



M. E. N. D.

Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

Holidays

My Jonathan was stillborn a little more than 20 years ago ... wow! It is hard to believe that many years have gone by, yet the sting lingers, and certainly the holidays can trigger emotions I'd prefer never to resurface. But they do. Last year was my 20th holiday season since Jonathan's death. I guess "20" made it somewhat of a monumental year for me. It caused me to reflect on the past 20 holidays, especially the first holiday season I endured following Jonathan's stillbirth, which was just six short months later. I am incredibly grateful and relieved that those fresh, raw emotions are years behind me, but I never want to forget the lessons I've learned from that spiritual and emotional struggle.

If I really think about it, I've learned a lot over these 20 years. In fact, I've decided these are gifts I've been given, not scars from a battle. Mainly, I've developed a change of perspective. I feel like I see things from an angle people who haven't endured a real tragedy cannot. I bet you can attest to the same. I feel like I'm definitely more compassionate toward those who are grieving. Before my losses, I had no clue the true physical pain one endures when losing someone they love, and how you *never* "get over it." The circumstances of loss may be different, but any grief is ugly grief.

I value pregnancies and the miracle of life more than I did before. Is there anything more offensive or harsher to our ears now when a woman complains about pregnancy woes? And little children ... is there anything more precious? Do we not find ourselves overly incensed when an innocent child is abused, neglected or mistreated? We wonder, WHY!? Honestly, why did that parent get a baby when ours died?

I have learned that, shockingly, I am not in control of my life. If you know me, you know I'm a planner and a calendar maniac! I still carry with me a large year-at-a-glance calendar in my purse. Nothing happens in my life if it's not on my calendar, except the stillbirth of Jonathan and the miscarriage of my

little baby in 2001. This has perhaps been the biggest lesson for me, yet it's a gift to know I am not in control. The Creator of the universe is, and, honestly, that's how I want it. The Lord planned every one of my days before any of them came to be, so why should I think I can be or want to be in charge?

Additionally, I've learned that life happens fast. How is it my only living child is now 24 years old, married, and living life as an adult? Just yesterday, he was my adorable little boy who could only fall asleep while holding on to my ear! So, I've learned to cherish each day we have. Hard, sad, lonely days pass, and so do the good, happy days. So hold on to them!

Finally, the most important and valuable gift I've been given over the years is peace. I don't like that I should have three children but only have raised one. I don't care for the deep pain and heartache I've endured over the years, and I wish some things in my life would have gone very differently. But, as the apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:11-13, I've learned the secret of being content in all situations. What a beautiful place to be! My husband Byron and I have been very happily married for more than 27 years, and we have a wonderful son, Byron, Jr., and now a daughter in his wife, Anna. We are active in the work of the Lord and are confident He has prepared many more wonderful years for us.

As we endure another holiday season without our little loved ones, I challenge you to think of the gifts your journey has handed you, instead of dwelling on the battle scars. Allow the Lord to give you beauty for your ashes, and pray for the supernatural peace only He can give.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell,*
Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell
M.E.N.D. President/Founder

Nota Español: El artículo de Rebekah Mitchell aparece en cada emisión de nuestro boletín para la audiencia latina.
Para ver el artículo de este mes en español, por favor vea la pagina numero 11.

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 at www.mend.org.

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

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You're Still Our Little Miracle

By Mark and Shakira Cobberti

*We still gave thanks that God gave you to us.
We thank the Lord that you came into our lives.*

You're still our little miracle.

*Even though you're not here with us anymore,
You're still our little miracle.*

*Even though you can't be a blessing on earth,
but you're a blessing in heaven,*

You're still our little miracle.

It does feel empty without you.

But you're still our little miracle,

Even though we can't hold you again.

You're still our little miracle

We can't wait to see you again.

Until then we'll keep your memory alive

We still love you and...

You're still our little miracle

♥ Mark and Shakira Cobberti,
Parents to Enoch

Happy Holidays...Sort Of..

It's entirely bittersweet. On the one hand, who doesn't love getting together with family? We visit, we remember the good times, and we eat the fixins that are only made this time of year. We wish everyone "Happy Holiday." There's the excitement of travel, presents, holiday breaks and vacations.

But at the same time, it is hauntingly lonely. Surrounded by a group of people who seem to have forgotten, who have "moved on." There's the conflict of emotion, wanting to keep the spirit of the room lively, but also wanting it to be okay for you not to be okay.

Especially when your loss happened during the holidays. I can't fit in the traditions I want to do to honor my baby around the hype of the holidays. I can't find the words to justify my somber demeanor as we approach the day he left my body, despite the happiness I feel getting to spend time with family. I can't shake the rising anxiety when those closest to me call my infant daughter my first when just a few years ago they were comforting me saying I was no less a mom because my son died.

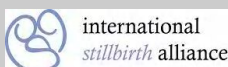
I could spend my life making wishes of how I want things to be, the "could have been" and the "should have been" moments I find myself missing more now that we have a baby in the house. I now get to experience all these moments I longed for, but it also makes me infinitely aware these are moments I will never have with my son.

This time of year isn't just about the holidays anymore. It isn't just about remembering good times, eating good food or living on the excitement of the season. It is now continually learning how to live with this strange juxtaposition of conflicting feelings. Of being happy and sad. Nostalgic from happy memories and nostalgic from memories you only wish you had. Joyful celebrations versus heavy-hearted prayers for the souls of little lives gone too soon. It's having to take in a "happy holidays" blessing while knowing in your heart it won't ever be as happy as it could be.

Happy holidays, from someone who knows it isn't always that way.

♥ Kristian Doucette,
Mommy to Rylan,

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri



How It's Supposed To Be

Today is Christmas, but it's not how it is supposed to be.

You're supposed to be here.

We were supposed to make cookies together, get to watch you unwrap presents, and take you to see Santa. We should have gotten to help you decorate the tree, hang up the stockings and unwrap your presents. We were supposed to get to hear you laugh at all the Christmas fun and see your eyes light up at all the wonders you would be understanding for the first time. We were supposed to feel our hearts fill with love and joy when you ate the frosting and candy toppings while decorating cookies, when we helped you hold your candle at the Christmas Eve service, and when we all snuggled up to read "The Night Before Christmas" together.

But that's not how it is.

Because you're not here.

Instead we try to hold it together when we see the kids at the mall, excited to see Santa - kids who would be about the same age as you. Instead, we feel an ache in our hearts, because the traditions we wanted to share with you make us miss you even more. They just remind us you're not here. Some days are easier, and some are so much worse, and so to cope with the holidays, we cling to each other. We tell each other that's it's okay to struggle, that Christmas never will be the same, but some years will be easier - maybe even almost "normal" - and this just happens to be a rough year. We know you are having a wonderful Christmas in heaven, and it soothes our hearts to know you are there, but oh, Jamie, we wish you were here. So we spend time together, just the two of us, because even though it's been two and a half years, the loss of you still hurts as much as it did the day we lost you.

Because we never stop missing you.

♥ *Laura Cain,*
Mommy to Jamie



The Woodlands Support Group Meeting (M.E.N.D.—Houston) fell on October 15 this year, which is Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day. We wanted to make this night extra special for our families and do something sweet to remember our precious little ones. Each family wrote their baby's name on a river stone and was able to take them home as a remembrance item. The rocks with all of our babies' names were lovingly displayed, surrounded by candles and angel ornaments. That night, each baby was represented by name all together, just as they are all together in heaven with Jesus.

Stormy Mitchell
M.E.N.D.—Houston Chapter Director

January/February Topic

Raising a Child with a Disability
After A Loss

Deadline: November 30, 2015

March/April Topic

Loss after Loss: When Does Grief Stop

Deadline: January 31, 2016

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. Because our newsletters are posted online, please understand that your name will likely be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

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Letters to the Editor should be sent to jennifer@mend.org. All letters submitted to the editor are subject to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests that it not be published.

Birthday Tributes: M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding newsletter. Tributes must be submitted via the online form at www.mend.org.

Heavenly Birthday	Deadline
January/February	November 30
March/April	January 31
May/June	March 31
July/August	May 31
September/October	July 31
November/December	September 30



Birthday Tributes

Happy 11th Birthday, Cece!

May all your heavenly wishes come true this year!

We love you so much!

Love,

Mommy, Daddy, and Ally

Celeste Kimberly Reid

December 7-8, 2004

Neonatal hemochromatosis

Parents: Skip Reid and Andie Boston

Sister: Allyson Kate



Happy 10th Birthday, Hope!

I can't believe it was 10 years ago I held you, my little pink bundle, in my arms. Sometimes it feels like minutes ago, others, such a long time has passed. What a comfort to know death is not the end, just an interruption.

XOXO, Mama

I thought of you with love today but that is nothing new

I thought about you yesterday and days before that, too

I think of you in silence, I often speak your name

All I have are memories and your picture in a frame

Your memory is my keepsake with which I'll never part

God has you in His keeping, I have you in my heart.

Happy birthday in heaven, Hope! I know PopPop and MeMa are celebrating with you, just as we have cupcakes and balloons for you on earth. :0)

I can't believe it was 10 years ago I held my first grand pink bundle. Lots of love on your two-hands birthday!

Love,

Grammy, Teepa, Mimi,

Uncle Ryan, Aunt Kasey and Uncle Jake

Hope Kirkpatrick

November 5-8, 2005

Amniotic band syndrome

Parents: Kirk and Aly Kirkpatrick

Siblings: Ian and Janie



Happy 37th Birthday, Elizabeth!

Happy birthday, Elizabeth. I wish you were here so we could celebrate with you, but you have heavenly birthdays with God. This year your daddy is with you, so you are not alone any more. All your sisters and your two nephews and two nieces wish you a happy 37th birthday. Mommy misses you and loves you. You are still my baby.

Love,

Mom

Elizabeth Nicole Garcia

Miscarried October 18, 1978

Parents: Paul and Jeannie Garcia

Siblings: Monica, Sylvia, Christina and Stephanie



Happy 6th Birthday, Madilynn!

Happy 6th birthday, sweet angel! Six years, it seems so long ago, but sometimes it is like yesterday. We still and will always miss you tremendously! This has been a big year. You are a big sister! Your little sister looks so much like you, and we wish so much you were here to play with her. You will always be a huge part of our lives, and we will make sure Alyson knows about her big sister in heaven. Enjoy your birthday celebration in heaven with Jesus and your great-grandparents. We will be celebrating your life here and missing you like crazy!

Love you forever!

Mommy, Daddy and Alyson

Madilynn Isabell Kelley

December 3, 2009

Cord accident

Parents: Jeremiah and Cherish Kelley

Little Sister: Alyson Hope



Happy 12th Birthday, Caleb!

