



Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss Support

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Letting Go of Normal and Embracing What Is

Since March, many of us probably felt as if we merely existed... Waking up each day, unsure of what would unfold with jobs, schools, activities, everything involved in what life once was. Even for M.E.N.D., we navigated new ways of supporting families through Zoom and virtual communication.

As states and cities begin to lift some of the restrictions, many of us still feel at a loss because what we are returning to is not what we consider "normal." Letting go of "normal" is a loss in and of itself. In this issue of the magazine, we explore the loss of normal, and how sometimes we need to move forward by "embracing what is."

In this issue...

As Life Changes

Mommy to Mary-Linda shares her journey of "normal" to "new normal" to "no normal." *page 8*

Mother's Day Memorial Walk

While we have seen many beautiful chalk designs, the most beautiful of all was seeing our babies' names. *page 9*

Before and After

Becky shares the story of Abi, and how life has created a pinpoint in the story of their family: Before-Abi and After-Abi. *page 10*

September/October Topic

*Other Holidays - Halloween/4th of July
Deadline: July 31, 2020*

November/December Topic

*Holidays
Deadline: September 30, 2020*

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcome. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the magazine. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please send any submissions to our Magazine Editor, Jennifer Harrison, at jennifer@mend.org. Any submission printed in our magazine will also be posted to our website indefinitely. Because our magazines are posted online, please understand your name will be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

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to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests it not be published.

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

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



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As a national organization, M.E.N.D. Leadership continues to monitor conditions in the United States relating to COVID-19. Since restrictions differ in each state, please follow your chapter on Facebook or connect with your director for updates regarding support groups. For information on support groups, including The Nationwide Support Group that meets year-round, please see page 19.



Feature Article

Feature from our M.E.N.D. President and Founder, Rebekah Mitchell, Mommy to Jonathan and Baby Mitchell

The topic for this issue was set months ago - long before any of us had ever heard of COVID-19. "Letting go of normal and embracing what is." Boy, we've all done that lately, haven't we? What exactly is "normal" anyway? We decide our normalcies by our culture, by what is traditional, standard or typical. Nothing about the past few months has even been close to usual or expected. We have found ourselves quickly, and with very little warning, creating a new normal for ourselves, our families, and our communities. This unexpected and inconvenient transition has been hard for everyone, but throw the loss of a baby in the situation...wow! Talk about a forceful embracing of "what is"!

I endured my own loss during this sheltering-in-place. My dad. He suffered from COPD for a few years, then began a steady decline several months ago. My dad was a successful trial attorney in his prime, and well-known in the field of criminal, family and church law. He experienced a radical conversion to Christianity when I was 5 years old, which gave him the honor and privilege of sharing his testimony on numerous national Christian media outlets. Countless people were led to the Lord by hearing how God completely transformed my dad's life, healed my parents' marriage and truly saved our family. For years we six kids and our mom thought we would give him a huge celebration of life service when he went to heaven. Never in our wildest dreams did we think we would have a death in the family during a season of quarantine and face coverings! Thankfully he died just days before a soft lifting of restrictions in the Dallas area, so we were able to have a visitation and limited attendance at his funeral. And the blessing is that it was live-streamed. To date, more than 700 people have viewed his service - perhaps more than would have attended the funeral. The Lord was truly

glorified and a message of salvation was given - exactly what he would have wanted.

When will I learn we cannot write our own story? I am a planner, an organizer, and an administrator. My dad affectionately referred to me as "our family manager." I plan everything and live by my calendar. One would think I would have learned better when I was diagnosed with a kidney disease just months after my wedding. Or when my Jonathan was stillborn in 1995 due to a cord accident. Or when I had a kidney transplant. Or when I miscarried our little miracle baby at 10 weeks. Or when my dad died during a worldwide pandemic. Nothing about my life has been normal, and certainly nothing about the past few months has been normal.

So, what do we do when life turns anything but normal? Hide? Run? Escape? Go crazy? Maybe a little of all of those, but those reactions aren't sustainable. Only embracing what is and making the very best of our situation is sustainable. I know you didn't plan to lose your baby, and neither did I. And if you lost your little one recently, you certainly didn't plan to endure such horrific suffering during a time when your support was very likely at an enforced minimum. Being alone in the hospital with only one other person is not normal. Grandparents being prevented from meeting their heavenly grandbaby is not normal. Not having your pastor come to your bedside when you need spiritual care the most is not normal. Not being able to have your living children come to the hospital to see their sibling before the funeral home comes to take away your lifeless baby is not normal. But you had to embrace the rules of the circumstances, and I'm so sorry.

During this time of uncertainty and grieving, the loss of my dad has allowed me much time to reflect, pray and re-prioritize many of the things I

Letting Go of Normal and Embracing What Is

Continued on page 13

Birthday Tributes



Happy 1st Birthday, Graham!

Happy 1st birthday to our sweet boy in heaven! We are so proud to call you our son, and we love you more than words can express. We wish we could celebrate with you physically in our arms, but we can only imagine the party you are having up in heaven with all those who love you on the other side of the veil. Sending so many hugs, kisses, love and tickles from all of us here on earth, we love you always and forever!

Graham Joseph Wilhite
July 2, 2019
Bilateral Renal Agensis
Parents: Rian and Cari Wilhite
Siblings: Emmitt and Cate



Happy 10th Birthday, Caelan!

Caelan, 10 years is a really long time - and it's gone by so fast. We love you so very much and miss you. You are our precious son. Happy 10th heavenly birthday. We can't wait to see you and hold you again!

Caelan Matthew Wallace
July 30–August 3, 2010
Premature
Also remembering
Oakley Jaden Wallace
Miscarried February 2016
Olivia Hope Wallace
Miscarried September 2016
Lincoln Avritt Wallace
Miscarried May 2018
Parents: Andy and Dana Wallace
Sister: Finlea Rose



Happy 14th Birthday, Livi!

Happy 14th birthday, sweet Livi. It has been 14 years since you became a part of our family, and we can't thank God enough for allowing us to be your family. We see your smile in the sunshine He graces us with, and we feel your hugs in the gentle breezes. You are loved and missed. Have the happiest 14th birthday ever and know your family loves you so much.

Love,
 Mommy, Daddy, Jaxson and Lauryn

Alivia Elizabeth-Grace Walker
July 24, 2006
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Robert and Liz Walker
Siblings: Jaxson and Lauryn



Happy 1st Birthday, Mary Grace Presley!

We love you so much, our sweet angel in heaven! There is not a day goes by we don't think of you. You were perfect in every way. We love and miss you!

Love,
 Mommy and Daddy

Mary Grace Presley
June 12-17, 2019
Hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy (HIE)
Parents: Sam and Jenny Presley



Happy 3rd Birthday, Levi!

It's been three years, but not a day goes by you're not in our thoughts. Sweet baby boy, we love you so much. Thank you for being your little brother's guardian angel. You are missed. You are loved. You are here with us.

