



The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

SERVING OUR
COMMUNITY
FOR OVER 40 YEARS

8701 36th Ave N
New Hope, MN 55427

MEETING SCHEDULE

OFFERING HYBRID MONTHLY MEETINGS ATTEND IN-PERSON OR VIA ZOOM

We meet 7:00–8:30 pm on the third
Monday of each month. Join us:

In Person: St. Joseph Parish Community
8701 36th Ave N., New Hope, MN

Via Zoom: To Register, use the link
emailed a few days prior to each meeting.

Bereaved Siblings Hybrid Meeting

A bereaved sibling facilitates the group.
Siblings (14+) meet at the same time and
place (in-person & Zoom) as our Chapter
meeting, but break into their own group
for support & conversation.

Monday, August 18

“National Conference Highlights”

HYBRID (In-person & Zoom) MEETING

Leadership Team and Members who
attended the recent Nat'l Conference
will share tools and insights acquired.

Sunday, September 14

“Walk to Remember and Fundraiser”

IN-PERSON EVENT

Members, family, and friends are invited to
our annual Walk Fundraiser. See Page 3 for
this popular Sunday noon event. Held at a
lovely park near our meeting space.

Monday, September 15

“Opioid Loss Inspires Public Health Legacy”

HYBRID (In-person & Zoom) MEETING

Opioid overdose remains a leading cause
of accidental death in the U.S. Paul Ostrow
of the Fentanyl Free Communities Founda-
tion will educate and train members on
the Nasal Spray overdose antidote. Having
the tools to help could save a life.
See article on page 4.

Monday, October 20

“Holidays & Significant Days”

HYBRID (In-person & Zoom) MEETING

Handling grief may be a challenge during
special dates and holidays. Anticipation is
sometimes worse than the actual day. We'll
explore ideas & options that may help you
navigate these days.

We Need Not Walk Alone

The Compassionate Friends is a
self-help organization offering
friendship, understanding, and hope
to bereaved families. Anyone who
has experienced the death of
a child at any age, from any cause,
is welcome. Our meetings give
parents the opportunity to talk
about their child and feelings as
they go through the grieving
process. Our meetings are also
open to grandparents, older
siblings, and extended family. There
are no membership dues. There is
no religious affiliation.

When a child dies, at any age, the
family suffers intense pain and may
feel hopeless and isolated. **The
Mission** of The Compassionate
Friends is to provide highly personal
comfort, hope, and support to every
family experiencing the death of a
son or daughter, a brother or sister,
or a grandchild, and helps others
better assist the grieving family.

**The Secret of TCF's Success
is Simple:** As seasoned griever
reach out to the newly bereaved,
energy that has been directed
inward begins to flow outward, and
both are helped to heal.

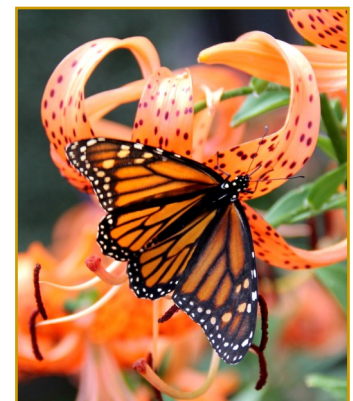
To Our New Members: Coming to
your first meeting is the hardest
thing to do. But, you have nothing
to lose, and much to gain. Try not
to judge your first meeting as to
whether or not TCF will work for
you. The second, third, or fourth
meeting might be the time you find
the right person...or just the right
words spoken that will help you in
your grief work.

**To Our Members Further Down
the 'Grief Road':** We need your
encouragement and your support.
Each meeting, we have new parents,
grandparents, and siblings. 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 and share your grief?

About Our Meetings: Please don't
stay away from a meeting
because the scheduled topic does
not interest you. At each meeting
there will be time to discuss and
share whatever is on your mind. We
welcome your participation, but it is
not required.

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TCF's Vision...

That everyone who
needs us will find us
and everyone who finds
us will be helped.

MINNEAPOLIS CHAPTER INFO

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Pat RellerLending Library
David BensonSpecial Events Coordinator
Gloria JordanSibling Loss Facilitator
Maggie BauerSteering Members At Large
Terri Lindfors, Jon & Ruth LarsonSteering Committee Meetings
Held quarterly to plan events and Chapter direction. Next meeting: OCT 10.