Our last year before the teens! How has time gone by so fast? It seems like yesterday we were happily expecting you. We were then filled with anxiety at your early arrival. How has it been so long since we were blindsided by your too-soon heavenly homecoming?

Our precious firstborn, I pray we are able to honor you and raise your little sister to know you. We look forward to our reunion in heaven. Come, Lord Jesus. Come!

Love,

Daddy, Mommy and Maddie

Caleb Scott Fann

December 1, 2003

PPROM

Also remembering

Baby August Fann

Miscarried August 13, 2004, at 8 weeks

Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann

Little sister: Madison Grace



Happy 1st Birthday, Logan!

It's been a year already! Not a day goes by we don't think of you! I know you are watching over us! We love you! Happy one-year angelversary!

Logan Smith

Miscarried November 4, 2014

Also remembering

Mercedes Kay Fisher

Stillborn July 4, 2001

Cord accident

Parents: Steven and Jennifer Smith

Brothers: Micheal and Matthew



Happy 15th Birthday, Raekwon!

Thinking about you as always. I cannot believe it has been 15 years since I laid eyes on you. I try not to dwell on what you would have been doing if you were alive, but you would be in 9th grade. You could have been playing sports, the best big brother and son ever ... the possibilities are endless. Because of your death I am stronger than ever. I love you forever, I like you for always. As long as I'm living, my baby you'll be. Mommy loves you always.

Raekwon McGhee
Stillborn December 2, 2000
Mommy: Nikisha Perry
Sisters: Victoria and Vivienne

**Happy 6th Birthday, Serenity!**

Has it really been six years? While I hate that I missed all the "firsts" I saw with your brother and sister, I wish even more I could see the "firsts" you experience in heaven. The first time you opened your eyes to see Jesus. The first time you saw your Papa Curt, Papa Frank and all your great-grandparents. The first time you walked down the streets of gold or danced through the wildflower fields of heaven. The first time you heard the heavenly choir and the angels. I can't imagine how beautiful it is in heaven, and I long for the day the rest of us will join you. Until then, we will continue in the work the Lord has for us.

Love you!
 Mama, Daddy, Levi and Ziva

Serenity Harrison
Miscarried December 3, 2009
Parents: Curtis and Jennifer Harrison
Siblings: Leviticus Aaron and Zivala Rose

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Roslynn!**

Today is your 2nd birthday. I hope you are as happy as you could ever be. I know you are in good hands, but I still miss you terribly. I love you, baby. You are always in my heart and mind. Happy birthday!

Roslynn Grace Rodas
September 2-23, 2013
CDH
Mommy: Kristen Rodas

**Happy 6th Birthday, Baby Acosta!**

Not a day goes by we don't miss you dearly. Mommy knows you are in a better place, that you are up there waiting for us to finally meet you and hold you in our arms. Until that day comes, I will be here sending kisses up to heaven, especially for you, sweet angel of mine.

Love XOXO,
 Mommy, Daddy, your brothers and sisters

Baby Acosta
Miscarried November 1, 2009
Parents: Adrian Acosta and Angelina Barajas
Siblings: Angie, Daniel, Kaley, Dominic and Frankie

**Happy 6th Birthday, Isabella!**

We can't believe you would be 6 this year. We still miss you as much as the day we held you. Taking your younger brother to school this year brought a fresh reminder of all we have lost with you. Happy birthday, baby angel. Lots of love from Mommy, Daddy and your brothers.

Isabella Lynne Bailey
December 21, 2009
Cord accident
Also remembering
Baby Bailey
Miscarried April 21, 2009
Parents: Jeremy and Ashley Bailey
Brothers: Anthony and Austin

**Happy 1st Birthday, Liam!**

Liam, my little bunny rabbit, Mommy and Daddy love you.
 We miss you.

Liam Magner
November 23, 2014
Chemical pregnancy
Also remembering
Butterfly Magner
March 14, 2008
Early labor
Delaney Magner
August 28, 2013
Chemical pregnancy
Parents: Terry and Jerrica Magner

**Happy 1st Birthday, Luisito Micah!**

Nuestro regalito que Dios nos mando.
 Descansa mi amor.
 Descansa mi bien.
 Descansa mi campeon.

My angel, we miss you like crazy. We can't wait to hold you again. Happy birthday, my angel.

We love you.
 Mommy, Daddy,
 Sam, Angie, Priscila, Andrew, Daisy, Monica and Mia

Luis Micah Gonzalez
November 18, 2014
Mother's advanced age
Parents: Luis and Eloisa Gonzalez
Siblings: Sam, Angie, Priscila, Andrew,
Daisy, Monica and Mia

**Happy 17th Birthday, Jaykub!**

Dearest Jaykub, you were gone before I even knew you existed, but you still exist in my heart. You would be 17 this year. I miss you so much. Happy birthday, my son.

Jaykub Tielur Ridell
October 16, 1998
Organ failure
Mommy: Meghan Ridell



Happy 6th Birthday, Kavya!

My sweet sweet Kavya ~ 6 years old! "You are my Sunshine my only Sunshine, you make me happy when..." You always make me happy when I think of our days together. Your sister and I talked about what to wish before throwing a penny in a fountain the other day. She said, "I wish my sister to come down from heaven for a long, long time." Your brother and sister both talk about you and from time to time will place a drawing or toy by your picture for you to have. They love you so much! You will forever be the missing link in our family on earth. Sweet precious daughter of mine, I long for you!

Mommy, Daddy, your brother and sister Jacob and Kyra,
your doggies Appu and Daisey

Kavya Kurishungal
December 17-31, 2009
Complications from an omphalocele
Parents: Pravin and Tina Kurishungal
Siblings: Jacob and Kyra

**Happy 14th Birthday, Elizabeth!**

Happy 14th birthday! You are always in our hearts!
We love you and miss you!

Elizabeth Ellen Cox
October 25, 2001
Polycystic kidneys
Also remembering
Baby Cox I
Miscarried March 2000
Baby Cox II
Miscarried October 2003
Parents: Scott and Kathryn Cox
Sisters: Graceanne and Jillian

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Anissa!**

Our precious daughter, the memory of your heartbeat inspires us still. You drew us nearer to God in ways unimaginable. We love you and can't wait to see you in heaven.

Love,
Dadu

Anissa Lani Sanchez
Stillborn November 14, 2013
Parents: Christoval and Anahi Sanchez
Siblings: Ethan Lee and Ezra Lev (due November 30)

**Happy 5th Birthday, Emery!**

Happy 5th birthday! Sweet Emery, Mommy and Daddy love you so very much. Kayden loves you and so do Jayden and George, Jr. We miss you!

Mommy

Emery Torres
October 9, 2010
Placenta abruption
Parents: George and Dallas Torres
Siblings: Kayden, Jayden and George, Jr.

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Mommy's Sweetness!**

Happy 2nd birthday, baby boy! You already know not a day goes by Mommy doesn't think or talk about you. I wish you were here with me, but, as always, I thank God for the gift of you. You are my passion and my reason for everything I do and the difference I am making in other people's lives. Thank you for being my son. I am so proud of you and even more proud I am your mother. I never knew I could create such an amazing person. I love you to infinity!

Anferney Keiron Daniel Crabtree
November 30—December 19, 2013
Septic shock, extreme prematurity
Also remembering
Baby Ekobena I
Miscarried June 2004
Baby Ekobena II
Miscarried April 30, 2007
Baby Ekobena III
Miscarried February 2008
Baby Ekobena
October 2011
Ectopic pregnancy
Baby Ekobena
Miscarried May 23, 2011
Parents: Anthony Crabtree and Queen Ekobena
Sibling: Amari

**Happy 1st Birthday, Baby!**

Happy 1st heavenly birthday, Baby Delmar! We knew about you for such a short time before you left this earth, but you changed our lives for the better, and we grew to love you so much. We look forward to meeting you some sweet day.

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Christian

Baby Delmar
Miscarried December 20, 2014, at 9 weeks
Also remembering
Everett Christopher Delmar
Stillborn April 18, 2012, at 28 weeks
Unknown cause
Parents: Chris and Miranda Delmar
Big brother: Christian

**Happy 1st Birthday, Ethan Nathaniel!**

To our beautiful angel, it seems like yesterday we finally met you and, in the same instant, we had to say goodbye. Your memory will forever live on, and we are comforted in knowing you are watching over us as our guardian angel. You are forever loved, our "Minnie Man Cub."

Love,
Mom and Dad

Ethan Nathaniel Keener
Stillborn November 10, 2014
Parents: Eric and Carlia Keener
Siblings: Bryson and Arian



Happy 1st Birthday, Joy!

I can't believe it was a year ago we saw you and your twin brother on the ultrasound! We were so excited to be expecting twins! All too soon you left us for heaven. I will always remember the joy you brought to our lives in the time you were here. Your twin brother Justus will always know about you. He arrived safely in July, and when I look at him, I wonder how life would be if you were here, too. But I know Jesus is caring for you, your older brother and oldest sibling. That gives me more joy than I can imagine. We love you, miss you and cannot wait for us all to be together one day!

Joy Mitchell
December 2014
Vanishing twin
Also remembering
Gideon Zeller Mitchell
Stillborn May 17, 2011
Membranous cord insertion
Avery Mitchell
Miscarried May 2008
Unknown cause
Parents: Todd and Stormy Mitchell
Brothers: Silas and Justus



Happy 19th Birthday, Joshua and Jeromy!

Would you have taken dates to your last homecoming or senior prom? Would you have graduated with honors? Which college would you have chosen? These questions I will never have answers to. I attended the TCHS graduation and cried because I knew, in a perfect world, I would have watched you both walk across that stage. I should have helped you move into your first dorm room. When those around me are celebrating their child's achievements, I can only live with unanswered questions. I hope one day I can celebrate with you! Heaven sounds sweeter all of the time!

I love you!
 Mom

Joshua and Jeromy Barsanti
November 21, 1996
Anencephaly
Parents: Randy and DaLana Barsanti
Brothers: Taylor, Collin, Harrison and Riley



Happy 8th Birthday, Kenny!

Happy heavenly 8th birthday, my sweet son, my angel! What a big boy you would be! You are in my thoughts and in my heart every day! Your picture is the first thing I see when I open my eyes, and I say good morning to you. Your face is the last thing I see when I lay myself to sleep, and I wish you a good night. You will forever be my greatest accomplishment and the true love of my life! I will cherish you and our memories forever. I can't wait to see you and hold you in my arms again! Mommy loves you to the moon and back times infinity! XOXOXOXOXO

Kenneth Weddington, Jr.
November 7, 2007
Unknown cause
Parents: Kenneth Weddington and Louisa Garza



Happy 1st Birthday, Charlie!

