



**THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
FRIENDS**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

# Bluegrass Chapter Newsletter

"We need not walk alone."

[www.tcfbluegrass.org](http://www.tcfbluegrass.org)

P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

January/February 2013

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## *Telephone Friends*

Sometimes it helps to be able to talk to someone who understands. The following bereaved parents are willing to provide support and comfort.

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[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

## We welcome you with Compassion, Love and Hope

It is always difficult to say, "Welcome" to people coming to our meetings for the first time because we are so very sorry for the reason they came. For some, the first meeting or two can be rather overwhelming, especially if they are newly bereaved. We hope that anyone feeling that way will return to at least a couple more of our meetings. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings, regardless of the age at which their child died or the length of time that has passed since that day.



## Love Gifts

### A Thoughtful Way to Remember

Love Gifts are a beautiful and loving way to remember a loved one. Through Love Gifts, we are able to reach out to others with our brochures and newsletters as well as obtain books and other information for our library. We truly appreciate every Love Gift, donation and sponsorship. Our Chapter work is done by

volunteers and these donations help us reach out in many ways, including the preparation and mailing of the newsletter.

## Refreshments

Some of us like to remember our child's birthday or the anniversary of his or her death by bringing a cake or cookies to the meeting that month. We would appreciate having you bring a special treat to any meeting. You may also want to bring and share a picture of your child.

## Mark Your Calendar



**The Lexington  
meetings will resume  
on February 5.**

# Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

## January Birthdates

- 1/1 **Paul Travis Hickey** Son of Al and Sandy Hickey  
 1/1 **A. Daniel Morris** Son of James and Marie Morris  
 1/2 **Jim Albright** Son of J. M. and Erna Albright  
 1/2 **Tyler Benjamin Johnston** Son of Joe and Andi Johnston  
 1/3 **Wesley Thomas (Tom) Whitehouse** Son of Betty Whitehouse  
 1/3 **John Andy Girdler** Son of Ella Girdler  
 1/4 **Joseph Lewellyn Powell** Son of Celia and David Powell  
 1/6 **Jeffrey Lynn Spradling** Son of Wilma Cracraft  
 1/7 **David Nelson Hunt** Son of Judy & Walter Hunt  
 1/7 **Benjamin Steele Truitt** Son of Charlotte Truitt  
 1/8 **David Kellemeier** Son of Pat and Robert Kellemeier  
 1/10 **J. Randall “Rand” Rogers** Son of Ron and Virginia Atwood  
 1/11 **Jason Lee Stephens** Son of Bobby and Carolyn Stephens  
 1/12 **Crystal Ann Knafl** Granddaughter of Karen and John Knafl  
 1/13 **Martha A. Moloney** Daughter of Dorothy Moloney  
 1/14 **Donald Duncan** Son of Donald and Diane Duncan  
 1/14 **Evan Scout Warren** Son of Brian and Kellie Kozee Warren  
 1/15 **Cole Brian Gilliam** Son of Joan B. Gilliam  
 1/16 **Larry Manuel** Son of Betty and Jack Manuel  
 1/20 **Jerry Denver Ison** Son of Genett Ison  
 1/21 **William (Billy) Allen Ransdell** Son of Mack and Deedee Ransdell  
 1/21 **Robin Grace Dixon** Daughter of Lenna and Letch Dixon  
 1/22 **Deana Marie Sea** Daughter of Darrell and Jean Sea  
 1/22 **Jacob Scott Harrod** Son of Mike and Cindy Harrod  
 1/27 **Weston “Ashe” Marlowe** Son of Brandi and Wesley Marlowe  
 1/27 **Mark Anthony Bishop** Son of Marlene and Mark Bishop  
 1/29 **David Julian Hunt** Son of Gail Tomblin  
 1/30 **Christian “Chris” Ford Cash** Son of David Cash

### Meeting Information

#### Lexington

First Tuesday of Every Month  
 6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.  
 Hospice of the Bluegrass  
 2321 Alexandria Drive  
 Lexington, Kentucky

#### Winchester

Third Tuesday of Every Month  
 7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.  
 Hospice East  
 417 Shoppers Drive  
 Winchester, Kentucky

### Meeting Format

Doors open one-half hour before meeting times to provide the opportunity to visit with old friends and acknowledge new ones. Please plan to arrive early so the meeting can begin on time.

# Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

## January Remembrance Dates

- 1/1 **Eric Ritchey** Son of Lynn and Harley Ritchey
- 1/2 **Julie Ann Kirkpatrick** Sister of Roy Stewart
- 1/4 **Mark Christopher Wills** Son of John and Patricia Wills
- 1/4 **Michael Houston Finley** Son of Katy Finley
- 1/5 **Ryan Christopher Harris** Son of Larry and Patricia Harris
- 1/7 **Bart Taylor** Son of Jack Taylor
- 1/7 **David Ryan Goldey** Son of George and Julia Goldey
- 1/8 **David James Rison** Son of Karla Scott and David Rison
- 1/9 **Angela M. Meece** Daughter of Claude and Verna Meece
- 1/9 **Wesley Thomas (Tom) Whitehouse** Son of Betty Whitehouse
- 1/9 **Mitch Baber** Son of Steve and Kim Baber
- 1/9 **Donald Jeffrey Johnson** Son of Barb and Don Johnson
- 1/14 **Evan Scout Warren** Son of Brian and Kellie Kozee Warren
- 1/16 **Jennifer Lee Toadvine** Daughter of Ted and Cyndi Toadvine
- 1/17 **Howard Joseph “Jay” Crim** Son of Becky & Keith LaVey and Howard B. Crim
- 1/18 **Neil Patrick Fouch** Son of Jennifer Gray and Michael Fouch
- 1/17 **John Martin Robinson** Son of Pat and Jim Robinson
- 1/19 **Andrew Clive Cloyd** Son of Roxann Devereux and Richard Cloyd
- 1/20 **Nathan Winston Crim** Son of Becky & Keith LeVey and Howard B. Crim
- 1/22 **Julian Vincent D. Regalado** Son of Mary Frances & Ramon Regalado
- 1/22 **Corey Len Tackett** Son of Sallie Jones
- 1/24 **Nathan Charles Stamper** Son of Charlie and Missy Stamper
- 1/25 **Kevin Allen Flynn** Son of Betty and Allen Flynn
- 1/26 **Geoffrey James Chapman** Son of Maureen Chapman
- 1/26 **James Earl “Travis” Fryman** Son of Rickey and Mavis Fryman
- 1/27 **Zachary P. Stanfield** Son of Ron and Karen Stanfield
- 1/28 **Stacey Carol Sea** Daughter of Darrell and Jean Sea
- 1/28 **Shannon D. Robinson** Son of Dale and Teresa Robinson
- 1/29 **Ryan Gregory Yeiser** Son of Greg (George) and Rita Yeiser

## February Birthdates

2/1 **Kevin Brant Prenatt** Son of Susan J. Prenatt  
2/3 **Brian Alan Frith** Son of Larry and Rowena Frith  
2/3 **Brian J. Bergin “Bri”** Son of Robert and Sherry Lowry  
2/6 **David Allen Rose** Son of Ralph and Carmileta Rose  
2/7 **Jacob Issac Gibson** Son of Veronica and Darrell Gibson  
2/8 **Keith Allen Gadbois** Son of George Gadbois  
2/8 **Glenn Cope** Son of Sheila Cope  
2/11 **Bobby Wayne Covert II** Son of Carman Covert  
2/12 **Christopher Michael Jackson** Son of Guy and Debbie Jackson  
2/16 **Jason Thomas Music** Son of Sandra Miller  
2/14 **Mark Christopher Wills** Son of John and Patricia Wills  
2/15 **Bill Varney** Son of Judy Varney  
2/15 **Eugenia L. Morton** Daughter of Eugene and Joyce Morton  
2/16 **Dawn Chrystine Beckett** Daughter of Mike and Lynn Lindsey  
2/17 **Bobby Sherman Parsons** Son of Anna McKinney  
2/18 **James Michael Farris** Son of Hulda Farris  
2/18 **Christopher Thomas Miller** Son of Colleen and Tim Miller  
2/21 **Stan Caudill** Son of Tom and Patricia Tschop  
2/22 **Michael Becraft** Son of Raymond and Lucille Becraft  
2/24 **Kristopher Ryan Gordon** Son of David and Chris Gordon  
2/25 **Missy Fields** Daughter of David and Janie Fields  
2/26 **Griffin Alexandar Watson-Mills** Son of Blake Mills & Candice Watson  
2/27 **Trista Erin Lane Hail** Daughter of Bill and Debbie Lane  
2/28 **Melody Cay Guffey** Daughter of George Foley  
2/28 **Kimberly Sue Toye** Daughter of Gail Toye  
2/28 **Joshua Scott Barker** Son of Deborah Barker