TCF NATIONAL OFFICE

1-877-969-0010

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.orgwww.compassionatefriends.orgwww.facebook.com/TCFUSA<https://twitter.com/TCFofUSA>

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Cathy Seehueter: (612) 991-9954

Email: seehuetercathy@yahoo.comThose who have SUFFERED
UNDERSTAND SUFFERING
and therefore

Articles printed in this newsletter reflect the author's personal views, and not necessarily the opinion of the newsletter editor or The Compassionate Friends.

RESOURCES

Chapter Locator Tool available on TCF National Website

[Locate Chapter Here](#) www.compassionatefriends.orgMinneapolis Chapter Website:
tcfmpls.org

MPLS Chapter Is On Facebook:



Join our Minneapolis Chapter's private Facebook community online:

[TCF Mpls](#)Or log onto Facebook and search:
TCF Mplswww.facebook.com/groups/TCFMplsNational Organization Website:
www.compassionatefriends.org

There are several options under "Resources" and "Find Support"

- Facebook Closed (Private) Groups
[TCF/USA National Facebook Page](#)
www.facebook.com/TCFUSA
- Online Grief-Related Webinars
- Online Support Communities
- National Magazine, *We Need Not Walk Alone*®

Growing Through Grief...Nurturing the Broken Heart

One-day Grief Conference

for families who have experienced child loss

Saturday, September 13, 2025 — 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Registration and Continental Breakfast: 8:00 am

LOCATION: Ironwood Springs Retreat Center

7291 Country Rd 6 SW, Stewartville, MN 55976

The conference is **FREE** (Includes Continental Breakfast and Lunch)For Conference Details and to Register: www.tcfrst.org*Registration is required*

Free Photo Button Pin

We will make each member a free button pin using your child, grandchild, or sibling's photo. You may email the photo to jonruthlarson@gmail.com. See important instructions listed below.

- Email a hi-res .jpg of the photo to jonruthlarson@gmail.com.
- We will size and crop the photo to fit the button area. Please note if there are any special cropping instructions. Example: "include the motorcycle, or fish, etc.; Do not include background scenery, etc."
- For best results, the photo image should fit a circle shape. We will size it to fit the needed 3½" in diameter (black dashed line as shown in layout).
- We will print the image, then assemble it on a 3-inch button (white solid line). The additional background of the photo is folded to the backside under the plastic cover.
- Because slight shifting may occur, the desired image area should be within a 2⅞" diameter (red dotted line).
- Note: Button image shown is not actual size.



Carson Thomas Jordan

Minneapolis Chapter



September 14, 2025

**Bassett Creek Park
5609 32nd Ave N, Crystal**

Noon: Check-in Begins; 12:30 pm: Walk Program

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 14** for our annual Minneapolis Chapter Walk to Remember. We walk to remember our children, siblings, and grandchildren who have died. Please invite family and friends to join us.

We will meet at beautiful **Bassett Creek Community Park in Crystal**, (same park as last year). The picnic shelter address is **5609 32nd Ave N**, between Douglas Dr N and Hwy 100.

Walk Location Directions: IMPORTANT - DO NOT use the park entrance on 32nd Ave N near the ballfield. Turn south off 32nd Ave N onto Welcome Ave., then turn right off Welcome Ave, to the parking area near the playground.

Meet at the picnic shelter near the parking lot, just down the trail. (Be aware that the pavement is uneven. Watch your step!)

Check-in begins at Noon;
the Walk Program starts at 12:30 p.m.

It's about a one-mile stroll around the pond on an asphalt trail. Participants can repeat the jaunt as many times as you wish.

This is our **Chapter's annual Fundraiser**. There is no fee to walk. We do appreciate donations to sustain the chapter. We are a recognized 501(c)(3) organization; all donations may be tax deductible. Funds received support our chapter's many activities that assist families after the death of a child, grandchild, or sibling.

Invite family and friends to join us for friendship and healing. It's heartwarming to see a family wearing matching t-shirts or ladybug wings; others brought balloons pinned to their shirts that "lifted" their shoulders. This scenic venue offers free parking, picnic shelters, portable restroom, disc golf, a memorial garden, benches along the path, a new playground area, dog park, and more.

