



## Mother's Day and Father's Day

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It's amazing how holidays and celebratory days take on new meanings as we grow older. When we were children, the anticipation of special days was oftentimes unbearable as we excitedly counted the days until Christmas, birthdays, the last day of school, and even Mother's Day and Father's Day. As a little girl I looked forward to those two Sundays each year, knowing my parents would be honored like a king and queen for the day by the six of us kids. As I grew older and was married, Mother's Day and Father's Day brought new traditions as Byron and I shared them with each other's families and time was divided between our respective relatives. Then we became parents ourselves, and as we continued to honor our parents, we were able to share in the joy of joining their role as honorees for the day. That elation lasted for four years. The next couple of years those days were very much dreaded by Byron and me. Sure, we were still respected as parents, but knowing one of our sons was not with us made it very hard to not feel overwhelmed with heartbreak and sadness.

Over time these spring Sundays became much easier, and with the pain subsided I now have a new perspective of Mother's Day. Throughout the day I feel a sense of heaviness as various families from M.E.N.D. come to my mind, and I wonder if they're surviving the day okay. I find myself watching women at church and those around me at Sunday lunch. I study the faces of those I know are hurting from loss and infertility and silently pray for them as I read their expressions of hidden hurt and silent grief. I attempt to

let each of them know that I recognize their heartache and the longing they have for their child.

Three years ago I sat behind a woman at church whom the year before had lost her young adult daughter in a tragic car accident. I noticed her stiffness throughout the first part of the service and knew she was making every attempt possible to not melt in anguish. Before long she began to wipe her eyes continuously, and her shoulders slowly began to sag as she released her pent-up emotions. When the congregation was asked to stand, I leaned up to hug her and simply whispered, "I know this is a difficult day for you." Her countenance immediately changed from distress to relief that someone – a person she didn't personally know - acknowledged her hurt.

For many of you, this will be your first Mother's Day and Father's Day since your loss. My heart goes out to you as I empathize with your sorrow. Keep your head high and rest assured that the intensity of your pain will not last forever. Soon you will be able to face these days with a new outlook. You will always remember the child you lost and know the day should be different than it is. There would have been another child or children bestowing you with love, gifts and cards. However, the deep darkness you feel now will become much lighter.

If time has passed since your loss and you can relate to the burden I feel for the bereaved, I encourage you to put into practice 2 Corinthians 1:4, which is the theme for this ministry. Offer the compassion and comfort you received from God when you were hurting to those whose hearts are broken. Let them know there is hope and that their joy will soon return. Be a witness as to how the Lord will heal their brokenness and share that just as the seasons and our ideas of life change, so will their wounded hearts.

*Rebekah Mitchell*

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## When a Husband Hurts

by Rev. Burton F. Wilbur, Jr.

It is not a question of whether or not you're a father. By God's grace, for a short time, you were given a gift more precious than the world seems able to comprehend—the gift of an unborn child. You are the father of a child whose age has been measured in weeks, months, or trimesters—not years. Even though you knew this child for a brief time, you have loved with a kind of love you have never known before.

I know, because I'm a father of two such children. I've walked the halls of the hospital, and I've cried the tears of losing two precious children I have never seen. Yet, Christ has not lost them and heaven cares for them. Someday, when this journey is through and my task on earth is done, I will walk with them in Glory. The Bible tells me God is just and our just God loves His children.

**It's not easy to bear the loss of a child by miscarriage.** No man who loves his wife and his unborn child can be untouched emotionally and spiritually during this time. The pain comes from all directions. It comes from phrases that are meant to help, but only sound hollow to our hurting hearts. "These things are for the best!" "You can always try again!" "I'm sorry your wife lost her baby!"

There is also the pain of being caught between our own sorrow and caring for our wives. After all, husbands are supposed to be strong and supportive. Yet, our own hearts are broken, our minds are spinning, and our trust in God is being tested beyond our faith.

**For fathers of invisible children, the pain at some point often turns to anger and tears.** We may come to the point of wanting to shout, but most of us don't. We want to say, "It is not a thing or a fetus we lost, it's our baby!" "It's not about trying again, it's about the loss we feel—NOW!" We want to shake our finger at miserable comforters and scream in their faces, "Don't you get it?! SHE did not lose a baby—WE did!" We may even want to direct some pointed questions toward God: "Dear God, why us? We wanted this child, we loved this child—why couldn't this child live?"

If anyone reading these lines has felt these emotions, then be assured you are not alone and you are normal.

Is there help and hope for husbands who are hurting and feeling helpless? Here are some truths that I have learned from dealing with this time of loss.

**Recovery from a loss takes time.** We want a God who acts fast to bring us comfort and make everything right. God doesn't usually operate that way. He promised that "All things work together for good to those who love God" (Romans 8:28 NKJV), but He doesn't promise that it will happen right away. If your pain seems too deep for you to bear, there is help for you from your pastor, support groups, or from your physician. If you and

your wife need help, please ask for the help you need. Getting help makes us more the men God wants us to be. Not less.