## “Love Never Dies”

Written by Sandi Goodman

[www.loveneverdies.net](http://www.loveneverdies.net)

Last night, in the glow of freshly fallen snow,  
I felt for the first time in months  
A sense of peace. A feeling of wonder overcame me  
and I looked around to see if you were there.  
Later, I thought to myself –  
Why did I need to look?”  
I know, as surely as I know how to breathe,  
that you are with me always.  
You are closer to me now than ever before  
and the only difference is that, instead of opening  
my eyes to see you,  
now I must open my heart.





## February Remembrance Dates

2/4 **Tressa Parsons Adams** Daughter of Linda and Bobby Parsons  
2/4 **Michael Terrell John Lee** Son of Vicky L. and Terry C. Lee  
2/5 **Sheena Christine Kiser** Daughter of Tina Kiser  
2/5 **James “Jamie” Earl Flynt** Son of Suzie McDonald  
2/6 **Andrea Kaye Huggins** Daughter of Jim and Sheila Huggins  
2/6 **Brandon Todd Wilson** Son of Bob and Starr Wilson  
2/13 **Jerry Denver Ison** Son of Genett Ison  
2/14 **Steven Matthew Service** Son of Ruth McGill  
2/16 **David Michael Harmon** Son of Jody Harmon & Luanne Murphy  
2/18 **Jack Charles Bahm, II** Son of Jack Bahm  
2/18 **Will Fister, III** Son of Gayle and J. W. Fister  
2/19 **David Nelson Hunt** Son of Judy & Walter Hunt  
2/19 **Allen Grant Borntraeger** Son of Doug and Cathy Borntraeger  
2/21 **Brandon Lee Lorance** Son of Callie Lorance  
2/22 **Hillary Paige Troidl** Daughter of Jim and Barb Troidl  
2/22 **Robin Lee Webb** Daughter of Ricky and Sharon Blakeman  
2/22 **Joe Collins Hisle IV** Son of Barbara and Joe Hisle  
2/24 **Crystal Ann Knafl** Granddaughter of Karen and John Knafl  
2/25 **Wicky Blakeman** Son of Mr. & Mrs. Wendell Blakeman  
2/25 **P. J. Phillip Duncan** Son of Donna Breeze  
2/25 **Ross Kemper** Son of Becky Kemper  
2/26 **Jacob “Jay” Lovenguth** Son of Jake and Markeata Lovenguth  
2/27 **Tony R. Applegate** Son of Dolly Wallace Bellomy  
2/27 **Vicki Lyn Easter** Daughter of Beulah Williams  
2/27 **Chris Rudnick** Son of Julia Rudnick-Woodall  
2/27 **Robert Riley** 5/15/75 Son of Robert & Linda Riley

### A NEW YEAR

By: Shirley Ottman  
Bereaved Mother

A time for looking ahead and not behind.  
A time for faith and not despair.  
A time for long great gulps of hopeful expectation.  
Drink deeply friend so that  
fortified with the promises it brings,  
This New Year will keep you  
near fresh springs of healing love,  
Where you may come to weave old and loving memories  
with new understandings and acceptance...  
And find peace.

*If we have omitted your child, misspelled  
your child's name, or listed incorrect  
dates, please accept our apologies and  
call Janie Fields at (859) 881-1991 to correct  
the information. Call any of our telephone  
friends if you are having a hard  
time on these days. We truly understand  
your pain; for we, too, remember our own  
children.*



“Angels exist, but sometimes, since they don’t all have wings, we call them FRIENDS!”

## Grief Triggers

It occurred to me that a good part of traveling our journey is spent managing “grief triggers”. In the beginning, after our child’s death, life itself is a trigger. Just breathing and going through the motions of everyday life triggers the gut wrenching sadness and emptiness of life without our child.

Then as time goes on we start to notice that not every minute of the day is consumed by grief. We start to spend time crawling out of the pit of darkness into the light. We start to realize that we CAN live and that while even though we think of our child all the time we recognize the situations that “trigger” our grief. It may be seeing another child who reminds us of ours or discovering a picture of our child or a note or a video. At first these triggers completely take us off guard and throw us back in the pit. But after awhile, we learn how to “manage” these triggers. Some of us avoid them altogether, such as not going to the cemetery or putting away the pictures. Some of us purposely look for the triggers because now we are strong enough to handle the emotion. Some of us cautiously make sure we always have a way out of a situation that might throw us into the grief pit. There is no one right way to manage the triggers of grief. Our journey is as individual as we are.