Dear Charlie, it's been one year since you left. We will always love and miss you, but we're grateful to know you're in the arms of Jesus. I'm glad you have our Heavenly Father to look after you and Michelle to play with.

Love,
 Mommy and Daddy

Charlie Everitt
Miscarried November 14, 2014
Parents: Joshua and Olivia Everitt



Happy 2nd Birthday, Arie!

Arie, happy 2nd birthday, little man. Not a day has gone by we haven't thought about you ... thought about what words you would be saying, what kind of kid you would be, would you be talkative like your sister or shy like your mommy, what kind of toys would you be into, and what kind of birthday party would Mommy be throwing you this year. We miss you more than you will ever know. We hope you have the best ever 2nd birthday in heaven. We love you to the moon and back, sweet boy.

Love,
 Mommy, Daddy,
 Big Sister Brinley and little brother Ryker

Arie Witt
November 5, 2013
Unknown cause
Also remembering
Baby Witt
June 27, 2014
Unknown cause
Parents: Mike and Candice Witt
Siblings: Brinley and Ryker



Happy 2nd Birthday, Lillian!

Lily, since the first time we saw you inside Mommy, we fell head over heels in love with you. From the first time we heard your heartbeat, our hearts were forever yours. You, baby girl, have taught us so much about love, beauty and worth. We wish you a very happy 2nd birthday. We are so honored you are ours, and we are yours. We love you so much, darling. We just can't believe it's your 2nd birthday already. Oh how much fun we would be having right now with you, sweetie. We will continue to celebrate you today and every day. There is a space in our hearts reserved for you and you alone, and we continue to be head over heels in love with you. Until the day we see you again know this - you will always be our baby girl, our firstborn, our beautiful daughter. You're Mommy's only sunshine, Daddy's song and joy and Arrow's forever big sissy.

We love you always and forever,
 Daddy, Mommy and Your little brother Arrow
 xoxo

Lillian Ember Stewart
Born to heaven November 23, 2013
Parents: Derek and Bethany Stewart
Little brother: Arrow Ryland



Happy 1st Birthday, Lydia!

Happy 1st birthday, my sweet angel! We miss you every minute of every day. My heart aches for all of the moments with you that will never be. I only held you in my arms once, but I will hold you in my heart forever. It gives me great comfort to know you are watching over us until the day we will join you in God's loving embrace. We love and miss you so much, precious girl! I am so blessed and thankful to be your mommy!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Kylee and Landon

*Lydia Walters
November 25, 2014*

Hydrops

Also remembering

Aiden Walters

Miscarried May 2005, at 12 weeks

Sienna Walters

Miscarried January 2013, at 6 weeks

Parents: William and Jamie Walters

Siblings: Kylee and Landon

**Happy 3rd Birthday, Rylan!**

We miss you so much and wish you were here to experience life with us. Your baby sister is so wonderful to have and has been a great joy. It makes us wish we could have experienced these moments with you. Enjoy your 3rd heavenly birthday. We can't wait to celebrate with you one day. For now we will enjoy a chocolate shake for you and tell your sister about her brother.

All our love,
Daddy, Mommy and Sissy

*Rylan Doucette
November 27, 2012*

Ectopic pregnancy

Parents: Aaron and Kristian Doucette

Little sister: Kinley

**Happy 1st Birthday, Noah!**

Our sweet baby boy, we can't believe you are already celebrating your 1st birthday in heaven. It seems like it was just yesterday when we laid eyes on your beautiful face and felt your sweet presence. The day we met you was so special. You were everything we wanted in a baby boy. You are so loved by many, and you've touched so many lives and will continue to by your story. We miss you and think of you every day. You'll always be a part of our family. There's much we want to say, but we will see you again, sweet boy.

Love always and forever,
Your daddy and mommy

*Noah Andrew Ziehm
December 21-31, 2014*

Labor and delivery complications

Also remembering

Harper Ziehm

Miscarried September 29, 2015

Parents: Andy and Amie Ziehm

**Happy 1st Birthday, Joseph!**

To our beautiful baby boy, I can't believe it's already been a year. Happy 1st birthday in heaven, precious angel. Since we can't hold you in our arms, we will hold you in our hearts forever.

Love
Mommy and Daddy

Joseph Harrison Clift

December 15, 2014

Unknown cause

Parents: Joe Clift and Kandi Ramirez

**Happy 1st Birthday, Amelia!**

Happy birthday, sweet baby girl! How we wish you were here with us! We miss you more than we could ever imagine. You are in our thoughts every single day. You grew strong inside your mommy for 36 weeks and then went to heaven. You are a gift from God. You are our angel and have brought joy to our family. In the few hours we had with you, you taught us to be strong for ourselves and for each other. You taught us to appreciate every minute we have with each other. We love you, Amelia!

Ameila Adaire Hadsell

Stillborn November 3, 2014

Parents: Asa and Amy Hadsell

Brother: Asa

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Malik!**

Happy birthday, our beautiful boy. Not a day goes by Mommy and Daddy don't think of you, miss you and love you. We will forever carry you in our hearts until the day we are reunited and get to hold you again. We want to thank you for being such an amazing guardian angel over your little brother. He will grow up knowing all you have done for him. We love you to the moon and back! Happy 2nd birthday, baby. We will be blowing out your candle for you.

Malik James Saba

December 11, 2013

Incompetent cervix

Parents: Kyle and Cara Saba

Little brother: Talon

**Happy 1st Birthday, Cash!**

We want to wish our first born, our son, Cash James, a happy 1st birthday in heaven! We miss you, sweet little boy! We'll have your smash cake here with family and be thinking of you! Oh, how Mommy and Daddy miss you little bear! We dream of what you would have been like, your smile, your chuckle, your baby babble! We know you looked just like your daddy! So handsome! We long to see you in heaven someday, baby! Love you! Happy birthday!

Cash James Ferguson

November 29—December 6, 2014

Premature birth at 24 weeks

Parents: Austin and Emily Ferguson



Happy 12th Birthday, Marissa!

Happy 12th birthday in heaven, our dear, sweet Marissa Joy! We love you and miss you! Guess what, Marissa? After six little brothers, you finally have a little sister! We were excited to welcome Sophia in May. Our first little girl since you left us. Having a baby girl again is bittersweet. Seeing her achieve all her firsts makes us realize all over again how much we missed out on without you here. No first memories with you still breaks our heart, but we know you are the first of us to meet Jesus! Missing you Marissa, but resting in the peace you are safe in our Savior's arms.

Love,
Your family



Marissa Joy Jordan

November 26, 2003

Skeletal dysplasia

Parents: Sean and Sarah Jordan

Siblings: Stephen, Season, Ethan, Marshall, Clay, Gavin, Gage, Parker, Joshua and Sophia

Happy 1st Birthday, Anna Lexii!

Happy birthday to our little angel in heaven. Not a day goes by we don't mention your name. We all love you, Anna Lexii. You were loved by so many people. You were just here for a few hours but moved the world. How you are dearly missed but never will you be forgotten, my angel. Happy 1st birthday! We hope you receive all 365 balloons we send to you on this day. A balloon for each day you were missed. We will forever hold you in our hearts.

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and big sister Emily

Anna Lexii Garcia

November 11, 2014

Anencephaly

Parents: Jesus and Erika Mosqueda

Big Sister: Emily



Happy 2nd Birthday, Airrington!

Airrington, happy 2nd heavenly birthday, beautiful daughter. Your life has touched more people's lives than we could have ever hoped for. We miss you; we love you. We hope you are dancing at the feet of Jesus, twirling around in His presence. Gable speaks of you and oftentimes wonders about you; he misses you. Save a place for us. One day closer sweetheart.. "Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal."

Happy birthday!
Love always and never not,
Dad, Mom, and your big brother Gable

Airrington Hope Fumagalli

Stillborn December 22, 2013

Unknown cause

Also remembering

Jakoebi Michael Fumagalli

November 21, 2011

Ectopic pregnancy

Parents: Michael and Kirsten Fumagalli

Big Brother: Gable



Happy 2nd Birthday, Mateo!

Mateo, it's been two years since you went to heaven. I want you to know I love you and miss you every single day. Your family prays for you, and we know one day we will be together. In the meantime, we are trying to do our best so you can be proud of us.

Papi, Julieta, Isabella y yo te amamos hijo.
HBD mi amor!

Mateo Gomez

December 15, 2013

Unknown cause

Parents: Alan Gomez and Cinthia Garcia

Sisters: Isabella and Julieta



Happy 5th Birthday, Khlo-Bug!

Happy 5th Birthday/Angelversary Khloe! We know you will have the most beautiful day in heaven. There is not a day goes by we don't think about you. Forever in our hearts and never forgotten. We miss you so much! Love you to the moon and back baby girl. 'Til we meet again Khlo-Bug!

Love,
Daddy and Mommy
(sending you lots of hugs and kisses your way)
Wilson, Willow and Winston (fur siblings)

Khloe Peyton Calderon

December 21, 2010

Potter's syndrome

Parents: Erik and Angie Calderon



Happy 2nd Birthday, Hannah!

Happy 2nd birthday to our precious baby girl. Hannah, you made us a mom and a dad. We miss you every single day. We love you with all of our heart and soul. God truly blessed us with a special little girl, and we wouldn't trade you for anything. You will never be forgotten and will always be loved.

Love Always,
Mommy, Daddy, Little Baby Kimble and your family

Hannah Sue Kimble

Stillborn December 23, 2013

Turner syndrome

Parents: Heather Sue and Jason Robert Kimble

Sibling: Baby Kimble due June 13, 2016



Happy 4th Birthday, Asher!

Four years. How has it been four years? Sometimes it still feels like yesterday since we held you and felt your soft skin. Even though you are with us every day, we still miss you beyond description. You will forever be our little boy, our firstborn. We love you, Baby. Happy birthday!

Asher Samuel Bennett

November 25-27, 2011

Cord accident

Parents: David and Glory Bennett

Little sister: Annalyse



Happy 2nd Birthday, Our Little Enoch!

It's been tough on your parents, but the Lord is helping us out every step of the way. I know you're happy up there with Grandma, and we know we'll see you again. It's not the same without you. We wish you were still here. We can't believe it has been two years since you've been gone. When your parents go to heaven, please be looking for us. We can't wait to see you again! We love you and miss you very much.

"And Enoch walked with God..." - Genesis 5:22

"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalms 147:3

Enoch Miracle Cobberti
December 3, 2013

Uterine fibroids/stage 2 chorioamnionitis
Parents: Mark and Shakira Cobberti



Happy 1st Birthday, Sophia!