**Remember: We are not God.** As husbands, we may sense how deeply our wives are hurting over the loss, and we may think it is our duty to be a tower of strength. Perhaps we feel that any display of weakness or sorrow on our part will only add to her grief. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Indeed, if our wives sense that our losses don't affect us, that only isolates them in their grief. We husbands do not have to be towers of strength. That's God's job. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1 KJV). It is not unmanly to cry with her; it is a caring and loving thing to do.

**Acknowledge gender differences in facing grief.** God has made men and women with some obvious and some not-so-obvious differences. One of those differences is that men and women do not necessarily grieve in the same way. Men often choose to close down; women generally choose to open up. Remember, it is normal for women to talk their way through loss and suffering. Studies show that verbalization often helps women cope with stress and can even lower their blood pressure. At some point, your wife will likely want to talk her way through this loss. Every moment of the pregnancy will be up for grabs, and she may be looking for one major mistake. You, being a man, may want to avoid these conversations. If you want to keep your marriage healthy and help your wife recover, you must give her opportunity to express her grief and loss. On the other hand, she must acknowledge that you may not be as verbal and that it's stressful for you to talk about it all the time.

**Never forget that you are in this together.** Your wife needs to know that you love her, that she did not fail you, and that you hurt too. If you try to hide a part of your pain, your wife will see it. Sooner or later it will have to be shared in order for you to heal.

For me, it was being in the room while the doctor was examining my wife. At one point he took a tiny bit of tissue and threw it away in a shiny steel bucket. Only later did I realize that this was "our baby." It haunted me to think that "our baby" was thrown in the trash. In order to stop the hurt and begin the healing, a haunting memory needs to be shared with someone who cares.

**You and your spouse will be blessed when together you share your loss, together you mourn the loss of your child, together you face the future, and together, you look to God.**

*Reprinted from Stepping Stones, a Christian newsletter for couples facing infertility challenges including pregnancy loss. For more information see [www.bethany.org/step](http://www.bethany.org/step).*

## Am I Not a Mother

by Gail Fasolo

Am I not a mother  
On this Mother's Day?  
I had a baby, but she's gone  
Death took her away.

Hopes and dreams have vanished  
A happy time, turned cold.  
My motherhood—where is it now?  
Gone? Or put on hold?

Am I not a mother  
Even though my baby died?  
Does anyone know my heartbreak  
Or the anguish felt inside?

Special gifts and flowers  
But who will think of me  
As I pray and shed some tears  
At your graveside where I'll be?

Mother's Day—so painful  
But I will make it through  
Yes, I am a mother!  
But God takes care of you!

*Gail is the mother of Christine, stillborn February 5, 1991.*

### July/August Topic

Telling New Friends About Your Baby  
Deadline—May 31, 2004

### September/October Topic

Grieving Alone  
Deadline – July 31, 2004

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 the back page of the newsletter for the appropriate address to send your submissions. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our website indefinitely unless we receive notice in writing that you are only granting permission for your submission to appear in the printed version of the newsletter.

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## M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings

### Regular M.E.N.D. meetings

are held the  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month from  
7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

**Mommies AND daddies are both  
welcome at all of our meetings.**

**Matters of Faith Bible study**  
is currently not meeting, though  
another group will begin if there is  
enough interest.

Please contact Jana Spigener  
at (817) 468-9963 or  
heartblossoms@msn.com if interested.

#### Playgroup

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

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

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

Join us in a time of sharing experiences.

### Our daddies group

meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of

March, June, September, and December  
from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

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

#### All support group meetings are held at:

**1159 Cottonwood Lane, Suite 150  
Irving, Texas (Las Colinas) 75038**

(This is on the west side of MacArthur Boule-  
vard, across the street from the Four Seasons  
Resort. There is a Holiday Inn Express at the  
entrance of Cottonwood Lane.)

For more information or directions,  
call (972) 459-2396.

### Subsequent pregnancy group

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

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

### Subsequent pregnancy birth class

*For families who are near their due date with their  
subsequent pregnancy.*

This one-night childbirth refresher meets once  
every three months and is conducted by one  
of our M.E.N.D. moms, Allyson Smith,  
R.N. The group requires a minimum of three  
participants to meet. For more information  
contact Allyson at ssmith@dallas.net  
or (972) 899-0405.



# Birthday Tributes to Our Special Babies

**LANDON GREGORY KANCEL**  
**BORN: APRIL 11, 2001**  
 FOREVER LOVED,  
 FOREVER MISSED,  
 NEVER FORGOTTEN  
**HAPPY 3RD BIRTHDAY!**

Love,  
 Mommy, Daddy, Angela,  
 Colton, Chase, Paige & Abby

*Parents: Andy and Dawn Kancel*

Happy 4th Birthday to our little angel

**Colten**

We love you!!!

*Colten Benjamin Ballmer*

*May 28, 2000*

*Umbilical Cord Stenosis-Congenital*

*Parents: Jamieson & Regan Ballmer*

*Baby brother: Logan*



## Happy Birthday Cailey!

Where has the time gone? Eight. You are eight years old.

