

Arlington Chapter

New Members

We are sorry you need us, but glad you found us.

Mike and Laurie Heuple, parents of Zach Heuple.

Sarah and Stuart and Reiter, parents of Alex Reiter.

THANKSGIVING

November: Cool days, chilly nights, autumn leaves changing colors, football games, apple cider and pumpkin pie. Ah. November! . . . Is it November already? Oh, no! Make it go away! Just let me sleep; wake me up in January. November is here, the start of the holiday season.

This is the time of year most bereaved parents dread. This is the time of year when thoughts turn to spending time with family and friends and celebrating. Holiday decorations start popping up everywhere you turn and holiday music begins to play at the malls and on the radio. People are busy cleaning their home, and are all abuzz with getting ready for. . . Oh, no! Thanksgiving!

Everyone is asking what are you doing for Thanksgiving?" For the bereaved parent, especially the newly bereaved, this question can become daunting and almost horrifying. What am I doing for Thanksgiving?

Thanksgiving - giving thanks. But I don't feel very thankful. How can I be thankful, when my child lives no more?
How can I be thankful, when he/she will never again walk through my front door?
How can I be thankful, when my eyes are filled with tears?
How can I be thankful, when he/she won't be here throughout the years?
How can I be thankful, when my heart will never mend?
How can I be thankful, when I've lost my dearest friend?
How can I be thankful, when his/her hugs and kisses have now ceased?
How can I be thankful, and sit down to a feast?
How can I be thankful, when my heart is filled with sorrow?
How can I be thankful, when I can hardly make it to tomorrow?

What do you answer? What will you do this year? For some, the choice is to keep the same tradition they have in the past. Others choose to remain home and ignore the holiday completely.

There are parents who go on vacation or go out to Thanksgiving dinner at a restaurant. Newly bereaved parents may question "what am I supposed to do?"

There is no standard right or wrong answer. Whatever feels the most comforting is the right answer for you. Family members or friends might disagree with your decision and say you are wrong. This often happens if you decide to break tradition, want to be alone, or decide not to celebrate at all. People can become very insistent, and tell you that Thanksgiving is about being with others. I have found that my choice has varied over the years from choosing to be alone and not acknowledge the holiday at all; to going to friends' and family members' homes; to just having dinner at home and when asked, I say, "I know that you may not like my answer, but still. I need to do what is best for me."

However you decide to spend this Thanksgiving, please remember that for however short or long your precious, awesome, amazing, wonderful child was with you here on earth, you are blessed to be their parent. You have been given a most spectacular gift—a one of a kind, unique, extraordinary child to carry in your heart, thoughts, and soul for all eternity. And this is a reason to be forever thankful.

From my home and heart to yours may you have a blessed Thanksgiving and may it be filled with peace.

Bev Rosen Katowitz
TCF, Charlotte, NC

Annual Candlelighting Ceremony

The Compassionate Friends, Arlington Chapter invites you to the Annual Candle Lighting Service at Friendship United Methodist church, 3527 Gallows Road, Falls Church, VA 22042 on Sunday, Dec. 10, 2017 at 6 pm. (Doors open at 5:45 pm) Please bring a picture of your child, sibling or grandchild. Fellowship follows. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Candles will be provided. All are invited. You do not have to be a member of TCF to attend.

Love Gifts

Jay and Lois Copeland, In loving memory of David Michael Copeland, son of Lois & Jay Copeland

Jay and Lois Copeland - In loving memory of Connor Moriarty, Son of Tom and Meegan Moriarty and grandson of Mary Frances Moriarty