



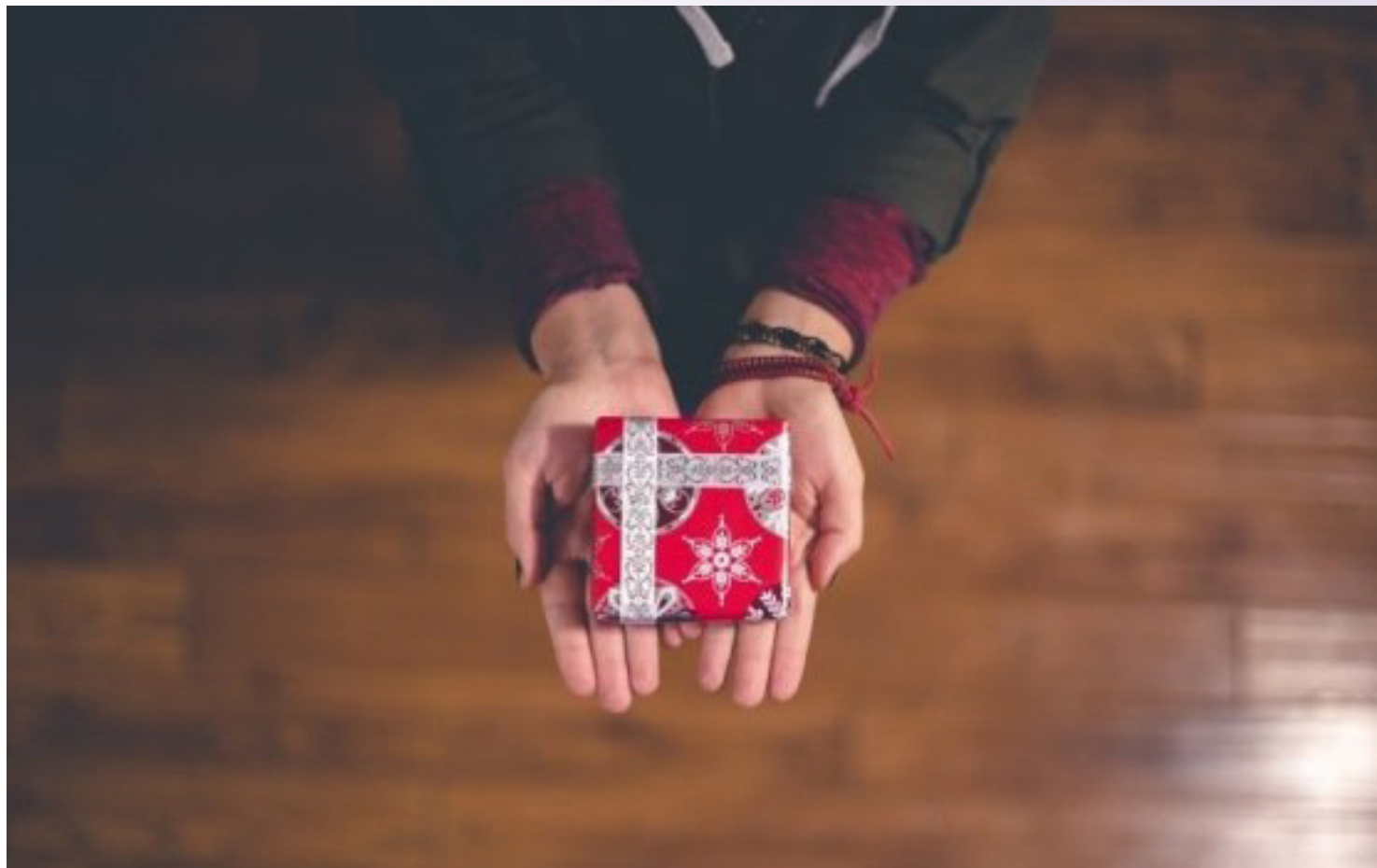
Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss Support

Volume 23, Issue 6

November/December 2018

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When the gift you looked forward to the most, is gone...

Celebrating When Celebrating Is Hard

Sometimes we feel ready to decorate everything, join the parties, participate in the caroling adventures... And other times.. we simply want to sit at our baby's grave, or hide in our closet clinging and crying into a memento, or even stare into oblivion, waiting for the holidays to pass. Each of these feelings are real, and they are okay. They help us process our grief, and sometimes will bring us to a way to celebrate, even when it is hard, even when it is difficult, even when it is painful.

Making Memories

Our President/Founder had plans to continue traditions from childhood memories, but had to adjust after her losses.

page 3

Celebrate Your Own Way

After loss, it is often difficult to "continue on" with the holiday traditions. A Mommy shares her thoughts on celebrating.

page 13

October 5th

We are continuing the story of Jubilation Divine, hearing from Mama this time, her side of the loss, and advice to mothers.

page 24

January/February Topic

No Other Children

Deadline: November 30, 2018

March/April Topic

Coping Mechanisms

Deadline: January 31, 2018

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 newsletter. 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 Newsletter Editor, Jennifer Harrison, at jennifer@mend.org. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our website indefinitely. Because our newsletters 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to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests it not be published.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 newsletter. 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



IN THIS ISSUE

Articles

Feature Article	3
Celebrate Your Way	13
Finding Your Christmas Joy	18
In His Presence at Christmas.....	19
The Holidays are Coming, But.....	23
October 5 th	24
Spanish Translation	28

Other Features

Bryan/College Station Walk of Remembrance.....	4
Chicagoland October Balloon Release and Lighted Bag Walk	4
Dallas/Fort Worth Wave of Light.....	5
In Loving Memory	6
Birthday Tributes	8
Wave of Light	12
SW Missouri Balloon Release	13
Dallas/Fort Worth Walk to Remember	14
Greater Houston Area Walk to Remember.....	16
Chapter Updates	20
Tulsa, Oklahoma Balloon Release.....	22
Subsequent Births.....	29
About M.E.N.D.	18
M.E.N.D. Chapters' Information	19

Feature Article



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

The holidays... I have a love/hate relationship with the holidays. Family is very important to me, so I cherish the end of the year because we set aside time to acknowledge with thankfulness our many blessings, and we celebrate the birth of our Savior with one another. We have parties, consume huge amounts of calories at each other's homes, and together we reminisce about our loved ones who are sadly no longer with us. I enjoy my house decorated for Christmas (I go all-out), and I tend to cook in November and December more than I do the other ten months of the year combined. Although I do not like the task of shopping, I take pleasure in purchasing gifts for others. So, for the most part, I love and look forward to the holiday season.

But, there are aspects of the holidays I firmly dislike, which are quite painful for me. My twin sister, Rachael, and I are the youngest of six kids. Growing up, our parents created and maintained wonderful holiday traditions for us, which are still very meaningful to me today. December 25 was the highlighted day of the year in our household. The traditions began with a handful of Christmas parties hosted by our parents, attending the Christmas Eve communion service at our church, followed by hurrying to bed so Santa wouldn't catch us awake. The next morning, we found all our gifts separated into six different stations, which we were not allowed to run to until all six of us were awake and had posed for our annual photograph on the staircase. Such wonderful, sweet memories! I planned to implement as many of these traditions as possible when I became a wife and mom. What I really looked forward to, for some reason, was having my children anxiously sit on the stairs for a picture before running to the Christmas tree to see what Santa had delivered.

The first Christmas Byron and I were parents, our son, Byron, Jr. (aka Little B), was a newborn, so it seemed kind of silly to take a picture of him in a carrier on the stairs. The next Christmas he was in the hospital with a bone infection, so, no photo.

Making Memories During the Holidays

Finally, just after his 2nd birthday, we were able to do what I dreamed of doing: having my child sit for a Christmas morning photo, in his pajamas, with bedhead, longing to race around the corner to see what lay before him. The next Christmas was much the same, but we had just discovered our new pregnancy, so I joyously told Little B, "next year you can hold your baby brother or sister in your lap for the picture!" I even purchased a new set of stockings for all four of us, that I planned to hang on our mantle the following year.

But none of that happened. My ideas of continued memory-making were shattered when our baby was stillborn the following June. That Christmas, once again, Byron Jr., sat alone on the staircase. I had high hopes and dreams that one day he'd have a sibling to share that moment with, but year after year, alone he sat. A kidney disease which resulted in a transplant for me, followed by the loss of another little baby, contributed to our only having one living child. So over the years, I had to reinvent traditions and memory-making. We kept the staircase photo tradition, but it killed me that each year he was by himself. When he was a teenager, we attempted to put our dogs in the photo with him, which didn't always work out too well. And we still never allowed gift opening before Christmas morning, to help rev up the anticipation and awe of the day. We spent extra time with family, mainly with my siblings who had kids his age so he could at least be with cousins to play with and share the specialness of the holidays with. And to this day, even as a grown married man, we shower him with an abundance of gifts - I'm quite sure more than he would receive were he not an only child.

Little B (now known as just "B"), gave us a beautiful daughter four years ago when he

My ideas of continued memory-making were shattered when our baby was stillborn the following June.

Continued on page 5.

Bryan/College Station Walk of Remembrance



Chicagoland October Balloon Release and Lighted Bag Walk



"Making Memories..." Continued from page 3.

married his wife, Anna. Like Byron and I do with our respective families, they take turns with each family for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The first year they were married, they were with us for Thanksgiving, but they were out of state with Anna's family for Christmas. I certainly understood that fair was fair, and it was only right for them to not be with us, but oh, how it killed me! Yes, Byron and I were with other family members, but we were childless on Christmas. There was a part of me that felt like I had lost a child all over again, even though he was just a couple of hundred miles away from us. Oh...but joy truly comes in the morning!! The next Christmas they were home, with us, along with our two dogs and their sweet puppy. A household full of love, laughter, fun, and a little chaos. Finally, the Christmas I had been waiting for - the "kids" were home and all was right in our little Mitchell world! And B didn't have to sit alone on the stairs that Christmas morning. We decided to snap a picture of all seven of us under the tree, still in our pjs, and some of us with bedhead! That is a Christmas that will stay etched in my heart for years to come.

