



The Compassionate Friends

Central Indiana Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Central Indiana Chapter Newsletter **November 2025**

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a non-profit, self-help organization that provides comfort, hope, and support for bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. We cordially invite you to attend our meetings.

Southside Meeting is the 1st

Wed. of each month @ 6:30 pm

New Hope Church

5307 W. Fairview Road

Greenwood, IN

Facilitator: Angie Groover
angie.groover@tcfcentralindiana.org
(317) 777 4258

Upcoming Meetings:

Nov. 5th & Dec. 3rd

Northside Meeting is the 3rd

Tues. of each month @ 6:30 pm

Epworth United Methodist

6450 Allisonville Road

Indianapolis, IN

Facilitator: Melanie Stewart
melanie.stewart@tcfcentralindiana.org

Upcoming Meetings:

Nov. 18th & Dec. 16th

CENTRAL INDIANA TCF CHAPTER

Chapter Leader: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Treasurer: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Webmaster: Larry Gardner

larry.gardner@tcfcentralindiana.org

Secretary: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org



ANNUAL WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

Please join us on Sunday, December 14, 2025, for The Compassionate Friends 28th Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony.

If you have not submitted your loved one's photo for the slideshow presentation, please email it to: tcfindy@sbcglobal.net by **November 15, 2025**

Please include the following information with photo: name, birthdate and angel date. Photos and information should be submitted as soon as possible to allow an ample amount of time to update the slideshow presentation.

If your loved one's photo was in the 2024 Slideshow Presentation you do not need to resubmit a photo.



New Hope Church
5307 W. Fairview Road
Greenwood, Indiana 46142

Sunday, December 14th
Time: 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Program Leaders:

April Leo, Central Indiana Chapter Leader
Angie Groover, Melanie Stewart & Kelli Clarke Support Group Facilitators
Larry Gardner, Webmaster

Fellowship Hour:

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Make an ornament for the holidays in memory of your loved one.
Please bring your favorite finger food for the refreshment pitch-in.
Drinks provided by TCF of Central Indiana.

Candle Lighting Ceremony:

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Chapter Leader & Support Group Facilitators
Readings, Slideshow Presentation, Music & Reading of Children's names.

Photos:

Every family is welcome to bring a photo as well to place on the remembrance table.

Navigating Thanksgiving after child loss requires self-compassion and a willingness to adapt traditions to honor your child while acknowledging your grief. Key strategies include creating space for remembrance by including a place setting or favorite dish, allowing for new or modified traditions, and openly communicating your needs to family and friends. It is also important to acknowledge and permit all your feelings—whether they are anger, sadness, or a mix of joy and sorrow and focus on small moments of comfort or gratitude.



Before the Holiday

- **Communicate your needs:** Talk to your family or host in advance about what you need. You might want to include a place setting, have a special toast, or be able to leave if needed.
- **Create a backup plan:** Have a plan for a "safe space" or a signal with a partner if you need to step away from the gathering. Knowing you have an exit strategy can provide a sense of control.
- **Lower expectations:** Grief is exhausting. Understand that this year will be different and allow yourself to scale back on traditions or activities. A simpler celebration is a valid choice.

During the Celebration

- **Honor your child's memory:**
 - Set an extra place at the table.
 - Cook their favorite dish or have a special toast in their honor.
 - Light a candle or place a photo on the table.
 - Include their name when sharing what you're grateful for.
- **Share stories and memories:** Encourage family members to share their favorite stories or memories of your child. This can be a way to keep their memory alive and can sometimes lead to laughter.

- **Be present:** Focus on small, quiet moments of peace or comfort, like a warm blanket or a kind word, as well as the bigger moments of gratitude.

Acknowledge your feelings

- **Give yourself permission:** It is okay to feel whatever you are feeling. Acknowledge your emotions without judgment. It is normal to feel sad, angry, or a mix of emotions, even on a holiday focused on gratitude.
- **Be gentle with yourself:** Adjusting to life after loss is a process. Be kind to yourself and know that your feelings are valid.
- **It's okay to change traditions:** If old traditions feel too painful, it is perfectly acceptable to create new ones or skip them entirely. This day is about what feels right and manageable for you and your family.

Seek Support

- **Lean on your support system:** Spend time with people who are comforting and supportive.
- **Communicate openly:** Tell others what you need. People who care about you are often desperate to help but may not know how unless you tell them.
- **Connect with other bereaved parents:** Family and friends may not fully understand your unique pain. Finding a support group with others who have experienced child loss can provide immense comfort and reduce isolation.
- **Seek professional help:** If you're struggling significantly, consider grief counseling or therapy, as professional guidance can provide valuable coping strategies.

Start each day (whenever possible) with a few minutes of alone time. Let those moments be the buffer between you and the day ahead. Don't allow your mind to wander to your "to do" list. Sit. Sip the hot beverage of your choice and let silence soothe your soul.

Don't overschedule your days (or nights!). Exercise the option of saying, "no" to things that are not important or necessary. Just because you have done it every other year doesn't obligate you to do it this year. Exhaustion always magnifies despair.

Try to balance busy days with not so busy days. The surest path to meltdown is traveling in the fast lane.

Let other people take on responsibilities-especially if they offer- and even if they don't. Asking for help when you need it is a sign of maturity, not a sign of weakness.

Keep a pad and pen on your nightstand and jot down any random thoughts that you don't want to forget before bedtime. There is no sense worrying about something you can't address until morning and writing it down means you won't forget it.


Make use of online everything. Have gifts sent directly to recipients. Order groceries for pick up. There are many ways to make life less hectic and more enjoyable. If you don't know what's available in your area, ask friends and family.

