



# The Compassionate Friends

## Pittsburgh Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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January/February/March • Winter 2021

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.

### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Box 3696 • Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Toll Free: 1-877-969-0010

Fax: 630-990-0246

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

email: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

### PITTSBURGH PA CHAPTER

P.O. Box 15495

Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Phone: 412-835-1105

Website: [www.tcfpittsburgh.org](http://www.tcfpittsburgh.org)

### PITTSBURGH CHAPTER CO-LEADERS

Megan Talbot: 814-860-4732

[co-leader@tcfpittsburgh.org](mailto:co-leader@tcfpittsburgh.org)

VACANT

[chapter.leader@tcfpittsburgh.org](mailto:chapter.leader@tcfpittsburgh.org)

### REGIONAL COORDINATOR

John Taylor:

304-280-4389

[taylorjohna@yahoo.com](mailto:taylorjohna@yahoo.com)

United Way #2647



## Winter Monthly Meetings

Meetings are usually 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)**

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021 (VIRTUAL MEETING)

#### *Dealing With the "Winter Blues" & Facing the New Year*

Join us in January for a discussion about how we can beat the winter blues and gear up for facing a new year without our loved ones. Learn from others what has helped them beat the "blahs" of the winter months and share some ideas of your own. Let's also talk about some things we can do to help make the New Year a little better than the last one. Remember - we are here to help! You need not walk alone!

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2021 (VIRTUAL MEETING)

#### *Ask in a Basket*

Our annual "Ask in a Basket" will be a bit different this year! TCF members will be able to either ask or anonymously write (in the Chat box) their questions about dealing with grief. Meeting attendees will be asked for their thoughts and feedback on their fellow TCF members' questions.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 2021 (VIRTUAL MEETING)

#### *Our Favorite Things*

Come celebrate the things you cherished most about your loved ones. Share stories or pictures. Talk about your favorite characteristics of those no longer with us. It is said "Be the things you loved most about the people who are gone." What are those things? Come prepared to share them with us so that we can know your loved ones better and help you celebrate the lives they lived.

### — INSIDE THIS ISSUE —

Home Meetings, New Members,  
Loving Listeners  
Birthdays and Anniversaries  
Poems & Remembrances  
Love Gifts and Love Gift Form

#### 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.

*New Members Greeted Recently*

We welcome the following new friends who have attended their first Compassionate Friends meeting recently. We are truly sorry that you have experienced the death of your child, sibling or grandchild. We sincerely hope we will be able to offer you some understanding and support. Coming to your first meeting may be the hardest step you have made since the death of your child. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not it will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting may be the time you will find the right person – or just the right words that will help you in your journey.

*Remember . . . You need not walk alone!!!*

Kathy A.  
Gregg B.  
Mary Anne B.  
Judy C.  
Christine D.  
Carole G.  
Steve G.

Mary Ann K.  
Robert & Therese L.  
Talia L.  
Wayne M.  
David & Laura M.  
Kelly T.



*Home Meetings*

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HOSTING A HOME MEETING?**

Home meetings give TCF-Pittsburgh Chapter members, particularly new ones, the opportunity to meet with a small group in a more intimate setting. Often, a monthly sharing just isn't enough, as members long to talk about and share memories of their child, grandchild, or sibling with others on a more frequent basis. We will guide you through the specifics, although it is rather simple. It is opening your home and hearts to others who are struggling to move forward in the grieving process. In the past, home meetings have been held in the eastern, western, northern, and southern regions of Pittsburgh. Meetings can be held on the day of your choosing, and they have typically been held in the evenings.

TCF-Pittsburgh Chapter's trained facilitators will be available to provide support and guidance for the home meetings.

If you are interested in hosting a home meeting or would like more information, please contact Megan Talbot (814-860-4732 or [co-leader@tcfpittsburgh.org](mailto:co-leader@tcfpittsburgh.org)). We will provide meeting information (dates,

hosts' names, address, and contact information) at our monthly meetings, where our members will be able to sign up to attend one or more meetings.

**NORTH HILLS AREA:**  
**January 14, February 18 and March 18**  
Please see details on our website if you are interested in attending.

*We ask that you contact the hosts at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to let them know that you plan to attend. If no RSVPs have been received 24 hours prior to the meeting, the host may cancel the meeting. If your plans change and you cannot attend, please notify the host family immediately. If you are uncertain whether the meeting is going to take place, please contact the host.*



**LOVING LISTENERS & REMEMBERING FRIENDS**

If waiting until the next meeting is too long and you want to talk, the following people may be contacted. They are willing to listen. They understand what you are going through and they do care. Feel free to call them when you need them.