She was so perfect the Lord took her early.
We love you, sweet Sophia, and miss you every day!

Sophia Nicole Warner
Miscarried November 17, 2014
Parents: Shane and Stephanie Warner



*Many things in this life are not meant to be understood. We are simply not strong enough to bear them, but where there are gaps in our understanding, there is also the grace of God who has chosen to carry the traveling case for us.
Our role is to trust it into His keeping.*

I Will Carry You: The Sacred Dance of Grief and Joy
By Angie Smith

A Season of Hope

I love the holidays. I am one of those people who do not understand the Scrooges of this world. I love the smells, the weather, the anticipation of decorating and finding that perfect gift. I love gathering with family and getting lost in conversation.

Last Christmas I remember filling my husband's ear with hopeful whispers that this Christmas would be our last without children. This summer as I daydreamed about the holidays, I saw a joy we haven't previously known: large sweaters over a large bump, special gifts for our first holidays as parents, endless conversation of our quickly approaching due date.

Now as the leaves start to fall, my heart drops as I think about the holidays. The familiar scenes play in my head, but sadness blurs the edges and anxiety fills me where eager anticipation used to be. Family pictures without my growing belly; well-intended comments that fall short and pierce my raw heart. I can't help but think that while being surrounded by our closest friends and family I will only further be reminded of what is missing, our third trimester.

This year will most definitely be different, although not the way we had previously believed. In the midst of Christmas carols and holiday cheer, I imagine myself feeling more alone than ever. It is hard for me to imagine that God knows my pain, that He who took my baby, weeps with me. It is hard for me to remember that He, too, had a child—that His child died for me, and for my child. It is hard for me to remember that He now holds my baby, and He is holding me, too. I easily forget that He does not leave me alone.

Maybe this is the new picture that I need in my head when I think of the holidays: an image of a baby that was born many years ago, the baby that would conquer death through death on a cross. The same man that now holds my baby, who is building an eternal glory that far exceeds the pain of this world. I will look to a season of hope that promises that this world is not the end, and that the end will justify the means.

While this first season after losing our baby will no doubt be especially difficult, I don't imagine that ever fully goes away. A very loved, little person will always be missing until we meet in eternity. As the holidays draw near, may we remember our precious children together, hang a stocking for our babies in heaven, and hold close to our hearts the hope found in the birth of Jesus.

♥ *Katelyn Wilson,*
Mommy to Baby Wilson,
M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri

Little Snowdrop

The world may never notice
If a Snowdrop doesn't bloom,
Or even pause to wonder
If the petals fall too soon.
But every life that ever forms,
Or ever comes to be,
Touches the world in some small way
For all eternity.
The little one we longed for
Was swiftly here and gone.
But the love that was then planted
Is a light that still shines on.
And though our arms are empty,
Our hearts know what to do.
For every beating of our hearts
Says that we love you

author unknown



Días de fiesta

Mi Jonathan fue nacido sin vida hace un poco más de veinte años... wow!! Es difícil creer que muchos años han pasado, sin embargo, la picadura persiste y sin duda la temporada de celebraciones lo pueden desencadenar emociones que preferiría nunca a resurgir. Pero lo hacen. El año pasado fue mi XX temporada desde la muerte de Jonathan. Supongo que "20" lo hizo algo de un año monumental para mí. Me hizo reflexionar sobre los pasados veinte años festivos, especialmente el primer año de la temporada Navideña que pase tras el nacimiento sin vida de Jonathan, que eran sólo 6 meses más tarde. Estoy increíblemente agradecida y refrescada de que esas emociones son años detrás de mí, pero no quiero olvidar las lecciones que he aprendido de esa lucha emocional y espiritual.

Si realmente me pongo a pensar en eso, he aprendido mucho en estos 20 años. De hecho, he decidido que estos son regalos que he recibido, no las cicatrices de una batalla. Principalmente, he desarrollado un cambio de perspectiva. Siento que veo cosas de un ángulo diferente a alguien que no han sufrido una tragedia. Apuesto a que usted puede dar fe de la misma. Siento que soy definitivamente más compasiva hacia los que lamentan. Antes de mis pérdidas, no tuve ninguna idea del verdadero dolor físico que uno sufre cuando pierden a alguien quien aman, y cómo uno *nunca* lo puede "superar". Las circunstancias de pérdida pueden ser diferentes, pero el dolor es un dolor feo.

Valoro los embarazos y el milagro de la vida más de lo que lo hice antes. ¿Hay algo más ofensivo o más áspero a nuestros oídos ahora cuando una mujer se queja de problemas de embarazo?? Y los niños... ¿hay algo máspreciado? ¿Nos encontramos demasiados indignados cuando un inocente niño es abusado, descuidado o maltratado? Nos preguntamos, ¿por qué? Honestamente, ¿por qué ese padre recibió un bebe vivo cuando murió el nuestro?

He aprendido que sorprendentemente, no estoy en control de mi vida. Si me conocen, saben que soy un planificadora y una maníaca del calendario! Aún siempre cargo conmigo un gran calendario del año en un vistazo en mi cartera. No pasa nada en mi vida si no está en mi calendario; excepto el nacimiento sin vida de Jonathan y el aborto involuntario de mi bebé en el año 2001. Esto ha sido quizá la lección más grande para mí, sin embargo, es un regalo saber que no estoy en control - el creador del universo tiene el control y honestamente, eso es lo que quiero. El Señor planeó todo y cada uno de mis días antes de cualquiera de ellos llegara a ser, así es que porqué debo pensar que puedo ser o quiero ser responsable?

Además, he aprendido que la vida pasa rápido. ¿Cómo es que mi niño vivo tenga ahora 24 años de edad, casado y vive la vida como un adulto? Solo ayer mismo, era mi adorable niño pequeño que sólo podría caer dormido mientras mantenía mi oído! Por lo tanto, he aprendido a apreciar cada día que todos tenemos. Días duros, tristes y solitarios pasan y también los días buenos y felices. Así que hay que detenernos de ellos!

Por último, el regalo más importante y valioso que he recibido durante los años es la paz. No me gusta que debo tener tres hijos, pero sólo tengo uno. No me gusta el profundo dolor y angustia que he sufrido con los años, y deseo que algunas cosas en mi vida hubieran ido muy diferentes. Pero, como el apóstol Paul dijo en Filipenses 4:11-13, he aprendido el secreto de ser contenida en todas las situaciones. Estar en este lugar es hermoso! Mi esposo, Byron y yo hemos sido muy felizmente casados durante más de 27 años, tenemos un hijo maravilloso, Byron, Jr. y ahora una hija de su esposa, Anna. Somos activos en la obra del Señor y confiamos en que ha preparado muchos años más maravillosos para nosotros.

Mientras soportamos otra temporada de celebraciones sin nuestros queridos, les consejo pensar en los regalos de que su viaje les ha entregado en lugar de pensar en las cicatrices de batalla. Permitan que el Señor les entregue belleza por sus cenizas y oren por la paz sobrenatural que solo él puede darnos.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell,*
Presidente y Fundadora
Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y Mitchell bebé Mitchell

*To the Mother who knows loss,
give...
your heart, your tears, your hand, your listening...
your compassion for her to grieve how ever long.*

The Darkness of Christmas

Christmas season has always been my favorite time of year. I love the food, the carols, the parties, and the giving of gifts. I love the focus on the incarnation of Christ. I love the bright lights and hues of green, silver and red. And I will even admit that I love a good, cheesy Hallmark movie. Christmas makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

Until one year, when it didn't.

I had been married a little more than a year when my first dark Christmas hit. I had every reason to think I would be bursting out of my normal clothes and growing a little baby. But I wasn't. There were no food aversions, no bouts of nausea, and no need for stretchy pants. The baby inside me had stopped growing weeks before. I was devastated. I felt little Christmas joy that year; there was only Christmas ache and a longing for what might have been. It wasn't my last sad Christmas, as we waited for God to provide us with children. What was once such a happy family time for me suddenly became a stinging reminder of the very thing I wanted most but still lacked: a family filled with children of my own.

Whenever we talk about Christmas we think about happy, joyous times, and that is most certainly the case for many. In the years since our first loss, we've had Christmases of joy and Christmases of sorrow. We know the feelings of both. But for others, Christmas can carry a dark cloud of sadness, a sadness that never seems to let up and is only exacerbated by the happiness swirling around you. For some, Christmas is a reminder of the darkness of painful circumstances. It carries no tidings of great joy. Maybe you are facing your first Christmas without your spouse or parents. Maybe you are reminded every Christmas season of your longings for a spouse. The loneliness can make celebrating the holidays too much to bear. Maybe your table is missing a beloved child who is wayward, and things never seem the same without him. Maybe your parents are divorced and you shuffle between two houses on Christmas Day, while your friends spend family time together. Christmas feels isolating and meaningless when all is not as it should be.

Whatever darkness you are facing this Christmas, know this: with all of the songs and festivities that point to good cheer and great joy, Christmas recalls darkness unlike any we will ever experience, but a darkness that brought light into a fallen world.

Mary's Soul-Piercing Pain

While Christmas is about the dawning of great joy in the coming of our Savior, it also foreshadows the darkness of His crucifixion. Simeon told Mary of her Son's purpose, that a sword would pierce her own soul (Luke 2:35). Mary, the woman whose heart warmed for her Son with every kick in the womb. Mary, the woman who nursed and diapered the very Son of God. Mary, the woman who loved and raised her Son like any other mother would do. And while He was no ordinary Son, He was still *her* Son. Bearing the Son of God did not make her numb to the often painful realities of motherhood, and her pain would be excruciating. No earthly person felt the weight of Christ's purpose like she did. While many were rejoicing at His coming, she would one day face the agonizing grief of watching her Son suffer on the cross for her sins and our sins.

It's easy to idolize Mary as a super-human vessel, ready to do whatever was asked of her. While she was certainly godly, she was still human. She was still a mother. This is what Simeon is getting at in his prophecy. With the atonement for our sins came the motherly pain of Mary. As she stared at that little Baby in the manger, she may not have fully understood all that was going to take place, but God the Father did. The birth of our Savior carried an ominous shadow of the darkness to come.

