

**The Compassionate Friends
28th Annual Worldwide
Candle Lighting
December 8, 2024**

Welcome

Creeds

Lighting of the Five Candles

Photos of Our Children

Ceremony of Candles

“Precious Child”

Closing

Please join us in the Fellowship Room after the program to visit with old and new friends, share memories of your loved one, and enjoy a treat and a cup of hot cocoa or cider.

We are sorry for the loss that brings you to our chapter of The Compassionate Friends but are so glad that you have found us. Please join us for our regular monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month (except December) at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 3801 E. 26th St., Sioux Falls, SD. Meetings begin at 7:15 PM. If you would like more information or would like to sign up for our monthly newsletter, please contact us at:

contact@compassionatesf.org

To have your child included in next year's Candle Lighting Ceremony slideshow on December 14, 2025, please send us a photo of your child along with his or her name.

Email to: kristin@compassionatesf.org

(Please use .jpg format with “2025 Slideshow” as the subject.)

In Our Hearts Forever

With a donation of \$10 or more, your child's name will be included in our special

Valentine's Day Edition Newsletter

To be included, mail your child's name and donation to:

Tami Meeker (TCF Treasurer)

48424 Beaver Valley Road

Valley Springs, SD 57068

Must be postmarked by **01-05-2025**



Grandparents' Remembrance

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

Siblings Walking Together

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters.

Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us. When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.

Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.



The Compassionate Friends Credo

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 all 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.

We Need Not Walk Alone. We Are The Compassionate

About Christmas

For those who think that Christmas and Chanukah are just nice days to give and get presents, bereaved parents have another message. Mixed with the joy is the knowledge of sadness. With the hope of birth comes the threat of death. We should not try to cover up our sadness in front of people, for we have a lesson to teach them.

But the holidays have a lesson for us, too. Yes there is death. Yes, there is a great bitterness in life. There is darkness. But there is hope. There is birth. There is light.

In a society which works so hard to deny death, perhaps only bereaved parents and a few others can truly understand the depths of these holidays.

*Dennis Klass
TCF St. Louis, MO*



***The
Compassionate
Friends***
Sioux Falls Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

www.compassionatefriends.org

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The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candlelighting



"... that their light may always shine"