Forever, we will love you always.

Levi Michael Gonzalez
Stillborn June 23, 2017
Unknown cause
Parents: Michael and Meagan Gonzalez
Little brother: Isaac



Happy 1st Birthday, Madelyn!

You were such a ray of sunshine! The day you were born was so scary. We didn't even know if you would make it, but then things got better surprisingly fast. We had high hopes for your future, getting to watch you grow up and develop in your own way. I try to imagine what your full belly laugh would sound like, what milestones you would have reached and exciting new things you would be doing today. We all miss you very much. You brought a lot of love to this world, and touched a lot of people, before and after death. We will continue to honor your memory.

Madelyn Leilani Brown
July 26–December 5, 2019
Undetected Pulmonary issues

Also remembering
Sean Xavier
July 2001
Early miscarriage
Baby 2
2013
Early miscarriage
Baby 3
December 2017
Early miscarriage
Baby 4
March 2018
Early miscarriage
Parents: Anthony and Kim Brown
Siblings: Lydia, Matthew, and Naomi



Happy 4th Birthday, Connor!

We love you and miss you so much. You would be so big and doing so many incredible things if you were here with us, but I know you are doing them in heaven. Thanks for watching over us. We love you, buddy!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Kelsey and Cooper

Connor Nathaniel Cash
August 31, 2016
Cord accident
Parents: Dustin and Jenna Cash
Siblings: Kelsey and Cooper

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Wilder!**

It's been two years since I held my sweet baby boy. After years of infertility, it was hard to imagine we were just days away from meeting him before his heart stopped beating. We miss him every day, but his death has taught me to appreciate the simple joys, let go of things that aren't important and realize that each person is unique and a miracle. We carry on knowing we want to be a family that would make him proud.

Wilder Maerke
Stillborn July 5, 2018
Cord accident
Parents: Thomas and Kristin Maerke
Sister: Magnolia

**Happy 5th Birthday, Rebekah!**

Bekah, you're 5! I cannot believe this much time has gone by since I held you in my arms. We miss you so much and will celebrate your sweet life here while you celebrate in heaven. Mommy and Daddy love you, sweet girl! We can't wait to squeeze you and never let you go. Kisses and hugs.

Here are what the kids want to tell you:

I miss you, sis. Just remember,
I will always love you. -Isaac

Hi Rebekah, Happy B-Day! I love and miss you. -Abby
I love you, Rebekah! Love, Esther!
Happy Birthday, Rebekah! -Tirzah

Rebekah Tikvah Nymeyer
July 16, 2015
Premature
Also remembering
Amasiah Nymeyer
Miscarried October 2010
Jonah Nymeyer
Miscarried July 2012
Parents: Jonathan and Terri Nymeyer
Siblings: Isaac, Abby, Esther and Tirzah

**Happy 16th Birthday, Jordyn!**

Happy sweet 16th, Jordyn! Jordyn, another milestone missed that you can't share with your twin sister, Jada.

We love you. We will continue to honor you, and Jada will always include you in each milestone. As the years pass, your memory is always on our minds, and you are forever in our hearts. We love you, and we know you are watching over us.

Happy sweet 16th!
Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Jada and Bruce Jr.

Jordyn Lynae Johnson
July 13-16, 2004
Cord accident
Parents: Bruce and Debra Johnson
Siblings: Jada and Bruce Johnson Jr.

**Happy 3rd Birthday, Mary-Linda!**

To our precious Mary-Linda on your 3rd heavenly birthday, we love and miss you so very much. Wish you were here with us. We remember you and carry your memory with us always.

Love,
Momma and Daddy
Big siblings Bakri, Maddux, Trinity and Leeland
and baby brother Jimmie

Mary-Linda Elizabeth El-Hakam
August 16, 2017
Fetal maternal hemorrhage
Parents: Rebekah and Moustapha El-Hakam
Siblings: Bakri, Maddux, Trinity, Leeland and Jimmie

**Happy 3rd Birthday, Cuddles!**

Happy 3rd birthday, Zoey! We love and miss you so much. We wish you were here to celebrate your day. We miss your little grip when you would hold our fingers, reading to you and playing music for you. My Beauts you will always be. You will never be forgotten, my love! We'll be thinking of you as we always do. Watch over us, my Cuddle Bug.

If there ever comes a day
when we can't be together,
keep me in your heart.
I'll stay there forever.

Zoey Von Martinez
August 16–December 16, 2017
Respiratory failure
Parents: Vanessa Hernandez and Eli Martinez
Siblings: Cecilia, Deja and Peyton



Hope

*Written by Alicia Ramirez
Mommy to Ezra Robert and Abbie Grace*

Hope is:

Trusting in the future

Not dwelling in the past

It's clinging on to Jesus

Hope is what will last

It's reaching for the future

It's trusting in His plan

It's following His leading

When I don't understand

It's praying for an outcome

Tears running down my face

It's crying out to Jesus

Who gives amazing grace

There is power in His name

He is peace that calms the storm

He heals the broken hearted

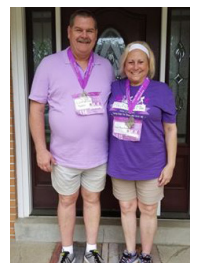
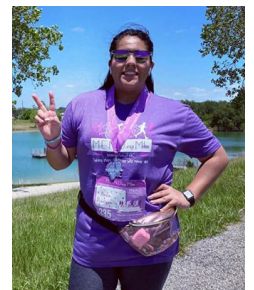
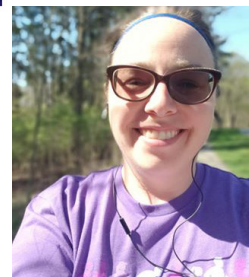
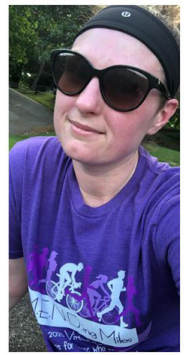
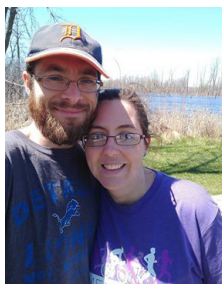
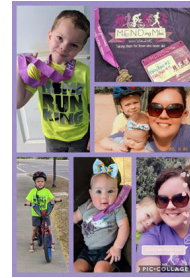
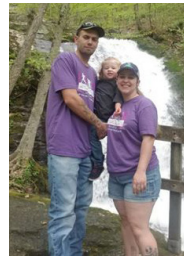
And meets me where I am!



2020 M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K



We had 450 people from all over the United States participate in our 3rd Annual M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K. It was our most successful 5K to date! After expenses, nearly \$7,000 was raised to help grieving families. Thank you for gathering your family and friends to join us in walking, jogging, biking, running, and "Taking Steps For Those Who Never Did." We look forward to seeing you next year!





As Life Changes...

