



Mother's Day and Father's Day

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As a child I think I may have looked forward to Mother's Day as much as my mom did, because I knew the day would include a nice lunch, gift-giving, and family fun. My twin sister Rachael and I are the youngest of six kids, so Mother's Day and Father's Day were always big celebrations at our house. The older kids spent time thoughtfully writing our parents personal notes of gratitude and affection while Rachael and I presented them with handmade pictures drawn on legal pad paper. Each parent purchased armloads of gifts for one another yet signed our six names to the cards. Like ducks in a row, we made sure we sat next to our parents at church instead of sitting with our friends. To this day, every Mother's Day my mom wears a corsage so large I'm not sure how it stays on.

My four sisters and I are now moms ourselves, so the tradition of these two days being a big family party has continued. My first year as a mom was in 1991, when I was three months pregnant with my first baby, Byron, Jr. I wasn't sure if I had quite earned the title of "Mom" yet, but I accepted the extra attention and gifts from my husband nevertheless. The next year I decided I had definitely earned it, since the task of getting my clothes on and being at church before the final prayer with my six-month-old baby had been achieved. No mistake about it—I wanted the accolades the two years following, since I had a toddler to chase around. And I was absolutely positive I had earned the honor in 1995, when I had a busy toddler and another little boy on the way.

The joy of Mother's Day drastically changed in 1996. Instead of looking forward to a day revering motherhood, I dreaded it and was convinced it was a cruel reminder that my maternity was incomplete. My little Jonathan Daniel was born still eleven months earlier, and the grief was still very prevalent in my emotions.

Sure I was still a mother, but instead of both my sons hugging, kissing and needing me all day, I only had one. The sadness and emptiness I felt that day was almost more than I could endure. Thankfully, my family recognized and acknowledged the pain I was feeling and was very loving and sensitive to me.

Mother's Day will never quite be the same for me. It has turned from an anticipated day of innocent joy and happiness to a day of bittersweet sorrow. It is no longer a difficult day for me to get through, but my heart is heavy. As I sit in church, I look around and read the faces of the women. Most of them have an extra glow about them, but some wear expressions of deep pain and anguish. Oftentimes they think they can come wearing masks of happiness, but those of us who empathize with their grief know what they are hiding. It is not just the women who have suffered a loss, it's also the ladies who are in the throes of infertility or have passed the age of childbearing and were never given the gift of a fruitful womb. It is not uncommon for women who long for their deceased children or babies that were never conceived to quietly disappear for the day. These women choose not to attend church, because listening to the pastor applaud all the mothers is too emotional. And, going to a restaurant for Sunday brunch and witnessing the celebrations at the other tables is entirely too painful.

Thankfully, many churches like mine have somewhat changed the format of only honoring the mothers with living children. Included with the praise is a gentle reminder to the congregation that there are many broken hearts in the sanctuary, and a special time of prayer is devoted to the hurting.

Maybe you're like me, and although Mother's Day is not as painful as it was the first few years following your loss, it will never completely be the same. I encourage you to remember the years it was incredibly unbearable and pray for the ones who are currently feeling that deep, raw heartache. Or, if you are one of the parents who are considering staying in bed with the sheets over your head all day, refusing to participate in the festivities, I give you permission to do so! One year soon you'll be able to face these Sundays again with a different and new perspective. I further want to assure you that you are a mommy, even if you don't have any living children here with you. You made a child and that makes you a parent. I'm not sure exactly how it all works in Heaven, but I'm guessing that you have a beautiful child cheering you on from up above who will one day honor and bless you with all the love and kisses you deserve on this special day.

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Rebekah Mitchell

M.E.N.D. is a Christian nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through monthly meetings, this newsletter, and our Web site.

For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the newsletter, contact us at

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Donations make the printing and distribution of this newsletter possible. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the address listed above. If your gift is made in memory of a baby, please include that baby's name (if named), date of birth and/or date of death, the parents' names, and the name of the benefactor. You may also include the cause of death (if known).

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Mother's Day Revisited

Barbara Atwood

Reprinted from *The Compassionate Friends Tucson, May 1998*

Mother's Day this year looms as a particularly difficult milestone for me. Sunday, May 10, 1998, is not only Mother's Day but also the second anniversary of the death of my ten-year-old son, Jacob. Because this day of private sadness also happens to be a day of public celebration, I decided that I should start thinking early about the occasion. I engaged in a little research about the holiday and learned a story that I think is worth sharing.

Mother's Day was the creation of a woman named Anna Jarvis in the early years of this century. Anna, who never married and never had children of her own, devoted herself to establishing a national Mother's Day as a way of honoring her beloved mother, who died on May 9, 1905. In Anna's view, her mother deserved a memorial because she had lived selflessly and endured considerable suffering; seven of her eleven children had died in early childhood. According to historians, Anna's mother mourned the deaths of her children throughout her life.