We will carry the names of our children, grandchildren, and siblings on bibs provided by the chapter. Markers will be available to create and personalize your bib.

If you are unable to join us, please submit their name, and we will be honored to include them on a bib (email your child, grandchild, or sibling's name to tcf.mpls@gmail.com).

ONLINE DONATIONS ACCEPTED

via VENMO & PayPal apps.

Find us using: @TCFMpls



Leadership Corner

I recently attended The Compassionate Friends National Conference in the Seattle area. This was my 5th conference attended in the 18 years since my only child, Carson, died. I attended my first conference in Washington, DC in 2010, 3 1/2 years after Carson died.

My interests and needs have evolved over time. Early on, as a bereaved mom impacted by a loss due to suicide, I yearned to know, "why?" I came to realize I'll never know why, and I don't need to know why. Attending workshops about suicide loss helped me with this layer of my grief.

Years later, since the loss of my only child, I find myself in the midst of another season of grief, processing a different layer with thoughts surrounding the absence of grandchildren, my legacy, care in my older age, etc. Attending Loss of an Only Child workshops at the recent conference helped me know I'm not alone in my thoughts and concerns.

TCF National Conferences fully support newly bereaved as well as seasoned grieving parents, grandparents, and siblings, regardless of age of child, cause of loss, and circumstances.

Gloria Jordan

Carson's mom 4ever and Ken's sister
Chapter Leader and Newsletter Editor
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Literary Perspectives

I try to find new angles to write about in my quarterly book reviews. So, I thought, this quarter, to pick a book about a losing a child to suicide. The book that I have chosen is *My Unexpected Journey: After Losing My Son to Suicide* by Erin Blechman.

It is Sunday night and I am up against the deadline for writing this article. I have kept putting it off and I am feeling bad about myself. It seems that I just don't want to put in the effort. What is wrong with me? As I start looking at the book I am tearing up. Oh, that is why I have been putting off writing this article. Just right now my own grief is not at the best place to deepen into the topic of losing a child. So, I will call a friend and try to get back to it.

Well, here goes. This book is organized by time periods: the days of the first week, after the unexpected news; the first month; the first year and a half; and four years later. The primary narrator is Max's mother but I am happy that Max's father's perspective is presented at times. Another thing I liked is that there are nice illustrations throughout. We also hear about the challenges for Max's brother.

I like that this book presents an unfolding narrative into this family's grief journey. I think that it helps we readers to feel this family's unfolding feelings.

I can imagine that it can be difficult for a parent to acknowledge to others that your child was lost to suicide. I hope that having this topic in our newsletter helps that part be less difficult.

Davie Benson

Abe's Dad and Chapter Librarian
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Opioid Loss Inspires Family's Public Health Legacy

As we wrote to you in 2023, our life changed forever on May 31, 2020 when our son, Kerry, died alone in his car parked in front of his home in Minneapolis. He died from ingesting a substance in the tiniest amount – about the size of the tip of a pencil. The substance was fentanyl and it was deadly. If he hadn't been alone, or had been able to test the substance, or if someone had stopped to help him as he slumped over in the car, perhaps he would be alive today.

The battle to save others and spare other parents and families such horrific loss continues:*

- Fentanyl is the leading cause of death for ages 18-45.
- There is approximately 1 fentanyl death every 9 minutes in the US.
- Fentanyl is involved in 80% of youth drug deaths, higher than any other age group.

*Fentanyl Free Communities Foundation education and awareness brochure

With hopes of continuing communication and action on this issue so close to our lives, we have invited Paul Ostrow, Chairperson of the Fentanyl Free Communities Foundation to come to our Minneapolis Chapter September meeting to talk about how to prevent fentanyl deaths:

- to talk about the life and death consequences of this insidious threat to our community—especially our young people who are at risk to using non-prescription drugs that can be sold in the form of almost exact replicas of prescription Xanax, Percocet, Adderall, etc, where seven out of ten pills can contain a lethal amount of fentanyl;
- to hand out the Fentanyl Free Communities awareness brochure and the newsletters;
- to hand out free supplies of the Nasal Spray form of the antidote Naloxone for Fentanyl poisonings and how to use the nasal spray and how to get more supplies of the nasal spray antidote.

We're looking forward to hearing about this difficult but important issue.