Written by Rebekah Maddux El-Hakam

Mommy to Mary-Linda

M.E.N.D.—Greater Houston Area Chapter

Our family was the happiest we had ever been in August of 2017. Our four big kids were thriving in finding their way. Our two oldest boys were 13 and 11 years old, our daughter was 9 years old, and our youngest son just turned 7. And we were nearly halfway through what seemed to be a normal, healthy pregnancy with a baby girl, Mary-Linda, whom we were expecting to arrive near the end of the year. Life was good! Until, it wasn't.

In one moment, everything changed. It was still summertime, and I left the kids at home with their dad so I could run to my 18-week appointment. I had been unable to find the baby's heartbeat on the fetal heartbeat Doppler the night before, but I shook it off as user error and tried to put it out of my mind. At my appointment, my greatest fears were realized, and I learned our daughter's heart had stopped beating. The next few days, months and even years have been a struggle to find a new normal for us. Our life after losing our daughter, Mary-Linda, is so different from our life before.

Navigating After Loss

We are still trying to figure out what normal looks like. For a year, I continued to work in the same capacity I had worked in before Mary-Linda's death. I loved being busy, and I loved my job. It seemed right at the time. We spent that entire year going to therapy, doctor appointments, and visiting with specialists. I wanted so badly to pinpoint what happened to Mary-Linda, so we could move forward with as much information as possible. Silently, I worried something was not right after I delivered Mary-Linda, making it more difficult for us to become pregnant again. For thirteen months we prayed, we waited and we kept hunting for answers. As it turned out, there was a diagnosis and a cause of death. Mary-Linda had suffered a fetal maternal hemorrhage (blood loss/

severe anemia), and her heart had stopped beating. I spent a lot of time researching this condition, and I was assured that this was not something that happened to the same mother twice.

In September of 2018, after having a chemical pregnancy the month before, we learned we were expecting again. It

was exciting and terrifying. We had a fertility doctor, a primary OB/GYN and high risk doctor all working with us. After the initial visits to confirm pregnancy, we would alternate seeing the OB/GYN and high-risk doctor every couple of weeks. Each visit with the high-risk doctor, they would check for fetal anemia.



I stopped working outside the home around the same time I became pregnant. It wasn't my intention to make this my new normal, but it was a huge blessing. Surrounded with people, family and friends who loved me and supported me, I really enjoyed my pregnancy. My father passed early in the spring, and we named our baby boy after him. In May of 2019, baby Jimmie Josiah joined our family earth-side.

Anything But Normal

This last year has been anything but normal. We had a baby. We moved to a different home. I started a new job. Our oldest son started high school. We spent most of the last year experiencing firsts with our new baby, and spent another year missing our Mary-Linda.

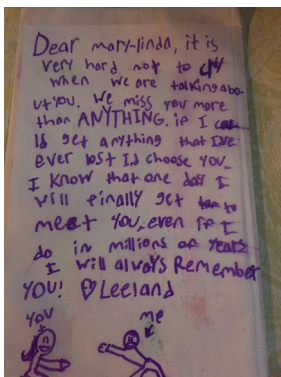
By the time March came around, we were in a pretty good rhythm. And then, the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe, and we went into strict lockdown with my mom, who is 78 years old and has some health issues. My older sister, Melinda, had Down Syndrome and lived with my parents her entire life. She passed away suddenly on Valentine's Day this year at the age of 50.

Our new normal really isn't normal at all. My mom has lived with us for the last several months. Our kids are home, which the baby loves! My husband and I are both working from home. It's intense.

Finding Focus

For now, there's no getting back to "normal." We've lost so much. If we focus on that, it becomes too overwhelming. So, instead we just try to focus on finding some joy and happiness in each day. My big kids are older, so chores have become a part of our new normal. We also eat so many meals together. We enjoy that.

As a practice, we pray together and attend online church as a family each Sunday. Our home church has also continued to engage us and ask us to submit recordings and videos so that we can contribute to elements of worship each week. We talk about Mary-Linda. She's part of our family. She's just not on earth with us. In our new house, her ashes sit on a shelf in my closet. It's actually a very pretty place. I have a Mary-Linda bear sitting nearby, and I look at it every single day. Sometimes, I hold the urn and completely lose it. Sometimes I just miss her so much that I can't catch my breath. Having other loved ones in heaven



with her gives me peace. Her Aunt Melinda. Her grandfather. Her great-grandparents. I know she's well cared for, and she's with Jesus. It doesn't make us miss her any less.

As I close, I want to encourage you to not put too much pressure on yourselves to "get back to" anything that you are not ready for. Losing a child is a devastating, often traumatic experience. We don't come out of it unscathed and unchanged. But, you are not alone. The God who is and was and is to come knows you, knows your pain, and He is with you. He wants to give you comfort and peace. Allow yourself time. Give yourself grace to be okay doing things differently.

I find comfort in knowing that we will see our Mary-Linda again when we all get to heaven. Until then, we will keep on remembering and keep on living our (not so) normal lives.



Mother's Day Memorial Sidewalk

Written by Rachel Dell

Mommy to Grace Kathryn and Rose

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri Chapter Director

As Chapter Director of M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri, I am blessed to serve beside some great people. One of the Assistant Directors for our chapter, Brianne Mansfield, worked so hard to honor our mommies this Mother's Day, which was even featured in one of our local newspapers. Her sacrifice is beautiful (as well as her artwork). We are very blessed to have her as part of our team to serve our families.

A few days before Mother's Day, Brianne posted on our chapter page and her personal facebook page a request for babies' names who will be missed over the Mother's Day holiday, and any symbols, colors or dates to include for a sidewalk chalk project. The names flooded the comments sections. After participating in our local M.E.N.D.ing Miles 5k that morning, Brianne lovingly spent the rest of the afternoon, around six hours, writing more than 100 beautiful names and adding symbolic art for the Mother's Day Memorial Sidewalk. We all pray the words Brianne posted will be true for the moms of these babies remembered:

"I pray this brings you a little joy and peace that your children are remembered fondly by many."



Before and After

Written by Becky Johnston

Mommy to Abigail Papendick

and Baby "Darth" Papendick and and Baby "Nugget" Papendick

M.E.N.D.—MidMichigan Chapter Assistant

March 3, 2017. This is the day that quickly divided my life into before and after. It started as a normal Friday. I'm a teacher, and at the time, I was teaching 1st grade at a small Christian school. Right before the bell rang to start the school day, I wasn't feeling well. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but something wasn't right. In a few hours, our world and our world-view would be forever changed.

I had gone in for my 20-week ultrasound on February 20, and the maternal fetal medicine doctor diagnosed a short cervix. After learning our background of this first pregnancy through IVF, he recommended we schedule an appointment "down the road" at the University of Michigan, so preventative measures could be taken if needed, and to have regular monitoring/measuring from my obstetrician. I went home from that appointment feeling anxious; I'd already had several complications during this pregnancy, including a previous visit to Labor and Delivery triage at 16 weeks, but we had no idea what to expect.