Anna insisted that the holiday always fall on a Sunday so that it would retain its spiritual moorings. Because of her efforts, President Woodrow Wilson finally proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. Although Anna couldn't prevent the first Mother's Day from quickly becoming a marketing phenomenon, she did try. Speaking out against "the mire of commercialization" that threatened to engulf Mother's Day, Anna attempted to preserve her creation as a truly "holy day," a time for solemn reflection and prayer.

Mother's Day, then, was borne of a daughter's grief and love. More importantly, it was intended as a tribute to a bereaved mother—a brave woman who lost multiple children but managed to live with an abiding kindness and generosity toward others. I like knowing this background, and my attitude towards Mother's Day has been colored by the knowledge. The holiday now makes me think of the common sorrow that links all bereaved parents. I feel a bond with Anna's mother that stretches over time and space. In a broader sense, the woman for whom the holiday was founded reminds me of people I've met at The Compassionate Friends who have continued to live productive, meaningful lives in the face of unthinkable loss.

Finally, Mother's Day in its origins symbolizes both the joy and the vulnerability inherent in parenthood. Anna's mother knew all too well that from the moment a child is born, hope and the possibility of tragedy go hand-in-hand. She understood the fragility of life.

Enriched by its own history, Mother's Day is easier for me to tolerate. The coincidence of dates this year—Mother's Day and the anniversary of my son's death—is not as jarring as it once seemed. Although the commercial images of the modern Mother's Day still make me wince, I can turn off the television and envision the kind of day that Anna Jarvis had in mind: a time for quiet reflection and the sharing of cherished memories.

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M.E.N.D.'s main chapter meeting place has changed!

New Location:

Suggs Law Firm

1522 West Airport Freeway, Suite 200

Irving, TX 75062

(Located on the south side of the highway, between MacArthur Blvd. and Story Rd.)

M.E.N.D.'s mailing address will remain the same. Only the meeting place has changed.



I won't say "Happy Father's Day,"
But I do hope you can see
Our son would wish you *peace* today
If happy you can't be.

A father with no child to hold -
Yet a father, still, you are.
Our boy lives in his heavenly home
And here, within our hearts.

One day, when our rest is won
We'll see him face to face.
I picture him there, our dearest son,
Waiting for us at the gate.

If he could speak to you this day
His words you'd hold so dear.
I know precisely what he'd say.
To me, it's vastly clear.

He'd say how much he loves you.
Your son, he's proud to be.
And he knows that you love him, too,
And miss him terribly.

He'd thank you for watching over me
And loving me like you do.
Great fathers, first, must great husbands be
And both, he'd say, are you.

And finally, he'd tell you
He's so happy you're his dad.
He couldn't pick a better man.
You're the best a boy could have.

*-Melissa Stephens, for Rob Stephens
on Father's Day, 2004
Remembering David Atkins Stephens
October 23, 2003, Omphalocete*

July/August Topic

How Hospitals Handle Bereaved Parents
(We welcome articles about how your hospital was helpful
or not helpful before and/or after your delivery)

Deadline: May 31, 2005

September/October Topic

Keeping Your Baby's Memory Alive

Deadline: July 31, 2005

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcomed. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the newsletter. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please see page two of the newsletter for the appropriate address to send your submissions. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our website indefinitely unless we receive notice in writing that you are only granting permission for your submission to appear in the printed version of the newsletter.

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M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

M.E.N.D. meetings
are held the

2nd Thursday of every month
from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Our Daddies group

meets the 2nd Thursday of
March, June, September, and December
from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

*This is a special time for daddies to get
together and discuss concerns unique to
them as fathers. Our moms and dads meet
together for introductions before dividing
into two groups for discussion.*

Subsequent pregnancy group

meets the 4th Tuesday
of each month from
7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

*For families who are considering becoming
pregnant or are currently pregnant after a
loss. Led by Christine Oxendine
(bearpals@charter.net).*

All main chapter support group meetings are held at:

Suggs Law Firm
1522 W. Airport Freeway, Suite 200
Irving, TX 75062

(Located on the south side of the highway,
Between MacArthur Boulevard
and Story Road)

For more information or directions,
call (972) 506-9000.

Playgroup

*For families with children born prior to or
subsequent to a loss.*

Contact DaLana Barsanti
at (817) 589-0588
fivekids@ev1.net

*(Playgroups meet at various locations around the
Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex.)*

New Chapter Meetings:

M.E.N.D. - NW Arkansas

Held the 1st Tuesday of every month
from 7:00—8:30 p.m.

at the Jones Center for Families,
922 East Emma Avenue,
Springdale, AR 72765.

For information, call 479-524-3500
or e-mail april@mend.org.

Coming Soon:

M.E.N.D. - Kansas

Opening in Emporia, Kansas,
May 12, 2005

M.E.N.D. - Houston

Opening in June 2005

M.E.N.D. - Georgia

Opening in October 2005.

