



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Chapter email: compassionate.friends.tucson@gmail.com

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WALKING THIS VALLEY- Tucson Chapter Vol. 48 No.1 January-February 2026

Welcome!

All bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings are welcome at our support group meetings. Here you will find comfort, caring people, and most of all-HOPE. Coming to the first meeting is hard, but you have nothing to lose and much to gain. For many it is the first real step toward healing. Although it may seem overwhelming, we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable. The hope of The Compassionate Friends is that those who need us would find us and that those that find us would be helped. TCF also provides information to help members be supportive to each other. We are not professional counselors. We are bereaved families who want to help each other.

We're sorry for the reason you're here, but we're glad you've found us-Tucson TCF

Tucson Chapter Meetings: Christ Church United Methodist 655 N. Craycroft

Second and Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9pm

January 14, 28

February 11, 25

March 11, 25



Marcia's Tree Analogy

Posted on September 30th, 2025

TCF National Website by Marcia Ashlock

I love trees. I always have. I always wanted to live in a house surrounded by lots of large, mature, beautiful trees. When we moved to our beautiful river property, my husband's favorite feature was the river, but mine was all the gorgeous trees. I loved it! Now just because I love trees, don't think I am a tree expert – I couldn't tell you the difference between a maple tree and an elm tree but I just know I love trees.

One of our trees, a huge, strong tree by the river, was one of my favorites. I loved it so much that my husband attached a beautiful wooden swing to it so we could sit under its beautiful branches and swing while looking out over the river. Sadly, during one severe thunderstorm, lightning struck that tree, severing one of its biggest, strongest limbs. The limb supporting our swing. The next day, looking at all the damage from the storm, I saw what had happened to this beautiful tree. I felt sick looking at the horrible damage done to this tree. Irrevocable damage. The broken limb on the ground just lay there, never to grace the tree again. The stump of the branch still held the swing but was charred and it was clear that the tree suffered huge damage and would likely die due to the extent of the damage. Knowing I was upset, my husband got some tie down straps he kept in his truck, climbed up a ladder to reach the broken off, charred branch and made a tourniquet type wrap around the branch, just before where the damage started.

We didn't know if it would work. We didn't know if that gaping wound in the tree could be repaired. Could come together again after such horrible damage. We waited and watched. For quite a while, we didn't see any improvement, any signs that the hard work he put in to repair it was doing any good. I began to think this was it for the tree. That the damage had been too extensive. Then one day, we noted something amazing – new life was growing out of the charred, damaged stump. A tiny, green branch was sprouting! It wasn't very strong and it looked like it was barely hanging on, but it was there! Finally, a sign of life again! As time passed, more and more branches and leaves started sprouting off that tree that seemed to be too damaged to make it. The leaves on the surrounding branches, that had started to wither, got some of their color back! That thick branch was still able to support the swing and we once again were able to enjoy its strength and gift of shade and comfort!

Now that tree, it doesn't look the same. The tree is not as beautiful as it once was. Maybe the tree feels sad that it no longer looks the same. It doesn't look like all the other trees around it that have all their limbs intact. But maybe, just maybe that tree knows that it survived what could have/should have killed it and guess what? It made it. It won't be the same. Won't look the same. Has scars on it that show the trauma the storm caused. But do you know what? It is still standing. It hasn't fallen into the river. It now gives shade again. It is a source of strength again to hold the swing. It is different than it was I bet it wishes it hadn't had the experience it had. But, that tree, that tree made it. It survived.

When we have gatherings at our river, people stand under its shade and feel relief from the hot sun because of it. Bad days have improved when its strong branches allow me to swing in peace from it. It once again is a source of comfort.

Yesterday, as I was walking on our property, deeply mourning the loss of my daughter, feeling more hopeless, exhausted and heartsick as I had ever felt in my life, I stood under that very tree. I looked up at it and saw the awful scar from what it endured. This may sound silly, but that tree, that tree gave me hope.

My life feels like that tree. A huge storm just wrecked me. A searing pain like lightening tore through me, causing irrevocable damage. At times, I don't know how I will stay standing. Just the thought of normal functioning seems way too much. My life, it will never look the same. I may never look the same. I will never be the same. The me from before that horrible phone call on September 2, 2024 to the me now feels completely different. And I hate that. But, looking up at that tree that day, I felt the tiniest spark of hope. I have hope that this deep severing in my own life will be bound by a wrap that can close this gaping wound in my life. Through the comfort of my dear family and friends, through the wise council of my grief therapist, through the acts of love through meals, groceries and flowers, through songs of promise and hope, through my faith, all these things, they wrap my heart, my soul, my broken heart. It aids in the oh so slow healing of the deep gap in my life, in my heart. I mourn that I will never be the same but find hope that a new me will emerge. I will one day be strong enough to support new life: new hopes, new dreams. I have hope that one day I can be a strength to others in grief, in pain. That they can rest under my strength when they have none of their own.