I went for the second of these monitoring appointments to have my cervix measured on March 1, and no change was noted, so that was a relief. When I went to the bathroom in the middle of that night, I remember having a little conversation with "Bump" (the nickname my husband Brian had given our baby), "Bump, I promise not to complain about the frequency of these middle of the night bathroom visits, or how big my belly gets, if you just keep cooking a little longer. I need you to stay in there and keep growing." I knew I was at a high risk for premature birth, with my age and getting pregnant through IVF, so I told myself if I could just make it a little longer, maybe everything would be OK.

Before

The next day, March 2, I received a surprise gift from my sisters. They made me a t-shirt with an inside joke about my Bump. I was feeling a little self-conscious; at almost 21 weeks, my belly wasn't big enough yet for the outside world to know that I was definitely pregnant, so I didn't want to wear the shirt out in public yet. To build my confidence, Brian modeled it for me and I took a picture. Then I decided I'd better get a shot of myself wearing the shirt to send to my sisters and thank them. That was the only time I was able to wear that shirt.

March 3, 2017. Fridays were my usual planning days; I learned early on in my teaching career to make sure everything was in place for the next week before I left on Friday, in case I got sick or anything happened over the weekend, so I would often stay late and get some extra work done. That Friday, I made sure I was done within an hour after school, because I really wanted to get home and lie down. Brian had worked from home that day, so he knew something was wrong when I got home so early and immediately laid down on the couch. After a couple hours, he convinced me I should call the on-call doctor and see whether I needed to be seen.

The same doctor was on-call that weekend as was my previous visit to Labor and Delivery, so she reassured me we would be doing the same exams to check on the baby. Everything looked fine on the ultrasound, but when she began the physical exam, the look on her face said it all. "I'm looking at the amniotic sac. This means your cervix is dilated." I distinctly remember the shock while I found the words to ask, "Am I losing my baby tonight?" She honestly told me, "I think so." She said they would admit me to monitor how things were progressing, since sometimes labor can stop on its own.

We began to watch and pray. We were in a holding pattern: it didn't look good, and we couldn't do anything about it. Contractions started coming closer together and more intense. Our amazing nurse and doctor took excellent care of us, explaining what was happening and what we could expect our baby to look like. They answered every question. I apologized for not knowing more, mumbling something about this being my first time and not having taken the maternity classes yet, and they were so kind with their responses.

Abigail Marie

Within about five hours of arriving at the hospital, the doctor sat on my bed and gently delivered our baby. "Bump" slipped silently into this world with a beating heart. I asked the doctor if it was a boy or a girl, and we learned she was a girl. I held her through her whole life, and attempted to speak all the words I could over her so that she would know she was loved and wanted. Brian cried over my left shoulder, trying to hold me and gently touch his baby. The nurse and doctor cried with us, too, as they continued monitoring everything. Seven minutes later, just after midnight on March 4, she slipped away, having never taken a breath. I had the wherewithal to ask what time she was born, and the nurse answered, "11:57 PM." Born on March 3. I reminded Brian that our daughter shared a birthday with our niece, Marie.

Brian sat next to me and held my hand the entire night. In the hours that followed, we tried to rest in between being checked on and trying to figure out what to do next. A couple of hours after our baby was born, he said, "Abigail Marie. I want to name our baby Abigail Marie." We hadn't fully decided on any names yet, but had made an extensive list years before. Abigail was on that list, although we hadn't considered it recently. I asked Brian where it came from, and he said that she just looked like an Abigail, and Marie because she shared a birthday with her cousin Marie. When I looked up the meaning of the name Abigail later, I discovered that it means "our Father's joy." Abigail's dad had chosen the perfect name.

After

March 4, 2017. We checked out of the hospital in the morning, with a memory box, a folder of resources, and a red rose. The nurse who had been with us through the whole night had ended her 12 hour shift just a few hours before, so we hugged the new nurse, tried to avoid eye contact with the rest of the staff at the front desk, and took the long, lonely walk to the elevator and out to our car, without our baby. The drive home from the hospital takes just a few minutes, but they were long minutes mired in exhaustion and sorrow. Now what? Where was the guidebook on what we were supposed to do? We weren't hungry, but I forced down an apple so I could take some medicine. Then we attempted sleep, as we'd been up all night—it was fitful at best.

It was time to start making phone calls and letting our families and work know what happened. We were dreading this. How do you share this horrible news? Telling other people, to me, meant I had to actually admit it happened, when I really kept hoping I would wake up to this being just a nightmare. Somehow we made it through these conversations and into the evening. Brian gathered up some funny movies to play in the background, and we reminded ourselves that we hadn't eaten anything almost all day. Nothing sounded good, but Brian made us breakfast for dinner—scrambled eggs, hash-browns, sausage, and toast. It hit the spot; to this day, I consider this meal of the highest comfort.

The next week was a blur of family, decisions, texts, cards, flowers, gifts, planning, and remembering to do adult things like eat, drink water, and sleep. Abigail was born Friday night, and Brian's sister, who lives a half mile away, gave birth to Katherine early Monday morning. The same doctor was on-call to deliver. Two days after that, terrible windstorms knocked the power out for several days around town, so we stayed with family and then at a hotel. Through it all, I kept checking my pulse to make sure I wasn't

dying of a broken heart. Somehow we made it through the visitation and memorial service, and were so thankful to our village of support for embracing us in our time of need. So many people shared with us their stories of miscarriage, stillbirth, and loss. I thanked each one for sharing and for showing us that maybe we could get through this experience and come out the other side, and even hope to find joy again. Then the world got quiet, and I panicked, thinking that people would forget about Abigail's existence.

In the days, weeks, and months that followed, Brian and I have learned to check in with each other while also figuring out how to move forward. Brian returned to work, and then I did, too. We leaned on our friends and family while writing our own guidebook. We eventually returned to the things we had enjoyed before Abigail died, but it took time—time that moved simultaneously

**... it took time—
time that moved
simultaneously
as fast as lightning,
and as slow as molasses.
Time that still alters its pace.**

as fast as lightning, and as slow as molasses. Time that still alters its pace. As we watch our niece Katherine grow, we notice the milestones that Abigail would have made. The show *This Is Us* spoke to me: one of the characters passes away, and another character speaks at the memorial service. She describes that when you lose someone, your life quickly divides into "Before and After." This made so much sense...ever since March 4, 2017, we measure our lives in Before-Abi and After-Abi time. Through time and experience, we have been able to ensure our daughter's existence would last much longer than seven minutes.

I imagine since the current pandemic, many people have started dividing their lives into Before-COVID-19 and After-COVID-19 time: remember back when we had birthday parties and family reunions? Remember going to restaurants and movie theatres? Those of us in the loss community might have been uniquely prepared for facing such a life-altering event; our worlds have already been rocked, perhaps many of us have built the resilience needed to move forward and embrace current circumstance.