**Mommies AND daddies are both welcome
at all M.E.N.D. meetings.**

Tributes to Our Special Babies

My beautiful little boy Anthony,

I can't believe you're turning five! Time has gone by so fast. I can't help but imagine that right now you would be going to school, and I know you would have been very smart! I love you, my son.

Love,
Your mommy

*In memory of Sergio Anthony Rodriguez
June 23, 2000
Unknown cause
Parents: Alfredo & Leonora Rodriguez
Baby sister: Brizeida Abigail Rodriguez*



HAPPY 2nd BIRTHDAY

To Our Precious Son Matthew

On this your birthday number 2
We want to say how much we love you!
We'd love to celebrate with balloons & ice cream,
Cake, gifts, hugs and kisses in a stream.
But in heaven you now sing your songs
In the midst of the heavenly throngs.
Our hearts broke when you went away,
But you're in our thoughts each and every day.
Many tears we've shed wishing you were here;
It's deep within our hearts that you're always near,
So on this special day, we remember you!
We love you more and more each day through!



Love,
Mommy & Daddy
Thomas & Michelle

*Matthew Joel Mifflin
Stillborn June 6, 2003
True Knot in Umbilical Cord
Parents: Dennis and Janet Mifflin
Siblings: Thomas and Michelle*



Happy 2nd birthday to our precious angel,

Clara Shea Huey

Love,
Mommy, Daddy,
and baby sister Olivia

*Clara Shea Huey
Stillborn June 16, 2003
Unknown cause
Parents: Ashley and Sara Huey
Little sister: Olivia Paige*



HAPPY 2ND BIRTHDAY COOPER!

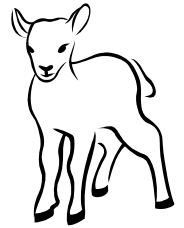


To our beloved boy,

We miss you each day and love you more than words can say. Paxton will blow out your candles for you as we wish you a happy birthday, too.

Sending you love, hugs and kisses,
Daddy, Mommy, Avery,
Tate and Paxton

*Cooper Graham Dill
Stillborn May 26, 2003
Cord accident, twin to twin transfusion
and velamoutous cord insertion
Parents: Jim and Brandee Dill
Siblings: Avery, Tate
and Paxton (Cooper's twin brother)
Remembering Baby Dill
Miscarried May 2002*



Happy First Birthday, Independence

*Before you were conceived,
I wanted you
Before you were born,
I loved you*



*Before you were here a minute
I would have given up my life
so you can have yours again!*

Happy birthday my little angel! Mommy misses you so much every day, and I know that every day that passes is a day that I get closer to holding you in my arms again. I love you so much. I look at your picture and can't believe that you'd be a year old. It feels like only yesterday that you were taken from me. Even though this is all so hard for me to understand I know that you're in a better place, safe and with family that has gone before you. Happy birthday my first-born, my daughter, my soulmate. Until the day we meet again, I'll love you always and forever.

Mommy

*Independence Sky Kelley
June 19, 2004
Unknown cause
Parents: Shawn and Heather Kelley*



Happy 7th Birthday Tristen!

It is so hard to believe that it has been seven years since you left us to be with the Lord! We miss you and think of you often.

Love,
Mommy and little sister Valerie



*Tristen Wayne Livermore
Stillborn May 5, 1998
Cord accident
Mom: Cindy Livermore
Sister: Valerie*

Ten Year Tribute to My Precious Gift from God

“Rebekah, your labor was not in vain...” Those words spoken by my pastor at Jonathan’s funeral have echoed in my mind for ten years. At the time I wondered what that could possibly mean. I literally risked my life to carry him, prayed for a miracle but instead ended up with a stillborn baby because he entangled himself in the umbilical cord. How could all my effort of bed-rest, hospitalization and deteriorating kidneys be good for anything? My baby was dead, my health failing, and my heart was broken.



I cringed when I heard or read scripture verses such as “...He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him...” These promises swam in my head for months following Jonathan’s death. It just didn’t make sense. It seemed that God was not keeping His word and that He had turned His back on me.

Every day I was pregnant with Jonathan I placed my hand on my bulging stomach and said aloud, “Thank you Lord for one more day with my baby.” I remember at the time wondering why I felt the need to pray such an unusual prayer of thanksgiving. I had fleeting thoughts of his life only being temporary but would dismiss it as an expectant mother’s common fear. I prayed over Jonathan every day, asking God to use his life to touch countless people and show others His miraculous power. I further petitioned God to let his life be even more of a miracle than that of his big brother’s and for the Lord to be glorified. Because of the kidney disease I had been diagnosed with a few years earlier, both my pregnancies were very high risk. My first son’s full-term successful delivery astounded many doctors. In fact, they told of our case at medical conferences in the Dallas area. My obstetrician attributed his beating the odds to a miracle of God, which is why I prayed that specific prayer over Jonathan. I fully expected him to be delivered prematurely and spend time in the NICU. I knew he would have many obstacles to overcome such as brain bleeds, blindness, deafness, and cerebral palsy. But I knew that Jesus could touch and heal his little body, astonishing the medical professionals and thus showing them His divine authority over sickness. When Jonathan’s life ended so unexpectedly due to a cord accident when I was seven months pregnant, I could not imagine why God had not answered my sincere prayers and used the opportunity to have souls changed. I went through months of questioning, anger, and confusion. Eventually I reconciled my relationship with God, and the scriptures I detested for so long became my strength. I realized God *had* begun a good work in me with Jonathan, and He *was* indeed going to see it through to completion; just not the way *I* wanted it to be fulfilled. Jonathan’s short life *was* going to work for good; just not the way *I* wanted it to work. A new scripture began to repeat itself in my spirit, “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...” I realized my prayers had been answered, more than I could have ever dreamed, just not the way *I* had planned. Jonathan’s life has touched countless people, more than I’ll ever know on this side of eternity. God has been glorified and His almighty power has been revealed. God turned my ashes to beauty, and I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that my labor was not in vain.