Plan for at least one recovery day for every large gathering/party/meal you have to attend. Some of us need two.

Don't sweat the small stuff. If you are used to having matching everything, perfect centerpieces and gourmet meals it may be hard to lower your standards. But if there is one thing I have learned since Dominic ran ahead to heaven, it's that the companionship of those we love trumps anything else. People rarely remember how you set your table but they will remember who sat around your table.

And if your heart is too tender to do anything but hold on and hope this month passes quickly, then do that. You don't have to live up to anyone else's expectations. Sometimes that's the best we can do and that is OK.

Grief requires so. much. energy.

A still life photograph with a warm, autumnal theme. In the foreground, two pumpkins are visible: a large one with a long stem and a smaller one next to it. To the right, a lit candle in a dark, rustic holder casts a warm glow. On the left, a white ceramic pitcher is partially visible. The background is dark and out of focus, with a lamp's shade visible at the top. The overall mood is cozy and intimate.

You're with me today,
and no matter how I choose
or do not choose to celebrate
Your love will always remain.
Our love will always remain
Even if holidays will never
look the same
The love will always remain.

-Liz Newman



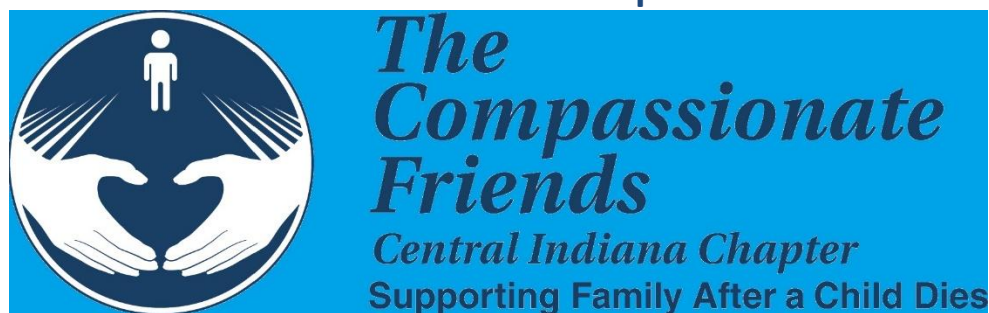
<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Shauna Synesael	Nov 04	Mar 19
Matt Price	Nov 06	Apr 15
Walter Griffin	Nov 08	Nov 25
Harrison Conner Strader Wood	Nov 08	Apr 05
Tyler Rugg	Nov 09	Jul 24
Brady	Nov 10	Dec 20
Donovan Isaiah Burdine	Nov 13	Jan 25
Christopher Lamberg	Nov 13	Feb 22
Stephanie Michelle Toof	Nov 13	Jul 09
Austin Robinson	Nov 14	Sep 26
Lindsay Marie Johnson	Nov 17	Jun 09
Haven Mills	Nov 17	Nov 17
Bwembya Longwe	Nov 21	Jul 17
Kadentz Mills	Nov 23	Nov 23
Maurice Martinez	Nov 24	Apr 29
Jacob Westman	Nov 26	Oct 28
Zachery Groover	Nov 26	Sep 28
Sarah Kish	Nov 28	Feb 16
Xavier McDonald	Nov 30	Nov 13

<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Kyle Kania	Sep 10	Nov 01
Andres Ichiro Garcia Hoshiko	Mar 25	Nov 01
Tyler Cundiff	Jan 14	Nov 04
Shelby Wimmenauer	Mar 03	Nov 04
Jackie Quandt	Jun 09	Nov 05
Jessica Humpf	Sep 23	Nov 08
Kelsey Devine	Mar 19	Nov 09
Willie Kalin	Oct 31	Nov 11
Mandy (Russell) Rode	Feb 21	Nov 11



<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Roxanne Young	Jul 07	Nov 12
Xavier McDonald	Nov 30	Nov 13
Kaitlyn Isbell	Apr 05	Nov 14
Ryan W Fry	Aug 14	Nov 15
Joshua Wright	Apr 08	Nov 15
Alex Dunn	Aug 11	Nov 16
Kendall Scout Wood	Sep 25	Nov 16
Haven Mills	Nov 17	Nov 17
Tanner Peckenpaugh	Mar 22	Nov 17
McKayla Myers	Dec 30	Nov 18
Luke Faul	Jun 01	Nov 19
Lora Pfiffner	Oct 10	Nov 21
Kevin Yanavich	Dec 04	Nov 21
David Stewart	Dec 22	Nov 21
Kadentz Mills	Nov 23	Nov 23
Walter Griffin	Nov 08	Nov 25
Ashley Marie May	Jul 18	Nov 26
Linsey Parley	Mar 08	Nov 26
Linsey Parsley	Jun 27	Nov 26
Robert Parsley	Mar 19	Nov 26
Alex Dagley	Jan 15	Nov 27
Robert Oswalt	May 28	Nov 27
Karlee Mason	Mar 14	Nov 28
Paul Gray (P.G.)	Jan 23	Nov 29
Aaron Miller	Mar 15	Nov 29
Corey Roberts	Feb 12	Nov 30

Central Indiana Chapter



The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are 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 grief so fresh and so intensely painful that we 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 the gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for our children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that 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.

We welcome submissions for the newsletter from any of our members. If you have a poem or some other writing that has helped you, or just some helpful insights of your own, submit them to april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org. Please be sure to include the author's name, whether it's someone else or yourself.

Love gifts are much appreciated.
You can mail them to our
Treasurer, April Leo
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Indianapolis, IN 46214
(317) 681 4292
april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

TCF National Headquarters – P.O. Box 3696,
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