March 3, 2017. There are many dates of varying significance I have memorized throughout our pregnancy journey, both before and after Abigail's birth. March 3, 2017, however, is the day we were forced to let go of normal and move forward in what is. We thank God for preparing us for this journey, and seeing us through to its end.



Soltar Lo Normal y Aceptar Lo Que Es

Artículo de Presidente y Fundadora,
Rebekah Mitchell,
Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y bebé Mitchell

El tema de este boletín se fijó hace meses, mucho antes de que cualquiera de nosotros hubiera oído hablar de COVID-19. “Dejar ir de lo normal y aceptar lo que es”. Vaya, todos lo hemos hecho últimamente, ¿no? ¿Qué es exactamente “normal” de todos modos? Decidimos nuestras normalidades por nuestra cultura, por lo que es tradicional, estándar o típico. Nada de los últimos meses ha estado cerca de lo habitual o lo esperado. Nos hemos encontrado rápidamente, y con muy poca advertencia, creando una nueva normalidad para nosotros, nuestras familias y nuestras comunidades. Esta transición inesperada e inconveniente ha sido difícil para todos, pero lanzar la pérdida de un bebé en la situación... ¡Wow! ¡Hablando de un abrazo contundente de “lo que es”!

Sufrió mi propia pérdida durante este refugio en el lugar. Mi papá. Sufrió de EPOC durante unos años, y luego comenzó un declive constante hace varios meses. Mi padre era un abogado de juicio exitoso en su mejor momento, y bien conocido en el campo del derecho criminal, familiar y de la iglesia. Experimentó una conversión radical al cristianismo cuando yo tenía 5 años, lo que le dio el honor y el privilegio de compartir su testimonio en numerosos medios de comunicación nacionales cristianos. Innumerables personas fueron conducidas al Señor al escuchar cómo Dios transformó completamente la vida de mi padre, sanó el matrimonio de mis padres y realmente salvó a nuestra familia. Por años, nosotros seis niños y nuestra mamá pensamos que le daríamos una gran celebración del servicio de vida cuando se fuera al cielo. ¡Nunca en nuestros sueños más salvajes pensamos que tendríamos una muerte en la familia durante una temporada de cuarentena y coberturas faciales! Afortunadamente murió pocos días antes de un suave levantamiento de las restricciones en el área de Dallas, así que pudimos tener una visitación y una asistencia limitada a su funeral. Y la bendición es que fue transmitido en vivo. Hasta la fecha, más de 700 personas han visto su servicio, tal vez más de lo que habría asistido al funeral. El Señor fue verdaderamente glorificado y se dio un mensaje de salvación, exactamente lo que él hubiera querido.

¿Cuándo aprenderé que no podemos escribir nuestra propia historia? Soy una planificadora, una organizadora y una administradora. Mi padre cariñosamente se refirió a mí como “nuestra administradora familiar”. Planeo todo y vivo según mi calendario. Uno pensaría que habría aprendido mejor

cuando me diagnosticaron una enfermedad renal pocos meses después de mi boda. O cuando mi Jonathan nació sin vida en 1995 debido a un accidente del cordón umbilical. O cuando me hice un trasplante de riñón. O cuando involuntariamente aborté a nuestro pequeño bebé milagroso a las 10 semanas. O cuando mi padre murió durante una pandemia mundial. Nada de mi vida ha sido normal, y ciertamente nada de los últimos meses ha sido normal.

Entonces, ¿qué hacemos cuando la vida se vuelve algo menos normal? ¿Nos Escondemos? ¿Corremos? ¿Nos Escapamos? ¿Enloquecernos? Tal vez un poco de todos esos, pero esas reacciones no son sostenibles. Sólo abrazar lo que es y hacer lo mejor de nuestra situación es sostenible. Sé que no planeaste perder a tu bebé, y yo tampoco. Y si perdiste a tu pequeño recientemente, ciertamente no planeaste soportar un sufrimiento tan horrible durante un tiempo en el que tu apoyo era muy probable forzado a un mínimo. Estar solo en el hospital con solo otra persona única no es normal. Los abuelos que se les impidió conocer a su nieto celestial no es normal. No poder tener tu pastor a tu lado cuando necesites cuidado espiritual más que nada, no es normal. No poder tener a sus hijos vivos en el hospital a ver a su hermano antes de que la funeraria venga a llevarse a su bebé sin vida no es normal. Pero tenías que aceptar las reglas de las circunstancias, y lo siento mucho.

Durante este tiempo de incertidumbre y dolor, la pérdida de mi padre me ha dado mucho tiempo para reflexionar, orar y volver a priorizar muchas de las cosas que considero importantes y normales. El viejo himno “Vivir por la Fe” ha sonado en mi cabeza numerosas veces las últimas semanas. El primer verso y el coro son así:

No me importa hoy lo que el día de mañana pueda traer,
Si la sombra o el sol o la lluvia,
El Señor que conozco gobierna todo,
Y todas mis preocupaciones son vanas.

Abstenerse:
Viviendo por fe en Jesús arriba,
Confiado, confiado en Su gran amor;
De todo daño seguro en su brazo de refugio,
Vivo por la fe y no siento alarma.

Estoy haciendo todo lo posible por vivir sobre fe, excepto que es cierto que no he estado sin alarma o

ansiedad durante este tiempo. Seguro, he tenido que rezar por estas emociones. Y como planificador, me recuerdo constantemente las palabras de Santiago en el capítulo 4, donde nos recuerda que ni siquiera sabemos lo que sucederá mañana, así que absténgase de jactarse de lo que será mañana. Básicamente, nos está diciendo que no digamos con certeza lo que vamos o no vamos a hacer porque la vida puede cambiar, ¡y cambiar rápido!

Para mi familia, una vez más estamos creando una nueva normalidad. Mi padre nunca volverá a estar en las funciones familiares. Nunca volverá a estar en casa de mis padres. Cada vez que visite la tumba de Jonathan, cruzaré el cementerio para visitar la de mi padre. Y ahora mis dos bebés han conocido a sus dos abuelos. Esa parte me hace sonreír, pero también estoy un poco envidiosa. Estoy aprendiendo a abrazar esta nueva vida de tener un padre en el cielo. No es mi costumbre ni mi

normal. No es lo que había planeado, pero ahora es lo que es.

“Escuchen, ustedes que dicen: ‘Hoy o mañana iremos a esta o a esa ciudad, pasaremos un año allí, llevaremos a trabajar y ganaremos dinero’. Ni siquiera sabes lo que pasará mañana. ¿Cuál es tu vida? Eres una niebla que aparece por un rato y luego desaparece. En cambio, deberías decir: ‘Si es la voluntad del Señor, viviremos y haremos esto o aquello’.”
Santiago 4: 13 - 15

“Letting Go...” continued from page 3

deem important and normal. The old hymn “Living by Faith” has rung in my head numerous times the past few weeks. The first verse and chorus go like this:

I care not today what the morrow may bring,
If shadow or sunshine or rain,
The Lord I know ruleth o’er everything,
And all of my worries are vain.