Jonathan’s stillbirth resulted in a ministry that reaches hurting families all over the world. The year of his tenth-year anniversary in Heaven has been an enormous year of growth for M.E.N.D. We have expanded our support groups to three other states and have several more pending. Our newsletters are distributed all over the world, and our Web site has been visited by hundreds of thousands of guests. Over the eight years of directing M.E.N.D. I have seen couples deepen their walk with the Lord and several parents accept Him as their personal Savior, confirmation that neither were their babies’ lives in vain. Words cannot express the emotions I feel at our Walk to Remember, the Christmas Ceremony, and new support groups, knowing that all of us are gathered together because of the death of *my* baby.

So I say to my precious gift from God, “Your life was not in vain!” God began your life within me and is completing His masterpiece of you through M.E.N.D. What I thought would destroy me has worked out for eternal good, and my prayers over you have been answered immeasurably more than I could have ever imagined! You’ve been in Heaven for ten years now, fulfilling God’s plan for your life. Three years ago you had a sibling join you, and I can only dream of what the two of you do together. I love you my precious Jon-Jon! Until we meet again...!

*In memory of Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995 , Cord Accident
Parents: Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
Big brother: Byron, Jr.
Remembering Baby Mitchell, miscarried December 2001*

Little Logan David, 

It's been five years since we last held you and kissed you. While our lives have continued in new directions, our hearts remain, as always, full of love and longing for you. My darling boy, you are missed and thought of every single day.

*We love you,
Daddy, Mama, and Little Brother Blake*

Sweet Little Darlin', 

It's hard to believe that it's been a year since you entered our lives. You surprised us the whole way through, from finding out we were pregnant with you to quickly finding out that you had already left us. The brief time that we had with you cannot diminish the love we have in our hearts for you. We know that your big brother Logan is with you, and that one day we will all be up in Heaven together. What a joyful day that will be.

*With all our love,
Mama, Daddy, and Big Brother Blake*

*Logan David Iliff
Stillborn May 5, 2000
Complete placental abruption
Little Darlin' Iliff
Miscarried March 4, 2004
Parents: Joseph and Samantha Iliff
Brother: Blake*

**Dear Angel Hope,**

We know that your birthday celebration in Heaven will be beyond words! We still do and always will miss you, but we get so excited thinking of you greeting us when we arrive at our real home! I'm making a list of all the great things we'll do together someday. Your life has brought about great changes in your mommy, and your whole family has learned lots about love and life. You are an important part of our family, and we love you eternally.

Forever yours,
Mommy and Daddy

*Angel Hope Brimmage
June 8, 2002
Spina Bifida*

*Parents: Ashley and Jennifer Brimmage
Siblings: Lindy and Mark*

**Dear Cailey,**

Happy 9th birthday! I wish you were here with me and Daddy and Hannah and Emily. It touches my heart every time your sisters mention your name. Even though they never got to meet you, they love and miss you all the same. Hannah really wishes you were here to be her big sister. Emily wishes you were here so that you could play with her and teach her all sorts of "big sister" stuff. We love and miss you.

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Hannah and Emily

*In Memory of Cailey Elizabeth Ottinger
Stillborn June 7, 1996
Cord Accident
Parents: George and Laurie Ottinger
Little sisters: Hannah and Emily*

**Happy First Birthday Bryce!**

At this time last year we were lovingly preparing for your arrival. It pains us that we will not be able to celebrate this first birthday with you. Even though we haven't gotten to watch you grow this year, our love for you continues to grow stronger each day. You will always be a special part of our family, and I know we will be together again some day. We love you and miss you so much! We are sending kisses to heaven for your birthday!

Love always and forever,
Mommy and Daddy

*Bryce Gregory Yammarino
Stillborn June 7, 2004
Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia
Parents: Julie and Derek Yammarino*

**Gracie,**

You would be two this month. We still think about you every day and look forward to seeing you in Heaven! You are still an inspiration to us in so many ways...you've taught our family so many things. You lived a lifetime in only forty days and forty nights and affected more people than most ever will in seventy plus years. We praise God for trusting us with you and we miss you terribly. We are joyful, however, knowing you are with our Savior, Jesus Christ, and know that you could not be in better hands! Until we meet again our precious daughter, know that you are in our hearts and lives every day. We love you so very much.