My life certainly does not look like how I pictured it. Definitely not how I wanted it to look. I could drive myself crazy in thinking about how this is not how I planned it, how unfair it is, how much the unfairness of this infuriates me...or, I can just sit with this grief. Allow myself time to both grieve and start to heal. Let the binds wrapped around me help me. Allow others to help me – even though receiving gracious gifts from others is oh so hard. Allow myself the time. Allow myself the grace I give others. Practice acts of self love. And wait. Know that my roots are deep and that I can survive this. I may emerge different than I was but I will still emerge. This is what I learned from my tree.

January Birthdays

JACK ATKINSON
TIMOTHY BYMP
KAREN FORD
GARY DURRENBERGER
RYKEN EVERETT
ROLAND JAMES
KYLAH RAE MARTINEZ
AARON MILLER
MICHAEL JOHN PADILLA
DAVID RADTKE
MICHEAL P SHEATS
ANTHONY THOMASON
RUDY URIAS JR.
LINDSAY WAKEFIELD
JOVAN ANTONIO ESCARCEGA
NICHOLAS A. BUONAVOLONTA
JOSEPH (JAY) KAPLINSKI
JAMESON GILES PERSONIUS

ROBERT BREMOND
SHANTI CARLISI
ZAC CLARK
KATIE EDMONDS
EDNA HERRERA
MEGHAN JONES
MIA MATHESON
PENELOPE OSWALT
KYLE PETTEYS
GREGORY RAMIREZ JR.
NICHOLAS SIMS
EMILY TRENT
RAMES VALENZUELA
PHILIP WORKMAN

KETZIA AMAIRANY FLORES
ANDREW INGARGIOLA
CHADWICK THOMAS KENYON
ANGEL PAZ GARCIA

ALEX GRADIAS
LARRY CASTAÑEDA
COLLEEN CONTER
KATHRYN EIDE
TIMOTHY HESKIN
SWAIN TAYLOR KOENIG
SEBASTIAN MEYER
DONN OWENS
CHRISTOPHER PULLEN
BECKA ROSENWALD
ERIC TAYLOR
ROBERT ERIC TURNER
MARIO VERDUGO JR
CHRISTIAN KNOTT

January Remembrance Days

DANIELLE BARNETT
PHILLIP BECKER
MICAELA ELINAH BENITEZ
JAKE BOUDREAU
ERICA LYN BOWDEN
CLYDE BURKEY
JOHN JOSEPH CEPIN IV
STEFAN ENRIQUEZ
LAURA GORMAN
SEAN HOLDEN
KENNETH LUIKART
DAMION MATTHEWS
MARIELLE MENTZER
TRACY ANN POLLINS
MICHELLE RENEE QUIHUIS
LINDA STUBBINS
JESUS TARAZON-ROSAS
EDWARD SAMUEL WEISS
CONNIE CHRISTINE WILSON
GABRIEL FIGUEROA
ANGEL PAZ GARCIA

GEORGIA COLEHOUR
ANDREW GAINES
BRIAN JOEL HARPER
TYGE IRSKENS II
STEPHEN MAHAFFEY
DANIEL J. McCLAIN
JARED PATRICK
LUKE RUTHERFORD
SHERYL SCHUBERT
OLANDO TRUJILLO
ANTHONY THOMASON
ANTHONY JOEL WELLS
MATEO GONZALES
CESAR TIZOK GONZALEZ
NICHOLAS A. BUONAVOLONTA

LUKE DAINS
MICAYLA JASMINE FULLER
EDNA HERRERA
AMY KRUPPENBACHER
MIA MATHESON
ALEX ANDRU MENDOZA
JASON PHANCO
JANESSA JACLYN SMITH
CLINT SMITH
IAN CHRISTOPHER SMITH
MARCOS RENE TORRES
CHRISTOPHER
ANDREW THOMAS REPP
ZEKE ZAVELA
JOSHUA GRABENBAUER



OTHER TUCSON IN PERSON AND ONLINE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