Eight years of wishing, hoping, longing that things were different that day that you were born. Born here on this earth for such a brief time, but born into the kingdom of heaven for eternity.

Your baby sisters talk of you often and so many times they say that they wish there were three little girls running around our house instead of two.

They echo what is in my heart every day. I will never stop missing you and loving you. Happy birthday my sweet baby!

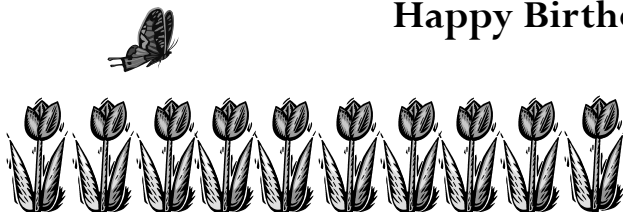


Love,  
 Mommy and Daddy  
 and baby sisters Hannah and Emily

*Cailey Elizabeth Ottinger*  
*Stillborn June 7, 1996*  
*Cord accident*  
*Parents: Laurie & George Ottinger*  
*Little sisters: Hannah and Emily*



## Happy Birthday Sydney and Ashley



Love,  
 Mom, Dad, and Samuel



## HAPPY 1<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY TO OUR PRECIOUS MATTHEW!!

We miss you and love you SO MUCH!!!  
 We think of you every day and wish you were here. You will forever hold that special place in our hearts. Bask in the sweet arms of Jesus.

### MISSING YOU

*by Janet Mifflin*



Oh, Matthew, I miss you every day  
 Countless times, in many a way.  
 It breaks my heart you had to go  
 Love grew from day one, you know.  
 I loved to hear your tiny heart beat  
 And feel the kicks from your small feet.  
 You "danced" to every music sound,  
 I giggled as you "twirled around".

But your life on earth was not meant to be  
 The day you left imprints my memory.  
 In a flash my heart did break  
 As a heavenly path you did take.  
 Life now is empty, sad and hollow  
 My earthly path I must follow.  
 I long to hold you in my arms,  
 Protect you from danger and harm.  
 I yearn to hear your infant cry  
 Or hear your gurgling contented sigh.

So many hopes and dreams  
 Are put on hold, it seems,  
 Until I join you in that heavenly place  
 Where at last we'll see face to face.  
 You wait for me there, my son,  
 With that piece of my heart.  
 At heaven's gate, to you I'll run  
 Arms open wide; life together we'll start.

But for now I'm missing you every day  
 Countless times, in every way.

*In loving memory of Matthew Joel Mifflin*  
*Stillborn at 34 weeks on June 6, 2003*



*True knot in the umbilical cord*  
*Parents: Dennis and Janet Mifflin*  
*Siblings: Thomas and Michelle*



*Sydney Lynne Brown*  
*5/18/00, Unknown cause*  
*Ashley MacKenzie Brown*  
*5/18/01, Antiphospholipid antibodies*  
*Parents: Brian and Marilyn Brown*  
*Little brother: Samuel Cole*

**Sweet Chrissie,**

We can't believe that it has been four years since you came and left our lives here on earth to be with our Heavenly Father. Even though we never held you in our arms, we know Jesus is holding your hand as you are growing. You will live in our hearts always and are still our "light of hope in dark times".

*Chrysanthemum "Chrissie" Steen*  
 May 3, 2000  
 Ectopic pregnancy  
 Parents: Lynn and Mary Steen



Love,  
 Mommy and Daddy

**Happy 9th birthday, Jonathan!**

We love and miss you every day!  
 "...until we meet again"

Mommy, Daddy, and Little B



*Jonathan Daniel Mitchell*  
 Stillborn June 24, 1995  
 Cord accident  
 Parents: Byron and Rebekah Mitchell  
 Big brother: Byron, Jr.

With sadness in our hearts we lovingly remember our sweet babies in Heaven. We miss you so and trust that God and the angels are keeping watch over you.



Much love,  
 Mama & Daddy

*Baby Rotello "Little Sumpin" miscarried 05/31/02*  
*Baby Rotello "Peanut" miscarried 05/07/03*  
 Parents: Paul and Angela Rotello

**Little Logan David,**

*Oh, how we miss you, sweet boy! Four years ago, we held you in our arms for the first and last time, and we have ached for you ever since. Watching your little brother Blake reminds us of all the good memories we wanted to make with you; blowing bubbles, going to the park, playing with friends, singing songs, hugging and kissing you.*

*Happy fourth birthday, Logan! We love you with all our hearts!  
 Love, Mama, Daddy, and little brother Blake*

*Logan David Iliff*  
 Stillborn May 5, 2000  
 Complete placental abruption  
 Parents: Joseph and Samantha Iliff  
 Sibling: Blake Donovan 8/1/01  
 Sibling in Heaven: Little Darlin' 3/4/04

**Happy 6th Birthday Tristen!!**

*It's hard to believe that it has been 6 years already and that you would have been in school by now!*

*From: Mommy and little sister Valerie*

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

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Angel Hope!**

*Angel, I can't imagine the joy you feel every morning as you wake up to see Jesus smiling at you. We miss you so much every day, but we're so glad that you are being taken care of by our Heavenly Father. Have fun with little Precious and kiss each other from us. I am so proud of you and proud to be your mommy. You have changed us and helped us to remember where our real home is. Words just aren't enough to express our love.*

*Eternally yours,*

*Mommy, Daddy, Lindy and Mark*

*Angel Hope Brimmage*  
 June 8 - June 8, 2002  
 Spina Bifida  
 Parents: Ashley and Jennifer Brimmage

**For Joseph's Fifth Birthday**

Joseph, my little brother  
 He is a loved one  
 With you God's work was well done.