Sincerely,
Mommy and Daddy,
Noah and Aidan

*Grace Ann Davidson
4/7/2003-5/17/2003
Due to complications from Trisomy 18
Hypoplastic left ventricle
Parents: Todd and Jill Davidson
Brothers: Noah and Aidan*



THREE YEARS AGO TODAY



Three years ago today the silence was deafening when you arrived into this world but were not allowed to stay.

Three years ago today a piece of my heart and soul were ripped away, never to be returned.

Three years ago today your face was imprinted on my heart and your body into my arms forever.

Three years ago today I learned that nothing and no one would ever take your place.

Three years ago today was very bittersweet; I had waited an eternity for you to come into my life, but instead, in eternity we will forever be together.

Three years ago today you changed my life forever, my firstborn; keep hold of that piece of my heart and soul in the palm of your hand . . . until we meet again.

by Monica Gregory

For Gabriela Faith Gregory

January 24, 2002

Anomaly of umbilical cord

Parents: Chris and Monica Gregory

Siblings: Daniel and Amarise



Little one, little one, Where have you gone?
Your going has darkened the brightest dawn.
Why did you leave us so soon, so soon?
Where can we look for you? Over the moon?
On butterflies' wings? In the heart of a rose?
Who knows, who knows where little one goes?



Where I have gone, I am not so small
My soul is as wide as the world is tall.
I have gone to answer the call, the call
Of the One who takes care of us all.
Wherever you look, you will find me there
In the heart of a rose, in the heart of a prayer.
On butterflies' wings, on wings of my own,
To you, I'm gone, but I'm never alone,
I'm over the moon. I am home.



**Happy 5th Birthday, Sydney !
Happy 4th Birthday, Ashley!**

Both of you are becoming such BIG girls in heaven.
But you will always be our baby girls.
We love and miss you very much,
Mommy, Daddy & Baby Brother Samuel

Sydney Lynne Brown
5/18/2000, Unknown cause
Ashley Mackenzie Brown
5/18/2001
Antiphospholipid antibodies
causing premature delivery
Parents: Brian and Marilyn Brown
Sibling: Samuel Cole Brown



*There are cupcakes in heaven,
Tiny angels come to play,
All the little candles lit,
Every day's a special day!*



**Happy 5th birthday,
Colten Benjamin Ballmer**
Daddy, Mommy & Logan love you!



*Colten Benjamin Baller
Stillborn May 28, 2000
Umbilical cord stenosis—congenital
Parents: Jamieson & Regan Ballmer
Little brother: Logan*

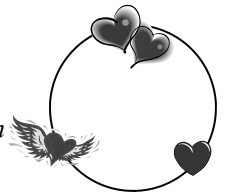


Tiny toes and tiny feet,
An infant cradled and cuddled
You were the image of complete.

But only in our memories and photos
Can we still remember the day you arrived
To make your mommy and daddy
so happy and surprised!

We think back to, wow four years ago!
When God showed us you, the miracle in our life.
Now, with you by your sister's side
An angel in disguise
We can be at peace,
The circle of our family is complete.

*In loving memory of our angel
Griffin Caleb McIntosh
Stillborn June 6, 2001
Parents: Matthew and Naomi McIntosh
Sibling: Mya Quinn*



Remembering Joseph

Sweet boy, you were like a shooting star, blazing your way into our lives and then leaving just as soon. It's exciting for us to think of how brightly you must shine in your home, where you belong. We look forward to being there with you one day as a complete family. Until then, no one will ever take your place. We love you.
Mom, Dad, Will, John,
and Mary Grace



*Joseph Charles Libby
Stillborn May 26, 1999, unknown cause
Parents: Wim and Sharlene Libby
Siblings: Will, John, and Mary Grace*

HELPFUL READING ...***A Deeper Shade of Grace***

by Bernadette Keaggy.
Sparrow Press, Nashville, TN, 1993.

Empty Arms: Emotional Support for Those Who Have Suffered a Miscarriage Stillbirth, or Tubal Pregnancy

by Pam Vredevelt.
Multnomah Press, Sisters, OR, 1984

Empty Cradle, Broken Heart – Surviving the Death of Your Baby

by Deborah L. David, PhD.
Fulcrum Publishing, 350 Indiana St., Golden, CO 80401, 1991

Grieving the Child I Never Knew:***A devotional companion for comfort in the loss of your unborn or newly born child***

By Kathe Winnenberg
Zondervan Publishing House

Heaven's Not a Crying Place

by Joey O'Connor.
To order, visit his website at
<http://www.joeyo.com/>
or e-mail joey@joeyo.com

I Can't Find A Heartbeat: Hope and Help for Those Who Have Lost an Unborn Child

By Melissa Sexson Hanson
Review and Herald
Publishing Association

I'll Hold You in Heaven

by Jack Hayford.
Regal Books
Ventura, CA

In Search of Hope

by Susan R. Lowe
AmErica House
www.publishamerica.com

Letters to Gabriel

by Karen Garver Santorum,
wife of Senator Rick Santorum
To order, call 800-935-2222.

