



Monthly Meetings

2nd Tuesday of each month

7:00pm-8:30pm

Stittville United Methodist Church

9066 Main Street Stittville, NY

4th Tuesday of each month

6:00pm-7:30pm

The Good News Center

10475 Cosby Manor Road

Utica, NY



Time Does Not Bring Relief (Sonnet II)

By Edna St. Vincent Millay

Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
I want him at the shrinking of the tide;
The old snows melt from every mountain-side,
And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
But last year's bitter loving must remain
Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide.
There are a hundred places where I fear
To go,—so with his memory they brim.
And entering with relief some quiet place
Where never fell his foot or shone his face
I say, "There is no memory of him here!"
And so stand stricken, so remembering him.

When Time Is No Longer Relative by Stacy Alamond



Einstein's theory of relativity states that "time and space are not as constant as everyday life would suggest. He suggested that the only true constant, the speed of light, meant that time can run faster or slower depending on how high you are, and how fast you are traveling."

I have discovered for the past 17 months that time, since the death of my son, is irrelevant. It's true that I can look at a calendar and pinpoint

how many days have passed, but the way that I perceive time is much different.

In some respects, it feels like yesterday when he laid down for a nap and didn't wake up. My emotional response is tapped into those images that I will never shake from the depths of my dark memories. It begins with the lackluster of his eyes that once were so intensely blue, the hours that passed until the ambulance arrived which was actually 15 minutes, the crowded room of medical personnel that stood over his small vessel, and it ends with me touching his hair for the last time. I replay this slideshow of his last day on Earth daily and it all seems like yesterday.

If I were to travel to a distant planet that we have not named yet, I understand that my age progression might be different than here on Earth. However, I would still be that same grieving mother no matter what changed around me. I would still see those images and my heart would be just as broken as it was before. It's difficult to see the entire picture of time and space when you are engulfed by your own grief. It is not time that moves slowly; rather it is the understanding of how much time is left before we can be reunited.

Grief is linear for me. I see a time before and a time after within the plane of my existence. I no longer ponder on what could happen, what I strive to accomplish or engage in frivolous banter about what I can look forward to. I can only move forward; for no change in my past will alter this reality. It's truly a grueling thought that I struggle with. Psychologists have labeled these emotions as signs of depression, but I am well aware that my state is altered. Can I still be suffering from a mental disorder like depression and still be cognizant that I am moving forward while holding this pain? There is no pill to be swallowed and no amount of conversation that will ever drag me from the path that I now travel on.

The only element of belief that I can hold onto is an eternity, which is incomprehensible for most. When I was a child the thought of eternity would frighten me as I reflected on my own mortality. I used to think, what if my religion had it all wrong and we only get one shot at this life. My face would get hot, I would breathe heavy, and panic would set in. I would quickly alter my thoughts and click myself back into my current state. I would tell myself not to think about it because I was young and had many years left before me. After my son died that degree of panic altered into how much longer do I have to be here until I can live in eternity with him

I am not a scientist, nor do I pretend to be as mentally endowed. Instead, I live in the understanding that the speed of light was my son and when his light left this world, time was no longer relevant.



7 Things I've Learned Since the Loss of My Child by Angela Miller

Child loss is a loss like no other. One often misunderstood by many. If you love a bereaved parent or know someone who does, remember that even his or her “good” days are harder than you could ever imagine.

Compassion and love, not advice, are needed. If you'd like an inside look into why the loss of a child is a grief that lasts a lifetime, here is what I've learned in my seven years of trekking through the unimaginable.

1). *Love never dies.*

There will never come a day, hour, minute or second I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased children as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones.

I love my child just as much as you love yours— the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn't so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn't stop me from saying my son's name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn't make him matter any less. My son's life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.

2). *Bereaved parents share an unspeakable bond.*

In my seven years navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindreds in mere seconds— a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we've never met before. No matter our circumstances, who we are, or how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It's a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.

3). *I will grieve for a lifetime.*

Period. The end. There is no “moving on,” or “getting over it.” There is no bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve. There is no glue for my broken heart, no elixir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache and love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time where I won't think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one finite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime.