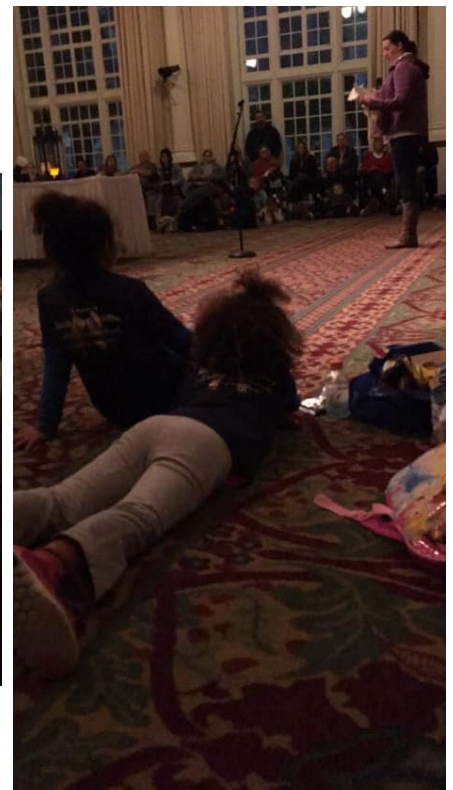
So, no the holidays have not always been full of great memories for me, but I've learned to make the best of it, create new memories and certainly cherish

what I do have. What I pray has never happened, is for my son to have bad memories of Christmas because his brother died. I hope Byron and I were able to create years of wonderful memories for our son, without the cloud of grief looming over our home due to his parents' dashed hopes and dreams of giving him siblings.

I pray for you this holiday season, sweet mommies, whose hearts are so broken and disappointed. Allow yourself to be sad, miss who is not sharing the holidays with you, and even let yourself be mad. Hold on to the assurance that some year, maybe next year or maybe in a few years, your joy will return. Certainly, we never forget our babies who died, and the holidays are without a doubt a trigger for immense grief, but one day, I promise, you'll smile, laugh, and create new, happy memories of the holiday season.



Dallas/Fort Worth Wave of Light Ceremony



In Loving Memory

Thank YOU for your support

Cooper Daniel Bane

Stillborn October 24, 2017
Unknown cause
Given by parents Joe and Laura Bane
and sister Lydia

Baby Collion Barron

Miscarried November 9, 2002
Given by mommy Daisy Barron Collins

Baby Barth

Miscarried August 2016
Given by parents Jason and Aubra Barth
and little sister Jewel

Noah

Given by Bethany Birkhead

Levi Samuel Bowmer

April 19, 2013
Trisomy 13 & Tetralogy of Fallot
with absent pulmonary valve
Parents: Sam and Jenae Bowmer
Little sisters: Evie and Val
Gifts given by
Grandmother Jaimi Wilkins
Goosehead Insurance/
Justin Winstead Agency

Andre Gabriel Broussard

Stillborn May 29, 2016
Trisomy 18
Given by
Parents Ross and Anna Maria Broussard
and big brother Bennett

Lennon Murphy Burghardt

Given anonymously

Hannah Crow

Stillborn February 11, 2015
Complications of HELLP Syndrome

Willow Crow

Stillborn January 28, 2016
Chorioamnionites
Given by parents Kristin & Joey Crow Jr
and sister to Skyler

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. For more information on how you can support M.E.N.D., please see the "About M.E.N.D." section in the back of this newsletter.

Abigail Grace Crump

July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Gifts given by
Parents Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli

Brooke Sophia Daily

Stillborn March 11, 2010
Vasa Previa
Gifts given by
Parents Jeremy and Lisa Daily
and sisters Sarah and Savannah

Sophie Jane Darnell

Stillborn May 28, 2013
Unknown cause
Gifts given by
Parents Tommy and Brea Darnell and
siblings Luke and Piper
Grandparents Danny and Helen Lynch
Uncle Bryan and Aunt Lesa Lynch
Michelle and Steve Skrasek

Parker and Riley Davis

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

Madelyn Rose Delagarza

Given by Crystal Ortiz

Baby Dill

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

Barbara Flores

Given by Nell Belanger

Hadley Kay Freimuller

October 17, 2015
Gifts given by
Mommy Kristin DeVille
Darrian DeVille
Nicholas Tilley

Paislee Ann Frette

April 4-5, 2012
Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome
Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette
Little sister: Colbie
Given by
Grandparents James and LuAnn Junkin

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.

Logan Wayne Fish

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

Angel Garcia

March 14, 2017, at 20 weeks
Unknown cause/fetal demise
Given by parents Giovannie and Lisa Garcia and
siblings Elijah and Liam

Erika Brienne Grau

July 9—August 3, 1997
Anoxic brain injury due to ruptured uterus
Gifts given by
Parents Ray and Yvette Ray Grau
Little sister Nataly Grau
Big Brother Nik Grau

CJ Gold

Miscarried August 12, 2008

Marina Gold

Miscarried July 14, 2009
Parents: Greg and Kathryn Gold
Big sister: Emily
Given by Grandmother Nellie Gold

Ella Lynne Gonyea

Stillborn August 24, 2016
IUGR / no amniotic fluid
Gifts given by
Parents David and Sable Gonyea
and little sister Laurel
Grandma and Grandpa Gonyea
Anonymously

Henry Scott Herzog

Stillborn April 8, 2014, at 38 weeks
Insufficient placenta
Given by
Parents Erin Gattuccio and Scott Herzog
and little sister Emilia

Sienna Lynn Helm

Given by Nadia Stefansson

Sara Isabel Johnson

Given by Chopin Klang

Sarah Ann King

Stillborn June 22, 1995

Unknown cause

Given by parents David and Lori King
and siblings Brooks, Brady and Kaylee**Twig Kolek**

August 14, 2016

Early miscarriage

Given by mommy Lydia Eustace Kolek

Haylee Rae Lager

September 8, 2018

Cord accident

Gifts given by

Parents Nicholas and Gabrielle Lager

Kenda Cavanaugh

Andrea Schluter

Karen Hawk

Teresa Sanzone

Beverly Waldroup

John Cavanaugh

Stacey Miller

Alison Sosne

Donna Dayka

Felicia Tower

Melissa Curley

Darlene Mynier

Andrea Colombino

Anonymous

Margaret Divito

Eddie Stroud

Nancy Gregorio

Darren Allen

Ashley Huffman

Patricia Betit

Kristin DeVille

Wilder August Maerke

July 5, 2018

Given by parents Thomas and Kristin Maerke

Winston James McDonald

July 2, 2017

Given by mommy Jennifer McDonald

Sophia Rose McGhee

Stillborn March 29, 2010

Unknown cause

Baby McGhee

Miscarried July 2002

Baby McGhee II

Miscarried January 2009

Baby McGhee III

Miscarried April 2009

Gifts given by parents Matt and Stacy McGhee

and siblings Micah and Scarlett

Grandparents Joey and Sheri Vigil

Tyler James Merrill

Stillborn March 28, 2014

Tetralogy of fallot

Given by parents Jennifer and David Merrill
and sister Michaela**Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord accident

Baby Mitchell

Miscarried December 2001

Gifts given by

Parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

Dentistry of Las Colinas /

Byron L. Mitchell, D.D.S.

Margot Lily Perry

Stillborn June 10, 2013

Cord accident

Gifts given by parents Brandon and Marisa Perry

and siblings Adeline, Bennett and Noelle

Grammie Marie Perry

Everleigh Violet Lorraine Pugh

April 11–19, 2018

Given by mommy Samantha Pugh

Oliver Joseph Rodriguez

Given by Amanda Rodriguez

Elena Marie Rusert

May 23, 2011

Premature

Given by parents Michael and Tina Rusert

and brothers Liam, Asher and Gavin

Jonathan Sanchez

June 13, 2010

Baby Sanchez Morin

October 24, 2015

Given by parents Devora and Salvador Sanchez

Brayden Ryan

Stillborn December 28, 2012

Given by parents Steven and Heather

Malik Saba

December 11, 2013

Incompetent cervix

April Saba

April 13, 2017

Molar pregnancy

Given by parents Kyle and Cara Saba

and sibling Talon

Morgan Schear

Miscarried March 28, 2006

Given by parents Nobel and Paula Schear

and brother Isaac

Molly Rene Schramm

March 10, 2004

Diaphragmatic Hernia

Mommy: Suzanne Schramm

Daddy: Jerry Schramm

Siblings: Morgan and Garrett

Given by Paul Duncan

Aiden Xavier Sohn

October 13, 2002

HELLP Syndrome

Hope Sohn

Miscarried May 2003

Whisper Sohn

Miscarried October 2003

Given by mommy Angelique Sohn

and brothers Joshua, Sebastian and Benjamin

Jordan Marie Sims

Stillborn November 10, 2006

Unknown cause

Given by parents Troy and D'Anna Sims

and siblings Jacob and Julia

Abigail Grace Story

July 9–13, 2015

Given by parents John and Faith Story

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997

TTTS and Polyhydramnios

Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith

and siblings Travis and Julia

Landyn James Turnbull

March 7, 2017

Marl Danielle and Hayden

December 15, 2017

Given by parents James and Kendra Turnbull

Harper Treinen

Given by Stephanie Baldwin

Alivia Elizabeth-Grace Walker

July 24, 2006

Incompetent Cervix

Given by parents Robert and Liz Walker

and siblings Jaxson and Lauryn

Emily June Watson

Given by Burke Watson

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

Janis Kidder

Sebago Sonography, Inc.

April Jenkins

Kelly Carmichall

Sonja Begemann



Birthday Tributes

Happy 4th Birthday, Baby Gamboa!

I still tear up every year as I write your birthday tribute. My sweet baby, you are 4 years old this year! Time passes so fast, yet you are always on my mind and so deep in my heart. You have a new brother this year, who I know you will love when you meet him. I can't wait to hold you in my arms one day, and see your gorgeous face and smile. Until then, have the best heavenly birthday ever, eat lots of cake and ice cream, and tell Grandma hello for me. Please pray for us.

We love you very much!

Daddy, Mommy, Olivia, Christian and Chiquitita

Baby Gamboa

Miscarried November 21, 2014

Parents: Anthony F. Gamboa and Denise Devora

Siblings: Olivia Guadalupe and Christian Anthony



Happy 3rd Birthday, Baron!

Dear Baron, we are wishing we could watch you running around with excitement on your 3rd birthday this year. We will always celebrate the day you joined our family. You are such a special child to us. Our hearts continue to ache every day because of your absence. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure, sweet baby boy! Please feel our love, kisses and hugs on your special day. We love you!

Baron Neelley

September 9–November 14, 2015

Unknown cause/SIDS

Parents: Bo and Allison Neelley

Sisters: Emma and Stella



Happy 3rd Birthday, Nevaeh!