Silent Grief

by Clara Hinton.
Published by New Leaf Press

A Silent Sorrow

by Ingrid Kohn.
Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.,
666 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10103, 1992

36 Hours with an Angel

by Lindsay Roberts.
Richard and Lindsay Roberts Ministries,
P.O. Box 2187, Tulsa, OK 74171

Time Piece

by Richard Paul Evans.
Simon and Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230
Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020,
1995-1996

When God Doesn't Make Sense

by Dr. James Dobson.
Published by Tyndale House Publishers,
Wheaton, IL, 1993

SIDS ...***The SIDS Survival Guide***

by Joani Nelson Horchler and
Robin Rice Morris.
To order, call 301-773-9691.

Subsequent Pregnancy ...***Another Baby? Maybe ...***

Thirty Questions on Pregnancy After Loss
by Sherokee Ilse and Maribeth Wildre Doerr.
Contact Centering Corporation
www.centering.org
402-553-1200

Pregnancy After a Loss – A Guide to Pregnancy After a Miscarriage, Stillbirth, or Infant Death

by Carol Cirulli Lanham.
Berkley Books, a Division of Penguin Putnam,
Inc., 375 Hudson St., New York, NY. To order
directly, call toll-free 1-877-853-3595.

Trying Again--A Guide to Pregnancy After Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Infant Loss

by Ann Douglas and John R. Sussman, M.D.
Taylor Publishing, 2000.
<http://www.having-a-baby.com/tryingagain.htm>

Infertility ...***When the Cradle Is Empty - Answering Tough Questions About Infertility***

by John and Sylvia Van Regenmorter
To order, call Focus on the Family at
1-800-232-6459.

For Children ...***The Cherry Blossom Tree – A Grandfather Talks About Life & Death***

by Jan Godfrey.
Augsburg Fortress, 426 S. Fifth St., Box 1209,
Minneapolis, MN 55440, 1996

Let's Talk About Heaven

by Debby Anderson.
Chariot Books, David C. Cook
Publishing Co., Elgin, IL, 1991

Molly's Rosebush

by Janice Cohn, D.S.W.
Albert Whitman & Company,
Morton Grove, IL 1994

Mommy, Please Don't Cry – Tender Words for Broken Hearts

by Linda DeYmaz.
Multnomah Publisher, Bend, OR
Contact www.multnomahbooks.com

Holiday Grieving ...***The Christmas Box***

by Richard Paul Evans.
Simon and Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230
Avenue of the Americas,
New York, NY 10020, 1995-1996



Most books available at www.amazon.com. To see more reading suggestions, visit www.mend.org. The views expressed by authors on this page do not necessarily reflect M.E.N.D.'s views, and their listing here does not equate an endorsement by M.E.N.D.

Give sorrow words: the grief that
does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart
and bids it break.
- William Shakespeare
From Macbeth, Act iv. Sc. 3.

No one ever told me that grief felt
so like fear.
- C.S. Lewis
From A Grief Observed

Letter to My Pastor

Dear Pastor,

It's almost Mother's Day again. They seem to come so quickly. I'm sure you are planning a very special service for all of the mothers. I know that it is such a special day for them, and I don't want to spoil anyone's joy. It is important for all of us to rejoice with each other, and even those of us who are not mothers can give thanks for those who are mothers.

All I ask is that you remember that this day can be extremely difficult for a number of members in our congregation. For women like me who struggle with infertility, Mother's Day can be the most painful day of the year. I've thought about staying home, but I know I need to be in God's house.

The most challenging part of the service is when all the mothers stand and the congregation smiles and applauds them. It feels awful to be the only one still sitting. I want to be able to stand with them. I want more than anything in this world to be a mother. It's something I have always wanted. I have carried children, but they were taken before they were ever born. I do have children, in heaven, but I'm not a mother in the eyes of those here on earth.

So, on Mother's Day I often go home and cry, not quite able to understand why I am unable to become what so many in the church consider to be "God's highest calling" ... a mother.

It is not only the un-mothers who feel lonely on this day. It must also be a painful day for single women who have never married, for mothers who have lost children, and for moms who have sons or daughters wandering from the Lord.

As Mother's Day approaches, I pray that you will remember that it is not only a day of rejoicing for some, but a day of painful reminders for others. I know that God will help you to be a blessing to our congregation as you minister to us on this Mother's Day.

