



The Compassionate Friends

Pittsburgh Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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Sept/Oct/Nov Fall Issue 2017

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide knowledge to help others to be supportive.

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is an international non-profit, self-help support organization which offers friendship and understanding and hope to families who are grieving the death of a child of any age from any cause. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership fees or dues, and all bereaved family members are welcome.

The Compassionate Friends was originally founded in England in 1969. The first U.S. Chapter was organized in 1972. The Pittsburgh Chapter began in 1978.

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United Way #2647



Fall Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held at **Bower Hill Community Church**

from **2:30 - 5:30 p.m.**

70 Moffett St, Mt. Lebanon, PA 15243 (off of Bower Hill Road)

Please sign in at the welcome table on the lower level of the church.

PLEASE NOTE!! ALL NEW MEMBERS WHO ARE ATTENDING A MEETING FOR THE FIRST TIME, PLEASE ARRIVE BEFORE 1:30 PM TO SIGN IN.

You will then join the regular meeting at 2:30.



Sunday, September 10, 2017

Our program will be our

3rd Annual Butterfly Release

Please see page 7 for more information on this special event. The butterfly release will take the place of our regular monthly meeting. There will be no sharing sessions after the release, but please join us for refreshments in the church's Fellowship Hall.



Sunday, October 29, 2017

Our speaker will be **George Satler**, a homicide detective from the Pittsburgh Police Department.

Detective Satler has extensive experience in law enforcement throughout Allegheny County, including as a narcotics officer for the city of Pittsburgh. As a homicide detective, he has worked on over 1,000 investigations including suicides, overdoses, and car accidents. Detective Satler will speak about how outside influences (which parents do not have control over) may contribute to a person's death in many circumstances; therefore, parents should not feel at fault.

The *Special Sharing* will be on *Overdose and Addictions*

Regular Sharings

1st time attending, Newly Bereaved Up to One Year, Grief 1-2 years, 3-5 years, over 5 years and Siblings Over 16 Years

Sunday, November 19, 2017

Our program will be **Grief and the Holidays** led by our own Lillian Meyers, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist and bereaved mother, who will lead our annual in-house discussion on preparing for the upcoming holiday season.

The *Special Sharing* will be a continuing discussion of our program on preparing for the holidays

Regular Sharings

1st time attending, Newly Bereaved Up to One Year, Grief 1-2 years, 3-5 years, over 5 years and Siblings Over 16 Years

DIRECTIONS TO BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH:
70 Moffett Street, Mt. Lebanon, PA 15243

Downtown: through Fort Pitt Tunnels. Exit 5A Banksville Rd. (Rte 19S), bearing right onto Banksville Rd. for 2.3 miles. The last few blocks of Banksville Rd. become McFarland Rd. before you bear right on to Beverly Rd. Go 0.6 miles to Cochran Rd., turn left and go 0.2 miles to Bower Hill Rd. Turn right and go 0.5 miles and turn right on to Moffett St. Bower Hill Community Church is on the right.

From Rt. 19: when you enter Mt. Lebanon, follow signs for Washington Rd. At light turn on Bower Hill Rd. Continue 1.7 miles on Bower Hill Rd and turn right on to Moffett Street. Parking available in the North Parking Lot of the church.

From Airport: East on I-376 to I-79S/Pittsburgh (Exit 64A). Take Exit 55 (Heidelberg/Collier). Take the Washington Pike ramp toward Bridgeville, then slight right onto Washington Pike/PA-50. Turn left onto Vanadium Road. Go about 1.5 miles, turn left onto Bower Hill Road. Go straight about 2.5 miles, then turn left onto Moffett St. Church is on the right.