God's Chosen Pain

Mary may not have fully understood what Jesus was sent to do, but God the Father knew of this imminent grief and ordained it to be (Isaiah 53:10). Jesus knew what was expected of Him, and He agonized over the grief and suffering waiting for Him at Calvary (Luke 22:39-46). With every shepherd's praise and magi's gift, the Father knew that the perfect fellowship would soon be momentarily broken for sin. In her book *When God Weeps: Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty*, Joni Eareckson Tada wrote of the Father and the Son's grief at the cross:

The Father watches as His heart's treasure, the mirror-image of himself, sinks drowning into raw, liquid sin. Jehovah's stored rage against humankind from every century explodes in a single direction. "Father! Father! Why have you forsaken me?!" But heaven stops its ears. The Son stares up at the One who cannot, who will not, reach down in reply. The Trinity had planned it. The Son endured it. The Spirit enabled him. The Father rejected the Son whom He loved. Jesus, the God-man from Nazareth, perished. The Father accepted His sacrifice for sin and was satisfied. The Rescue was accomplished. God set down His saw. This is Who asks us to trust Him when He calls on us to suffer.

With the joy over this little Baby in the manger came the promised reality that the joy would soon turn to momentary grief. We have a perfect heavenly Father who knows what it means to grieve over loss. The darkness of our Christmas is not foreign to this God. He is not aloof. He is present with us, because He knows us deeply and walks with us in our pain. He has endured deep pain, too.

When we think about Christmas and are heartbroken to face another holiday with tears, we have hope. While Mary faced heart-piercing grief as she birthed her Son, this grief was for the good of us all. While God the Son suffered at the crucifixion, by this suffering we are healed (Isaiah 53:5), and He is a great high Priest who can sympathize with our sufferings (Hebrews 4:15).

Whatever darkness you face this Christmas, it is not the final word in your life. It may be lifelong. It may feel like it will never let up. It may threaten to undo you at times. And it is real. But we can grieve this holiday with hope that one day the Baby who came in a manger will wipe every tear from our eyes and make His blessings flow for us forever (Revelation 21:4). The darkness that hovered over His cradle did not win. And it won't win over us either.

Courtney Reissig is a writer, wife, and mom to twin boys. She is married to Daniel, and together they live in Little Rock, Arkansas, and serve at Midtown Baptist Church. You can read more of her writing on her blog or follow her on Twitter.

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The Counselor's Corner

“Providing Guidance Through Life’s Storms”
 Written by Susan A. Adams, PhD, LPC-S, NCC
www.drSusanAdams.com

Grieving does not stop during the holidays. Many have lost a significant person or more than one person (baby, child or adult), and the holidays are a real emotional struggle. Often clients say they just want to “stay in bed and pull the covers over their head” in hopes they can ignore their surroundings and feelings.

Houses are decorated, families often gather, and traditions are celebrated – sometimes by choice, sometimes for other family members, and sometimes because “we’ve always done it that way before.” However, for those who are grieving, it can be a painful reminder of empty arms or empty chairs. The silence can be deafening and establishes a crescendo full of pain that is reflective of the wounded spirit within us.

Finding a way through the sea of smiling faces and expectations is certainly challenging. There is not a “one size fits all” either. Finding something to “give” when you feel empty inside can generate a spiral of negative emotions that just further emphasizes the loss and pain you are experiencing.

I am reminded of a story about a Canadian minister who worked with those who did not have enough to eat or a place to sleep. A young 7-year-old boy helped the pastor remember what true ministering and service to those who were hurting was all about.

The young boy invited his pastor to his home one hot summer day. The pastor went in spite of his negative feelings related to the heat and lack of safety in the neighborhood. As he sat in the house with the young boy and his mother, he surveyed his surroundings. Even though the house was as clean as the boy’s mother could make it, he noticed the leaky faucet, missing floor tiles, boarded up broken windows, and a general stuffy, putrid smell that drifted in from the surrounding neighborhood.

Suddenly, the young boy asked his pastor if he would like a cup of cold water. The pastor would welcome the cold water, but had concerns about the purity of water. However, he accepted the offer. He watched as the young boy took the largest ice cube from the tray in the freezer, put it in a cup stained by use over time, and ran tap water into the cup. Then he lovingly handed it to the minister to drink. *What a gift!* This young boy had demonstrated the simple act of kindness as he gave what he could.

This holiday season what can you give to others? For some reading this column, your grief is fresh and raw. For others, you have experienced numerous holiday seasons. As I remind my clients, grief is not about comparison to determine who hurts the worse. It is about honoring the woundedness of your own heart and reaching out to someone else who is also hurting. It is too easy to pull our own grief and pain around us -- almost like righteous rags rather than open our hearts to healing and loving again. Fear becomes our shield: fear of being hurt; fear of forgetting the person who died, fear of what tomorrow might bring.

May I gently challenge you to be brave and recognize that there are those around you who just may need a cup of cold water only you can give? Matthew 10:42 says, “You can be sure that whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of these my followers because he is my follower, will certainly receive a reward” (GNB version). Grief shared is cut in half.

All of this column’s resources are available through www.centering.org. I’ve tried to select a variety of resources that might be helpful along your journey. (FYI – this is my favorite place to order grief related materials. They have such a variety of resources, and they are reasonably priced! Dr. A)

An Empty Cradle: A Full Heart, by Christine O’Keeffe Lafsert. This is a collection of more than a hundred short meditations that beautifully interweaves the very real feelings of bereaved parents with Scripture passages that provide comfort, direction, and a send of hope.

Fathers Grieve, Too, by Dr. S. M. Johnson, Rev. Terry Morgan, Joy Johnson, Chaplain James Cunningham, Earl Katz, Dr. Ray Goldstein. Helpful information for men. Makes a good handout and available in Spanish, also. Only \$0.75.

Miscarriage: A Man’s Book, by Rick Wheat. This resource can help men with their own grief, help them share and understand their wife’s grief, and help them know what they can do to better navigate the difficult days which lie ahead. Author has been there and has based his writing on his own experiences.

Given in Love, by Maureen Connelly. This book is especially for working with mothers who are choosing an adoption plan. Includes discussion about decisions, mementos, naming, saying goodbye, and includes a letter to the baby and the adoptive parents. Also include a healing service for giving a child in love.

Grieving Grandparents, by Lori Leininger. This book is a practical exploration of the anguish, sorrow, and sense of helplessness grandparents feel when their beloved grandchild dies following miscarriage, stillbirth, SIDS or infant death. Information will help grandparents as they attempt to comfort and support their children who suffer while they also learn to cope with their own grief.

Dallas/Fort Worth Walk to Remember

The 19th annual M.E.N.D. Walk to Remember was truly a beautiful day to remember. More than 1,000 people came to acknowledge and remember more than 360 babies. Our speaker, Janay McDonald Wilborn, was amazing! Janay candidly shared her journey of the grief she endured following the loss of her two sweet babies, but most importantly shared the hope and peace she has in the Lord. The balloon release was absolutely emotionally spectacular as balloons floated to the sky, symbolizing our babies going to heaven.

Mark your calendars now for the 20th Anniversary Walk to Remember, which will be held on Saturday, October 1, 2016.

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Tiff's Treats, Las Colinas
Glenn and Nancy Martin
A.K. and Kay Hindocha
Rack Room Shoes
Rosa Cruz

Kathryn Cox
Dianna Mupeti
Jennifer Sharp
JD and Magen Kaye
Torie Myers
Ashley Cruz
Zulema Cano
Michelle Rose
Precious Moments
Nothing Bundt Cakes, Southlake
Lisa Synrod
Chris and Monica Gregory
Katie Partington
My Forever Child
Rachael McClelland
Shawna Abbott
Menaca Padakandla
David and Brittney Fish
DeAnna Cochran Jewelry
Kendra Scott Jewelry
Adventure Kids Playcare
Angelique and Doug Sohn
Inspired Creations by CEO
Grand Prairie Air Hogs Baseball
Magen Kaye, Jamberry Consultant
FC Dallas
Jason's Deli
Nataly Grau
Alley Cats
Chick-fil-A
Fito and Jackie Hernandez
Dallas Mavericks
Design Your Own Labs
The Haven's Spa
Jennifer Perkins
Katie and Andres Gomez

Dallas Stars
Amanda Hulse
Amy Ray
Sympathy Solutions
Lone Star Park at Grand Prairie
Theatre 3
Sewell / Mini of Plano
Cotton Patch Café
Smashburger
Spring Creek Barbeque
Fort Worth Zoological
Donald and Amanda Vanloon
Chelsea Anderson
Robert and Liz Walker
Danny and Helen Lynch
Texas Rangers
Billy Bob's Texas
Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
Steve, Michelle and Joyce Skrasek
Jena's Jems
Pics by Azul
Red Lobster
Jaimi Wilkins
Advocates of Anferney
Seth and Nicole Herrick
Metal Motif
AMC Theatres
Anything Goes
Bryan and Lesa Lynch
Anne Stimmel
Rebecca Workman
Disneyland
Sterling Images
The Comfort Club

Houston Walk to Remember

M.E.N.D.—Houston had a extremely successful Walk to Remember. Thank you to everyone who attended our 10th Annual Walk to Remember. We had more than 800 people in attendance as we remembered the precious lives of more than 200 babies. We especially thank the team of volunteers who made the Walk possible. We heard the beautiful singing voice of Theresa Yow and the heartfelt story of loss and grace from Kelly Gerken. God’s comfort and hope was so present that day.



Sponsors

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 Houston Zoo
 Sheri Marie Salon
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 Patricia Rodriguez
 Debbie Ozuna
 Linda Gonzales
 Josh and Ashley Albritton
 Leah Alanna Todd
 Roberta Causley
 Stefanie and Greg Miller

Dallas/Fort Worth
 Walk to Remember



How to Care for Women Who Have Miscarried

When I found out I was pregnant, I remember excitedly texting a friend who was much further along, asking her a boatload of questions about what was normal for the first trimester. We swapped plans and even shared the same expectant mother's Facebook group. By the time her due date neared, I was texting her every day to ask how she was faring.

She went into labor two weeks after I miscarried. She texted me days before: *It's okay if you would rather me just stop texting you baby news. I understand if that's too much for you right now, and I won't be offended.*

I knew that, whatever my response, she would try to be understanding and patient with me. In the days following my bleak announcements, friends like her became invaluable to me, and in the months since, I've grown to appreciate her sensitivity all the more.

There is no magic bullet that can make the pain of having a miscarriage disappear. However, in my quest to love women who have experienced this loss (Romans 12:15), and as a woman who has been touched by it herself, there are a few things that have been comforting reminders of how the Lord uses his people to care for one another.

1. Share the Joy

I have always loved children, but it wasn't until I took a class on ethics and unborn life that my interest in the intricacies of pregnancy and birth took flight, so much so that I did a research paper on the history of midwifery. A whole new world was opened to me. I had always known that the Lord was the author of life (Psalm 139:13), but to see just how beautifully crafted that life was in the womb blew my mind.