Happy 3rd heavenly birthday, my tiniest princess! Your siblings and I love and miss you so much! You are always forever in our minds and hearts! Until we meet again, my love!

Love,
Mommy

Nevaeh Rose Hernandez

Stillborn October 4, 2015

Mommy: Stephanie Cuevas

Siblings: Destiny, Isabella, Armando and Angel



Happy 15th Birthday, Caleb!

Caleb, here we are celebrating your 15th heavenly birthday. We should be getting a Driver's Permit and telling you grades are more important than hunting (well, your Dad would be on your side I'm sure). We should be watching you play a sport and dreading the moment you bring home your first girlfriend. Instead, we'll eat an eggnog cheesecake like always and look through your scrapbook. We will remind ourselves that 15 years is a blink compared to eternity in heaven with you and Jesus. Until we're together again, our firstborn, our son.

Happy 15th, sweet boy.

Love, Mom, Dad and Maddie

Caleb Scott Fann

December 1, 2003

P.P.R.O.M.

Also remembering

Baby August Fann

Miscarried August 13, 2004, at 8 weeks

Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann

Little Sister: Madison Grace



Happy 4th Birthday, Joy!

We love you so much. I know you are playing with your oldest sibling and older brother today. You have been playing with them every day in heaven for the last four years. I can't believe it was four years ago you and your twin brother were snuggled in my womb. Now we hold him in our arms, but we never got to hold you. But one day, I will hold you both, and all of your siblings, in my arms and we will all laugh with JOY. Until then, I hold you in my heart. We are sending you, Avery, and Gideon all of our love. Forever.

Joy Mitchell

December 2014

Vanishing twin syndrome

Also remembering

Gideon Zeller Mitchell

Stillborn May 17, 2011

Membranous cord insertion

Avery Mitchell

Miscarried May 2008

Parents: Todd and Stormy Mitchell

Brothers: Silas and Justus



Happy 1st Birthday, Bella!

This year would've been Baby Bella's 1st birthday. Your family misses you, baby girl, so much. I hope you feel our love all the way up there in heaven. I know you are watching over me love. I hope you have a gorgeous smile that never leaves your beautiful little face. Mommy loves you, angel; I always will.

Arabella Montgomery Wolcott
December 16, 2017–March 10, 2018
SIDS
Mommy: Tori Wolcott

**Happy 7th Birthday, Elliot!**

To our sweet boy, Elliot, of course we can only dream of the boy you would be right now. Seven years old? How is this possible? Even after all these years, there is still the sense that someone is missing at the dinner table, during every family outing and especially in family pictures. One thing is for certain, we know you are in the most incredible hands; you have no suffering, sorrow or pain. For these things, we are grateful, and we are filled with joy to know we will see you again.

We love you deeply, and we thank God every time we remember you.

Elliot Joseph Wood
Stillborn December 21, 2011
Unknown cause
Parents: Ron and Halee Wood
Siblings: Reese and Hyun

**Happy 4th Birthday, Baby!**

Remembering you, our third little one, and wishing you a happy heavenly birthday. We never saw your precious face or held you, and we don't know whether you're a girl or a boy, but we love you so much. You will always be part of our little family, and we will keep you in our hearts. We will meet you some glorious day, and will no longer be separated.

With our love and hugs and kisses,
 Mommy and Daddy, Christian and Clara

Baby Delmar
Miscarried December 20, 2014, at 9 weeks
Unknown cause
Also remembering
Everett Christopher Delmar
Stillborn April 18, 2012, at 28 weeks
Unknown cause
Parents: Christopher and Miranda Delmar
Siblings: Christian Matthew and Clara Evelyn

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Alex!**

Happy 2nd heavenly birthday, Alex! We miss seeing you grow up and change before our eyes. We can't help but wonder about your personality as you turn into a toddler. Would you be curious and active like Daddy, or complacent and shy like Mommy? We miss you every day, sweetheart, and are anxiously awaiting the day we're together again with you, Baby V and Grandpa in heaven! Hugs and kisses, Alex!

Love,
 Daddy and Mommy

Alexander Wallace Van Buren
Miscarried November 7, 2016
Also remembering
Baby V
Miscarried September 4, 2017
Parents: Steven and Lauren Van Buren

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Blakeleigh!**

Happy 2nd heavenly birthday, our beautiful angel! Wow, it is hard to believe it has already been two years. It seems like just yesterday we were holding you in our arms. Thank you for being such a great guardian angel to your baby sister. Mommy and Daddy tell her about you all of the time. We are so blessed and proud to be your parents, my darling. We love you to heaven and back.

Mommy, Daddy, Brielynn and fur brother Chelokee

Blakeleigh Delamere Rougeau
November 19, 2016
Asphyxiation due to sacrococcygeal teratoma
Parents: Brandon and Brook Rougeau
Little sister: Brielynn Mary

**Happy 7th Birthday, Charlotte!**

Sweet Charlotte, we miss you so much! Over the past seven years, our love for you has only grown stronger. You continue to live on in our hearts, and not a day goes by without us thinking about you. We love showing your picture to your brother and sister, and we mention you often to them. And now, you have another sibling on the way whom we will share your legacy. You have made Daddy and I better in every way possible, but we sure do wish you were still here. We love you, sweet girl.

Charlotte Grace Harrison
December 28, 2011–January 4, 2012
Complications at birth
Parents: Luke and Amanda Harrison
Siblings: Evan, Audrey
and Baby Harrison 4 (due April 2019)



Happy 6th Birthday, Brayden!

Dearest Brayden, there isn't a day goes by you aren't terribly missed on earth.

You would be in Kindergarten this year and no doubt loving school just like your Momma. You are with us more than ever in our new house. With every sunset, you are here. I hope you are getting lots of hugs from my Dad. I wonder what you would call him?

With more love than I ever knew possible,
Mommy and Daddy

Brayden Ryan
Stillborn December 28, 2012
Parents: Steven and Heather

**Happy 9th Birthday, Madilynn!**

Happy 9th birthday, our beautiful angel! It's been nine years since we held you and tearfully said "Goodbye." How is that possible? You are always on our minds, and we love you so much! Your little sister said she misses you and wants to play with you. She knows you are her guardian angel. Your Pawpaw has now joined you in heaven, and I know he was planning to love on you for us, but oh, how we wish we could hug you again! We'll love you forever, sweet girl, and it will be such a joyous day when we see you again.

Madilynn Isabell Kelley
Stillborn December 3, 2009
Cord accident / Amniotic Band Syndrome
Parents: Jeremiah and Cherish Kelley
Little sister: Alyson Hope

**Happy 1st Birthday, Olivia!**

"Even the tiniest child leaves behind
love that will last forever"

Sweet girl, you are loved and missed more than words can express. Who knew a 1 lb., 8oz. baby could change our lives so much? The 29 days we got to spend with you here weren't enough, but we look forward to seeing you again some day. Families are forever. Birthdays in heaven must be spectacular, even better than Disneyland!

We love you,
Dad, Mom, Sam and Ben

Olivia Lorraine Horrocks
November 14–December 13, 2017
Extreme prematurity and sepsis
Parents: Shawn and Megan Horrocks
Siblings: Sam and Ben

**Happy 3rd Birthday, Ashton!**

Happy birthday, angel. Today you would have been 3. Running and laughing with your sisters. Taking care of your new sister. She looks just like you, baby. We know you are having fun with your Grandma, Granny and Grandpa. Mommy and Daddy miss you every day. We love you so much.

Ashton Robert Oetting
November 30, 2015
Unknown cause
Parents: Jason and Elizabeth Oetting
Siblings: Chloe, Gracie and Ashlyn

**Happy 40th Birthday, Baby Girl!**

Wow! Where has the time gone? Wishing you were here. Sometimes I look up to the sky and see if you or your Daddy is sending me a message or a sign that you're watching. I hope you have a fabulous birthday in heaven. Miss you bunches!

Love,
Mom

Happy 40th birthday to our sister in heaven! We love and miss you very much and can't wait to meet you one day in heaven. Give Daddy a big hug and kiss from us! Monica, Sylvia, Christina and Stephanie

Happy birthday, Aunt Elizabeth! We love and miss you. Hugs and kisses from Alexis, Issac, Samuel, Leah and Xavier

Elizabeth Nicole Garcia
Miscarried October 18, 1978
Parents: Paul and Jeannie Garcia
Siblings: Monica, Sylvia, Christina and Stephanie

**Happy 3rd Birthday, Baby Clyde!**

Baby Clyde, today marks your 3rd birthday in heaven. I'm sure you're up there running around with no worries in the world. I will never forget the day you were born. Your Mommy held you first as she cried with tears of pain, but also with joy of having to have been able to finally meet you. We cried and prayed for you, hoping for a miracle, but God had other plans! We may not have you here in the flesh, but we have you forever in our hearts! I wish you a very happy 3rd birthday, mijo lindo, from all your love ones. Love your favorite tia Yvette.

Forever in our hearts, my baby Clyde

Clyde Edwin Miller V
December 11, 2015
Sudden placenta abruption
Parents: Paola Calderon and Clyde Edwin Miller IV



Happy 5th Birthday, Layla!

Happy birthday, our sweet baby! We love you and miss you so much, Layla. We think about you every day. Thank you for all the butterflies you've sent over the years and for all the ways you let us know you're near us. Five years have gone by so fast. It seems like just yesterday I was holding you so silently in my arms and kissing your beautiful face. Please pray for us and visit us in our dreams. While you're celebrating with Jesus, we will be celebrating your beautiful life here. We are so thankful God chose us to be your parents. We love you, Layla! Happy 5th birthday!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Sissy and Brother

Layla Yvette Arismendez

November 22, 2013

Placental abruption due to high blood pressure

Also remembering

Baby Arismendez

Ruptured ectopic pregnancy

October 19, 2012

Baby Arismendez 2

May 24, 2014

Early miscarriage

Parents: David and Roxanne Arismendez

Siblings: Cierra and David

**Happy 9th Birthday, Serenity!**

Wow... Nine years... How can this be possible? I keep thinking I want your siblings to stay little, for time not to pass, but I go back and forth with you.

Sometimes I hate it as the days, months and years pass by, and some of my memories of carrying you fade.

But I also know each day, month and year that passes will be closer to the time I get to go Home, and finally hug you, to love on you, to kiss your beautiful face.