*A Haiku written by big brother Will*



*Joseph Charles Libby*  
 May 26, 1999  
 Cord accident  
 Parents: Wim and Sharlene Libby  
 Siblings: Will, John, and Mary Grace



## Encouragement from the Word for Mother's Day

by Carol Ruth Blackman

In thinking of Mother's Day I was trying to choose which mother in the Bible to write about. There are many mentioned. Naomi is one of the first to come to mind. We remember when she returned to her home town of Bethlehem after the death of her husband and both her sons she told everyone "Call me not Naomi (which means *pleasant*), call me Mara (which means *bitter*); for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty" (Ruth 1:20-21). It is always so comforting to read on in Ruth 4:14-15, after Ruth's son was born: "And the women said unto Naomi, 'Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than sevens sons, hath born him.'"

In our day with Social Security and pensions, it is hard for us to comprehend the plight of the widowed and childless women in Bible days. If they had no husband or sons to provide for them, life would be extremely hard as they aged. So for Naomi to feel great bitterness is understandable: she went out full, a husband and two sons; she came back empty, not certain if a kind, near kinsman would be willing to help her or not. Then Boaz brought hope and joy to both Naomi and Ruth.

"A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refusing to be comforted, because her children are not" (Jeremiah 31:15). There were two times Rachel (symbolizing the mothers in Israel) was weeping for her children. Once was when Israel was in bondage in Egypt and the Egyptian king feared the Israelites' strength. So, he commanded all the baby boys be killed at birth. That is when the deliverer Moses was born and saved alive by that king's own daughter. The other time is referred to in Matthew 2:16-18: "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, 'In Rama is there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and will not be comforted, because they are not.'" Both times God had brought forth a deliverer in the form of a baby, and the kings so greatly feared these babies they destroyed large numbers of babies.

II Kings 4 tells of the Shunammite woman whose husband was old and she was childless. God miraculously gave her a child in verse 17, then when he was grown he went out to his father with the reapers in the field and had what appears to possibly be an aneurysm or a severe allergic reaction, and he died. Then God miraculously raised him from the dead. Again in I Kings 17 there is the story of the widow of Zarephath whose son died, and the Lord raised him again from the dead also.

Bereaved moms have all wondered why God miraculously raised some other bereaved mother's child from the grave but not ours. There are so many mysteries here on this earth. Only in God's time, when we are in His presence will we ever know the multitude of purposes in all the difficult things we have gone through.

Bereaved mothers have existed from the beginning of time. Just a few pages into Genesis, only 36 verses after we read of Eve's creation, she becomes a bereaved mother when Abel is slain by Cain. There is no mention of how she faced this heart-break, but 17 verses later the Scripture says she had Seth: "'For God,' said she, 'hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.'"

Then there is Job's wife, who suffered such great loss when all their wealth and children were taken away, combined with her husband's health, all in such a swift blow. Her pain was so great she longed for death, hoping for relief from the pain.

I close with a promise from Isaiah 49:13-16 for all whose hearts are heavy with bereavement: "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted. But Zion said, 'The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.' 'Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before me'" [the Lord replies].

*Carol Ruth Blackman is former editor of Bereaved Parents Share and Bereaved Parents Share II. Carol and her husband Ed lost their son Samuel to stillbirth February 21, 1988.*

## A Grieving Husband's Thoughts

by Pat Grimm

There is a wife who is missing at our house  
I'm not sure where she has gone  
I never seem able to reach her  
And time seems ever so long

Often, I try to talk to her  
But she is just not there  
And I have grown accustomed to  
That blank and aimless stare

I lost a son too, and I loved him as much  
But it seems like she just does not hear  
Does she know men do not grieve the same  
That inside we are shedding our tears

I would give anything to have Andy back  
And start our lives anew  
If I could just see my wife smile again  
But I do not know what to do

So—I will stick in there and keep doing my best  
To comfort, love her and pray  
That my wife will come back to our house again  
In each and every way.

*Written in loving memory of Pat's son,  
Andy Grimm,  
March 3, 1971–January 25, 1999  
Suicide*

*Dedicated to all husbands who have lost a child and are now  
trying to comfort a brokenhearted mother.*

*From Bereaved Parents Share, June 2000  
Printed with permission*

Back in September, we passed along a query from Debbie Armentrout to our members. She was interested in talking to families involved in the decision to withdraw life support from infants and wanted to know how those experiences had affected M.E.N.D. members. This information was needed for Ms. Armentrout's dissertation thesis, titled "Descriptions of Parents' Lives Before, During, and After Neonatal Life Support Decisions." Ms. Armentrout is still very interested in talking to those families. It has taken her longer than anticipated to get through the approval/paperwork process for this project. She plans to contact families who have expressed an interest in talking with her in the coming months, probably in May or June.