Refrain:

Living by faith in Jesus above,
Trusting, confiding in His great love;
From all harm safe in His sheltering arm,
I’m living by faith and feel no alarm.

I’m doing my best to live by faith, except admittedly I have not been without alarm or anxiety during this time. For sure, I’ve had to pray about these emotions. And as a planner, I am constantly reminding myself of James’s words in chapter 4 where he reminds us that we don’t even know what will happen tomorrow, so refrain from confident boasting about what tomorrow will look like. Basically, he’s telling us not to say for sure what we are or are not going to do because life can change - and change fast!

For my family, we’re once again creating a new normal. My dad will never be at family functions again. He’ll never be at my parents’ house again. Every time I visit Jonathan’s grave, I’ll now go across the cemetery to visit my dad’s. And now both of my babies have met both of their grandfathers. That part makes me smile, but I’m also a little envious. I’m learning to embrace this new life of having a parent in heaven. It’s not my usual or my normal. It’s not what I had planned, but it’s now what is.



Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
in the M.E.N.D.ing Miles 5K

*“Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’
Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow? What is your life?
You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.
Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’”*
James 4: 13 - 15”

In Loving Memory

Thank YOU for your support

Maverick Zane Andrews

October 26, 2018
Parents: Shonna and Daniel Andrews
Given by Jaqueline Lane

Dennis Gerald Brewer, Sr.

June 21, 1930 – April 28, 2020
Grandfather to

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Baby Mitchell

Miscarried December 2001
Father of Rebekah Mitchell, President/Founder
Gifts given by
Amber and Al Zuckerman and Family
Tina and Michael Rusert
Beth and Mark Shelton

Oliver Brueck

March 10, 2016
Parents: Aaron and Lauren Brueck
Given by Patricia Mallozzi

Jackson David Crowe

August 22 – September 9, 1998
Heart defect
Parents: Marie and David Crowe
Siblings: Hannah and Andrew
Given by Gail Bohdan

Abigail Grace Crump

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

Riley and Parker Davis

November 14, 2006
Premature
Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis
and siblings Annalise and Owen

Paislee Ann Frette

April 4-5, 2012
Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome
Gifts given by
Parents Brent and Courtney Frette
and little sister Colbie
Grandparents James and LuAnn Junkin

Baby Goforth

Miscarried October 28, 2014

Wyatt James Goforth

October 24, 2016
Obstructed bladder, bilateral kidney failure,
pulmonary hypoplasia

Ellie Ryan Goforth

Miscarried April 5, 2017
Given by parents Nichol and Monty Goforth
and sisters Emmerson and Claire

Charlotte Grace Harrison

December 28 – January 4, 2012
Parents: Amanda and Luke Harrison
Given by Jacqueline Lane

Serenity Harrison

Miscarried December 3, 2009
Given by parents Curtis and Jennifer Harrison
and siblings Levi, Ziva and Evie

Jackson Glen and Tyler Ray Light

February 23, 2009
Placental abruption
Parents: Kirk and Diana Light
Siblings: Brayden and Lexi
Given by Deborah Payne

Barron Lehr

Given by Sandra Lehr

Kennedy Elaine Lloyd

Stillborn April 19, 2017
Mommy: Kaitlin Lloyd
Given by Kristi Jumper

Matthew Joel Mifflin

Stillborn June 6, 2003
Cord accident

Little One Mifflin

Miscarried February 6, 2006

Lil' Rosebud Mifflin

Miscarried March 10, 2007
Parents: Dennis and Janet Miffli
Given by Fidelity Charitable

Chase Austin Miller

April 21, 2011

Incompetent cervix

Baby "Blueberry" Miller

Miscarried May 4, 2015
Given by parents Greg and Stefanie Miller
and sisters Cora, Hazel and Violet

Gideon Zeller Mitchell

Stillborn May 17, 2011
Membranous cord insertion

Avery Mitchell

Miscarried May 2008

Joy Mitchell

December 2014
Vanishing twin syndrome
Given by parents Todd and Stormy Mitchell
and brothers Silas and Justus

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord accident
Baby Mitchell
Miscarried December 2001
Given by parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

Margot Lily Perry

Stillborn June 10, 2013
Cord accident
Parents: Marisa and Brandon Perry
Siblings: Adeline, Bennett and Noelle
Gifts given by Grandmother Marie Perry
Grandparents Mary and Norman Lorentz

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997
TTTS and Polyhydramnios
Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith
and siblings Travis and Julia

Michael J. Thornton

May 15, 1970
Parents: Janet (deceased) and Mike Thornton
Given by Jacqueline Lane

Adrian Joseph "AJ" Zuckerman

Stillborn March 30, 2007
Cord accident
Given by parents Al and Amber Zuckerman
and brothers Eli and Alex

Gifts of Support:

Christ Church Assembly of God, Fort Worth, TX
Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO
Olivia Atkins
Nicole Englishbee
Katie McCann
Matthew Patterson
IV Organics, Los Angeles, CA



Thank you to those who recently held a Facebook fundraising campaign or donated to M.E.N.D. through one of these.

We are so thankful for our family and friends who show love and support during activities like these or other areas such as sharing about M.E.N.D., assisting at events, or simply and most importantly, praying for us.

In Loving Memory of my Dad, Dennis G. Brewer, Sr.

June 21, 1930 – April 28, 2020

Growing up, my dad was a well-known trial attorney, primarily in the Dallas criminal courts. He was often compared to the fictionally-famed defense attorney, Perry Mason, due to his brilliant and eccentric antics in the courtroom.

There are six of us kids in my family. The older four are stair-steps, then my twin sister, Rachael, and I came along 7 ½ years later. I often refer to us as the accidents! My older siblings grew up with a much different dad than Rachael and I did. My dad had quite a testimony of his years as a criminal attorney, an alcoholic and drug addict. When Rachael and I were 5 years old, my dad gave his life to the Lord and was instantly radically changed. No AA, no counseling, no rehab - truly 100% delivered and set free from his bondages. Over the years, the focus of his law practice changed as well. He still represented a criminal from time to time, but he began a legal ministry, if you will, to couples whose marriages were falling apart. When a husband or wife retained him for a divorce, he mandated that they first have a session or two with the marriage counselors he lent space to in the law office. He also was known in the Dallas/Fort Worth area for drawing up free wills for those who would include an altar call at their funeral - basically meaning that the salvation message would be given at the service. During this time, churches and ministries across the nation began to grow, and some evolved into what today is known as a "mega church". Those of us who direct a non-profit understand that unfortunately, a ministry is also a business, especially in the eyes of the IRS. Pastors, evangelists, and Christian ministries often found themselves needing legal representation, but few attorneys were well-versed in this type of legal field. Thus, my dad became a pioneer in the legal world of Church Law.