Pregnancy is a beautiful thing, and children are a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). The reality of miscarriage should not squelch our thanksgiving for the gift of that new life, whether it lasts nine weeks or ninety years. If you're pregnant, no matter how early, your news is cause for rejoicing, even if it reminds us of a painful loss.

2. Carry Humbly

However, in that joy, be careful not to flaunt your assurance, but carry your child humbly before the Lord. Growing up, miscarriage wasn't a topic shrouded in mystery. Pregnancies were usually announced early and losses were shared. Although each individual couple must choose the timing and the openness that is best for them, I was immensely blessed by the openness of the mothers in my community. The Lord used them to teach me long before my own pregnancy that the gift of life was in the hands of the Lord (Job 1:21).

I do not recommend that expectant mothers fill their minds with looming statistics, endlessly Google inane symptoms, or prepare for the worst. This sort of pessimism is just a cry for help from a micromanager who aches for control. But I also caution, especially young first-time moms, to view each day they have with their little one as a blessing to be received with gratitude, not entitlement.

3. Love by Listening

It can be easy to check on someone when the pain of a miscarriage is recent, but don't forget to ask how they're doing six, twelve, or eighteen months later. Miscarriage, especially in the first pregnancy, carries a host of baggage. Mother's Day can be hard. Pregnancy announcements can be bittersweet. The idea of a new pregnancy can be frightening.

God has placed us in the Body of Christ and called us to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2). Miscarriage is becoming less of a taboo subject, and it's a helpful trend for pain that has been silenced for far too long. Love your sisters by listening.

4. Remain Present

What I loved most about my friend's message was that she didn't just fall off the face of the earth when she thought her pregnancy might be painful to me. She asked. Not all of my friends felt as bold, but whether or not they came out and posed the question, I still appreciated the fact that so many of them reached out to me.

Miscarriage is scary, especially for moms-to-be. It tests the limits of our submission to God's sovereignty like little else. It forces us to put our money where our mouth is after claims of trusting that He knows what is best for us and our loved ones. Don't run from that challenge as it sprouts up in the lives of the women around you; embrace them and embrace the call to trust the Lord.

5. Ask Questions

Not all women are the same. Some of the things recommended in this article truly blessed me but may be an annoyance to others. As with any other sort of loss, miscarriage affects different women in so many ways. However, as others asked me how best to care for me during that dark season, I was so grateful that the question was on the forefront of their minds.

My friend gets to hold her baby, and I love to see pictures of him, not because it diminishes the pain of my own loss, but because, by her care, my friend reminded me that it is more than motherhood that binds us; she is a sister in Christ whose heart was sensitive to the groaning of my own. The value of that love is immeasurable.

Parents Guaranteed Right to Bury Stillborn Babies

When Erica Raef learned 13 weeks into her pregnancy that her unborn child no longer had a heartbeat, she was devastated. But when she and her husband, Joshua, began making the difficult plans of delivering and burying their baby — whom they named Liam — they were dealt an unexpected burden on top of tragedy.

A doctor told the Amarillo couple that if Erica Raef delivered in a hospital, they wouldn't be able to take Liam's body for burial. Texas law did not allow hospitals to release the remains of stillborn infants less than 20 weeks old, they were told.

Although the couple believed delivering in a hospital was safer, they chose to do so at home so they would be able to bury Liam. Hours after miscarrying at home, Erica Raef began bleeding uncontrollably. She passed out on their bathroom floor, and Joshua Raef rushed her to the hospital.

"It was a very traumatic experience that I wouldn't wish on anyone," Erica Raef told a Texas House committee in April as she fought back tears. "This is ultimately why we are here today, to make sure this doesn't happen anymore."

And starting Sept. 1, it won't. Moved by the Raefs' story, lawmakers passed House Bill 635, which guarantees parents the right to the remains of their unborn children, regardless of how small they are.

Texas hospitals have had different policies on releasing fetal remains. Many will give the remains of stillborn infants to parents if asked, but some interpret state law to classify fetal remains less than 350 grams as "medical waste," said Charles Bailey, a lawyer and senior vice president with the Texas Hospital Association.

"There were some established laws with respect to how you would handle fetal remains above a certain age and above a certain weight," said state Rep. Walter "Four" Price, R-Amarillo, who authored HB 635. "But it was not as clear and hospitals had different policies with respect to anything that fell outside those ranges."

The hospital association supported HB 635, which the Texas House and Senate unanimously passed, because it clarifies the law and allows hospitals to honor parents' requests, Bailey said.

"We want to be sensitive to the wishes of parents," he said. "This just clarifies that hospitals will be able to honor those wishes."

Most hospitals already allow fetal remains to be released to parents, Price said. Neither the hospital association nor the Department of State Health Services could provide specific numbers on how many hospitals had a policy forbidding the release of fetal remains below 350 grams, but Price said he thinks stories like the Raefs' are more common than one might think because most people do not discuss them.

Speaking to state lawmakers in April, Joshua Raef said, "I know that's maybe a minority of hospitals in the state" that forbid the release of fetal remains below 350 grams. "But for us, it was everything."

Dr. Moss Hampton, who leads the Texas branch of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, says that in such cases, it's always safer for a mother to deliver at a hospital. Hampton said that mothers can have dangerous medical complications. Also, if the miscarriage occurs at home, a doctor could have trouble determining the cause to prevent it from happening again.

"From a physician's standpoint, you would like everyone to deliver in a hospital," Hampton said.

Although the Raefs knew delivering at home could be dangerous, Joshua Raef said they did not regret their choice.

"In the end, going through all that, it was still worth it to have our baby to bury," he told lawmakers.

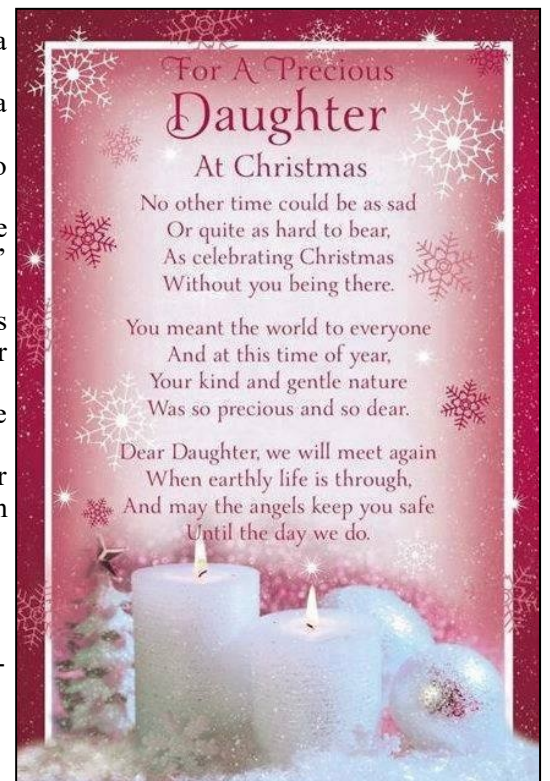
When state Sen. Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound, the bill's Senate sponsor, introduced the legislation in a committee hearing, she said the Raefs' story moved her to tears.

"This is a bill we need to pass," Nelson said at the Senate hearing. "That's the goal of this bill — to ensure that a parent has the opportunity for a proper burial of their deceased child."

The Raefs, who have three children, drove seven hours to testify before lawmakers in support of the bill.

"If this law can help even one family grieve for their child in the manner they choose, we feel like it is a great success," Joshua Raef told the *Tribune* in an email.

Written by Stephanie Bollag. Originally published August 17, 2015 in the *Texas Tribune*. Retrieved October 16, 2015 at <https://www.texastribune.org/2015/08/17/law-guarantees-parents-right-bury-stillborn-babies/>.



M.E.N.D.

Chapter Corner**Chapter Meeting****Information****M.E.N.D.—Houston**

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
4500 Bissonnet, Ste 337B,
Bellaire, Texas 77401

Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.
Lone Star College,

3200 College Park Dr, Room A228,
The Woodlands, Texas 77384

Director: Stormy Mitchell
stormym@mend.org, (281) 374-8528

Subsequent pregnancy group meets
on odd numbered months
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.,

led by Chiara Ott (chiara@mend.org).

Daddy's group meets quarterly
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.,
led by Greg Miller (stephaniem@mend.org)

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana

Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
CHRISTUS St. Michael Rehab Hospital
2400 St. Michael Drive
Texarkana, Texas 75503
Director: Monica Davis
monica@mend.org, (903) 490-1210

M.E.N.D.—NW Washington

Meets the 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m.
Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room
1800 Myhre Rd.
Silverdale, Washington 98383
Gig Harbor Meeting
Meets the 4th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.
St. Anthony Hospital/Greenpoint Dining Room
11567 Canterwood Blvd NW,
Gig Harbor, Washington 98332
Director: Stacy McGhee
stacym@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
Project H.O.P.E.
1419 S. Enterprise
Springfield, Missouri 65804
Director: Kathryn Gold
kathryn@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates***Tulsa***

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa is looking forward to hosting our 4th Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony to commemorate our babies during the busy holiday season. It will be held on Tuesday, December 8, 2015, at 7:00 p.m., at Liberty Church. For additional information, please contact me at lisa@mend.org or (918) 694-4325 (HEAL).

Lisa Daily

NW Washington

Thank you to Brian Kurzrock for his generous donation of two Seahawks tickets, and thank you to all those who participated in this fundraiser. We raised \$875. These funds will help us have a wonderful Christmas Candlelight Ceremony. Our Christmas Ceremony will be on December 12, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. Please visit the M.E.N.D. website for more information, to RSVP and register for childcare.

Stacy McGhee

Wichita Falls

M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls continues to meet regularly on the second Thursday of the month. We are currently planning a special Christmas ceremony for our December meeting. More information will be coming soon.

Sarah Fukasawa

Amarillo

After having the privilege of serving the Amarillo area families who have lost babies due to miscarriage, stillbirth or early infant death since 2010, our chapter closed, holding its last meeting in September. It was a decision that was prayed about and taken very seriously. I am truly blessed to have been a part of M.E.N.D. and am so thankful for the opportunity God has given me over the last five years to serve Him through M.E.N.D.

Becky Anderson

Texarkana

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana will have our 9th Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony at Beech Street First Baptist Church Family Activity Center on Saturday, December 18, at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to attend the ceremony, please contact Monica at 903-490-1210 or monica@mend.org.

Monica Davis

Bryan/College Station

I want to say a big THANK YOU to Texas Avenue Baptist Church for hosting our 5th Annual Balloon Release, Kroger of College Station for donating two fruit trays for the event, and Stefanie Miller for donating her time to take family photos.