- *Information & Referral Services: <http://www.211arizona.org/>
- *Homicide Survivors, Inc.: 520-740-5729
- *FOOTPRINTS-Pregnancy and Infant loss: 520-873-6590
- *Tu Nidito/Children to Children: 520-322-9155
- *Alive Alone <http://www.alivealone.org/> -for parent(s) who have lost their only child
- *Survivors of Suicide..... 520-989-0467
- *www.empactsos.org (suicide loss support group)
- *Rachel's Gift (pregnancy and infant loss-national group) www.rachelsgift.org
- *Miss Foundation <http://www.missfoundation.org/>
- *babysteps.com
- *griefwatch.com (books and products)
- *Pomc.com (families of murder victims)
- *webhealing.com
- * thegriefftoolbox.com
- *whatsyourgrief.com
- *save.org (suicide awareness)
- *taps.org (military death)

CRISIS HOTLINE INFORMATION

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255
Suicide Hotline	1-800-Suicide
Depression & Crisis Hotline	1-800-784-2433
The National Institute for Trauma & Loss in Children (TLC)	1-877-306-5256
Families Anonymous (Addiction/Recovery)	1-800-736-9805
Al-Anon Family Groups (Addiction/Recovery)	1-888-425-2666
Post Partum Depression	1-800-944-4773



The 2025 Jim Click Millions for Tucson Raffle

The Jim Click Millions for Tucson Raffle 2025 edition is now over

Congratulations to all the winners and charities!

You can see the names of the winners on the Millions for Tucson homepage. We did not sell any winning tickets in 2025. We are due!

Tucson Chapter Steering Committee:

Leader/Facebook: Kirsten Bice Co-Leader: Sharon Farrell

Treasurer: Nancy Richards

Editor: Diane Allison Contributing Editors: All members- contributions wanted!

Outreach/ Correspondence: Kirsten Bice, Nancy Richards, Kenny Allison

Website: Julie Shulick New Attendee Coordinator: Cat Morrow

Library: Debbie Russell

Regional Coordinator: Denise (Dean) Amore

Remembrance Cards To receive remembrance cards for your loved ones birthday month and the death anniversary month, sign-up with your complete information, for the memorial book (<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/find-support/to-the-newly-bereaved/>).

The Compassionate Friends National:

Online Support information is available on the National Compassionate Friends Website at www.compassionatefriends.org. (NationalOffice@compassionatefriends.org)

The Compassionate Friends offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions.

Facebook Groups: The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of private Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator. Please click on the link next to the group you wish to join and answer the screening questions so they can confirm your request.

Name Badges: If you would like a name badge to wear on a lanyard at meetings please send your name, your child’s, grandchild’s, or sibling’s name, and a photo of your loved one to our email at compassionate.friends.tucson@gmail.com

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, OH



THE BONDS OF SHARED GRIEF

*Posted on October 9th, 2025 by Shari O'Loughlin
TCF National Website*

Divisiveness and intolerance for others' views seem prevalent all around us today. We see it in our political beliefs, social justice concerns, and health environment. It is apparent within families, workplaces, and organizations. When we are grieving the painful death of a child, grandchild, or sibling, this divisiveness creates walls that can make our sorrow even deeper. It's difficult enough when we're grieving to feel connected to the people around us, and these dividing walls can further isolate us.

The Compassionate Friends credo begins with these words:

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.

Uniting people who share this deep grief was the premise that started The Compassionate Friends. The death of our brother, sister, child, or grandchild permeates all aspects of our being. It's something that can't easily be explained to those who have not experienced it, while those who have, possess a deep and compassionate understanding that requires little explanation. The bonds within our TCF community can bridge these chasms we see around us. Rather than being further isolated in our grief, we can feel surrounded by understanding, community, and shared hope that can be lifesaving during this time.

While none of us would choose to be a part of this community given the reason that brought us, we are connected at a deeply meaningful level. It's hard to see someone across the table with a similar loss and stay in a place of intolerance and anger. When we remember what binds us as a group and honor our shared losses, we focus on supportive and comforting connectedness. When we reach for the love in our hearts that's bolstered by our shared sorrow, we can model a greater energy that's needed in our world. Our child, grandchild, or sibling who died and brought us to TCF is honored each time we choose this path of connection through our differences rather than more division because of them.