Ms. Armentrout can be contacted at [dcarment@utmb.edu](mailto:dcarment@utmb.edu).

## Music Resources

The following music has been helpful to others during their time of grief.

### *Home Free*

Words and music by Wayne Watson  
Watson's *Home Free* CD can be found at most Christian bookstores.

### *Thought You'd Be Here*

Words and music by Wes King  
From his CD *A Room Full of Stories*, available for purchase at most Christian bookstores.

### *With Hope*

By Steven Curtis Chapman  
From his CD *Diving In*, available for purchase at most Christian bookstores.

### *Goodbye for Now*

Words by Kathy Troccoli, music by Scott Brasher and Kathy Troccoli  
From Troccoli's CD *Corner of Eden*, available for purchase at most Christian bookstores.

### *Glory Baby*

Written by Nathan and Christy Nockels  
Found on Watermark's *All Things New*, can be purchased at Christian bookstores.

### *Empty Arms*

Words and music by Teri Curp  
From her CD *Look Ahead*  
Teri Curp Ministries  
1413 NE Grand Avenue  
Lee's Summit, MO 64086  
816-246-8374  
[tcings@swbell.net](mailto:tcings@swbell.net)  
[www.tericurp.com](http://www.tericurp.com)



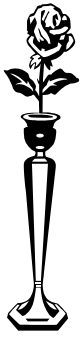
### *Better Hands*

By Julie Ann Gvillo  
From her CD *I Stand in Awe*  
Available for purchase at  
<http://www.julieanngvillo.com/music.htm>

*"When we bury someone we love, we must also bury a part of our heart. But we should not bemoan this loss. Our hearts, perhaps, are all they can take with them."*

*Richard Paul Evans  
From David Parkin's Diary  
January 28, 1934*

In Loving Memory

**Aiden Xavier Sohn**

October 13, 2002  
HELLP Syndrome

**Hope**

Miscarried May, 2003

**Whisper**

Miscarried October, 2003

Given by parents,  
Doug and Angelique Sohn  
and big brother Josh

**Aiden Xavier Sohn**

October 13, 2002  
HELLP Syndrome

**Hope**

Miscarried May, 2003

**Whisper**

Miscarried October, 2003

Parents, Doug and Angelique Sohn  
Big brother Josh  
Given by friend Geri Hawkins

**Abigail Grace Crump**

Stillborn July 1, 2003  
Trisomy 18

Given by parents,  
Gerald and Jaimie Crump

**Jordan Claire James**

September 9 - October 15, 2003  
HLHS

Given by parents, Julie and John James

M.E.N.D.

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

**Thank you so much!**

**Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995  
Cord Accident

**Baby Mitchell**

Miscarried December, 2001  
Parents, Byron and Rebekah Mitchell  
Big brother, Byron, Jr.  
Given by grandparents,  
Dennis and Sue Brewer

**Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995  
Cord Accident

**Baby Mitchell**

Miscarried December, 2001  
Parents, Byron and Rebekah Mitchell  
Big brother, Byron, Jr.  
Given by Dentistry of Las Colinas/  
Byron L. Mitchell, D.D.S.

**Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995  
Cord Accident

**Baby Mitchell**

Miscarried December, 2001  
Parents, Byron and Rebekah Mitchell  
Big brother, Byron, Jr.  
Given by Aunt Roxanne and Uncle Jim Suggs  
and cousins Elizabeth, Kathryn,  
Jimmy, and Jesikah

**Logan Wayne Fish**

September 17, 2002  
Skeletal Dysplasia  
Parents, Brittney and David Fish  
Brothers, Landry and Hudson  
Given by Curves for Women of Fort Worth

**Joseph Charles Libby**

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

**Jacob Theodore Oxendine**

April 28, 2001  
PROM  
Parents, Christine and Chip Oxendine  
Little sister, Emily  
Given by Uncle Mark  
and Aunt Stephanie Shelton

**Lauren Paige Grimes**

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

**Matthew Joel Mifflin**

June 6, 2003  
True knot in umbilical cord  
Given by parents, Dennis and Janet Mifflin  
and siblings, Thomas and Michelle

**Michael Garabedian, Jr.**

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

**To My Son**

You were of my body,  
So tiny, so human  
My perfect son.  
You looked like your Daddy,  
But had my ears.  
You were born through a veil of your  
Mommy's tears.

But you let me know in you own  
special way,  
Not to give up,  
Not to fade away

You kicked the doctor  
And stuck out your tongue,  
That's when I realized,  
You were definitely my son

Conceived of a love  
So hard to find,  
You touched all our lives  
In your own short time.