I miss you so much, and so want you to be here with me.

It's in these moments, these tough moments, when I really desire to hold you, that I just have to trust God. I don't always understand His purpose, but I understand His promise.

So when I can't hold you, and I can't understand His purpose, I hold on to His promise.

Serenity Harrison

Miscarried December 3, 2009

Parents: Curtis and Jennifer Harrison

Siblings: Leviticus, Zivala and Evalina

**Happy 22nd Birthday, Joshua and Jeromy!**

I wish I could say I didn't grieve you or cry over you... I wish I could say I don't miss you... I wish I could say I don't live with regret... But I can't! Losing you is something I will never get over. I hear a song or pass a certain place, and I'm still reminded of those happy months before your death... and then, the next instant, I'm sad.

I wonder, do you see me? I wonder, do you hear me? I wonder, do you know I'm your mom?

It's said, "Heaven is so glorious, you don't care for things of this earth." I wish for birthday celebrations in heaven, and to be there with you, one day!

Love,
Mom

Joshua and Jeromy Barsanti

Stillborn November 21, 1996

Anencephaly

Parents: Randy and DaLana Barsanti

Brothers: Taylor Wesley, Collin, Harrison and Riley

**Happy 6th Birthday, Rylan!**

Our yearly chocolate shakes for you has become a bittersweet tradition. Thankful for the hope we have to see you, hold you, know you. All we can do now is love you, sweet boy.

Rylan Doucette

November 27, 2012

Ectopic pregnancy

Parents: Aaron and Kristian Doucette

Siblings: Kinley and Alexyn

**Happy 5th Birthday, Lillian!**

Our princess, you are turning 5. We can hardly believe that. Five years. Wow! Seems like just yesterday when we held you. Kissed you. Sang to you. Said "Goodbye" to you. As each year passes, we know we are closer to seeing you again. We long for that time to be a "complete" family.

Until then we join with all of heaven to celebrate you. Our baby girl. Our Lily and Arrow and Jude's Big sister.

We miss you. Adore you. And wait with expectation. Happy 5th birthday. We love you so much! xoxo

Lillian Ember Stewart

November 23, 2013

Parents: Derek and Bethany Stewart

Little siblings: Arrow and Jude



Happy 11th Birthday, Kenneth!

Happy heavenly birthday, son! It seems just like yesterday, but it's been 11 years since I was blessed with you. It's been very hard for me this year because I'm very sad you are not with me, but you are not alone anymore. Your tia Nita is now with you, and I know she is loving you and holding you close to her. It brings me peace to know you have each other and that both of my angels are watching over me. We will celebrate you and your birthday as a family like we always do and will forever keep you in our thoughts and in our hearts! Mommy loves you to the moon and back times infinity!

*Kenneth Weddington, Jr.
November 7, 2007
Unknown cause
Mommy: Louisa Garza*



Happy 13th Birthday, Hope!

I can scarcely believe it was 13 years ago since I held you, my little pink bundle, in my arms. How very precious you looked in your smocked gown. Imagining you as a teenage girl takes my breath away. I wonder what might have been had you lived, and also what you are now experiencing in heaven.

Until I can hold you in heaven, I will hold you in my heart.

Lots of love to you!
Mama

Happy 13th birthday, Little Pink Grandbundle! It's hard to believe you're now a teenager! It doesn't seem that long ago we were watching you and singing to you. You were so cute in your "fancy" dress and party hat.

Can't wait to celebrate your BIG 13! with cupcakes and roses.

Love,
Grammy, Teepa, Mimi, Uncle Ryan, Aunt Kasey,
Uncle Baer and Baby Finn xoxo

*Hope Kirkpatrick
November 5-8, 2005
Amniotic band syndrome
Parents: Kirk and Aly Kirkpatrick
Siblings: Ian and Jane*



Happy 3rd Birthday, Little Ladybug!

Happy 3rd birthday, sweet girl. I know you will be having a wonderful party up in heaven. Three years has been three too many. I think about you every day. My heart won't heal until I'm holding you in my arms again. I love you to the moon and back.

Love,
Mommy

*Payton Denee Contreras
Stillborn December 2, 2015
Mommy: Quenita Jackson*

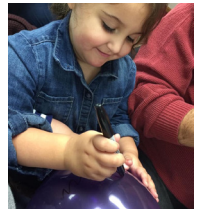
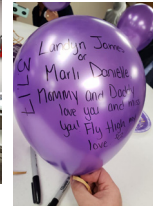


Wave of Light

These pictures were shared by some of our members of our M.E.N.D. chapter pages on Facebook during the Wave of Light on October 15.



SW Missouri Balloon Release



Celebrate Your Own Way

Written by Andrea Gimlin

Mommy to Gabriel

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri

That time of year has come again. Time for Thanksgiving feasts and homes full of joy. Right around the corner is snow, snuggles and presents carefully wrapped.

I remember the first holiday celebrations we attended after Gabriel died. It was awful. Though the world had seemed to stop turning, music and laughter were humming through every hall I seemed to walk through. I think a lot of family were hoping to go back to happier times. Not that they wanted to forget what had happened, but instead yearned for the fond memories of years past. We had so many dark months, I feel everyone truly believed that if we celebrated the same way, then surely we could begin the process of healing.

What they didn't think about was the nights I had dreamed of our first holidays with Gabriel. While I was pregnant, I would rub my tummy and imagine his sweet face when he had his first Thanksgiving meal. I pictured his messy hands all over his tray as he

enjoyed all the favorite foods I had loved. I knew what presents would be waiting around our Menorah and Christmas tree. I could imagine the chunky, drooly baby, beaming for his first pictures with Santa. I even saw myself rocking him to sleep at Midnight Mass to Silent Night.

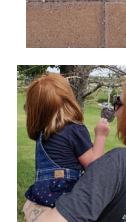
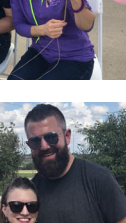
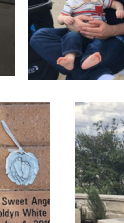
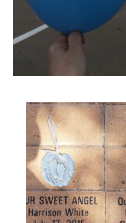
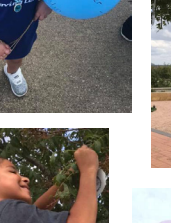
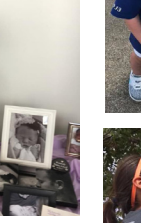
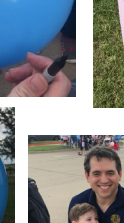
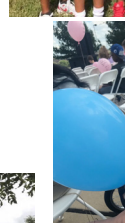
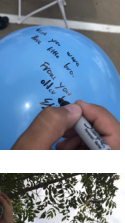
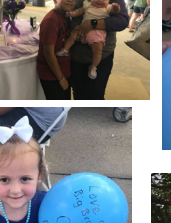
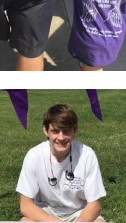
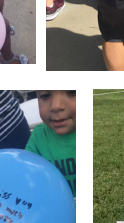
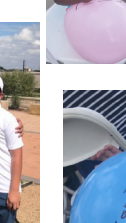
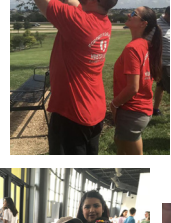
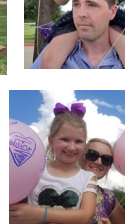
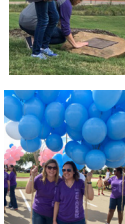
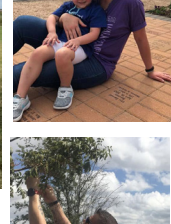
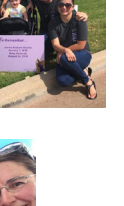
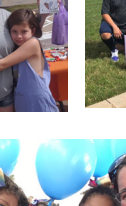
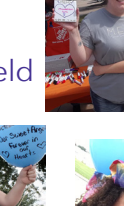
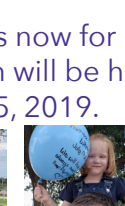
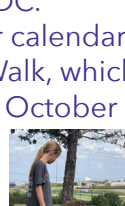
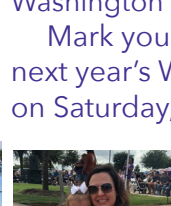
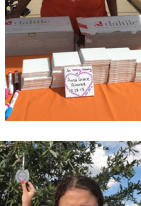
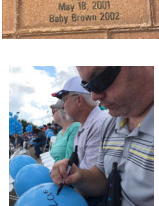
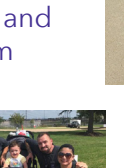
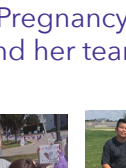
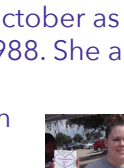
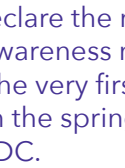
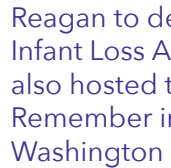
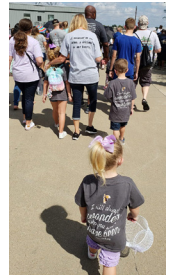
But then, everything changed. He was stillborn at the end of March at 38 weeks gestation. The grief was so intense and heavy, it felt like the holidays snuck up on us. And there was a gaping hole everywhere I went. At every meal there was a missing seat. In every picture it was painfully clear my arms were empty as they hung at my sides.

My personality flaw is that I tend to strive to make everyone around me happy, even going as far as to sacrifice my own well being. How everyone else chose to get through the holidays was completely opposite of what I needed. As we prepare to celebrate our sixth onslaught of family gatherings, presents and chaotic joy, I find that I am beginning to speak for myself. Whether this is your first year without your baby or your 100th year, my greatest advice is to be easy with your heart. Prepare those around you for YOUR needs. No matter what they may be. It may seem difficult to find the words, but you may find that some of your family would rather protect you and honor your baby in a way that makes you happy too.

Dallas/Fort Worth Walk to Remember

The Walk to Remember is the highlighted annual event of our headquarter chapter in the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex. More than 1,100 family members and friends were in attendance this year, remembering 334 babies. We were honored to have pregnancy and infant loss awareness trailblazer, Sherokee Ilse, as our guest speaker. Sherokee has written numerous books on the subject of loss, and she was very instrumental in getting former President Ronald Reagan to declare the month of October as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness month in 1988. She and her team also hosted the very first Walk to Remember in the spring of 1989 in Washington DC.

