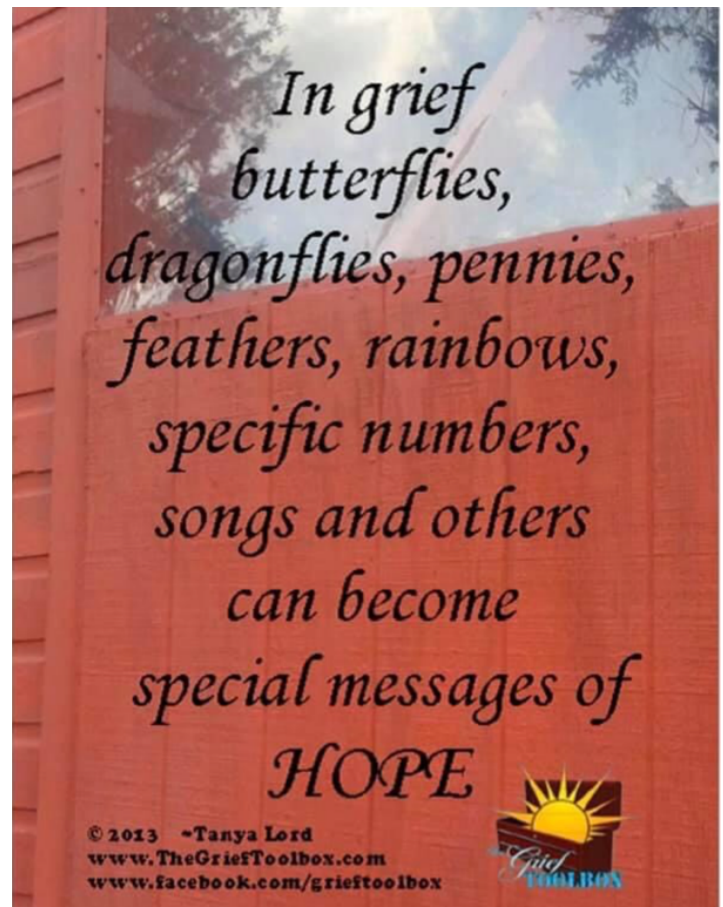
I did that because it's complete insanity to expect something from someone who is not capable of giving you what you need, for whatever reason.

Losing my son was enough to push me close to the edge. There's no way I would allow anything else to take it further.

Please if you can, forgive, forgive, and forgive again as often as it takes.

That's what I have learned in the nearly four years since my son died.

*By Janice HK, who asked that her full name not be used.*



# Love Gifts

In loving memory of Skylar Kauffman from Grandmother Pam and Mother Heather Gebhard.  
"It has been nine years that you have been gone. On your birthday this month, you would have been 19 years old and graduating from high school with the class of 2020. We miss and love you so much. Love always, Mom and Mom-Mom Pammy and your baby sister Brooklyn."

In loving memory of our son, James G. Geib from Jim and Helen Geib.  
" Forever in our hearts."

In loving memory of my son, Brandon S. Gilbert, from Susan J. Gilbert.  
"You are loved and thought about every day. Love, Mom."

In loving memory of our daughter, Sundai Marie Peters, from Phil and Arlene Peters.  
"Our dear little Sundai. We love and miss you so much. Mom, Dad and Adam."

In honor of families we serve and memory of loved ones, from the C.R. Strunk Funeral Home, 821 W. Broad St., Quakertown, PA 18951

A special thank you to Diane Guerecki, Kasey Bradley 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 doing our newsletter and website. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to, Betty and Charlie Hottenstein for addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. They do this in remembrance of their daughter, Tracy. 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

A Love Gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends. Love Gifts can be in memory of a child or sibling on their birthday or angel day, can honor a friend or relative, or can show support for the work of TCF. Love Gifts are the Chapter's main monetary support. **Please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends Quakertown Chapter.** (Bank will not accept just TCF)



**Love Gifts are tax deductible – Chapter Non-Profit #2053**

**Circle One:** *In Memory* or *In Honor* of (name of person) \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Death Date (Angel Day) \_\_\_\_\_

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

- Memorial Garden
- Special Events (i.e. speakers, community outreach)
- Candle Lighting Program
- Memorial Walk & Butterfly Release
- General operating expenses

*Love Gift Message:*

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email or Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Checks payable to  
**The Compassionate Friends**  
**Quakertown Chapter**  
PO Box 1013  
Quakertown, PA 18951

Treasurer Use Only

Cash/Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_  
D \_\_\_\_\_ Q \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_



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

Next Virtual Meeting : June 9



### *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.