Julie Bartell and Billy Binder
TCF Minneapolis, MN

Redemptive Possibilities

We have talked often at our chapter meetings about "Redemptive Possibilities." I define a Redemptive Possibility as something that a bereaved parent, grandparent or sibling does to help others that would never have been done without the loss of a child.

The family of the almost three-year-old boy who was killed by an alligator at Disney World in June 2016, started a foundation in Nebraska. The Lane Thomas Foundation was founded to give honor and light to Lane's life. The Foundation is dedicated to supporting families of children needing lifesaving organ transplants. The foundation fulfills this mission by funding nonmedical expenses borne by the families, promoting public awareness and sponsoring clinical research. Their effort has received national attention.

If we as bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings are open to "Redemptive Possibilities," they will appear to us. It may take a year or two or three, but those "Redemptive Possibilities" are out there for us to discover. They can be little, or they can be big. They are healing and keep us looking outward rather than always looking inward.

David Hendricks
TCF Northwest Houston

The Gift of Someone Who Listens

Those of us who have traveled a while
Along this path called grief
Need to stop and remember that mile,
That first mile of no relief.

It wasn't the person with answers
Who told us of ways to deal.
It wasn't the one who talked and talked
That helped us start to heal.

Think of the friends who quietly sat
And held our hands in theirs.
The ones who let us talk and talk
And hugged away our tears.

We need to always remember
That more than the words we speak,
It's the gift of someone who listens
That most of us desperately seek.

Nancy Myerholtz
TCF Waterville/Toledo Ohio

A Different Kind of Griefsm

Coping with Grief after a Substance Use Related Death



Wednesday Evenings
7:00pm - 8:30pm via Zoom
October 15th - November 19th

The turmoil before and after an addiction-related death of a loved one may have a different effect on each family member or friend.

The group coaching support differs for traditional grief support because the focus is on the trauma and stigma that often results from this kind of death. There is a specifically focused educational curriculum for each session.

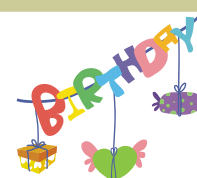
This is a no cost 6-week series hosted by Brighter Days Family Grief Center HIPAA compliant Zoom platform. All facilitators have experienced the death of a loved one from substance use disorder and have been trained through Recovering U.

To register, scan QR code or go to <https://form.jotform.com/221534390807152>



Our Children Remembered...on Their Birthdays

Loved...Missed...Forever in Our Hearts



August

CHILD		MEMBER
Jennifer Blethen	sibling	Melissa Blethen
Ron Reinert		Sharon Reinert
Nicole		Kris Anderson
Thomas Shut		Ona Rygh
David Andrew Twigg		Selma Twigg
Kristin Reller		Pat & Don Reller
Kristin Reller	sibling	Anthony & Kayla Reller
Peter Laverty	sibling	Thomas Lavry
John Benz		LuAnn Yerks & Mike Benz
Alexis Whitney		Sandie Jensen
Ben Hansen	sibling	Taylor Gotta
Ben		Karen & Gary Hansen
Hailey		Michelle Chamlin
Sam Grodnick		Tammy Grodnick
Sheryl Ann Heggem		Ron & Julia Laabs
Sheryl Ann Heggem	sibling	Sharlene Wimpfheimer
Michael James Lewis		Joanne Lewis
Archer		Kara Amorosi
Keeden	grandchild	Stacey Smith
Khari Dixon		Arineith Imani
Tommy		Sheryl Hutton
Dan Lewis		Chris & Bob Lewis
Steffanie Quick	grandchild	Jan Quick
Steffanie Quick	sibling	Matthew Quick
Steffanie		Kevin & Sue Quick
JD	sibling	Anna Hebl
Kate		Scott & Lisa Fronek
Juli Elisabeth	sibling	Melissa Myers & Michael Crees
Juli Elisabeth		Lisa & Steve Crees
Kyle		Mary Jappe
Mackenzie Ndujwe Nnantah		Korina Hackert
Melissa Roeser		Marilyn & Steve Dahlmeier
Matthew		Sue Reid & Mark Schmidt
Shay	sibling	Kira, Andrew McSherry
Shay		Benjamin McSherry
Shay		Meagan McSherry
Eric Nelson		Mary Tkadlec
Joseph Daniel Muonio		Michael & Anita Muonio
Melissa Marie Vomhof		John & Ruth Vomhof
Anthony Howe Jr.		Fahlon Tiller