AJ, thank you  
For your own special gift  
Teaching us all  
Not to give up,  
To never quit.

by Theresa Forsythe  
Mommy of Alexander Jacob Forsythe

**Subsequent Births**

**Michael and Tammy Ross**  
of Hurst, Texas,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Ethan Michael,  
April 6, 2004, at 11:03 p.m.  
He weighed 6 lb. and was 18 ½ inches long.  
The Rosses lovingly remember  
Bryce,  
stillborn October 29, 2002,  
due to an unknown cause.



# M.E.N.D.'s WALK TO REMEMBER

October 2, 2004

Mark your calendars now—more details in future issues

*We'd like to print information about other remembrance events in upcoming newsletters. If you know of another bereavement organization that is planning a remembrance walk, please contact Rebekah at [Rebekah@mend.org](mailto:Rebekah@mend.org).*

## Giving Thanks on Mother's Day

by Krysandra Hislop

***"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3***

With Mother's Day coming up, I know how hard it is for me and for others. My mother stopped speaking with me and "excommunicated" me from her extended family fourteen years ago. That was really hard, but so were the nineteen years prior to that as I could never be "good enough" and I faced constant ridicule and rejection.

In more recent years, my heart has turned to thoughts of my sons who are missing from earth but are instead rejoicing in heaven. Last year, Mother's Day came and my thoughts were still full of my son whom I had lost at nineteen weeks just four months earlier. My husband wanted to take me somewhere special. He had noticed a place on his commute that had flowers growing and a sign that announced it as a "gardens", so he decided to surprise me with a trip there.

Imagine his surprise when he pulled up and read the full sign, "Morningside Memorial Gardens". Poor fellow, he had taken me to a cemetery for Mother's Day! And yet, in the midst of my grief, it seemed like the best place to be at that particular moment, a place where tears are allowed and I was still my son's mother, even though we couldn't be together.

For me, this year Mother's Day has a new meaning. God has been busy this past year. The greatest thing He has done is to work diligently on healing my heart. I no longer feel the great pain or shame when I think about my own mother and her rejection, her whole family's rejection of me. Oh, I know that I will likely never be acceptable in their sight, but I have learned on a deeper level that I am acceptable in my heavenly Father's sight. I am \*precious\* in His sight, and so are you!! What an amazing truth.

God has also worked hard to heal my heart from the loss of my sons, my babies. How He worked His healing is still a mystery to me. I know He brought a lot of neat people into my life whom He used to do His work. Healing didn't come instantaneously, fast, or as quick as I wanted it to, but as I kept giving my grief to Him, He kept giving me peace and healing.

This is my hope and prayer for all of you. Even when it is hard, hang in there. When you are angry with God, let Him know and ask Him to take that anger away and ask Him to replace it with acceptance for His plan. We have already endured the loss of our loved ones, and nothing can bring them back to us in this lifetime. By holding onto anger, or any other emotion that gets between us and our relationship with the Lord, we are hurting ourselves unnecessarily. We will have things that we need to work through, be it anger, depression, or other strong feelings that come up because of our losses. I strongly encourage you to bring all these emotions and issues to the Lord. Time will not heal your wounds. It may dull the pain, or cover it over with the here and now, but it will not heal your pain. Only the Lord can do that. He has the power to mend broken hearts and set the captives free.

Remember always that our Lord is a \*personal\* Savior. That means that each of us has a personal relationship with Him. This gives us the rights of friendship, but also the responsibilities of friendship as well. If a friend of ours did something that hurt us, where would our friendship be if we never confronted our friend with our feelings? So, too, our Lord wants us to come to Him with our hurts. The blessing of the friendship is that He has the power to heal those hurts, to soothe the ragged parts of our hearts and souls. The longer we turn away from Him in our pain, the longer we wait for His healing touch.

I hope that each of you will draw closer to the Lord this Mother's Day. I will especially pray that you will be able to thank Him for the gift of motherhood. Each one of you has been blessed by the special gift of being a mother. The Lord chose you to have the blessing of carrying a child, if only for a short time. You are a mother, regardless of how short that time was. One day, you will see and meet that precious child or children the Lord created within you.

My thoughts and prayers are with you all this Mother's Day. May the peace of God be in your hearts and minds this weekend.

*Krysandra and her husband Roger are the parents of six children on earth and eight in heaven, including Jedidiah (6/28/01) and Isaac (1/7/02), both stillborn due to premature delivery.*

**Helpful Reading ...**

*A Deeper Shade of Grace*  
by Bernadette Keaggy.  
Sparrow Press, Nashville, TN, 1993.