Mark your calendars now for next year's Walk, which will be held on Saturday, October 5, 2019.





Thank you to all our sponsors of the Dallas/Fort Worth Walk to Remember.



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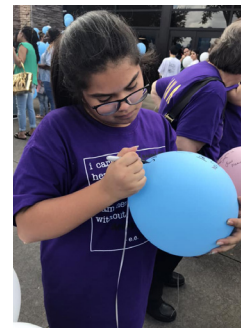
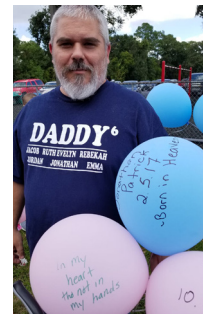
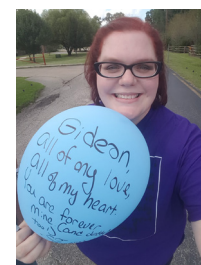
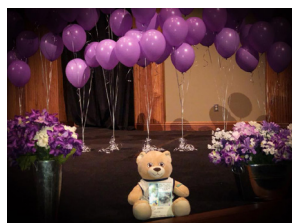
Greater Houston Area Walk to Remember



This year was M.E.N.D. Greater Houston Area's 13th Annual Walk to Remember. We had more than 900 family and friends attend to remember the lives of almost 300 babies. This year our theme was "I Carry Your Heart," from the poem by e.e. cummings, because we truly carry our babies' hearts in our hearts and they are with us always. We heard words of healing and hope from Katie Hulburt who has one twin in heaven. Rebekah El-Hakam shared her voice and talent with us as our singer, as she remembered her daughter. Reading the names of each baby, and seeing their ornaments hang on a tree is always humbling and impactful, so many little lives that have touched the hearts of countless others.

We want to thank Bammel Church of Christ for letting us host the Walk at their church every year. Thank you to the Walk committee who volunteered their time to plan the Walk, and to those who helped set up. This event would not work without you all. We thank every person who donated towards the Walk monetarily or who donated raffle items, because of you, we

can continue to offer this Walk free to everyone who attends. Each family who attends our walk is prayed for and every baby is honored. Their lives have touched our hearts.



Thank you to all our sponsors of the Houston Greater Area Walk to Remember.

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Dorine and
Alla Andrea Solomon

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Remembering Ella Grace Huribut

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Remembering Miranda Torress Everett

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Leighton Elizabeth Guillot

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Remembering

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Forrest Abraham Lewman

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Remembering Theodore York Houlston

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Remembering Gideon Zeller, Avery and
Joy Mitchell

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Finding Your Christmas Joy

Written by Jennie Drude

Mommy to Dharma, Stella and Liza

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station Chapter Director

For almost 11 years, I have been part of the “infant loss community.” I feel like it is common for us each to have a month we dread. Maybe your baby died in May, around your wedding anniversary, or Halloween, so you start getting that dreadful feeling in the pit of your stomach as Halloween decorations begin appearing in stores. For me, it’s December.

When my husband and I were expecting our first child, we found out on December 13, 2007, that she had anencephaly, a life-limiting condition. We were told she would be stillborn or die shortly after birth. We

This was supposed to be our last Christmas with “just the two of us.”

came home from that horrible appointment to our fully-decorated, extreme home makeover-Christmas edition house. This was supposed to be our last Christmas with “just the two of us.” I found myself becoming resentful very quickly to Christmas. Not Jesus - but the commercialized part of it. My baby was going to die, and people were driving around with reindeer antlers on their SUVs. It just felt odd.

So my husband and I packed away our decorations, only leaving out my beautiful nativity. That is all that mattered. This was to celebrate God’s gift to us-Jesus! The birth of Jesus is all I wanted to celebrate. And I needed to do that without a tree, a gingerbread house, and lights on my home.

Dharma went to be with Jesus on April 1, 2008, another holiday I despise.

Slowly over the years, I began to edge my way back into Christmas. It was very hard to get that Christmas joy back. I am thankful I had friends and family who were willing to be patient with me.

I found myself expecting my 4th baby in 2014. We were so excited and our two living children could not wait to have a baby brother or sister. On December 26, we went to the doctor and found out our precious baby, Stella Darling, had anencephaly like her big sister. So again, we came home broken-hearted to a house fully decorated. I quickly retreated back into my dark hole where you could find zero Christmas joy.

It’s not like I enjoyed hating Christmas; I used to love Christmas! I wanted to love it again. In 2016, I heard someone say “Don’t let Satan steal your joy.” I prayed and prayed and PRAYED for God to show me the joy again. Show me the other things that come with

celebrating His birth. The family time making cookies, watching old Christmas movies from the 80s and getting the biggest tree your living room can handle and let the kids decorate it with handmade ornaments.

But my favorite Christmas tradition is helping others in our community. Whether it’s taking food to the nurses in Labor and Delivery who have to work Christmas day, donating toys to local toy drives, or just make a point to brighten the day of everyone you come in contact with, smile, tell them “Merry Christmas,” and invite them to your church’s Christmas concert. These are simple ways to get your own Christmas joy back and have enough to share with others. I still get that dreadful feeling in the pit of my stomach at the first sight of yard inflatables, but I am thankful God has restored my Christmas joy, and I am able to “keep on truckin’ ” through December.



A stocking is hung for each member of the family, no matter on earth or in heaven.

...my favorite Christmas tradition is helping others in our community.

In His Presence at Christmas



Written by Stormy Mitchell

Mommy to Avery, Gideon and Joy

M.E.N.D.—Greater Houston Area Chapter Director

Christmas Eve 2011, I walked into church to attend our church's Christmas Eve service. My heart was so raw, still broken and bleeding. I was the shell of the person I had been before... before that day in May when we were told our son no longer had a heartbeat.

You never expect when you are 33 weeks pregnant after a healthy pregnancy, after the baby shower, after the kicks and nudges, after the swollen feet and symptoms, after the plans you made, that you would have to say goodbye. In a moment, everything we had dreamed for our life was gone. My heart felt empty. I missed the fact that my son's life would never be in my life on this earth ever again. We would never be together until I got to go to eternity.



I didn't want to do Christmas that year. I wanted to run away and forget all about it. At the same

It should have been
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however,
it was the
most painful.

time, I wanted to celebrate because I love Christmastime. My heart wasn't in it at all. It felt empty. I should have had a baby to dress up in reindeer pj's. I should have been planning on what to buy him and to fill his

stocking with, not what flowers to put at his grave. It should have been the most exciting Christmas of our lives; however, it was the most painful.

That first year after our Gideon went to be with Jesus, I honestly don't remember a lot. My memories are patchy and inconsistent. But I remember this night. I remember where I sat in the pew. I remember the people who sat around me. I remember the



shirt I was wearing. I remember feeling a little bit of hope even amid unspeakable pain. During the church service, we began to sing worship songs and Christmas songs. I closed my eyes and thought about what the words of these songs really mean.

When I sang the words "Sleep in heavenly peace," I burst into tears. Yet, still I sang, still I worshiped. God's presence was so close to me, it

enveloped my heart and my soul. It was almost tangible. I was overwhelmed and overcome by His presence. I had never experienced it like that before. It



was like I was breathing in His spirit. Tears streamed down my face, and I felt joy because I was in the presence of the Lord. I realized in that moment, Gideon was in the presence of God the same way I was. But for him it was better, he was actually In God's presence. He could touch Jesus' face if he wanted.

In that second, I felt completely connected with my son. For the first time since he died, it was if I could feel him, too. I knew he was in the same presence I was, and that made me close to him again. It made me connect with God in a new way and in a way with my son that I never could on this earth. I knew it was because we were both worshiping God at that exact moment. It is a moment that I hold onto and think of often. Every time I am in church, or every time I feel the presence of the Lord, I know Gideon is in His presence, too.

This is our 8th Christmas without our son, and in some ways, it doesn't get easier because I miss him just as much as I did eight years ago. However, I know I am eight years closer to seeing him again and each year that passes makes me closer to that great day. When things are hard, when I almost can't bear it, when I don't think I can make it another Christmas without him, I think about that Christmas Eve service. I think about how one day it will be Christmas every day when we are with Jesus. And when I think about how Jesus is the One who holds my son today, it makes me want to celebrate His life, His birth, His death and His resurrection. Because of those things and because of Jesus, I know I will get to see my Gideon again, and my other tiny little babies in heaven for the first time. That makes it easier to celebrate when celebrations seem impossible. I can turn my eyes to Jesus and experience His presence with joy and know my babies are in that same presence, too.



M.E.N.D. CHAPTER UPDATES

Denver

M.E.N.D. is excited to announce a new chapter: Denver!

My name is Kimberly Adams, I am the chapter director for M.E.N.D.–Denver. My husband, Jeff and I, have five living children who are 15, 11, 9, 6 and 2. Our loss journey began in August of 2005, with a miscarriage at 9 weeks. On February 14, 2006, we lost our son Benjamin at 17 weeks. In July of 2006, we had another miscarriage at 6 weeks. On September 8, 2011, we lost our son, Jonathan, at 15 weeks. On January 21, 2018, we lost our son, Lane, at 12 weeks. In July of 2018, we lost twins at 7 weeks.



M.E.N.D.–Denver will host our first support group on November 13. We have been in touch with other infant loss groups in the Denver area and the support for M.E.N.D. is overwhelming because there are very few opportunities for support groups that allow participants to come at no cost and with no time restrictions. We are so thankful to be able to open our doors to the community and begin meeting that need.

Kimberly

Greater Houston Area

M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area is hosting our 13th annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony December 1 at Spring Baptist church at 7:00 PM. If you want to attend, please register at www.mend.org. This event is the perfect way to include your babies in your holiday celebrations. It is a quiet, intimate event of remembrance.

We also opened a new satellite chapter of M.E.N.D. Greater Houston in Kingwood! That support group is held the 2nd Thursday of each month. For more information on the Kingwood support groups, email nikisha@mend.org.



Stormy

SW Missouri



M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri celebrated our babies in heaven at our 7th Annual Balloon Release. There were 86 in attendance honoring 58 babies.

We also helped sponsor the Springfield Wave of Light ceremony held on October 15. This beautiful community event was held outdoors where we lit candles in remembrance of our babies in heaven.