Anonymous

*Reprinted by permission from Stepping Stones, a newsletter for infertile couples published by Bethany Christian Services.
For more information click on www.bethany.org/step.*

A Mother's Day Poem

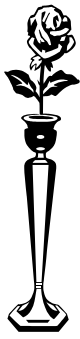
*for Mothers Who Carry Their Children in Their Hearts
Rather Than in Their Arms*

So many months I carried you
and I couldn't wait to see
What a wonderful little person
you would turn out to be.
I had my dreams of how it would be
just to watch you grow
But now those dreams are faded
because I shall never know.
For God in His great wisdom
looked from His throne above
And saw how beautiful you were,
so He carried you away with love.

Now the rocking chair sits silent
and the lullabies won't be voiced
But in heaven there's a celebration
as all the angels rejoice.
My tears, they won't be quiet,
they flow like a river roars
And I know my life is forever changed -
to be the same no more.
I must be a special mother
because I have been set apart
Some mothers carry their children in their arms,
but I carry you in my heart.

*By Beverly Tinney for Rose Yoder, mother of Cynthia Dawn Yoder, stillborn 8/28/94.
Reprinted with permission from Bereaved Parents Share II, May 2000*

In Loving Memory



Alexander William Underwood
Stillborn September 8, 2004
Placental Abruption
Given by parents,
David and Anastasia Underwood

Carlie Maxine Durbin
Stillborn March 8, 2002
Cord Accident
Given by parents,
Mike and Jana Durbin
and siblings Seth, Andy,
and Camryn

Nealy Shae Duerksen
Given by
Shane and Charla Duerksen

Gabriela Faith Gregory
Stillborn January 24, 2002
Anomaly of Umbilical Cord
Given by parents,
Chris and Monica Gregory
and siblings Daniel and Amarise

**Alexis Leigh
and Nicole Leigh Rudeen**
Stillborn March 11, 2005
Unknown Cause
Given by parents,
Randy and Sherri Rudeen
and big sisters Julie and Sara

M.E.N.D.

gratefully acknowledges these gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend, or given by someone just wanting to help. These donations help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s mission by providing this newsletter and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. Please refer to the back page of this newsletter for more information regarding where to send your donations and what information to include.

Thank you so much!

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord Accident
Baby Mitchell
Miscarried December, 2001
Parents, Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
Big brother, Byron, Jr.
Given by Dentistry of Las Colinas/
Byron L. Mitchell, D.D.S.

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord Accident
Baby Mitchell
Miscarried December, 2001
Parents, Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
Big brother, Byron, Jr.
Given by grandparents,
Dennis and Sue Brewer

Michael Garabedian, Jr.
Stillborn February 2, 1998
Cord Accident/Villamentous Cord Insertion
Adam Michael Garabedian
Stillborn July 25, 2001
Cord Accident
Parents, Mike and Cindy Garabedian
Sisters, Victoria, Elizabeth, and Catherine
Given by Garabedian Properties

Lauren Paige Grimes
Stillborn March 6, 1999
Unknown Cause
Baby Angel Grimes (Raleigh's Twin)
Miscarried January 25, 2001
Given by parents, John and Paula Grimes
and sister Raleigh

Matthew Joel Mifflin
Stillborn June 6, 2003
True Knot in Umbilical Cord
Given by parents, Dennis and Janet Mifflin
and siblings Thomas and Michelle

Cole, Kaylyn, and Hannah Busker
December 10, 2004
E coli Infection
Given by parents, Kim and Michael Busker
and sister Allison

Colten Benjamin Ballmer
Stillborn May 28, 2000
Umbilical Cord Stenosis - Congenital
Parents, Jamieson and Regan Ballmer
Little brother, Logan
Given by Kathie and Gilbert Menough

Joseph Charles Libby
Stillborn May 26, 1999
Cord Accident
Given by parents, Wim and Sharlene Libby
and siblings, Will, John, and Mary Grace

Addie Grace Metzger
Stillborn August 1, 2001
Vasa Previa
Given by parents, Stephanie and Philip Metzger
and siblings Colin and Meg

Caleb Scott Fann
December 1, 2003
Unknown Cause
Baby August Fann
Miscarried August 13, 2004
Given by parents, Heather and Jonathan Fann

M.E.N.D. would like to recognize the following sponsors for their help in establishing M.E.N.D.'s new Kansas chapter. Thank you for your generous donations.

Shane and Charla Duerksen
(In memory of
Nealy Shae Duerksen)
Merlin Mathis

Philip and Stephanie Metzger
Steve and Pamela Standerwick
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Stewart
Sharon and Max Stewart, Jr.



To the editor:

My husband woke me this past Mother's Day with breakfast in bed and a card that glowed with warm thoughts about my motherhood. It probably meant more to me in some ways than it would have to other mothers, because the only child I had was dead at birth.

You might think it strange to acknowledge such a mother. One million families a year experience the death of an infant, and often the well-intentioned advice offered them is to "have another one," a suggestion implying that a baby is something like an hors d'oeuvre.