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Home Meetings, New Members,
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TCF Pittsburgh Chapter notes

- IBM Community Grant** – TCF-Pittsburgh Chapter has once again received a grant (\$2,000) from the IBM Community Grant Program. The program, part of the IBM Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs Program, has contributed a total of around \$20,000 to our chapter since 2003. The annual grants are provided to support non-profit organizations for which IBM employees and retirees serve as volunteers. Our own Pittsburgh Chapter member, John Urso, is an IBM retiree who joined TCF after the death of his son. John has worked to secure these grants for TCF over the years. The funds provided through these grants have had a positive impact in sustaining our chapter's operations. Many thanks to John and IBM!
- Save the date!** – Our annual Candlelight Remembrance service will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2017. Look for more details on our annual remembrance service soon! December 11 is also the date of The Compassionate Friends' Worldwide Candle Lighting; for more information, visit <https://www.compassionatefriends.org/event/annual-worldwide-candle-lighting-2/>



3rd Annual Butterfly Release

Our third annual butterfly release will be held on Sunday, September 10, 2017 at 2:30 p.m. on the lawn of Bower Hill Community Church. Upon arrival, each registered TCF family will receive a complimentary monarch butterfly to release in memory of their loved one as well as any extra butterflies that they may have ordered. Additional butterflies will be available for purchase at the event. The afternoon will include a brief memorial service followed by a reading of the names of those we have loved and lost. Light refreshments will be served indoors following the butterfly release. We invite you to bring a dozen cookies or other treats to share, along with a picture of your loved one.

The butterfly release will take the place of our regular meeting in September.

*For your comfort,
please bring a blanket or lawn chair to the butterfly release.*

*We will **NOT** be able to provide any chairs this year. Members **MUST** provide their own chairs/blankets to sit on.*

In case of heavy rain, we will hold the service indoors and you will take your butterflies with you for release after the rain.

REMINDER:
The butterfly release will start PROMPTLY at 2:30 p.m.!
We hope to see you there!

Falling for you....

...while leaves fall, the river drifts by and friends sit, speaking of loved ones lost to suicide. Like the river, conversation drifts. Some smile at memories shared. Others cry tears of regret, anger, guilt, despair; tears for what could have been, but is no more. Through the years, this group of friends has learned that words fall short of describing sorrow. And so we sit silently, watching the....

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling for you....

...until the time comes to fall in line and drift toward a table adorned with recently fired clay shapes. At an earlier gathering, I molded soft gray clay then impressed it with words and symbols of your life. Although I don't speak of it, I know that yours is not the only life interrupted. My life is also damaged, diminished, in danger of falling apart in oh so many ways. This small group shares space with those we miss and love, both living and dead; in this, my child's birth and death season. How I long to see you float free with the....

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling for you....

...and I long to connect again with you but my plea falls on deaf ears. I'm left with the task of creating your wind chime. A year ago, on your birthday, leaves fell as I stamped the soft clay heart with musical notes, falling stars, hovering doves and the words "treasured memories." Now the clay has cured and along the holes in the edge of the stamped heart, I tie other clay shapes with lengths of string – my heartstrings. I add an anchor, a porcelain leaf inscribed with the words "falling in love." The pieces fall in place like....

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling for you....

...and then I playfully brush my fingers through your wind chime; fingers that long to run through your hair. The chime whispers your name but its music can never fill my heart like the sound of your voice. Fall – a time for friends to make wind chimes and memories. A time for....falling leaves....falling tears....falling eternally for you.

*Carol Clum
TCF Medford Oregon*



Little footprints on a paper,
 Tiny footprints stamped on white.
 No smiling pictures of your bath time,
 No running or flying a kite.
 Such sparse memories I have of you,
 Sweet, beautiful, babies mine.
 No keepsake rattles or no bronzed shoes,
 No treasures for me to find.
 Just tiny little footprints,
 That I look at every day,
 My memories of two little boys,
 That the Angels took away.
 We will make a million memories,
 When Daddy and I get there,
 Oh wait, we'll make it two million,
 After all, you are a pair.

Marilyn Rollins
 TCF Lake-Porter County, IN

**September is:
 National Suicide
 Prevention Month**

Sunday, September 10 is
World Suicide Prevention Day 2017
 For more information, visit
suicidepreventionlifeline.org



**October is:
 Pregnancy & Infant
 Loss Awareness Month**

For more information, visit
www.october15th.com



WAVE OF LIGHT

FOR OCTOBER 15TH

Everyone is invited to light a candle on
 October 15th at 7 pm in
 ALL Time Zones, ALL Over The World.

If everyone lights a candle at 7:00 pm
 and keeps it burning for at least one hour,
 there will be a continuous WAVE OF LIGHT
 over the entire world on October 15th.