Our Christmas Candlelight Ceremony will be held December 10, at 7:00 PM, at Second Baptist Church. Please watch our Facebook group for an event announcement coming soon. Register online at www.mend.org.

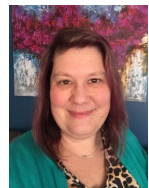
Kathryn

Palm Beach, Florida

M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach, Florida successfully launched on Thursday, October 11, with our very first support group. We'll continue to meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month in Brookdale's theater room at 7:00 PM. We're so thankful for the outpour of support from our area hospitals, therapists and other local charities that understand the need for grief support in our county. Currently we are looking for a few volunteer assistants to help our chapter blossom into a strong community of families that come together in support of one another!



Jessica



MidMichigan

M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan is thankful for the opportunity to help grieving families find hope and comfort in MidMichigan. I would like to share a special "Thank You" to my volunteers and assistants as they give of themselves to help others in their grief journey. We are looking forward to meeting new families on the 1st Tuesday of every month at Ashman Plaza at 7:00 PM.

Karen

Bryan/College Station, Texas

M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station had a busy few months! We had a beautiful Walk of Remembrance followed by a mass butterfly release in the Barbara Bush Rose Garden at the George Bush Presidential Library. We had around 100 in attendance. I want to thank Richard Kean, Cheryl Fox, Ashlea Schroeder, LaRhesa Johnson, JaeCee Crawford, Melody Pittman, Marilyn Branson, Jason Drude, Janet Divin, Katie McClelland, Todd Mitchell and the George Bush Presidential Library for helping make our event a beautiful and successful one.



I also want to thank Kohl's Department Store in College Station, Texas, for assembling folders for us to provide to healthcare professionals, in which they also provided our chapter with a grant! I want to thank Kohl's Department store in Conroe, Texas for hosting and helping with our blood drive in honor of Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness month. The Kohl's employees also painted memory boxes to be given to local hospitals for families who lost a baby too soon.

For more information about upcoming events and support groups, please email jennie@mend.org and you can also join our Facebook group.

Jennie



Chicagoland

M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland was blessed with a sweet time remembering all of our babies at our October balloon release and lighted bag walk. We look forward to honoring all of our babies by decorating our M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland tree at the zoo lights display at the Brookfield Zoo in November.

Sara

Tulsa, Oklahoma

M.E.N.D.–Tulsa is hosting our 7th Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony to commemorate our babies during the busy holiday season. The ceremony will be held on Tuesday, December 4, at 7:00 PM, at Anthem Church. For additional information, please contact me at lisa@mend.org or (918) 694-4325 (HEAL).



Lisa

NW Washington



M.E.N.D.–NW Washington is looking forward to being with families to remember and celebrate our babies at Christmas with our 8th Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony. Thank you to all the volunteers and local businesses that contribute to this event to make our evening of remembering our babies extra special.

M.E.N.D.–NW Washington would like to thank the following people and businesses for contributing to our online auction.

Tina Winters-Starbucks Bucklin Hill
 Zara Baker-Lularoe Zara Baker
 Meghan Lucas-Rodan + Fields
 Amanda Snelson
 Jennica Peralta-Usborne Books
 Jenny Webster-Nola Baby Co.
 Alicia Griffee-Usborne Books
 Courtney Friend-Moment In Time Photography
 Dancing Brush
 Michelle Sunset-Sunset Styling Studios
 Blossom Baby

Michelle Morris-Scentsy with Michelle
 Carole Aiken
 Nicole Smith-Sharing Signs
 Lydia Young-Fox Hollow Collective
 Ashley Burch, Fox Hollow Collective
 Kasia Leann Art
 Heather Benza
 Nikki Walder-Younique
 Jamie Artache-Moctezuma Mexican Restaurant
 Juken Gunam-Taquieria Los Cazadores

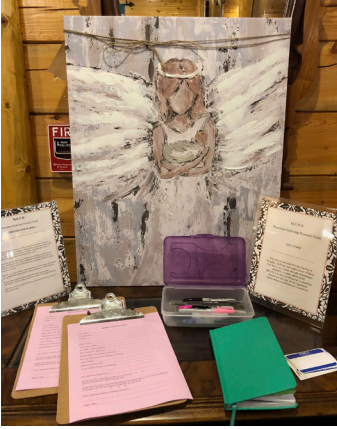
Thank you for helping us raise money for our Christmas Candlelight Ceremony.

Stacy



Tulsa, Oklahoma Balloon Release

Thank you to our sponsors, Absolutely Balloons and Sam's Club, for their support for this event.



Have you visited our M.E.N.D. shop?

It's easy for people to see how many living children people have, but what about the children who are not with us, who we miss every day?

Support M.E.N.D. and share the story of your baby with clothing, hats, cups, ornaments and other items available in our shop at shop.mend.org.



The Holidays Are Coming, But...

**"Providing Guidance in Life's Storms"
Dr. Susan Adams**

The Christmas air is filled with bright gold and silver tinsel. Wreaths of pine cones and red berries drape Christmas trees or adorn front doors. The red and green stockings hanging from the mantle emphasize thoughts of "Santa Claus is Coming To Town" and "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer."

However, these sights and sounds often do not serve as a happy reminder of Christmas carols like "Joy to The World," "Silent Night," or "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Parents struggle between living with and without their tiny child. Certainly Christmas is coming, but so are the sad memories of an empty place in the family. Sometimes the memories begin the first of November and continue on through Christmas into January 1.

Loved ones offer words of condolences in hopes that they are offering comfort, but a season filled with presents and laughing voices are only reminders of a sad journey of painful grief. Even the thought of the holiday seems to bring a pressure that makes it difficult even to breathe. Former memories and family traditions often threaten to suffocate grieving parents instead of offering solace.

Here are some suggestions that many of my grieving clients have shared through the years; tips to help survive the holidays.

- Know you will survive even though the first Thanksgiving, Christmas, or another seasonal holiday will be difficult.
- Find a couple of people you can talk to or meet with during the holiday season. These people may have discovered some helpful ideas of their own.
- Your energy level may be low, so skip putting up the tree, baking cookies or wrapping presents. Buy gift cards or shop online if this makes the holidays easier.
- Spend the holidays with those who will let you talk about your child. You need the freedom to say your child's name because stories about your child can be a comforting legacy.
- Taking a trip to a nearby town can provide an escape from difficult days because it often provides a different holiday experience.
- Decorate the grave. Sometimes being busy decorating the grave gives a feeling of doing something for your child who lived briefly, and that you can no longer hold.
- If a group of bereaved parents have a special candle-lighting service to remember the children in your area who have died, consider attending it. Surrounding yourself with others who understand the pain of loss can be therapeutic.
- Spend time reflecting on the season or record some thoughts in a journal. This is great therapy, too.

One day you will wake up, it will be January 2, and the holidays will have ended. Even though you cry through this season, you also will discover that you are stronger. You will realize that those tiny footprints are permanently imprinted in your heart, and they will leave an indelible mark of love forever.

October 5th

An interview with Rheanne Griswold

Mommy to Jubilance Divine

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri

Written by Jennifer Harrison

M.E.N.D.—Newsletter Editor

Our May/June newsletter included an interview with Matt Griswold, daddy of Jubilance Divine, to share how his beautiful story impacted Matt, and all those around him. In October, I sat down with Jubilance's mom, Rheanne, to hear her side of the story, and the beautiful life ministry of Jubilance Divine.

Within this interview, I have also included pieces from Rheanne's own writing that she has shared with other ladies' groups.

Jennifer Harrison: Let's just jump right in this. We've heard Matt's side of the story, so let's begin hearing part of yours.

Rheanne Griswold: From an early childhood, I dreamed of being a wife and mommy. I had 2 little sisters I would mommy, and would take care of many other children. At 23, thinking my dream of "barefoot and pregnant" was not meant to be, I was already preparing my heart for fostering or adopting. Because in my heart, even if I wasn't "a wife," I still wanted to be "a mommy."

Fast forward to when Matt and I got married: we began trying for a baby immediately.

Rheanne's writing: I had no idea that it was a thing that once you made up your mind to get pregnant, it didn't just happen. That was completely blindsiding, hard and confusing! After ten months of exhaustingly trying (which, by the way, is TOTALLY UNHEALTHY FOR A NEWLY MARRIED SEX LIFE), I went to the doctor to see if there was something wrong. They referred me [to a specialist] and the testing began.

Within the next couple weeks, my "girls" were hurting like I didn't know hurt could hurt...I was convinced I might even have breast cancer. On July 21, 2011, I took a pregnancy test because I hadn't ovulated (anyone else enjoy the "peeing on a stick every day" thing?) I took a pregnancy test, and it was positive. But since I was certain there was no way... I waited a couple hours and took another one.... It, too, showed positive!

When I took the test, it was really a worship moment. I remember collapsing on the bed, face

down, just giving the baby back to the Lord, and who could ever know what that would ultimately mean. It was not my plan of what happened. And if I would've known, let's be honest, I may have refrained and missed out on a multitude of blessings for myself and others.

Let's fast forward to the appointment.

I had an appointment late in the day, at 18.5 weeks. Matt couldn't go with me, so Whitney, my girlfriend, who also longed to be a mommy, came with me. She was just as excited since this was her first baby doctor appointment to ever attend.

I had no sign that anything was wrong. I was peeing all the time... all the things with pregnancy.

The beginning of the appointment was normal... everything "looked great..." until the Doppler couldn't find a heartbeat. They wheeled in the portable ultrasound machine, but still couldn't find it. The doctor kept trying with the portable ultrasound, but still ... nothing.

They called down to see about the ultrasound machines, but the office had shut them down, so my doctor told me to come back the next morning. I told them if they just shut the ultrasound machines down, they can turn them right back on because I was not going home not knowing if something is wrong with my child.

So they did. And it was just a whirlwind from that point forward.

My senses just kind of went away.

My world started spinning. It was blurry. I couldn't walk. I couldn't think. I couldn't feel. I couldn't see. I didn't know where to go or what to do or how to get there.

I couldn't get a hold of Matt. And thank God for Whitney. She was my rock and my eyes and ears and feet.

Bits and pieces are missing from my memory. The next thing I remember after the ultrasound was Matt sitting next to me in the chairs facing the doctor at his desk where he proceeded to tell us all the bad news, the statistics and what will happen next. Go home. Pack your bags, go to Labor and Delivery to be induced at 8:00 PM.

What!? Are you kidding me!? Go home??