February Birthdays

JASON BAKE
DAVID BAKER
WESTON FOARD
BRIAN FRAZIN
JOSHUA BEDELL
LUKE DAINS
KEVIN GEIS
DANIEL LEE GEIS
JOSHUA GIBSON
CHANCE MORGAN ALLISON
LAUREN AUFDENKAMP
ISAIAH BATES-SCOTT
NATHAN ANDREW BRALY
JEREMY BRIGHT
CHRISTOPHER SCOTT CURTIS
AISLYNN TIANA DAVIS
JENNIFER DUTTON
ROGER PAUL EAGLE
MATTHIAS EDWIN ENLOW
D. FRANCES ENRIQUEZ
SAHARA FAHMY
PETER JAMES "PJ" FARRELL
RAUL (BUDDY) GARCIA
CHARLES A. (CJ) GRAHAM
SHAY EMMA HAMMER
BRIAN JOEL HARPER
KYLE HENSON
CHRISTOPHER J.R. HESSE
SEAN ALEXANDER KINCAID
PETER KJOLSRUD
ERIC SETH KOVITZ
JOSE EDY LEYVA
PAIGE LOVE
DANIEL LOWE
AISLYNN TIANA MAGUIRE
BRIDGET MEMBRILA
ROLANDO MONGE
JOSHUA MOSS
ALYSSA GUNN MULDONADO
THOMAS WILLIAM NEAL
MICHELLE VICTORIA PADILLA
NICHOLAS PUTNAM
CASSIE RAIO
AZAR IAN RUST
NICHOLAS ANDREW SAN ANGELO
REBECCA SIEGEL
DAREK SLAYTON
IAN CHRISTOPHER SMITH
KATELYN NICOLE STANES
ANTONIO TIRADO
JAMES TURNER
HOLLY VICKERS
GABRIEL NATHANIEL AGUILAR
RICHARD HISLOP



ROBBIE MEINDL
ABEL RUSSELL

February Remembrance Days

BILL ANDERSON
DAVID BAKER
NICK BARNETT
TAMARA DAWN BASS
PHILIP BIGGERS
JADEN ELIJAH BLUE
KELLI BONN
CALEB CANDLER
CARM-IDRELLE CASSEUS
JOHN PATRICK CLINE
JENNY CRIM
KATIE DECKER
ALAN DOYLE
TROY EADLER
ELISA GASTELLUM
DONALD GREENE
RAAD HALABY
CINDY HARTRANFT
JAY JOHNSON
GREGGORY RYAN KAISER
REBECCA KATZ
CHARLES JOSEPH KEEN
CHRISTIAN LAWSON
ZEMIRA BAYLA LENC
ANGEL LEON
KYLAH RAE MARTINEZ
BRIDGET MCCABE
DALE MELLBERG
PAUL METZGER
SHAWN NOBLE
NATHAN NOWECKI-HUBBLE
TIMOTHY O'DONNELL
PENELOPE NOELLE PADILLIAS
AVA PASSANNANTI
CHRISTOPHER PULLEN
SHAWN DOUGLAS RAMON II
PAUL ROBOLD
BENJAMIN ROHEN-TRAPP
AZAR IAN RUST
DANIEL SCHNEIDER
DAREK SLAYTON
JARED SMITH
EMILY RENEE SORKIN
KATELYN NICOLE STANES
JULIO C. VERGARA
KENNETH WALTER
JA-MUS WHITFIELD
ORION WORLEY
NOAH ZACARIAS
RANDY ZIMMERMAN

Year End Events: October and December Candle Lightings



Holiday Get Together



For the New Year

Where there is pain,
Let there be softening
Where there is bitterness,
Let there be acceptance
Where there is silence,
Let there be communication

Where there is loneliness,
Let there be friendships
Where there is despair,
Let there be hope.

Ruth Eiseman TCF Louisville, KY

Bereaved Parents

Different ages
Different stages
Different issues
Same pain
Daily strain
Occasional tissues
Our children have died
Often is all we know

A fact we fear to hide
Despite our ever-present woe
We live with pride
Though broken-hearted
To love, remember, and grow

Victor Montemurro
TCF Medford, NY

Valentine Message

I send this message to my child
Who no longer walks this plane,
A message filled with love
Yet also filled with pain.
My heart continues to skip a beat
When I ponder your early death
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.
Valentine's Day is for those who love
And for those who receive love, too
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.
I'm thinking of you this day, my child,
With a sadness that is unspoken
As I mark another Valentine's Day
With a heart that is forever broken.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF Katy, TX In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen





**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Tucson, AZ
Permit No. 2296

A National self-help, non-profit organization for families who have experienced the death of a child

THE TUCSON CHAPTER
P.O. 30733
Tucson, AZ 85751-0733

Return Service Requested

The Unfinished Path

When we were young, under your wing I was kept.
As I grew older, on your shoulder I wept.
With a problem I could come to you, day or night.
Just knowing your answers would always be right.
You joined the Marines and "Semper Fidelis" you barked.
I could see right then my path was marked.
It was a path to perfection or so I thought.
To be like you is what I sought.
Since your prints have ended, I don't know where to go.
I've asked Mom and Dad, but they don't quite know.
So I ask your advice just one more time.
Because your prints have ended,
The rest must be mine.

Tim Maloney, USMC
TCF Hingham, MA
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January-February 2026