September

CHILD		MEMBER
Jordan		Carlos Velazquez
Barrett Ugland		Renee Forst
Nick Harter		Brian & Sandy Harter
Tom Williams		Keri Williams
Dale DeStono		Nancy & Bob DeSteno
Anne Maclin		Jeanne Maclin
Anne Maclin		Alan Maclin
Kelsey Eberle		Roxanne & Terry Eberle
Nikolai		Veronica Vrasnenkova
David Lindgren		Janet & Jeff Bowers
David Lindgren	sibling	Tony Lindgren
Weston		Lisa Koch
Ethan		Tom Lang

September (continued)

CHILD		MEMBER
Yoeni		Roberto Falcon
Brooke	sibling	Paige LaSota
Jaden Dallas Dalton		Karren Gray
Calob		Jessica Bartram
Mark		Tim & Ann Bremer
Jesi		Pat & Sue Harding
Abigail Grace		Tom & Christina Monroe
Scott Reinert		Sharon Reinert
Sullivan	grandchild	Bev Lind
Sullivan		Cathy Dunn
Sullivan		Jamie & Tyler Peek
Ben	sibling	Annie Wallace
Rob Anderson		Sandy Cikotte-Anderson
Isaac		Renieri Banegas & Anna Kokesh
Tracy Greenwood	sibling	Tanya Broten
Tim		Rozanne & John Puhek
Keith Demry		Char Fonville
Jason McCarthy	grandchild	Ken & MaryLou Theisen

October

CHILD		MEMBER
Tyler Herman		Michael Herman
Maia	grandchild	Beth Hansen
Dani		Wendy Poulsen
Carissa Hayen		Linda Hayen
Alanna		Annamarie Hill
Jen		Karen & Gary Gross
Zofia		Josh & Zabrana Schultz
Alicia Marie Queen-Wilson		Queen Wilson
Scott		Harriet Lodermeier
Matthew Robert Demsky		Barbara Demsky
Alyssa		Rich & Dori Beattie
Caitlin Louise Higgins		Jeffrey Weihe
Calder		Peter DeMaio & Ashley Heerema
Hunter		Sandra Lawver
Levi Blaukopf		Lauren Cody Bach
Cole Linnell		Jean Thurmer
Corey	sibling	Tasha Feigh
Corey		Mary Feigh
Hunter		Sue Aguilar
Jordan		Leslie Holt
Allison	sibling	Andrew Bailey
Allison		Miriam Porter
Henri		Colisa Lemal

Birthday Month

Birthdays are recognized at our monthly meetings. During your child/sibling/grandchild's birthday month, you're invited to bring a photo or memorabilia to display on our Birthday Table. You may sign up to bring their favorite snack or treat to celebrate. If attending via Zoom, we invite you to share a photo during introductions.

Our Beloved Children...in Our Hearts Always

especially during the Remembrance Month of their death.



August

CHILD		MEMBER
David		Elayne Lipp
Rob		Mary Quade
Noah David Muonio		Michael & Anita Muonio
Natalie Perry Smead		Karen Prieto & Pete Smead
Lindsay	sibling	Ana (Kol) Nikol Peduk
Chad		Joyce Rubin
Kameron		Dawn Gurule
Keeden	grandchild	Stacey Smith
Kevin Kocur		Jan Kocur
Isaac		Renieri Banegas & Anna Kokesh
Gretchen		Susan and Dave Windschitl
Anthony Howe Jr.		Fahlon Tiller
Vince		Eric & Carrie Donarski
Christopher		Mary & Bruce Bauer
Chris	sibling	Maggie Bauer
Everett	sibling	Allie Rachko
Everett		Charla Rachko
Everett	nephew	Mary Jane Kronberg
Everett Rachko	cousin	Mollie Freese
Bryan Michael		Bonnie & Mike Maloney
Yoeni		Roberto Falcon
Sheryl Ann Heggem		Ron & Julia Laabs
Sheryl Ann Heggem	sibling	Sharlene Wimpfheimer