At that point, I wasn't really far enough along in my pregnancy to know what they were really talking about. If it was a fourth pregnancy, yes, but at 18 weeks of our first pregnancy, we didn't really know what was going on.

I knew on the surface what was going on with Jubilance, but I didn't believe it. I was fully believing for a miracle.

At the hospital, before being induced, I made the nurses, with everything they could, make sure for me there was no heartbeat, because that's just what I had to do. Because how in the world could I have ever survived if I would have just allowed them to begin the induction and aborted the miracle I had believed WHOLEHEARTEDLY was going to happen? That was terrifying! Especially since I had no other signs, no bleeding, no cramping, none of those things that come with the usual miscarriage.

When there was nothing to be found. I took a deep breath, through my tears and shrugging, I said "OK... OK God, this must be what I have to do."

The hospital staff offered to me they could mask "this," everything, to give me something so I wouldn't feel it, mentally and physically. I told them, "No, if this is all I get to have with my baby, then I want it all. I want to feel everything."

Over the next 18.5 hours, waiting for the birth, we planned a funeral and thought of names for a boy or girl (since we didn't even know what we were having). We thought of all sorts of things. We thought about how you tell people, because, well, how do you? At this point nobody had talked to me about this happening in their life...

During this time, I began to think...how am I going to handle this? I am handling it right now, but which way am I going to go? Am I going to be mad? Is this feeling ever going away (and it doesn't)? Am I going to get over it? Am I going to move on? How is this going to affect me and my family and the rest of our lives?

So I made a decision. I circled back to the beginning, when I dedicated this baby to the Lord, and I decided He has a plan in this. I don't have to understand that plan, and that's hard...hard to grasp. But that's where we landed...I decided that if this is God's plan, because I prayed for the baby, I have to allow God to do whatever He wants to do in my life, and I just have to trust Him.

After lots of squeezing of the bed rails and clenching teeth and reminding myself to breathe, I felt the baby drop and told the nurses I think it's time.

At 14:30, I delivered our baby boy, Jubilance Divine. Jubilance meaning: Abundance of joy, and Divine meaning devoted to God. I had so much joy just to be his mommy, to feel his flutters and kicks, see his laid-back positions on his ultrasounds. To know God created this life and chose me to be his life source to fulfill His plan, if even just for a moment. And devoted to God from the very moment I knew he existed.

I had to stay in the hospital as any woman who just had a baby. They put me in an isolated part of the mother's ward. Within 24 hours, my milk came in. It hurt so bad! And I never even considered having to deal with that too. Yea for another reminder. The nurses told me just to avoid it, put on a sports bra and it would eventually go away.

They should have told me it was painful. They should have told me there were milk banks that I could donate my milk to help other babies. But they didn't.

I was discharged and sent home to the house that was ready for a baby. And...how do you tell people you're not pregnant anymore?

I had all the symptoms of delivering a baby with no baby to mask the terrible ugliness of it all.

Let me tell you some light that I saw in this long, lonely, eternal tunnel:

... A lady at work ... started opening up to me how she too had delivered a stillborn. She couldn't believe she was even telling me because she had never talked about it, and it had been

over 30 years. She was an Army wife. She delivered her baby in a time when you just didn't talk about it. She described how she was in one of those open rooms where women were having babies all over the place in plain view. And there she was, empty, lonely, broken. [We] grieved and shared together. It was absolutely beautiful, I am so thankful for God putting her right there with me at that moment. I needed her every bit as she apparently needed me too!

Over the past eight October 5th's I have lost count and track of all the women who have opened up to me because I shared and they now knew they were not alone. ...on the first anniversary, while at my 38-week appointment, pregnant with Hutson, there was a woman ...hysterically, numbly, crying while

I had all the symptoms of delivering a baby with no baby to mask the terrible ugliness of it all.

"...if this is all I get to have with my baby, then I want it all. I want to feel everything.

searching for answers was written all over her face. Her husband slouched down in his chair with a blank stare and total helplessness written all over his.

I knew exactly what they were going through without needing to hear a word.

...Without saying a word, I motioned for her come to me, and she did. I held her. I cried with her. Then I started telling her my story. I remembered how miserable it was when my pregnant friend fell off the planet, and so I even let her touch my belly and have whatever moment she needed at that time. I prayed with her and made sure we exchanged numbers. I have kept in touch through these years, especially on our anniversary.

What are some of the hard parts through it all?

Every moment can be a hard part if you keep letting yourself go there.

I think it's okay to grin and bear it for a little while, and what I mean by that is it's okay to think about where he would be at, like in 1st grade or what sports, or activities he might be in or part of, just thinking about those types of things and allowing myself to smile and dream a little bit, but also what he is currently doing too, in heaven.

The hard parts are when the kids ask, or the dates come, or someone asks how many kids we have, and I want to ask, "How much time do you have?" or I just say, "I have four at home?"

Moments that hit me...random moments.

Holidays. Who's here, who's not here.

Anything you do for your kids reminds you that, you don't get to with another.

How do you celebrate, remember Jubilance?

March 15 was his due date, and that's always a really hard day, more so for me than anybody else.

October 5 is the day I delivered him, and October 4 is the day of the appointment, so overnight, I hardly ever sleep. It's been how many years, and I'm still curled up in a ball, and I think, "I got this; I'm fine." But then I live those hours all over again, year after year and I keep thinking I'm good and going to get over it, be OK, but in these moments, I'm not, and that's OK.

But I do try to turn that mourning into praise or worship. I pray for other women who are going through it; that's what I try to do, just to put some type of positive spin on it. I never know what to do, but those are some of the things I've landed on!

We try to do a birthday celebration every year on

...I live those hours
all over again,
year after year
and I keep thinking,
"I'm good,"
and going to get over it,
be OK,
but in these moments,
I'm not,
and that's OK.

being in heaven, and they will ask about him, but usually in the those moments we are not thinking about him.

Speaking of the holidays, what do you do to remember Jubilance?

At Jubilance's funeral, a great-aunt, who wasn't around as much, gave me an ornament. I don't know what her story is, but I can't wait to hear it someday. It was a Christmas ornament of a little baby. This was in October, so in December we hung the ornament. Now we have a little white tree we hang his ornaments like that one and the ones we get through M.E.N.D.. So that's how we remember and the way we keep him part of the holidays. We always sponsor a child at Christmas. It kind of helps, but it's still a roller coaster emotion. That first Christmas was really hard.

Mother's Day/Father's Day, not that it's ever easier, but before I had a baby in my arms, it was hard. I have two step-boys, but it wasn't really *my* Mother's Day.

How did you handle your first Christmas?

I was a mess. I don't know how to explain it, and when you have other kids there that don't understand? I didn't want to really do anything. I didn't want to put up a tree...I just didn't want to.... I didn't want to grieve or mourn either. I just wanted to hide. But we just kept pushing. Just to survive.

We talked in the article with Matt about him supporting you, so how did you support Matt during this time?

It changed our relationship. It put a new dynamic there that I had been craving that he probably didn't know could exist. When you go through those 18 hours...just everything changes. He was

October 5. Each looks a little bit different. Sometimes we go all out with cake or cupcakes. We actually didn't this year. Part of me feels guilty wondering, "Are we just doing it for me?" We talk about Jubilance as a family; he'd be right at a year older than Hutson.

Our girls even mention their brother

very genuine and supportive. He became a caretaker, which usually I am the caretaker. It opened up that dialogue and intimacy that we didn't understand, but prayed through. And found God's grace, mercy and comfort we could only find through Him. And then if Matt was having a down time I could lift him up and if I was having a downtime he could lift me up. It just created something in our relationship that had never been there before. I feel like I supported him by just being there and guiding our thoughts, prayers and decisions in a godly way, and then--he just took over!

The brightest thing that came out of this situation involved my husband. He never left my side. Our relationship grew as we grew up together in this experience. It strengthened our marriage. Of course he struggled with understanding me and my feelings and even the situation as a whole, but he was there for me like he never had been before and maybe hasn't even been since.

How has M.E.N.D. played a role in your loss?

We received a box from the hospital that had the M.E.N.D. information in it. Since then we have attended the Christmas Candlelight service. We love that it gives us a specific time to remember Jubilance during the holiday. We've even brought others with us who have had a loss, even the couple who had spent 30+ years of silence about their baby, joined us in remembering our babies at the Christmas Candlelight Ceremony. While the rest of the season is celebrating with everyone who is here, this is a special time for us to remember who we are missing and wishing were here.

If you could ask God about Jubilance, what would it be?

Why? What are you doing with him? I'd like to think He had to take him to raise him to be part of that last army. He has this really big purpose. I gave him to You, so what are You doing with him? What are your raising him up to be?

Advice from Rheanne to Other Moms:

- You are not alone
- It's okay to not understand - We don't always want our kids to understand things, so we need to realize it's okay for us to not understand everything too. It might be a way of protecting us, just as we try to protect children.
 - Just because this happened doesn't mean you are worthless or not loved. There is a bigger purpose we just don't understand
 - There is an army of women who will surround you created from their own journey in loss.. we are strong together, and we can help other women together, and that's a beautiful thing.
 - Share your story, because you never know who needs to hear it. You never know what it will do in someone else's life, even if it's someone directing one person to another. And don't be afraid to be connected because it's those moms who will celebrate with you, who understand, when everyone else thinks you are crazy.
 - Don't think you are not a mom. You are. From the moment that baby was conceived. You are a mom. You just have to come to grips to be okay with it, even if it's not on the outside, you supplied life to that baby, and God chose you to do that.

So now, my advice is to always enjoy and treasure every moment with your baby whether it is one minute or a lifetime. Applying this advice to my last two pregnancies made for a much better me.

If you don't remember anything else, I want you to take this away: no matter what your lonely place looks like, even if it has nothing to do with child loss:

In the loneliest of places, Christ is there, and that's where I find that I am the least lonely with Him. I don't feel like it is a coincidence that this is a testimony and story God has given me. I delivered my baby in October, which is Infant and Pregnancy Loss Awareness month. And to top it all, Hutson was born on October 15, which is Infant and Pregnancy Loss Awareness Day.

I understand that my story is not yours and I hope you understand that whether you've never experienced any of this loss or you have more babies in heaven than in your arms, you can be a beacon to those around you that are suffering. Only through Christ, in the midst of our ugliness, and trials and loss, we can acknowledge we really are intentionally and purposefully created to fulfill a mighty and ultimate plan.