Perhaps some recognize this loss as a legitimate one and would even offer a bereaved mother some quiet affirmation of her motherhood. But what of fathers of babies or children who are dead? How often are fathers asked, "How is your wife doing?" after a child has died? How many fathers of deceased infants, fathers who may or may not have surviving children, will receive a card on Father's Day that acknowledges the child who died?

Our society insists that men embody the "Mr. Mom" qualities of sensitivity, vulnerability, and the ability to nurture, but fathers are sometimes expected to shy away from these qualities when faced with the awkwardness of grief. A father is expected to provide his wife with understanding and support when a child or an infant dies; but how many business associates, neighbors, or family members avert their eyes when a drop of moisture threatens to spill onto the cheek of a bereaved father?

And how many fathers this Father's Day will grieve their dead children privately and silently? Do what you can to change this in your corner of the world. If you know the father of a miscarried baby, an infant or older child who died, muster the courage to acknowledge his fatherhood to him.

There are many ways to do this, including just sending a card. A regular Father's Day card with a note inside would work. Whatever you choose to try to offer these fathers, offer the positive acknowledgement that fatherhood does not end with the death of a child.

Ronda J. Wintheiser

Reprinted from the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* Editorials

June 14, 1989

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Jennifer R. Burgess, Psy.D., presents

A psychoeducational therapeutic group for

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- Understanding and learning to be supportive of a partner's grief*
- Coping with others' celebrations in the midst of your grief*
- Dealing with potentially unsupportive others in couples' lives*
- Building a life beyond the grief*
- Coping with the fear of potential future loss and infertility*

Call for more information
817-559-4045

Not affiliated with M.E.N.D.

Subsequent Birth

Julie and John James
along with *big sister Bailie*,
of Flower Mound, Texas,
joyfully announce their new bundle of joy,
Lauren Elizabeth,
born March 21, 2005.
She weighed 7 pounds
and was 18 inches long.
The James family lovingly remembers
Jordan Claire,
September 20 - October 15, 2003,
Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome.



M.E.N.D. Fundraisers

As a non-profit organization, M.E.N.D. is funded solely by private donations and fundraisers. Any assistance you can give us by participating in any or all of these fundraisers is greatly appreciated.

Kroger grocery stores donate a percentage of all purchases of those shoppers who have and use a Kroger Share Card back to M.E.N.D. To obtain your Share Card, contact Rebekah via one of the ways listed on the last page of this newsletter and let her know how many you need. This program is valid in Texas, but residents of other states may need to check with store managers to see if they participate.

Tom Thumb also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please ask your Tom Thumb cashier to link your card with M.E.N.D. Our number is **6265**. If you are already linked to another organization, they will split a donation of one percent of your purchases between the organizations. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.

Stamps.com offers a \$10-\$20 referral program. If you would like to purchase stamps from home and receive a free postage scale, visit www.stamps.com, and use referral code C-4FTJ-TWR. Stamps.com will give the incentive money to M.E.N.D. in the form of free postage.

Shannon Outen, a M.E.N.D. member and co-owner of **Paper Patch**, represents several lines of business stationary, specializing in customized holiday/Christmas cards at a discounted price. Shannon will donate 10 percent of her profits to M.E.N.D. from each Christmas card order. Contact Shannon at (817) 557-4733 or email outencs@aol.com to receive a current catalogue.

Christine Oxendine is a representative of **Avon**. She has offered to give to M.E.N.D. 10 percent of any orders placed by M.E.N.D. members. To receive a catalogue, contact Christine at 940-381-6617 home or 682-365-7448 cell, or e-mail bearpals@charter.net.

Glenn Martin is looking for M.E.N.D. families willing to grant space for small gumball machines in order to raise funds for M.E.N.D. If you have a retail business or connections to a high traffic location, like a restaurant, and are willing to place a gumball machine in your location, Glenn will place, stock, and service the equipment and give M.E.N.D. 35 percent of the proceeds. His business has most of its route in the Grapevine and Southlake areas and could travel further into the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex for a high traffic location. Glenn can be contacted at (817) 874-5366 or glmartin@attg.net.

M.E.N.D. can now earn funds through **i.think inc.**, an online marketing research firm. You can help by signing up as a survey panel member and designating us as the recipient of your fee. Every time you complete a survey M.E.N.D. will be automatically credited. Go to the website at <http://www.ithink.inc.com> and choose "Sign up to become an i.think inc. panel member" Fill out the sign-up survey. Under the "Funds for Charity" section, select M.E.N.D. from the list of names. Once you have completed the sign-up survey, including a valid email address, you'll be contacted with an Internet address and password for specific surveys for you to take part in. At the end of the survey, press the "Submit" button, and M.E.N.D. will be automatically credited as the recipient of all money you have earned.

Bob Nordberg is owner of www.buildatee.com in San Antonio. BuildATee.com is dedicated to providing customers with quality customized shirts, ballcaps, athletic wear, and gift items. Ten percent of online sales at BuildATee.com will be donated to M.E.N.D.

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