*Empty Arms: Emotional Support for Those Who Have Suffered a Miscarriage Stillbirth, or Tubal Pregnancy*  
by Pam Vredevelt.  
Multnomah Press, Sisters, OR, 1984

*Empty Cradle, Broken Heart – Surviving the Death of Your Baby*  
by Deborah L. David, PhD.  
Fulcrum Publishing, 350 Indiana St., Golden, CO 80401, 1991

*Free to Grieve*  
by Maureen Rank.  
Bethany House Publishers  
6820 Auto Club Rd.  
Minneapolis, MN 55438

*Grieving the Child I Never Knew: A devotional companion for comfort in the loss of your unborn or newly born child*  
By Kathe Winnenberg  
Zondervan Publishing House

*Heaven's Not a Crying Place*  
by Joey O'Connor.  
To order, visit his website at  
<http://www.joeyo.com/>  
or e-mail [joey@joeyo.com](mailto:joey@joeyo.com)

*I Can't Find A Heartbeat: Hope and Help for Those Who Have Lost an Unborn Child*  
By Melissa Sexson Hanson  
Review and Herald  
Publishing Association

*I'll Hold You in Heaven*  
by Jack Hayford.  
Regal Books  
Ventura, CA

*In Search of Hope*  
by Susan R. Lowe  
AmErica House  
[www.publishamerica.com](http://www.publishamerica.com)

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

*Loss and Grief Recovery Help Caring for Children with Disabilities, Chronic or Terminal Illness*  
by Joyce Ashton with Dennis Ashton.  
Baywood Publishing

*Morning Light – Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Early Infant Death from a Catholic Perspective*  
by Bernadette Zambri.  
To order, call 905-278-2058 (in Canada).

*Silent Grief*  
by Clara Hinton.  
Published by New Leaf Press

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

*36 Hours with an Angel*  
by Lindsay Roberts.  
Richard and Lindsay Roberts Ministries,  
P.O. Box 2187, Tulsa, OK 74171

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

*When God Doesn't Make Sense*  
by Dr. James Dobson.  
Published by Tyndale House Publishers,  
Wheaton, IL, 1993

*When Hello Means Goodbye*  
By Paul Schweibert, M.D., P., and Kirb.  
Perinatal Loss, 2116 NE 18<sup>th</sup> Ave.,  
Portland, OR 97212, 1986

*When Pregnancy Fails: Families Coping with Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Death*  
By Susan Borg and Judith Lasker.  
Bantam Press, 1989

**SIDS ...**  
*The SIDS Survival Guide*  
by Joani Nelson Horchler and  
Robin Rice Morris.  
To order, call 301-773-9691.

**Subsequent Pregnancy ...**  
*Another Baby? Maybe ...*  
*Thirty Questions on Pregnancy After Loss*  
by Sherokee Ilse and Maribeth Wildre Doerr.  
Contact Centering Corporation  
[www.centering.org](http://www.centering.org)  
402-553-1200

*Pregnancy After a Loss – A Guide to Pregnancy After a Miscarriage, Stillbirth, or Infant Death*  
by Carol Cirulli Lanham.  
Berkley Books, a Division of Penguin Putnam,  
Inc., 375 Hudson St., New York, NY. To order  
directly, call toll-free 1-877-853-3595.

*Still to Be Born*  
by Paul Schweibert, M.D.  
Perinatal Loss, 2116 NE 18<sup>th</sup> Ave.,  
Portland, OR 97212, 1986

*Trying Again--A Guide to Pregnancy After Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Infant Loss*  
by Ann Douglas and John R. Sussman,  
M.D.  
Taylor Publishing, 2000.  
<http://www.having-a-baby.com/tryingagain.htm>

**Infertility ...**  
*When the Cradle Is Empty - Answering Tough Questions About Infertility*  
By John and Sylvia Van Regenmorter  
To order, call Focus on the Family at  
1-800-232-6459.

**For Children ...**  
*The Cherry Blossom Tree – A Grandfather Talks About Life & Death*  
by Jan Godfrey.  
Augsburg Fortress, 426 S. Fifth St., Box  
1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440, 1996

*Let's Talk About Heaven*  
by Debby Anderson.  
Chariot Books, David C. Cook  
Publishing Co., Elgin, IL, 1991

*Molly's Rosebush*  
by Janice Cohn, D.S.W.  
Albert Whitman & Company, Morton  
Grove, IL 1994

*Mommy, Please Don't Cry – Tender Words for Broken Hearts*  
by Linda DeYmaz.  
Multnomah Publisher, Bend, OR  
Contact [www.multnomahbooks.com](http://www.multnomahbooks.com)

*Someone I Love Died*  
by Christine Harder Tangvald.  
Chariot Books, David C. Cook Publishing  
Co., Elgin, IL, 1988

**Holiday Grieving ...**  
*The Christmas Box*  
by Richard Paul Evans.  
Simon and Schuster, Rockefeller Center,  
1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York,  
NY 10020, 1995-1996

*A December Grief*  
by Harold Ivan Smith  
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City  
Kansas City, MO

## Mother's Day Memories

Our daughter, Mary Elizabeth, was stillborn on May 7, 1996. This was only five days before Mother's Day. My heart was broken and the week before had been very exhausting. Thankfully, we had our son Silas at home, and I still felt like a mother and that he needed me to continue doing all of the motherly things. My heart goes out to women who do not have another child at home. The loss is so great when the child we are all looking forward to having in our lives is suddenly no longer there.