September

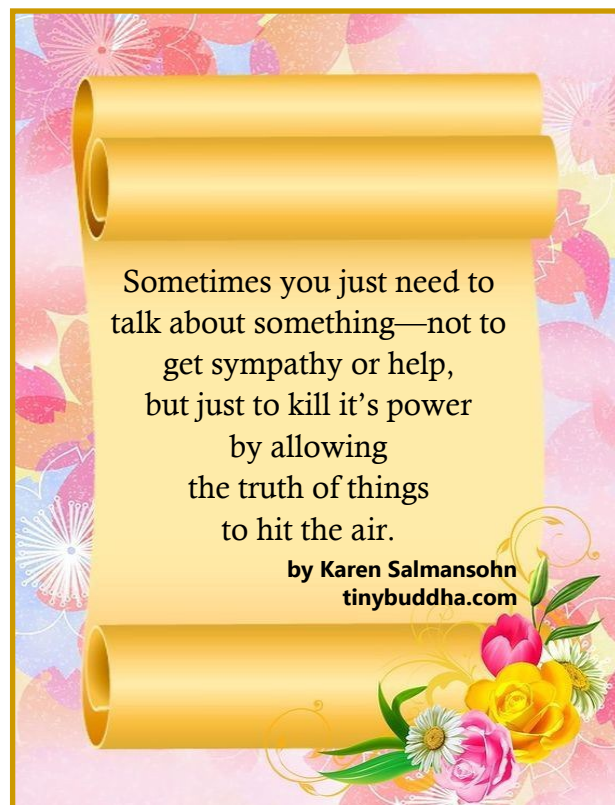
CHILD		MEMBER
Dani		Wendy Poulsen
Dylan Colbath		Lisa Colbath
Gavin		Nancy Toohey
Matthew (Matt)		Stephen & Carol Hawk
Penelope Thompson	grandchild	Brenda Thompson
Penny		Hayley Wender
Jackson		Kellie Nielson
Jeffrey		Deb Decker
Aiden		Mary Sullivan
Sam Abron-Yeager		Tarsha Davis
Hunter		Sandra Lawver
Alex		Frank Commers
Adam		Kathryn & Waters
Daniel		Audrey Nelson
John Benz		LuAnn Yerks & Mike Benz
Scott	sibling	Suzie Berzins
Scott		Cathy Drexel
Scott		Stephen Berzins
Benjamin		Todd & Debbie Huberty
Dan		Ruth & Jon Larson
Dan	sibling	Michael Larson
Henry		Helen & Chris Taylor
Aaron Ginsberg	sibling	Leonora Ginsberg
Dawn Ankney		Sharon & Gregory Maidment

October

CHILD		MEMBER
Brendan Dow		Maggie Dow
Carolyn Ann Bedford		Barbara Demsky
Kyle		Mary Jappe
Nick	sibling	Alyssa Kroll
Dale DeStono		Nancy & Bob DeSteno
Sean		Angel Peterson
Troy Perron		Gin Johnson
Christopher		Barb Teed
Jeff		Terry & Roger Nelson
Ken Pflepsen	sibling	Gloria Jordan
Kirk	sibling	Ben Folen
Kirk Folen		Susan Folen
Maia	grandchild	Beth Hansen
Aaron Carlton		Kristi Strom
Sawyer James Tate		Robert & Joy Tate
Tyler Herman		Michael Herman
Kelly Hyatt		Maureen Hyatt
Mark		Tim & Ann Bremer
Jean Claude Wishard	sibling	Danielle Wishard-Tudor
Maggie Grace	grandchild	Jean Umezu
Nikolai		Veronica Vrasnenkova

Sometimes you just need to
talk about something—not to
get sympathy or help,
but just to kill it's power
by allowing
the truth of things
to hit the air.

by Karen Salmansohn
tinybuddha.com



Why Losing A Grandchild Is So Devastating

Complicated grief is just that, complicated.

This is a story I hoped I never had to share. We lost our baby granddaughter. Even though we knew she might not make it to her birth, it didn't make it easier.

This grief would be complicated. So I want to share why losing a grandchild is so devastating. And maybe it will help someone else who's about to go through it.

Another girl... We were ecstatic. Ruthie would have a sister! Being a grandma is one of my joys in life. Knowing the family was growing, well you can imagine how excited I was. "Can you watch the kids? I have a doctor's appointment," my daughter-in-law said. "Of course," I responded. I looked for each and every opportunity to be with those little people who call me 'Grandma.'"