## Another New Year

By Jim Hobbs

### Where All The Butterflies

Quite a few years ago we were well acquainted with a songwriter-musician and my wife and I had a great time going to her concerts. It was a time long before our son Jesse’s birth. Then, one winter, something happened to the music. There was a change going on that I didn’t understand. Everything was fine with me the way it had been. Our songwriter friend wrote and performed a song called “New Beginnings.” The lyrics claimed that she was expanding her horizons. I should have felt better for her, but I didn’t. To me it was an end to something good, not a beginning.

When Jesse died, I was again forced into changes that I didn’t choose. Except that this change was permanent. I have been seeking *new beginnings* ever since. It was so difficult the first couple of years that I couldn’t think past the next week or two. Now, after four years, I am able to think and plan farther into the future, but it took time. Lots of time. As this new year progresses, my hope for you will be that you too will be able to look forward to new beginnings and to find happiness again. If anyone deserves a happier future, it would be a bereaved parent or sibling or grandparent.





## On Angel's Wings

SoSadDad

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Ernie Laughlin, father of Melanie and Jennifer

I lie awake under the covers,  
the dog snuggled at my feet,  
The cat lounging on my chest,  
both soundly asleep.  
My wife lies beside me,  
so innocent, so sweet.  
She surely doesn't deserve this,  
no, not this stinging defeat.

I'm tired from the long work day,  
but I can't sleep just yet;  
I'm waiting for you to get home,  
my daughter, my sweet pet,  
And pop your head in the door:  
“Dad, I'm home,” you say.  
“Get some rest,” I reply,  
“and be sure your clock is set.”

“I love you.” “I love you too, Dad,”  
you say with a smile.  
“She's home, Hon,” I whisper softly,  
“safely home for a while.”  
My wife turns and squeezes my hand,  
as she lets out a sigh,  
We've survived another night,  
survived another trial.

Sometimes it's one in the morning,  
sometimes it's four.  
Sometimes I get out of bed  
and slowly pace the floor;  
I listen for your car in the drive,  
and the blaring radio.  
I've been through this scenario  
so many times before.

Sometimes when I'm sitting up,  
patiently waiting for you,

You walk in and give me a hug  
(for me, nothing else would do),  
And ask “what'd you have for dinner, Dad?  
Are there any leftovers?”  
Then you settle in on the couch,  
flipping channels on the tube.

Now I lie awake under the covers,  
the dog snuggled at my feet,  
the cat lounging on my chest,  
both soundly asleep.  
I still get up at one or four,  
and pace the floor for hours.  
But before I go back to sleep this night,  
it isn't you I'll greet.

For loneliness, desperation, hopelessness and  
fear  
will be my companions tonight.  
We'll meet my wife along the way,  
and party into the night.  
We'll wake-up in the morning with  
a hangover of sadness and grief,  
And face the realization that  
this might always be our plight.

Because you're not coming home tonight,  
not at one, not at four.  
You left us here to grieve your loss,  
nothing less, nothing more.  
But this is not our home, nor yours,  
and we'll join you soon enough,  
We'll see you again in Heaven;  
Yes, on Angels' wings you soar!

## What We Wish Others Understood About the Loss of Our Child The Gap

The gap between those who have lost children and those who have not is profoundly difficult to bridge.

No one whose children are well and intact can be expected to understand what parents who have lost children have absorbed, what they bear. Our children now come to us through every blade of grass, every crack in the sidewalk, every bowl of breakfast cereal, every kid on a scooter. We seek contact with their atoms – their hairbrushes, toothbrushes, their clothing.

We reach out for what was integrally woven into the fabric of our lives, now torn and shredded. A black hole has been blown through our souls and, indeed, it often does not allow the light to escape. It is a difficult place. For us to enter there is to be cut deeply and torn anew, each time we go there, by the jagged edges of our loss. Yet we return, again and again, for that is where our children now reside. This will be so for years to come and it will change us, profoundly. At some point, in the distant future, the edges of that hole will have tempered and softened, but the empty space will remain—a life sentence.