Jennie Drude

SW Missouri

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri had 80 in attendance to for our 5th Annual Breakfast Balloon Release, honoring 35 babies in heaven. I could not have done it without the help of Heather Fann, Rachel Dell, Jennifer Harrison, Ashley Sudheimer and our friends at Second Baptist. Thank you to Second Baptist for providing a beautiful venue to hold our ceremony.

Our Christmas Ceremony will be held on Monday, December 7, 2015. For more information, please contact me at Kathryn@mend.org.

Kathryn Gold

Chicagoland

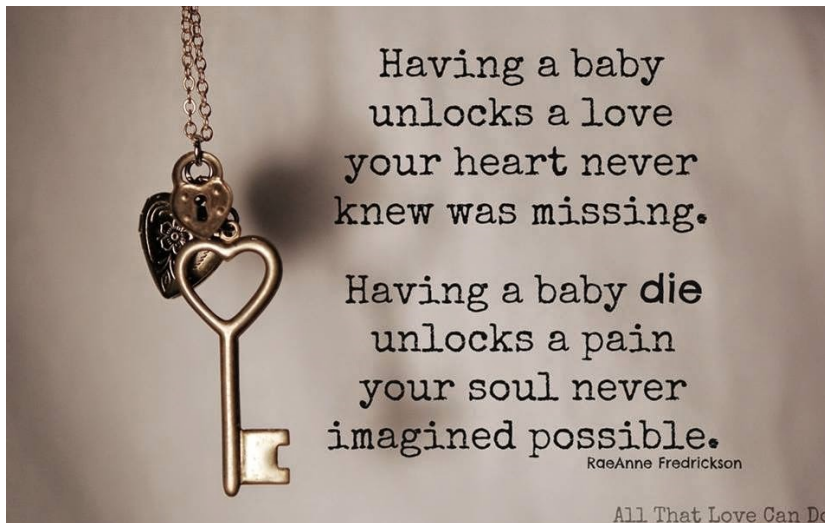
M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland looks forward to having a M.E.N.D. Christmas tree at the Brookfield Zoo lights display over the Christmas season. We are excited to be able to remember and honor our babies as well as raise awareness for M.E.N.D. in the Chicago area. We are thankful to be able to continue to serve hurting moms and dads in our area.

Sara Hintz

Houston

We are looking forward to our Christmas Candlelight Ceremony (CCC) on December 5, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at Spring Baptist Church. M.E.N.D.'s own DaLana Barsanti will be sharing an inspirational message and her gift of music with us. Please keep watch on your email and the website for more information on the CCC. The Christmas Candlelight Ceremony is the perfect way to incorporate your babies in heaven into your holiday festivities.

Stormy Mitchell

**M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station**

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.
Texas Avenue Baptist Church
3400 State Highway 6 S,
College Station, Texas 77845
Director: Jennie Drude
jennie@mend.org, (979) 220-7851

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa

Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
Canyon Crossing
1651 E Old North Rd.
Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063
Director: Lisa Daily
lisa@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls, Texas

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.
Christ Home Place Ministries
1420 Twin Oaks Street
Wichita Falls, Texas 76302
Director: Sarah Fukasawa
sarahf@mend.org, (940) 642-3284

M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland, Illinois

Meets the 1st Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
St Peter Lutheran Church
202 E Schaumburg Road
Schaumburg, Illinois 60194
Director: Sara Hintz
saraann@mend.org, (630) 267-9134

M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings in the Dallas Metroplex

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

M.E.N.D. main chapter meetings

are held the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Daddies group

meets the 2nd Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

A time for dads to meet together and discuss topics relevant 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 from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Led by Liz Walker: liz@mend.org
For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.

Food and Fellowship

are held the 4th Thursday of every month at 8:00 p.m. at the Corner Bakery in Southlake Town Center

A time to relax and meet with other M.E.N.D. parents in a social setting.

Contact Brittney Fish:
brittney@mend.org

Infertility group

meets the 3rd Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Cheryl Davis for meeting location and information at Cheryl@mend.org

For families experiencing infertility after a loss.

Parenting After Loss Playgroup

Meets monthly at various locations in the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex.

Contact Magen Kaye: Magen@mend.org or call (214) 435-3870

Mommies AND daddies are both welcome at all M.E.N.D. meetings. Unless otherwise noted, all support group meetings are held at:

**Wells Fargo Bank
800 W. Airport Freeway
Irving, TX 75062**

(Located in the Crystals Pizza parking lot, between MacArthur and O'Connor) Meetings will be in the bank board room, located on the first floor.

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

In Loving Memory**Courtney Liza Abare**

December 15, 2008
Placenta abruption
Given by mommy Julie Abare

Baby Abbott

Miscarried October 30, 2013
Holland and Hayden Abbott
Stillborn August 9, 2014
TTTS
Given by parents Tyler and Shawna Abbott

Grace Selena Aguilar

November 15, 2013
Given by parents Jason Aguilar
and Jennifer Nizzi

Emma Bailey

Stillborn April 23, 2008
Incompetent cervix
Brooklyn, Jillian and Sydney Bailey
January 1-2, 2010
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Chad and Melissa Bailey

Andrew Robert Bateman

Stillborn October 7, 2014
Unknown cause
Given by parents Tim and Laura Bateman
and sisters Leah and Hannah

Betancourt Babies "2"

Miscarried
Angel Betancourt
Miscarried October 4, 2013
Given by mommy Lizeth Pescina

Henry Back

Miscarried July 26, 2013
Given by parents Jacob and Jennifer Back
and siblings Emily and Natalie

Levi Samuel Bowmer

April 19, 2013
Trisomy 13 and tetralogy of fallot
with absent pulmonary valve
Gifts given by
Parents Jenae and Sam Bowmer
Grandmother Jami Wilkins

Liam and Sebastian Callaway

Stillborn August 5, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Rori and Zach Callaway
Sibling: Miles and Aurelia
Gifts given by
"Grams" Gayle Groce
The Harrington School, Inc.

Melly Josefina Cano-Meyer

May 29, 2014
Given by mommy Zulema Cano

Michael Dean Chesnut

January 7, 2010
Mayson James Chesnut
August 18, 2010
Mark Anthony Chesnut
August 18, 2010
Baby Chesnut A
June 13, 2011
Baby Chesnut B
December 5, 2011
Given by mommy Brittany Chesnut

Audrey Grace and Addison Lee Cochrane

September 26, 2015
Prematurity
Parents: Rob and Casey Cochrane
Gifts given by
Mike Gothelf and Jenn Hoye
Dwayne Chapman
Terie Nickell
Chip Sowden
Diane Pappé

Samuel Adan Contreras

Stillborn November 11, 2010
Cord accident
Parents: Mercedes and Alfredo Contreras
Given by Dr Delphinium Designs & Events

Baby Cox I

Miscarried March 2000

Elizabeth Ellen Cox

October 25, 2001
Multicystic kidneys

Baby Cox II

Miscarried October 2003
Given by parents Scott and Kathryn Cox
and siblings Graceanne and Jillian

Abigail Grace Crump

July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Given by parents Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli

Jael Jose Rodriguez Cruz

August 4, 2015
Given by mommy Ashley Cruz

Nathan Joshua Cruz

September 14, 2009
Given by Rosa Cruz

Brooke Sophia Daily

Stillborn March 11, 2010
Vasa previa
Given by parents Jeremy and Lisa Daily
and sisters Sarah and Savannah

Sophie Jane Darnell

Stillborn May 28, 2012
Unknown cause
Gifts given by
Parents Tommy and Brea Darnell
and siblings Luke and Piper
Grandparents Danny and Helen Lynch
Grandmother Tammy Darnell

Riley and Parker Davis

November 14, 2006
Prematurity
Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis
and little sister Annalise

Baby Dill

Miscarried May 2002
Cooper Graham Dill
Stillborn May 26, 2003
TTTS and cord accident
Given by parents Jim and Brandee Dill
and siblings Avery, Tate
and Paxton (Cooper's twin)

Westin Dobbins

August 8, 2012
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Cortney and Randy Dobbins
and siblings Cynlee and Colt

Logan Wayne Fish

September 17, 2002
Skeletal dysplasia
Given by parents David and Brittney Fish
and brothers Landry and Hudson

Paislee Ann Frette

April 4-5, 2012
Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome
Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette
Gifts given by grandparents
James and LuAnn Junkin

Jacob Yoshiaki Fukasawa

Stillborn February 8, 2010
Unknown cause
Given by parents Yoshi and Sarah Fukasawa
and siblings Ava and Noah

Arrington Hope Fumagalli

Stillborn December 22, 2013
Unknown cause
Jakoebi Michael Fumagalli
Miscarried November 21, 2011
Ectopic pregnancy
Given by parents Michael and Kirsten Fumagalli
and brother Gable

Mateo Gomez

December 15, 2013
Unknown cause
Given by parents Alan Gomez and Cinthia Garcia
and sisters Isabella and Julieta

Nelson Eric Gonzales

February 28, 2014
Given by mommy Elaine Gonzales

Max Graham

Stillborn March 12, 2013
Placental abruption
Given by parents Aaron Graham
and DeAndrea Dare and little sister Maeze

Serenity Harrison

Miscarried December 3, 2009
Given by parents Curtis and Jennifer Harrison
and little siblings Leviticus and Zivala

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 page 2 of this newsletter for more information regarding where to send your donations and what information to include.

Thank you so much!