**Pregnancy and Infant Loss
 Remembrance Day**

A love gift is a contribution to honor our children, grandchildren, and siblings, who have died or a memorial for a relative or friend. To contribute a love gift, simply mail in the form below with your gift. There are no dues or fees to belong to TCF and **FUNDS RECEIVED ARE USED FOR PRINTING AND MAILING EXPENSES, FOR PURCHASING LIBRARY MATERIALS, AND MISCELLANEOUS CHAPTER EXPENSES.** These gifts are frequently given on the anniversary or birthday dates or in lieu of flowers when someone has died. Your donation is tax deductible.

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU WISH TO SEND A LOVE GIFT OR SUBMIT A POEM FOR YOUR LOVED ONE'S BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY DATE, PLEASE SEND THE INFORMATION TO THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS LISTED ON THE DONATION FORM (RATHER THAN DROPPING IT IN THE MAILBOX AT THE MONTHLY MEETINGS), SO THAT WE CAN BE SURE IT IS ACKNOWLEDGED IN THE APPROPRIATE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER.

We thank the following people for their kind generosity, love and sharing:

- JA, IN MEMORY OF HER SON, GA
- LB & JB, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON AND BROTHER, MB
- WD, IN MEMORY OF HIS DAUGHTER, ARD
- LLD, IN MEMORY OF HER DAUGHTER, DLD, & GRANDSON, DLD
- ME, IN MEMORY OF HER SON, BE
- RJG, IN MEMORY OF HER SON, DAC
- JFH, IN MEMORY OF HIS SON, NJH
- JH & CH, IN MEMORY OF THEIR DAUGHTER, CH
- RK & BK, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, JWK
- MJM & KM, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON & BROTHER, RSM, JR.
- EP, IN MEMORY OF HER GRANDSON, JP
- JR, IN MEMORY OF HER DAUGHTER, EB
- MS & GS, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, GS
- DS & PS, IN MEMORY OF THEIR DAUGHTER, KCS
- AS & MS, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, DMS
- GS & RMS, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, RS
- BT & LT, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, JT
- RT, IN MEMORY OF HER SON, JPT
- MAV, IN MEMORY OF HER SON, VV
- CAV, IN MEMORY OF HER SON, VCV, JR.
- LW & RW, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, JTW
- JZ & CZ, IN MEMORY OF THEIR SON, PZ

DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF TCF MEMBER, WE
 AB • DG • BH • MAM • BM & LM • DS & PS • GS & RS

LOVE GIFT DONATION FORM - PLEASE SEND THIS FORM WITH YOUR CHECK

LOVE GIFTS are a loving memorial to our children, grandchildren and siblings, usually given on birthdays, anniversaries, holidays etc. Your gift may be accompanied by a poem or article for your loved one's special day.

I, (PRINT YOUR NAME) _____ wish to make a donation

in memory of my: Son Daughter Sister Brother Grandson Granddaughter _____

(PRINT THEIR NAME) _____

Their Date of Birth: _____ Their Date of Death: _____

Please note: All love gifts, poems, etc. for the **DEC/JAN/FEB 2017-2018** newsletter must be received by **November 1, 2017.**

Please make checks payable to: **THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS** and mail to: **P.O. Box 15495, Pittsburgh, PA 15237**

Please be sure to send all love gifts and poems to our mailing address above so that the love gift can be acknowledged in the correct month of your loved one's birthday or anniversary.

**The Compassionate Friends
Pittsburgh Chapter
P.O. Box 15495
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Return Service Requested
Permit No. 17**

Next issue will be
Dec/Jan/Feb 2017-2018
All love gifts, articles and speakers
will be due by November 1, 2017

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If you'd like to receive this
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The Compassionate Friends Credo
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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 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.
PLEASE NOTE: Per National Office of TCF, the parents and siblings credo has been combined and the above version is the one we are to use for children, siblings and grandparents.

We need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate Friends.

TCF Pittsburgh Phone:
412-835-1105

Good Grief Center:
412-224-4700

**Highmark Caring Place: A Center for
Grieving Children, Adolescents & their families**
1-888-224-4673