My husband, Byron, was still in dental school when we got married, so I worked at the law firm as a court runner, a job I absolutely loved! I continued to work there after Byron graduated, and I stayed on part-time following the birth of our first baby and even after our Jonathan was stillborn. One year after Jonathan's death is when I started M.E.N.D.. With the help of my dad, I obtained our 501 (c) (3) within weeks. He taught me the basics and legalities of running a non-profit - the good, bad and the ugly. He counseled our Board of Directors on many occasions of what was allowed and not allowed in this unique area of running and leading a small, volunteer-based Christian organization. I have always recognized and appreciated having my own personal non-profit attorney at my beck and call! Thankfully, my brother has fallen into our dad's footsteps of legal expertise in religious organizations, so rest assured the M.E.N.D. legal representation has not been lost. My dad was passionate about helping preachers and those like me who started a ministry out of heartbreak with a calling to reach out to others. He was so proud of M.E.N.D. and what we as a ministry have grown into. He proudly wore purple to all our events and never missed an opportunity to brag on his baby girl!

Today, he's in heaven with my babies and yours. I can't even wrap my mind around the idea of him truly spending time with and now knowing my heavenly children. If they somehow didn't already know about M.E.N.D., I am sure he has told them everything by now! He especially loved the balloon release at our Walk to Remember ceremonies. The hundreds of blue, pink and white balloons that represent our babies flying to heaven awed him. I am confident he has also gotten to know the two little babies he and my mom lost to miscarriage over 60 years ago - babies my parents also acknowledged with white balloons each year at the Walk. When loved ones die, we tend to imagine what they are doing in heaven. I like to think of my two heavenly children and my two unmet siblings holding his hand and guiding him through enormous and beautifully indescribable gardens. He had a love and strong appreciation for all types of flowers, especially exotic ones, specifically gardenias.

While I'm so sad he's not here on earth with us any longer, I know he's more alive than ever before! I'll forever miss just being able to call him with a quick legal question or pop over to the house for more in-depth judiciary advice. Most of all though, I'll miss his tender love. He always said, "Give me three kisses". So, I send you three kisses to heaven, Daddy and long for the day when I can kiss you again! Love on my babies until I get there and I can't wait to finally get to meet your little ones, too. Until we meet again, Daddy...



M.E.N.D. CHAPTER UPDATES

Greater Houston Area

M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area is continuing to offer our meetings on Zoom each month. We also did something new! We conducted a hospital training over Zoom to speak with nurses and staff on how to care for families. We have trained and spoken to many nurses, but never held training online. It was a really neat way to still be able to



help healthcare professionals in this time of uncertainty and changes. If you know of any doctors, churches, community centers, etc. that may need information on M.E.N.D. and resources on how to care for families, email their information to stormym@mend.org. Even if we aren't meeting

in person, we still are available.

Stormy

Bryan/College Station, Texas

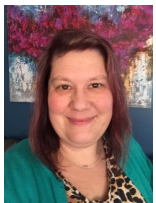
M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station has enjoyed our monthly Zoom support groups; however, I know we all really look forward to being able to go back to our in-person support group format. I want to thank everyone who participated in our M.E.N.D.ing Miles 5k! I enjoyed seeing everyone's photos on social media. For more information about M.E.N.D.–BCS please email jennie@mend.org



Jennie

MidMichigan

Thank you to everyone who supported M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan by purchasing an "I AM MIDLAND" t-shirt in the month of April. We raised \$166 just by sharing the link on a few personal pages. We appreciate everyone's support! We've also enjoyed sharing our monthly gathering time virtually with the Chicagoland Chapter. Friendships of support have budded and will continue to bloom out of this difficult season of isolation. We hope



to be meeting in person this summer at Live Oak Coffeehouse in Midland! Watch Facebook for Zoom links and details of when we can meet in person again!

Karen

Denver, Colorado

Thank you all for your support in our Virtual 5K! We could not do what we do without you. For the past couple of months M.E.N.D.–Denver has been



meeting online via Zoom. Please be sure to check our Facebook group for an updated link each month or news of when we can return to in-person meetings. Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can assist in anyway in these uncertain times.

Kimberly

Lynchburg, Virginia

M.E.N.D.–Lynchburg is preparing and waiting for restrictions to lift so we can hold our first in-person support group. In the meantime, we are thankful for online Zoom support groups for us to continue to support each other. There are multiple options each month if you would like to attend. Check our Facebook page for dates and times of each Zoom support group. I look forward to meeting you all.



We continue to grow our chapter to meet the needs of hurting families. We had some amazing items donated to us to help us support families. We are desiring to grow our team by adding another assistant. If you feel led to serve hurting families in our area, please contact me at Melissa@mend.org for more information.

Melissa

Tulsa, Oklahoma

M.E.N.D.–Tulsa has held our monthly support groups on Zoom, but we look forward to in-person support groups when it is safe to do so. Please continue to connect with us through Facebook for updates.



Cat

Men of M.E.N.D.

Men of M.E.N.D. has officially changed the time of the monthly meetings to 8:00 PM Central. It will still be on the 3rd Monday of the month. We hope this makes the meetings more accessible for everyone. We continue to grow in both the Facebook page as well as the meetings.



Russell

San Antonio, Texas

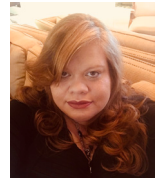
M.E.N.D.–San Antonio continues to have our monthly support group via Zoom and praying for families struggling during the pandemic. As the city starts lessening restrictions, we hope to see the number of COVID-19 cases drop consistently to ensure the safety and support of the families in our area when we are able to meet again. We miss having our in-person support groups, but are so blessed technology can help bring us together.



Katie

Palm Beach, Florida

Due to current restrictions still in place, M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach will continue to serve our families with our monthly meetings via Zoom. We miss our families greatly, but we continue to be available through phone, text, email and social media when anyone needs us. We are also eager to welcome a new assistant into the team, so if you have a heart to help other grieving families please contact Jessica@mend.org or call/text (561)843-3509. Hope to see everyone soon!



Jessica

Online Support

The Nationwide Online Support group has been working on ways to continue to engage our moms who don't have face-to-face chapters near them. We have created a Facebook Group to remain connected and support each other between meetings. The next Nationwide Online Support group meetings will be July 16 and August 20. Please complete the Online Information form found on the M.E.N.D. website to receive the meeting link. Hope to see you there.



LaRhessa

Southwest Missouri

Southwest Missouri continues to meet the needs of our families through our online support groups. We are working diligently to help grieving families in our community during this time. We would like to also thank those who participated in the M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K. Our chapter appreciates your support.



We want to let all our mommies and daddies know we think of them often, especially during the Mother's Day and Father's Day season. Brianne Mansfield, an assistant with Southwest Missouri, recently wrote the names of babies submitted to her in a Mother's Day sidewalk chalk memorial. It was very touching to see the beautiful artwork and our babies' names lovingly written. Her time and

effort was a blessing to our chapter at a time when we are unable to meet in person. To read more about the Mother's Day Memorial Walk, please see page 9.