Samuel Hintz

Stillborn October 29, 2008
Cord accident

Joel Hintz

Stillborn July 3, 2009

Baby Taylor Hintz

Miscarried February 2010

Parents: Greg and Sara Hintz
Siblings: Louis, Caleb, Anna, Elijah,
Hope, Levi and Isaiah
Given by grandparents Wally and Ann Neumann

Jayden Noah Kaye

Stillborn October 10, 2006
Unknown cause

Baby Kaye

Miscarried December 2007

Tucker Steven Kaye

Stillborn February 8, 2010

Genetic disorder

Given by parents JD and Magen Kaye
and siblings Noah and Mia

Emma Krymkiewicz

May 5, 2009

Neonatal hemochromatosis

Baby Girl Krymkiewicz

Miscarried June 13, 2008

Given by parents Hernan
and Ana Krymkiewicz and sister Isabella

Kavya Kurishungal

December 17-31, 2009

Complications from an omphalocele

Given by parents Pravin and Tina Kurishungal
and siblings Jacob and Kyra

Emmaline Ila Legg

July 29, 2010

Full-term placental abruption

Baby Legg I

Miscarried 1999

Baby Legg II

Miscarried 2009

Baby Legg III

Miscarried April 13, 2011

Parents: Jimmy and Ami Legg

Siblings: Mckinley, Madeline and Maxton
Given by Ellen Brenan

Catherine Mary Martin

Stillborn December 15, 2001

Baby Martin I

Miscarried June 14, 2002

Baby Martin II

Miscarried September 2002

Given by parents Glenn and Nancy Martin
and siblings Alexander and Alison

Jaylen Montrell Matlock

July 15, 2007

Given by mommy Torie Myers

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord accident

Baby Mitchell

Miscarried December 2001

Given by Dentistry of Las Colinas /
Byron L. Mitchell DDS

Mekhi and Imani Mupeti

June 7, 2013

Prematurity

Given by parents Micky and Dianna Mupeti

Eden Nwaokelemeh

May 1-6, 2015

Sepsis

Given by parents Nonye and
Angelita Nwaokelemeh

Carter Patrick Outen

Stillborn November 6, 2000

Cord accident

Baby Outen I

Miscarried April 3, 2001

Baby Outen II

Miscarried October 5, 2001

Given by parents Chris and Shannon Outen
and sisters Erin and Charlie

Margot Lily Perry

Stillborn June 10, 2013

Cord accident

Parents: Brandon and Marisa Perry

Siblings: Adeline and Bennett

Given by Marie "Grammie" Perry

Lilly Claire Pitchford

September 11-12, 2009

Taylor Shea Pitchford

April 2015

Given by mommy Jennifer Pitchford

Julian David Rodriguez

April 1, 2007

Prematurity

Given by mommy Rachel Prado-Wall

Elena Marie Rusert

May 23, 2011

Prematurity

Given by parents Michael and Tina Rusert
and brothers Liam, Asher, and Gavin

Morgan Schear

Miscarried March 28, 2006

Given by parents Nobel and Paula Schear
and big brother Isaac

Theo Fleurima Shannon

Stillborn August 10, 2006

Stroke

Geri Fleurima Shannon (mother)

May 21, 1970—June 11, 2015

Sudden illness

Dad/Husband: Ted Shannon

Sister/Daughter: Ysabel

Given by Arguello, Hope and Associates, PLLC

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997

TTTS and Polyhydramnios

Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith
and siblings Travis and Julia

Aiden Xavier Sohn

October 13, 2002

HELLP Syndrome

Hope Sohn

Miscarried May 2003

Whisper Sohn

Miscarried October 2003

Given by parents Doug and Angelique Sohn
and brothers Sebastian and Benjamin

Baby Stevens

Miscarried March 1, 2013

Given by parents Zach and Hope Stevens
and siblings Zepan, Ezra and Malachi

Urda Twins

Miscarried February 2014

Rosalie Grace Urda

Stillborn October 31, 2014

Unknown cause

Given by parents Peter and Janelle Urda

Eli Simiyu Lynn Vaxter

June 15—August 30, 2015

Given by Brenda Vaxter

Kyle Charles Walton

November 19, 1998

Group B Strep and lack of proper nourishment

Parents: Kristen and Kyle Walton

Siblings: Jessica, Laura and Joshua

Given by Moxie Pest Control

Cora Anne Watts

Stillborn February 10, 2015

Cord accident

Parents: Alan and Kenzie Watts

Gifts given by

Carolyn and Billy Watts

Carol Fitch

Arie Witt

Stillborn November 5, 2013

Unknown cause

Baby Witt

Miscarried June 27, 2014

Parents: Mike and Candice Witt

Siblings: Brinley and Ryker

Given by Roberta Causley

Jackson Wood

June 6, 2009

Cord accident

Given by parents Darin and April Wood and
siblings Isaiah, Thomas and Alexis

Adrian Joseph "AJ" Zuckerman

Stillborn March 30, 2007

Cord accident

Gifts given by parents Al and Amber Zuckerman

and brothers Eli and Alex

Michael and Jane Gartenhaus

Gifts of Support

West Conroe Baptist Church, Conroe, TX

Valerie Jones

Janis Kidder

Lisa Vallejo

Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, TX

Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO

Kristin Kamrow

Legacy Giving

Losing a child has changed each of our lives forever. We appreciate all financial support of the services our organization gives to bereaved parents—no matter the size of the contribution. However, some of you may have the capacity and desire to give a lifelong gift to M.E.N.D.

If you're interested in creating a legacy gift or endowment in honor of your baby, M.E.N.D. would be happy to assist you in gathering the necessary information to remember our organization in your will or trust. For more information about legacy giving, please contact Rebekah Mitchell at rebekah@mend.org.

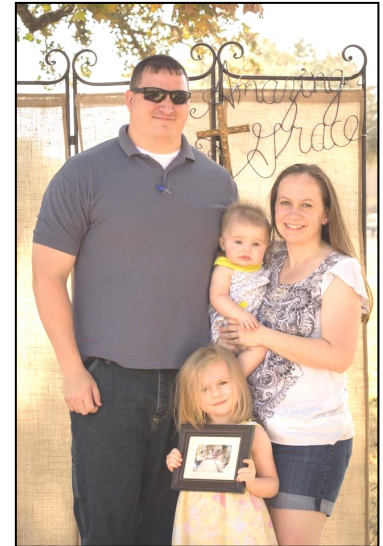
M.E.N.D.—Tulsa Balloon Release

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa spent a beautiful evening remembering our babies during our 5th Annual Balloon Release. We are so thankful to Sam's Club and Absolutely Balloons for their generous donation.



M.E.N.D.—Bryan/ College Station Balloon Release

The 5th Annual Balloon Release for M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station provided a special, treasured moment for us to remember our babies in heaven. Thank you for all who attended.



M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri Balloon Release

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri had 80 in attendance to for our 5th Annual Breakfast Balloon Release, honoring 35 babies in heaven. Jim and Barber Risner shared a wonderful testimony of the loss of their grandson and how God has helped the family through the loss, followed by the release of 100 balloons. It was a beautiful time to remember our babies in heaven.



Subsequent Births



Jeremiah and Cherish Kelley,
of Springfield, Missouri,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Alyson Hope,
born April 28, 2015,
measuring 5 lb., 7 oz.,
and 18 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Madilynn Isabell,
stillborn December 3, 2009,
cord accident

Aaron and Kristian Doucette,
of Battlefield, Missouri,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Kinley Jean,
born July 9, 2015,
measuring 7 lb., 10 oz.,
and 20.5 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Rylan,
November 27, 2012,
ectopic pregnancy

Bradley and Elizabeth Faram,
of Arlington, Texas,
along with sister Emma,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Brentley Cooper,
born August 28, 2015,
measuring 4 lb., 10 oz.,
and 17.75 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Trinity Ann,
August 1, 2014,
placenta abruption

Todd and Stormy Mitchell,
of Conroe, Texas,
along with brother Silas Todd,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Justus Ryan,
born July 25, 2015,
measuring 6 lb., 3oz.,
and 19.5 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Gideon Zeller,
stillborn May 17, 2011,
membranous cord insertion,
Avery,
miscarried May 2008,
unknown cause,
and Joy (Justus' twin),
December 2014
vanishing twin syndrome

Jim and Larissa Wheeler,
of Arlington, Texas,
along with big sister Julianne,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Evelyn Marie,
born August 8, 2015,
measuring 6 lb., 2 oz.,
and 18 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Baby Wheeler,
miscarried March 2009,
Michael Noah,
stillborn January 27, 2010,
unknown cause,
Abigail Mercy,
miscarried June 3, 2014,
and Everly Hope (Evelyn's twin),
miscarried January 2015

Sean and Sarah Jordan,
of Lima, Ohio,
along with siblings Stephen, Season,
Ethan, Marshall, Clay, Gavin, Gage,
Parker and Joshua,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Sophia Helen,
born May 17, 2015
measuring 9 lb., 8 oz.,
and 21 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Marissa Joy,
November 26, 2003,
skeletal dysplasia,
and Baby Jordan,
miscarried October 8, 1999

Tony and Kristie Lansdell,
of Fort Worth, Texas,
along with siblings
Bryleigh, Kynlee and Hayden,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Camryn Madison,
born September 8, 2015,
measuring 7 lb., 14 oz.,
and 19.75 inches.
The family lovingly remembers
Kaley Brooke,
stillborn January 18, 2010,
cord accident

Kimberly and Alan Barton,
of Irving, Texas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Emily Love,
born October 5, 2015,
measuring 7 lb., 11 oz.
The family lovingly remembers
Bailey Ann,
May 20-28, 2014,
brain hemorrhages

Ten Minutes with You

If I had 10 minutes with you, what
would I say?

Would it surprise you if I said
nothing, other than I love you?

I would just sit and stare at you.

I would take in every inch of your
tiny body.

I would memorize the shape of
your eyes, mouth and nose.

I would breathe in your scent.

I would hold your hands and stroke
your skin.

I would hug you and hold you, and
wish those 10 minutes would last
for eternity.

But then how could I let you go?

I would scream and cry and beg
you to stay.

My child, I may not have that gift
of time, but I will always have you.

You will live in my heart, until the
day I die.

And when I have taken my last
breath, please be waiting at the
Heavenly gates.

I will run to you and sweep you up
in my arms, we will swirl and
laugh and giggle.

From that moment on we will be
together... FOREVER.

By Zoe Clark-Coates
(A Saying Goodbye Poem)

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death
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“... that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (2 Corinthians 1:4)

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 in Texas and Louisiana who have their Kroger Plus Card linked to M.E.N.D. To link your card, go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com and set up an account if you do not already have one. Once you receive the email after setting up your account, click on “My Account,” then go to “Edit Kroger Community Rewards” and input your Kroger Plus card number. You’ll see a screen with your information in boxes, at the bottom right, there is a box that says Community Rewards. Click that, then enter the M.E.N.D. number, which is 80513. Once that’s entered, you’ll confirm that M.E.N.D. is your charity of choice. This link will be good until the 2015-2016 program expires. You must link your card each year to M.E.N.D.
- **Tom Thumb** also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please contact Rebekah (rebekah@mend.org) to obtain the Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.
- **GoodSearch.com** is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Powered by Yahoo!, it is used like any other search engine. To earn money for M.E.N.D. using Goodsearch.com, go to www.goodsearch.com and designate M.E.N.D. as your charity of choice.
- **Ebay** has a charitable giving program that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you sell items on Ebay and would like to designate a percentage of your revenue to M.E.N.D., visit www.missionfish.org to find out how.
- **Igive.com** will donate a penny a search and a portion of each purchase made through their website to M.E.N.D. Sign up today! M.E.N.D.’s cause number is 52025.



www.mend.org