- SIBLINGS (over 16)** .....Carlotta Harbaugh - 412-859-0303
- ALL CHILDREN**.....Gene & Rose Sprando - 724-947-3130
- STILLBORN, MISCARRIAGE, INFANT DEATH**.....Jen Geis - 412-841-1701
- LEGAL ISSUES**.....Jeff Bragdon - 412-600-4675
- FATHERS**.....John Urso - 412-847-8337
- SUICIDE** .....Sandy Economou - 724-457-9117
- DRUG OVERDOSE** ..... Mary Jane Marculaitis - 412-916-2094

**IF YOU CANNOT REACH ANY OF THESE NUMBERS, PLEASE CALL 412-835-1105**

## TCF PITTSBURGH

### Chapter Notes

- **Monthly meetings updates** – Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we are still unable to meet in person at the church. We will plan to continue with online, virtual meetings through Zoom in 2021 until restrictions on indoor gatherings are lifted and the church allows our meetings to resume. Look for emails and/or phone calls with information on upcoming meeting details and the link to join the meeting on Zoom. Please contact us if you don't receive a meeting invitation a few days before the scheduled meeting. If you haven't shared your email address with us, please contact Susie at [editor@tcfpittsburgh.org](mailto:editor@tcfpittsburgh.org).
- **"Coffee Hours"** – We are planning to have additional virtual meetings to give our members the opportunity to meet and support one another on a more frequent basis. These short, one-hour meetings will be scheduled on weekday evenings. We hope that a weekday meeting may be more convenient for some of our members who may not be able to make the Sunday monthly meetings. Check your email for invitations to these meetings throughout the year. We hope you can join us!
- **2021 monthly meeting dates** – Our meeting dates for 2021 have been scheduled. Please note: As of this writing, our meetings will continue to be virtual; also, the length of the meetings has been shortened (2:30 – 4 p.m.).
  - January 31
  - February 28
  - March 28
  - April 25
  - May 30
  - June 27
  - July 25
  - August 29 (Butterfly Release)
  - September 26
  - October 31
  - November 21
  - December 12 (Candlelight Memorial Service)

#### ***In Memoriam***

*We are very sad to report the passing of two of our TCF members and former volunteers:*

**Betty R.** passed away in September at the age of 85. Betty joined TCF after the death of her daughter. Betty was active with TCF for more than 30 years and had several roles in our chapter, including co-leader, secretary, office administrator, and group facilitator at our monthly meetings. She also led special sharing sessions on loss by suicide, and could be found at our information table, selling TCF wrist bands and butterfly pins.

**Dorothy T.** passed away in September at the age of 81. Dorothy and her husband Frank joined TCF after the death of their daughter. Dorothy and Frank volunteered for TCF by managing our library and helping out with our monthly meetings and calls to our members. In addition to their involvement with TCF, they founded the Pittsburgh chapter of Parents of Murdered Children (POMC) after their daughter's death.

***Our heartfelt condolences go out to Betty and Dorothy's family and friends.***

#### **Donations from the 2020 Butterfly Release**

Thank you to the following TCF members who decided to donate the money they sent in to purchase butterflies for our butterfly release in August, which had to be canceled due to uncertainties around the coronavirus pandemic.

Michael D.  
 Bill D.  
 Tamara F.  
 Cathy G.  
 Colleen K.  
 Mary Jane M.  
 Colleen M.  
 Bill & Kim P.  
 Rosemarie R.  
 Donna S.  
 Adrian & Marlene S.

*Your generosity is appreciated!*

**In Memory of My Rose**

It was February 24 when asthma stole  
your last breath away;

Now eight years later, I still love you  
more each day.

I wonder what you're doing and if you  
can see me now;

I continue to hope and pray that you  
will visit me somehow.

"Special" days are still so hard; they  
often feel like the first;

So, I do my best to manage day-to-day  
until we can hug again.

Please remember that until that time, I'll  
love you more each day.

Love, Mom xoxoxo

**Happy Heavenly Birthday to Our Daughter**

**Sarah Ann**

**1983 – 2018**

Birthday wishes sent to Heaven from your family below.

Sarah, we miss and love you dearly and wanted you to know.

Your Birthday's not forgotten and your memory lives on.

We celebrate the life you had even though you've gone.

If we were given just one wish, one that would come true,

We'd wish you back beside us to spend this day with you.

We will always love and miss you and often shed a tear.

Especially on your special day, year after year.

Somewhere over the rainbow is where you will be, Sweet Sarah,

Forever in our hearts.

We love you,

Mum, Dad, Douglas and your two precious sons, Joshua and  
Jacob

**In Memory of Arman**

1996 – 2020

**Love, Mom**

September 20, 2015 at 10:27 PM

Don't let the opinions of others deter you from  
doing/trying/buying something that has  
potential to bring you any form of happiness.  
It's your time/money/body and you should  
avoid any forces that draw you from new  
experiences. Your next new encounter could  
forever impact who you are, what you think,  
and how you interact with the world around  
you. One's life is a journey that he or she is  
best suited to navigate. -Arman



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:**

♡ Love Gifts ♡




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### 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 **April/May/June 2021 newsletter must be received by March 1, 2021.**

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  
**APRIL/MAY/JUNE 2021**  
ALL LOVE GIFTS, ARTICLES AND SPEAKERS  
WILL BE DUE **BY MARCH 1, 2021**

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Murrysville, PA  
15668  
Permit # 51

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If disposing of it, please shred.*



If you'd like to receive this  
newsletter via email, please  
contact [editor@tcfpittsburgh.org](mailto:editor@tcfpittsburgh.org)

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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 The Compassionate Friends, the parents and siblings credo has been combined and the above version is the one we are to use for children, siblings and grandparents.

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

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**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