Our friends will change through this. There is no avoiding it. We grieve for our children in part, through talking about them, and our feelings for having lost them. Some go there with us; others cannot and, through their denial, add a further measure, however unwitting, to an already heavy burden. Assuming that we may be feeling “better” 6 months later is simply “to not get it”. The excruciating and isolating reality that bereaved parents feel is hermetically sealed from the nature of any other human experience. Thus it is a trap—those whose compassion and insight we most need are those for whom we abhor the experience that would allow them that sensitivity and capacity. And yet, somehow, there are those, each in their own fashion, who have found a way to reach us and stay, to our immeasurable comfort. They have understood, again each in their own way, that our children remain our children through our memory of them. Their memory is sustained through speaking about them and our feelings about their death. Deny this and you deny their life. Deny their life and you have no place in ours.

We recognize that we have moved to an emotional place where it is often very difficult to reach us. Our attempts to be normal are painful, and the day to day carries a silent, screaming anguish that accompanies us, sometimes from moment to moment. Were we to give it its own voice, we fear we would become truly unreachable and so we remain “strong” for a host of reasons even as the strength saps our energy and drains our will. Were we to act out our true feelings, we would be impossible to be with. We resent having to act normal, yet we dare not do otherwise.

People who understand this dynamic are our gold standard. Working our way through this over the years will change us as does every experience— and extreme experience changes one extremely. We know we will have actually managed to survive when, as we have read, it is no longer so painful to be normal. We do not know who we will be at that point nor who will still be with us.

We have read that the gap is so difficult that, often, bereaved parents must attempt to reach out to friends and relatives or risk losing them. This is our attempt. For those untarnished by such events, who wish to know in some way what they, thankfully, do not know, read this. It may provide a window that is helpful for both sides of the gap.

Bereavement is like a journey; we travel from one place of  
happiness, searching for another place of happiness to call home.

Know that there is hope. Know that many, many bereaved  
parents who have been in the same painful place  
that you are now have found life meaningful again.  
Know that you will too.





## A New Year

For bereaved parents and siblings, the new year presents us with a clean slate on which nothing is written. We may face many slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in this new year, but we will also have many opportunities to serve our families, our friends, and our communities with love and devotion.

For each bereaved parent and sibling, choosing to go forward in search of hope when one feels hopeless, in search of love when one feels bereft, in

search of new life when one feels barren, are courageous choices, especially when one feels devastated, bewildered, and inert. Perhaps we all can resolve this new year to pick up the telephone to call an empathetic friend when we find ourselves hip-deep in despair—or call when something nice has happened.

If we do so when we are depressed, we might find at least a little relief. If we do so when something good has entered our lives, we might even brighten the day of another bereaved parent. We can help each other by displaying our concern for each other.

By reaching out to others who walk the same road, we can make the journey a little less difficult for ourselves as well as for others.

## This Can BE A Constructive If Not A Happy Year

Happy New Year??? “How can it ever be again?” “How will I ever make it through another year of this torment?” When we are hurting and so terribly depressed, it is hard to see any good in our New Year but we must try.

First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable, that we will someday feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe, but even if we don’t believe it, we must tell ourselves over and over again that it is true – because it is! Many parents whose children have died in the past will attest to this. Remember, also, no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering now.

Second, we must face the new year with the knowledge that this year offers us a CHOICE – whether we will be on our way to healing this time next year or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that, if we choose to be on our way to healing by the following year, we must work to get there and that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief, to cry, to be angry, to talk about our guilts, to do whatever is necessary to move towards healing.

Third, we must look for good in our lives and find reasons to go on and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and a spouse for whom we must go on. Most important, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know that our dead children would want us to go on! No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate and aware of the real values in life. Let us not waste this New Year.

## New Year By Sascha Wagner

The New Year comes  
When all the world is ready  
For changes, resolutions-  
Great beginnings,  
For us, to whom  
That stroke of midnight  
means  
A missing child remem-  
bered,  
For us, the New Year comes  
More like another dark-  
ness.

But let us not forget  
That this year may be the  
year  
when Love and hope and  
courage  
Find each other somewhere  
In the darkness  
To lift their voices and  
speak:  
Let there be light.