Creando Recuerdos Durante los Días Festivos

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

Tengo una relación de amor/odio con los días durante la temporada Navideña. La familia es muy importante para mí, así que aprecio el final del año porque apartamos el tiempo para reconocer con agradecimiento nuestras muchas bendiciones, y celebramos el nacimiento de nuestro Salvador el uno con el otro. Tenemos fiestas, consumimos grandes cantidades de calorías en los hogares de uno y del otro, y juntos recordamos a nuestros seres queridos que lamentablemente ya no están con nosotros. Disfruto de mi casa decorada para la Navidad (decorada exageradamente), y tiendo a cocinar en noviembre y diciembre más de lo que hago los otros diez meses del año combinados. Aunque no me gusta la tarea de ir de compras, me complace comprar regalos para otros. Así que, por la mayor parte, amo, y espero con ansias la temporada navideña.

Pero, hay aspectos de las fiestas que no me gustan y son bastante dolorosos para mí. Mi hermana gemela, Rachel, y yo somos los más jóvenes de seis niños. Al crecer, nuestros padres crearon y mantuvieron tradiciones navideñas maravillosas para nosotros, que todavía son muy significativas para mí hoy. El 25 de diciembre fue el día destacado del año en nuestra casa. Las tradiciones comenzaron con un puñado de fiestas de Navidad organizadas por nuestros padres, asistiendo al servicio de comunión de Nochebuena en nuestra iglesia, seguida de correr a la cama para que Santa no nos encontrara despiertas. A la mañana siguiente, encontramos todos nuestros regalos separados en seis estaciones diferentes, a las cuales no nos permitían correr hasta que los seis estábamos despiertos y nos habíamos posado para nuestra fotografía anual en la escalera. ¡Qué recuerdos tan maravillosos! Planeé implementar tantas de estas tradiciones como sea posible cuando me convertí ser esposa y mamá. Lo que realmente esperaba por alguna razón, era tener a mis hijos sentados ansiosos en las escaleras para una foto antes de correr al árbol de Navidad para ver lo que Santa había entregado. La primera Navidad que Byron y yo éramos padres, nuestro hijo, Byron, Jr. (aka Little B)

era un recién nacido, por lo que parecía un poco raro tomar una foto de él en un portador en las escaleras. La próxima Navidad estaba en el hospital con una infección ósea, así que no había foto. Finalmente, justo después de su segundo cumpleaños, pudimos hacer lo que soñaba hacer: tener a mi hijo sentado para una foto de la mañana de Navidad, en pijama, con cabeza de cama, anhelando correr a la vuelta de la esquina para ver lo que estaba delante de él. La próxima Navidad fue muy similar, pero acabamos de descubrir nuestro nuevo embarazo, así que alegremente le dije a Pequeño B, "¡el año que viene puedes sostener a tu hermanito o hermana en tu regazo para la foto!" Incluso compré un nuevo conjunto de medias para los cuatro que planeé colgar en nuestro manto al año siguiente.

Pero nada de eso pasó. Mis ideas de seguir haciendo memoria se rompieron cuando nuestro bebé nació muerto el siguiente mes de junio. Esa Navidad, una vez más, Byron Jr., se sentó solo en la escalera. Tenía grandes esperanzas y sueños de que algún día tuviera un hermano con quien compartir ese momento, pero año tras año, se sentó solo. Una enfermedad del riñón que dio lugar a un trasplante para mí, seguida por la pérdida de otro pequeño bebé, contribuyó a solamente tener un niño vivo. Así que, con los años tuve que reinventar las tradiciones y las creaciones de recuerdos. Porque yo estaba tan profundamente afligida la mayoría de los días navideños, tuve que asegurarme que Pequeño B no crecería sin una sensación de recuerdos maravillosos como yo tenía. Sí, guardamos la tradición de la foto de la escalera, pero emocionalmente me mató que cada año él estaba solo. Cuando era un adolescente, intentamos poner a nuestros perros en la foto con él, que no siempre funcionó demasiado bien. Y todavía nunca permitimos la apertura de regalos antes de la mañana de Navidad, para ayudar a acelerar la anticipación y el asombro del día. Pasamos tiempo extra con la familia, principalmente con mis hermanos que tenían niños de su edad con quien por lo menos podría estar con los primos para jugar y compartir la especialidad de las fiestas. Y hasta el día de hoy, incluso como un hombre casado, lo bañamos con abundancia de regalos - estoy segura de que más de lo que recibiría si no fuera hijo único.

Pequeño B (ahora conocido como "B"), nos dio una hermosa hija hace cuatro años cuando se casó con su

esposa, Anna. Como Byron y yo hacemos con nuestras respectivas familias, se turnan con cada familia para el día de gracias y Navidad. El primer año que se casaron, nos acompañaron para el día de gracias, pero estaban fuera del estado con la familia de Anna para Navidad. Yo ciertamente entendía que era justo, y era justo para ellos no estar con nosotros, ¡pero oh cómo me dolió! Sí, Byron y yo estuvimos con otros miembros de la familia, pero no teníamos hijos en Navidad. Había una parte de mí que se sentía como si hubiera perdido a un niño de nuevo, a pesar de que estaba a sólo un par de cientos de millas de distancia de nosotros. ¡Oh... pero la alegría viene realmente en la mañana!! La próxima Navidad estaban en casa, con nosotros, junto con nuestros dos perros y su dulce cachorro. Un hogar lleno de amor, risas, diversión y un poco de caos. Finalmente, la Navidad que había estado esperando – los “niños” estaban en casa ¡y todo estaba bien en nuestro pequeño mundo Mitchell! Y B no tuvo que sentarse solo en las escaleras esa mañana de Navidad. Decidimos tomar una foto de los 7 de nosotros bajo el árbol, todavía en nuestros pijamas, ¡y algunos de nosotros con cabeza de cama! Esa es una Navidad que permanecerá grabada

en mi corazón durante los años por venir.

Por lo tanto, no los días festivos no siempre han sido llenos de buenos recuerdos para mí, pero he aprendido a hacer lo mejor de ellos, crear nuevos recuerdos y ciertamente apreciar lo que tengo. Lo que rezo y lo que nunca ha sucedido, es que mi hijo tenga malos recuerdos de Navidad porque su hermano murió. Espero que Byron y yo pudimos crear años de recuerdos maravillosos para nuestro hijo, sin la nube de dolor asomando sobre nuestra casa debido a las esperanzas y sueños no cumplidos de sus padres de darle hermanos.

Rezo por ustedes esta temporada Navideña, dulces mamás, quien los corazones están tan quebrantados y decepcionados. Déjense sentir triste, extrañen a los quien no están compartiendo esta temporada con usted, e incluso dense se permiso de enojarse. Asegúrense de que algún año, tal vez el próximo año o tal vez en unos pocos años, su alegría volverá. Ciertamente, nunca olvidamos a nuestros bebés que murieron, y estos días de esta temporada son sin duda un detonante para un dolor inmenso, pero un día, te prometo, sonrieras, te rieras, y crearas nuevos y felices recuerdos de la temporada Navideña.

Subsequent Births

Celebrating our Rainbow Babies

Derek and Bethany Stewart,
of Canton, Ohio,
along with big brother, Arrow,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Jude Fawkes Eliot,
born March 23, 2018
measuring 7 lbs., 9 oz.,
and 22 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
big sister, Lillian Ember,
November 23, 2013

Kristina and Shawn Mendes,
of Bremerton, Washington,
along with siblings Tabitha and Kaleb,
joyfully announced the arrival of
Braxton Able,
born September 19, 2018,
measuring 8 lbs.
and 21.5 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Jesse,
stillborn July 14, 2017, at 20 weeks

Amanda and Juan Rodriguez,
of Houston, Texas,
along with siblings
Gabriella, David and Steven,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Ozias Ezequiel,
born August 29, 2018,
measuring 7 lbs., 4 oz.,
and 19.5 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Oliver Joseph,
June 28, 2017,
Thanatophoric dysplasia,
Pumpkin Seed
miscarried February 24, 2016
unknown cause

Joe and Lisa Garcia,
of Lake Dallas, Texas,
along with big brother Alex,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Chloe Janelle,
born September 13, 2018,
measuring 7 lbs., 5 oz.,
and 19 inches long
The family lovingly remembers
Faith Noelle,
stillborn August 19, 2015,
cord accident

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

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

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



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• Helping Babies Survive & Thrive •

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Legacy Giving

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

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

M.E.N.D. Chapter Information

M.E.N.D.–NW Washington

Meets the 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM
Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room
1800 Myhre Rd.

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: Kathryn Gold
kathryn@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: Lisa Daily
lisa@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

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 (beginning
October 11) at 7:00 PM

Brookdale Lake Worth

3927 Hadjes Dr

Lake Worth, FL 33467

(close to Turnpike & 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 Kilburn
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.–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

The Meeting Room at Serene Bean

1933 East Ave

Katy, Texas 77493

Katy Director:

Kessi Wilhite, kessi@mend.org

Kingwood Area, Texas:

Support Group on 4th Thursday

Kingwood Director:

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 6:30 PM

6450 Kings Parkway

Kingwood, Texas 77346

At Rosemont Assisted Living,

2nd Floor Community Room

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)

Daddy's group

Meets quarterly

on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM,

led by Greg Miller

(stefaniem@mend.org)

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

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

Mommies AND Daddies
are both welcome at all
M.E.N.D. support groups.
Unless otherwise noted,
all support groups are held at:
Wells Fargo Bank
(building with black windows)
800 W. Airport Freeway
Irving, TX 75062
(Located off 183,
between MacArthur and O'Connor)
Support groups will be in
the bank board room,
located 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
A time for dads to meet together
and discuss topics relevant to them
as fathers. Our moms and dads
meet together for introductions
before dividing into two groups for
discussion.

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

Parenting After Loss group
meets the 1st Thursday at 7:30 PM
at Panera Bread
1900 Preston Rd.
Plano, Texas 75093
Contact:
Laura Bateman at laura@mend.org or
Tina Rusert at Tina@mend.org
for more information
For families who are raising living
children after a loss.

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Kroger grocery stores recently updated their Community Rewards system,
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When enrolling (which needs to be completed each year),
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linked your account, visit <https://www.mend.org/kroger-rewards/> for instructions.

Want another way to support M.E.N.D. plus get some awesome gear?
Check out our M.E.N.D. Shop at shop.mend.org.
See page 22 for more details.