Our daughter was born when I was 23 weeks pregnant. My body felt so empty when I could no longer feel her kicking me. It hurt so badly to know I would never hold this little one and hug her and be her mommy. To not be able to gaze in her little eyes was very heartbreaking. She was born with her eyes closed and perfectly whole. But, as soon as she was born, she was no longer breathing, and I knew she was safe in the arms of Jesus. We held her for several hours and loved her and took her picture to have a tangible reminder of our sweet baby. Later in the week we buried her in a beautiful white dress. We picked a beautiful stone for her grave and keep it decorated with pretty flowers for our little one in heaven.

Mother's Day has always been one of my favorite holidays since I became a mother. I love to wear a corsage to church and am thrilled

with the fact that I am a mother. That year, I could not go to church and celebrate. I believe that even when you have lost a child, you are still a mother and should receive honor. But when your loss is so very fresh, it is hard to face others and celebrate. We had a quiet celebration at home. Many of my friends sent gifts and cards. They lifted me up in prayer, and I truly felt held in the comforting arms of God.

Since then, God has blessed us with another little girl to love—Sophie. All three of our children are a blessing to us. I wear a birthstone necklace with three charms on it, and our children love to look at it. Mary Elizabeth is a special part of our family, and we will join her again in heaven. Her memory is beautiful to me now, but her death left a great emptiness inside of me.

When I hear of a family losing a baby or child, I lift them up in prayer and send a note to let them know I care. Sometimes I include a small gift. It helped me greatly to have someone to talk to who had been through a loss. I remember these women on Mother's Day and on the birthdays of the children they lost. A hug, a touch, a special card to show you care can mean so much. Even when your baby does not survive, you are still a mother, and I hope others make you feel special and cared for.

*by Laura Clark, mother to Silas and Sophie on earth and Mary Elizabeth in heaven.*

### M.E.N.D. Fundraisers

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

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

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

Kim Robinson, a **Pampered Chef** kitchen consultant and M.E.N.D. family member, is donating 40 percent of sales to M.E.N.D. members back to our organization. You can browse products at [www.pamperedchef.com](http://www.pamperedchef.com), then e-mail Kim at [kimr@cheerful.com](mailto:kimr@cheerful.com) to place an order.

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

**Kevah Kreations** has developed a special Infant Memory Scrapbook Kit to help families develop their babies' memory scrapbooks. This is a very delicate and sensitive 20-piece kit. Cost is \$5 plus \$2 for shipping and handling. Info may be requested at [Kevah955@cs.com](mailto:Kevah955@cs.com) or by calling 843-871-3071. All checks may be made payable to Kevah Kreations. Mention M.E.N.D. while ordering and a small percentage of the sale will be donated back to M.E.N.D.

Diana McInelly is a consultant for **Usborne Books at Home**, a children's book company. Diana is donating 10 percent of purchases made off her Web site by M.E.N.D. members back to M.E.N.D. You must e-mail Diana if you purchase from the Web site so that she'll know you are a M.E.N.D. member. The Web address is [www.luvusborne.com](http://www.luvusborne.com), and you can e-mail Diana at [rmcinely@hotmail.com](mailto:rmcinely@hotmail.com).

**Once Upon a Family** offers beautiful keepsakes to keep memorabilia safe and sound. Consultant Amy Gill is offering M.E.N.D. 20 percent of sales of the Baby Keepsake Box, Tiny Treasure Box, and Memory Trunk made to M.E.N.D. members back to M.E.N.D. The items can be viewed at [www.ouafamily.net](http://www.ouafamily.net), and Amy can be reached at 214-725-6116 or [texasgills@hotmail.com](mailto:texasgills@hotmail.com)

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

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

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

<p>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.</p>	<p>Donations make the printing and distribution of this newsletter possible.</p> <p>Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to:</p> <p>M.E.N.D. P.O. Box 1007 Coppell, TX 75019.</p>	<p>Visit our web site at: <a href="http://www.mend.org">http://www.mend.org</a></p> <p><b>Board of Directors</b></p> <p><i>Founder/President</i> Rebekah Mitchell</p> <p><i>Vice President</i> Lori King</p> <p><i>Secretary</i> Byron Mitchell, D.D.S.</p> <p><i>Medical Advisor</i> Gonzalo Venegas, M.D.</p> <p><i>Directors</i> Jana Spigener DaLana Barsanti Lisa Durham Christine Oxendine</p> <p><i>Officers</i> Denise Gradel Rae Scrivner Pam Morren Nicole Didier</p> <p><i>Editor</i> Sharlene Libby</p> <p><i>Co-Editors</i> Rebekah Mitchell Byron Mitchell, D.D.S.</p>
<p>For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the newsletter, contact us at M.E.N.D. P.O. Box 1007 Coppell, TX 75019 (972) 459-2396 1-888-695-M.E.N.D. Fax (972) 459-2396 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:Rebekah@mend.org">Rebekah@mend.org</a> <a href="mailto:Sharlene@mend.org">Sharlene@mend.org</a></p>	<p>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).</p>	

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death  
P.O. Box 1007, Coppell, TX 75019  
USA  
(972) 459-2396 or Toll Free 1-888-695-M.E.N.D. (1-888-695-6363)  
*Return Service Requested*

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