And so I played and laughed at their antics. They knew I would and counted on it. Our time together would be over soon. I heard their mom come in the back door. I could hardly wait for her update. But one look at her face told me it was not a routine check-up. I heard words I had never heard before, "Trisomy 18, an incompatibility with life." My stomach tied in knots. And those knots stayed for the rest of the pregnancy. A heavy cloud hung in our world.

Olivia was born in January. I remember the call, "Mom, would you bring the kids to see their sister." But I didn't ask any questions. I just waited. We lived our lives thankful for this new addition to the family, uncertain how long we would be able to enjoy life with her.

From the moment she was born, Livie defied whatever was written about Trisomy 18 babies. First of all, she did live to her birth. And then weeks afterwards. And those weeks turned into months and then it was time for a milestone, her first birthday! I'm not going to say that the first year flew by. There were many scares. Many times that we thought we would be saying goodbye. But she was still here.

In February, she got sick. We shared the prayer request and hundreds of people stormed heaven. And she got well. But then when she got sick again, she didn't have the strength to fight it.

The call... I picked up the phone to hear, "Mom, I have some very sad news to tell you..." As much as I wanted my son, Nathan to stop talking he didn't. Livie was gone. I just stood there frozen.

This wasn't the first baby funeral I would go to, but this one was different. This wasn't my brother's baby who was only two weeks old when he died of crib death. Nor was Jeannie's Erin Lynn, who survived 5 major surgeries and then died at 8 months. Both of those funerals were so hard as I hurt for those moms and dads.

This was my granddaughter. The one I had prayed for before she made her entrance. The one I kept praying for. This was Livie.

Grief was everywhere... When it's a grandchild, it's not just you grieving for the loss, but it's compounded because you also feel for the mom, for the dad, and for the siblings. All those broken hearts. I heard things my grandchildren said. I saw the pain in their eyes. I told God, "My son is hurting, do you know

how I feel?" But I knew he did know. He saw his own Son suffer. I hurt deeply. When a child dies, it's not just their life you grieve, but all the hopes and dreams you had for that precious little one.

They say a parent should never have to bury their child, may I just add, the same is true for a grandparent.

The hope we had ever since we knew she was coming, had been replaced by a painful awareness of what lie ahead. We were thankful for every moment spent with Livie, but our sadness tried to drown out our gratitude.

Our beautiful gift... Livie taught all of us the importance of staying in the moment. I watched as Nathan and Heather displayed it. They took care of their three other children, tried desperately to get rest, and they cared for Livie. And not only did they love Livie, they shared her with everyone. Facebook posts would be written about her progress. They shared every little thing she did, so others could praise God. This little girl was so loved. When pictures were posted, people responded with comments. Precious videos of Livie head-dancing, Livie laughing, or the infamous making raspberry sounds with Daddy. And just as everyone felt joy at her presence, there was a void when she slipped into heaven.

Music... Nathan made this beautiful video of his daughter and shared it with the world. He also chronicled his journey, writing his first book, *So am I*, talking about how we sometimes give in to the fears we face. He created new music as well. Then a second album. One that shared their grieving following Livie's death. The side without Livie. The struggles, the sadness, the anger. Why would he share that? Because this world is full of people who will face the same thing. Maybe the sentence won't be Trisomy 18, instead, maybe it will be cancer or some other disease. The particulars don't matter, the pain is the same.

Dreams are crushed but life tries to resume. But it's never the same. When a grandchild dies it is so devastating. You feel helpless. The thing they most want, you can't give. And you can't take their pain away. They have to go through it.

Dance Again... When you lose a loved one, inside you just want to shrivel up and disappear. The desire is so strong. Some people put their feelings into words. It's what my son did. "Tell the music not to play," he sang. And I'm sure he meant it with all his broken heart. So like Hemingway, he bled his words out and they became a second book and album.

Yes, losing a grandchild is devastating. Losing a child, impossible.

By Anne Peterson,
who has had many losses in her life
and is author of 14 books.

Editor's Note: After I read this article, it occurred to me the author is the mother of author and singer-songwriter Nathan Peterson. Nathan, bereaved father to Olivia, performed at past TCF National Conferences and was a Keynote Speaker. Monica in Dallas, and Terri and I in Denver, heard him speak, play guitar and sing. We have a book he authored in our Lending Library.



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c/o St. Joseph Parish
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