Every missed birthday, holiday, milestone— should-be back-to-school school years and graduations; weddings that will never be; grandchildren that should have been but will never be born— an entire generation of people are irrevocably altered *forever*.

This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.

4). *It's a club I can never leave, but is filled with the most shining souls I've ever known.*

This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I've ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship— that we could have met another way— *any* other way but *this*. Alas, these shining souls are the most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honor of knowing. They are life-changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave.

Every day loss parents move mountains in honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, spearhead crusades of tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining *the club*. If you've ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy.

Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a lifeforce to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You'll be thankful you did.

5). *The empty chair/room/space never becomes less empty.*

Empty chair, empty room, empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever gone for this lifetime. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, a forever-hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, clichés or well-wishes for us to “move on,” or “stop dwelling,” from well intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. Gone is still gone. The problem is nothing can fill it. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains.

The empty space of our missing child(ren) lasts a lifetime. And so we rightfully miss them forever. Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.

6). *No matter how long it's been, holidays never become easier without my son.*

Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why every holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your precious children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two— *anything*— than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one of more of your precious children. That is why holidays are *always and forever* hard for bereaved parents. Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.

7). *Because I know deep sorrow, I also know unspeakable joy.*

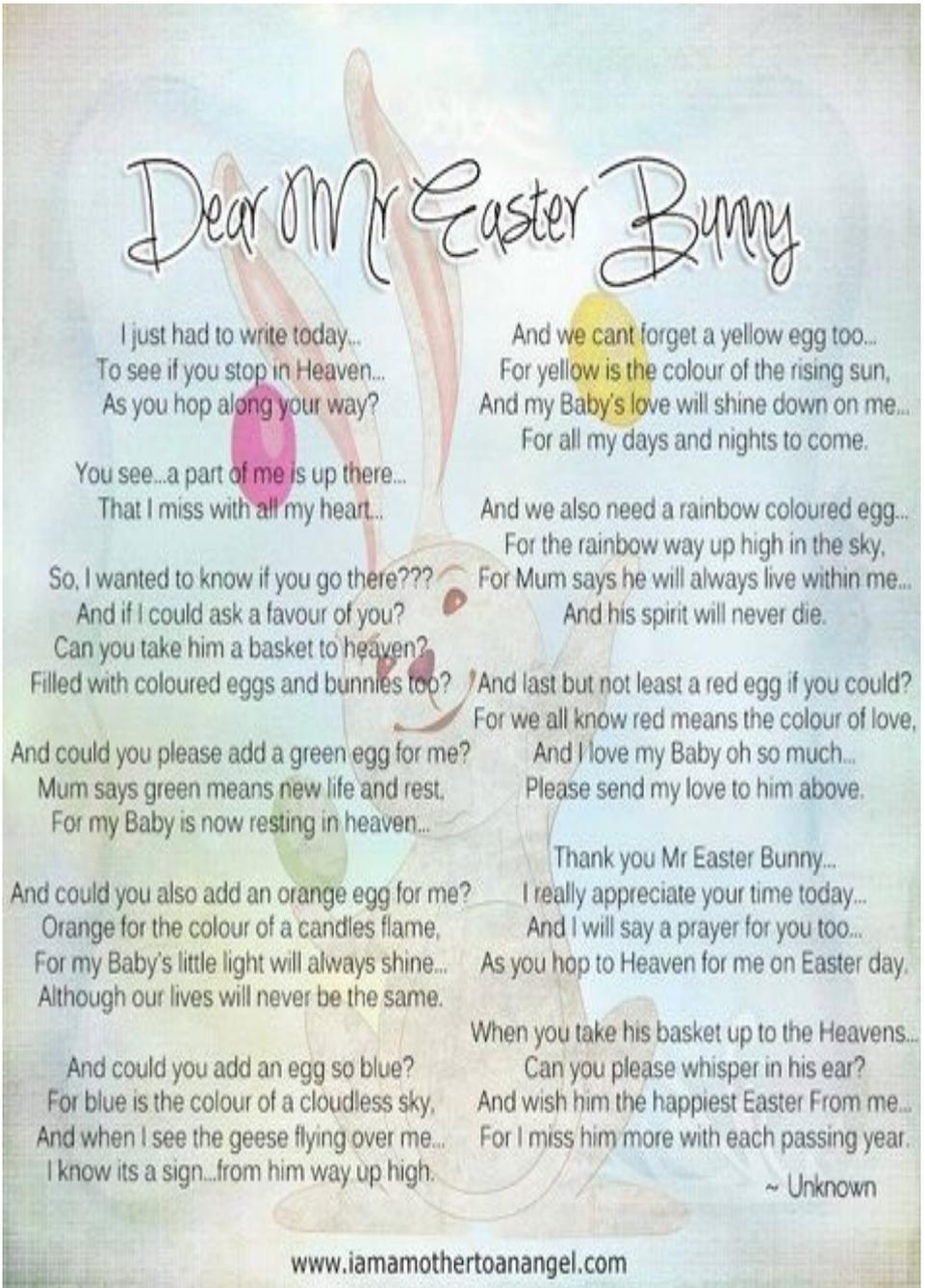
Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact, though it took awhile to get there. It is not either/or, it's both/and. My life is more rich now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still. Because I grieve I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief.