Rachel

NW Washington

We continue to offer our monthly support group meetings online via Zoom. Check our Facebook page for the Zoom login information under the Events tab. We miss seeing you all in person, and hope in the coming months we can resume our monthly in-person meetings.

Thank you to all who have joined us online the last two months, it has been good to see you. Many new, local and distant moms have joined us, and we look forward to seeing you again. Thank you to all who participated in our M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K this year! It was a huge success, and we can't wait for next year's event.



Stacy



Columbus, Ohio

M.E.N.D.–Columbus, Ohio is working diligently to reach out to grieving families. While our support group meetings are conducted virtually, we encourage you to join our Facebook community as well. We are thankful for all support received with our Facebook fundraiser...we raised nearly \$900! We love you and will continue to pray for your families.



LaTrina

Chicagoland

M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland joined with M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan to hold monthly support groups using Zoom. Technology has made support groups still possible during difficult times, and we are so thankful. We will continue to strive to best serve all hurting and grieving families in the Chicagoland area in the coming months.



Sara

About M.E.N.D.

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 support groups, this magazine, and our website at www.mend.org. For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the magazine, contact us at:

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P.O. Box 631566
Irving, TX 75063
Phone and Fax: (972) 506-9000
(Please call before faxing)
E-Mail: rebekah@mend.org
jennifer@mend.org
www.mend.org

Donations make the printing and distribution of this magazine 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).

M.E.N.D. is a member of
First Candle/SIDS Alliance
International Stillbirth Alliance
Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance



international
stillbirth alliance



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M.E.N.D. Support Groups in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex

Mommies AND Daddies are both welcome at all M.E.N.D. support groups. Unless otherwise noted, all support groups are held at: 800 W. Airport Freeway Irving, TX 75062 (building with black windows, located off 183, between MacArthur and O'Connor). Support groups are held in the building's board room on the first floor. For more information, call (972) 506-9000.

M.E.N.D. chapter support groups are held the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Daddies group meets the 2nd Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., from 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups for discussion.

Parenting Groups:

Subsequent pregnancy group
meets the 4th Tuesday
from 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Led by Marisa Perry: marisa@mend.org
For families who are considering
becoming pregnant or are currently
pregnant after a loss.

Parenting After Loss groups are for families
raising living children after a loss.

Parenting After Loss Playgroup
(children welcome)
Currently it meets in Irving at the play
area inside Irving Bible Church, but will
eventually meet in various locations
For more details, contact:
Corley Rinaldi at Corley@mend.org.

M.E.N.D.

Chapter Information

M.E.N.D.–NW Washington

Meets the 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM
The Oak Table Cafe'
3290 NW Mt. Vintage Way
Silverdale, Washington 98383
Director: Stacy McGhee
stacym@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 PM
Project H.O.P.E.
1419 S. Enterprise Ave
Springfield, Missouri 65804
Director: Rachel Dell
rachel@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 PM
Hawthorne Suites
1010 University Drive East
College Station, Texas 77840
Director: Jennie Drude
jennie@mend.org, (402) 704-6363

M.E.N.D.–Tulsa, Oklahoma

Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 PM
Canyon Crossing
1651 E Old North Rd.
Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063
Director: Cat Markham
cat@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

M.E.N.D.–Columbus, Ohio

Meets on the 2nd Monday, at 6:30 PM
Paul Mitchell-The School of Columbus
3000 Morse Road
(Upstairs Conference Room)
Columbus, Ohio 43231
Director: LaTrina Bray
latrina@mend.org (614) 530-5128

M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland, Illinois

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

M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach, Florida

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:00 PM
Embark Lake Worth
3927 Hadjes Dr
Lake Worth, FL 33467
(close to Turnpike and Lake Worth Rd)
Director: Jessica Gaddie
Jessica@mend.org, (561) 843-3509

M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan

Meets the 1st Tuesday, at 7:00 PM
Ashman Plaza
713 Ashman Street
Midland, Michigan 48640
Director: Karen Kilbourn
karen@mend.org, (989) 577-5755

M.E.N.D.–Denver

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 PM
Journey Church
9009 Clydesdale Rd.
Castle Rock, Colorado 80108
Director: Kimberly Adams
kimberly@mend.org, (720) 593-0166

M.E.N.D.–San Antonio, Texas

Meets the 4th Monday, at 7:00 PM
8620 N New Braunfels Ave
San Antonio, Texas 78217
Director: Katie McClelland
katie@mend.org

M.E.N.D.–Lynchburg, Virginia

Coming Soon!
Director: Melissa Scifres
melissa@mend.org

M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area

Greater Houston Area Main Chapter:
Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM
Lone Star College,
3200 College Park Dr, Room A228,
The Woodlands, Texas 77384
Greater Houston Area Director:
Stormy Mitchell
stormym@mend.org, (405) 529-6363

Satellites in Greater Houston Chapter:

Katy, Texas:
Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:00 PM
Katy Community Fellowship
24102 Kingsland Blvd
Katy, Texas 77494
Katy Director:

Kessi Wilhite, kessi@mend.org

Kingwood Area, Texas:
Meets the 2nd Thursday at 6:30 PM
6450 Kings Parkway
Kingwood, Texas 77346
At Rosemont Assisted Living,
2nd Floor Community Room
Kingwood Director:
Nikisha Perry, nikisha@mend.org

Subsequent pregnancy group

Meets every other month
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM,
led by Stormy Mitchell
(stormym@mend.org)

Daddies group

Meets quarterly
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM,
led by Greg Miller
(stefaniem@mend.org)

Online Support

M.E.N.D.–Online Support Group
Held the 3rd Thursday at 9:00 PM (CST)
to join, contact
Director: LaRhesa Johnson
LaRhesa@mend.org

Men of M.E.N.D.

Held the 3rd Monday at 8:00 PM (CST)
to join, contact,
Director: Russell Gaddie
Russell@mend.org
Facebook Group:
www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND

Please follow your chapter on
Facebook or connect with your local
Director for updates when in-person
meetings will resume.



The Garden of Hope is a place of peace and solace where families can come for a quiet time of reflection, prayer, or even to celebrate the life of their loved one.

The Garden of Hope was established by M.E.N.D. in 2016, and is located on property of Calvary Church in Irving, Texas.



You can remember your loved one by purchasing a brick in the Garden of Hope. Brick purchases can be made at <https://www.mend.org/garden-of-hope>. Bricks purchased by August 15, 2020, will be installed prior to the Walk to Remember in October 2020.

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death
PO Box 631566, Irving, TX 75063
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(972) 506-9000
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Did you know?

You can give to M.E.N.D. every time you shop on Amazon?

Go to smile.amazon.com and set Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death as your charity! It's so simple!

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible smile.amazon.com purchases.

We appreciate your support!