Because I've clawed my way from the depth of unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again— when the joy comes, however and whenever it does— it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply: the love, the grief, the joy, the pain. I embrace and thank every morsel of it. My life now is more rich and vibrant and full, not despite my loss, but *because* of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it all "worth" it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say *thank you, thank you, thank you*. Because there is nothing—and I mean absolutely *nothing*— I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible.

I have my son to thank for that. Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given.

Even death can't take that away.

By, Angela Miller



Birthdays

Michael Fanfarillo	February 1st
Michael Nash	February 1st
Kylie Ann Turczyn	February 8th
Dan Secor	February 10th
Ralene Amber Marchione	February 11th
Logan Lints	February 17th
Kara Mororui	February 17th
Jessica Oullette	February 18th
Jessica Deblasis	February 21st
Zoey Brown	February 24th
Kaden Eckrich	February 28th
Avery Demarsh	March 4th
Pharoah Farley	March 6th
Jessica Keib	March 9th
Alya Griffiths	March 10th
Kevin Crossley	March 11th
Abigail Bohstedt	March 19th
Biana Palek	March 19th
Dawn Peck	March 21st
Brogan Colbert	March 31st
Cory Wilkey	April 2nd
Melissa Brewer	April 8th
Jeannine Roberts	April 27th

Angelversaries

Scott Shepardson	February 3rd
John T. Nagy	February 6th
Kyle Riedman	February 7th
Brandon Tim King	February 9th
Alexa Nowak	February 12th
Jennifer Moore	February 15th
Joshua Morinitti	February 15th
Jordan Morinitti	February 15th
Ayla Griffiths	February 22nd
Jason Southwick	February 25th
Johnathan M. Wurz	February 25th
Dana L. Matt	March 1st
Jeannine Roberts	March 1st
Zoey Brown	March 3rd
Adam Rhoades	March 8th
Biana Palek	March 15th
Pharoah Farley	March 16th
Matthew Pitcher	March 20th
Steven Zacaroli	March 27th
Katie Cathey	March 28th
Ralene Marchione	April 6th
Kevin Crossley	April 11th
Faith Johnson	April 30th



Chapter Steering Committee

David Roberts, Chapter Leader	Brandi Flemings, Community Advocate
Cheri Roberts, Chapter Treasurer	Bill Flemings, Newsletter Editor
Stacey Borst, Community Advocate	Stacy Alamond, Website Administrator
Debbie Cathey, Special Projects	
Kelly Colbert, Community Advocate	

Al Visconti, Regional Coordinator

(518) 225-5851

altchny@gmail.com

Mission

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

Vision Statement

The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Acknowledgements

The Compassionate Friends of The Mohawk Valley wish to thank The Stittville United Methodist Church, The Good News Center, First United Methodist Church of New Hartford, and Sprezzo's in Rome for the support of our mission in 2019.

TCF of The Mohawk Valley

P.O. Box 493

Whitesboro, NY 13492

tcfmohawkvalley@gmail.com

www.tcfmohawkvalley.org

The Compassionate Friends

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

(877) 969-0010

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

www.compassionatefriends.org