## **WHEN YOU SEE A BUTTERFLY**

**By Brytani Russell**

When you see a butterfly,  
Think of me.  
When you see a shadow,  
Don't be afraid.  
When you see a light,  
Think of good things.  
But, when you see a butterfly,  
Think of me.  
When you see a cloud,  
Don't be afraid to try and grab it.  
When you see a raindrop,  
Open your mouth, Let it fall in.  
When you feel a hand touch you,  
Don't jump away.  
When you get all tingly,  
Let the feeling last.  
When you feel loved,  
Cherish it forever.  
But, when you see a butterfly,  
Think of me.  
When you feel like you've lost your way,  
Remember I am there to guide you.  
When you feel like no one is there,  
Make sure you know I am.  
When you feel like I am gone forever,  
Make sure you feel like I am there.  
When you think you've grieved too much,  
I know there's always another tear.  
But when you see a butterfly,  
Think of me.  
For you know that I am always with you,  
In every way, shape and form.  
I am always there to protect you,  
Even through dangerous storms.  
Know that I am right behind you,  
In whatever fate decides to put you through.  
For I may be gone,  
But I am around  
So, when you see a butterfly,  
Know I'm always there.



## **SNOWFLAKES**

**By Carol Tomaszewski**

It finally feels like wintertime outside...  
the air has a chill and there's a  
chance for snow. My daughter, who  
is a young adult, is just like a little  
kid waiting for the snow. She tells me  
it's her favorite time of the year.  
For me, I prefer to bask in the summer  
sunshine. Since my son died, I  
often feel like it's a wintertime all  
year long. I feel chilled to the soul. I  
want to stay home and snuggle in bed  
and ignore the rest of the world. I  
want to eat chicken soup and  
chili...comfort food for a cold day. I  
want to grumble and grouch at the  
world. So I prefer the warmth and  
sunshine as I hope to get rid of some  
of that wintertime feeling.  
Yesterday my daughter reminded me  
that every snowflake is unique, even  
though we can't see the difference.  
She continued to say that snowflakes  
are like our grief. Everyone grieves  
differently and, therefore, our grief is  
unique. What looks like it's the same  
to everyone who has not experienced  
the loss of a child, is really something  
very special and unique to each one  
of us. And...sometimes it comes in  
light flurries or huge drifts, sometimes  
it lasts for days...or only minutes.  
Sometimes we're able to plan  
ahead and other times it takes us by  
surprise.  
Now, when the snow falls, I will be  
reminded that I am unique, as is my  
daughter and my son. I may even go  
outside and let the beauty of the  
snow fall around me.

## Top Ten Ways To Live Your Life In View Of Your Child's Death

- 1) When someone asks, “Can I help?” Say yes. At the very least, borrow their ears to listen. When you offer to help someone, don't you like when they take you up on the offer?
- 2) Remember there is no deadline for grief. You are a parent to your child as long as you live. Find a way to remember them each day.
- 3) You loved your child with all your heart...live a good, loving life in their honor.
- 4) Do not sit alone with your grief. There are many other bereaved parents to meet. Join a group. Attend a supportive event offered through the Colors of Healing. Attend a Compassionate Friends meeting or one through a hospice or your church. Call me for resources in your area.
- 5) Recognize that everyone in the family grieves differently. The grief of your other children or your spouse/partner may look very different than your own. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. There is no valor in holding back tears.
- 6) Reading can help. There are many good books written by and for bereaved parents.
- 7) Writing can help. Expressing emotions on a piece of paper or blog has been researched and shown to have positive health benefits. This can be as simple as jotting a few words on a calendar.
- 8) Be gentle to yourself. Loosen up on your expectations for yourself. Listen to your heart; you are the best judge of what is good for you.
- 9) Transform your pain into something new: take a risk, help someone else, or revitalize important dates. Live your life larger. Reach for hope.
- 10) Love yourself. Love each other. Love...

The new year offers opportunities for progress, reinvestment, understanding, forgiveness, growth and all things positive. Be kind to yourself and pick one. Better still, choose all.

If you make New Year's Resolutions,

I hope they include:

- Try to take it one day at a time.
- Forgive yourself for whatever it is you feel you did wrong.
- Figure out ways to resolve your anger so you can let go of it.
- Risk reinvestment in life.
- Concentrate on and value what you have left, as much as what you have lost.
- Let those you value know how important they are to you.

These are important steps forward.

Try to be good to yourself in the New Year.

## WINTERSUN: Thoughts of Comfort and Understanding for Healing from Grief

By Sascha

There are those days in winter when your world is frozen into a vision of eternal ice, when earth and air are strangers to each other, when sound and color seem forever gone.

There are those days in winter when you feel like dying, when life itself surrenders you to anguish, to total mourning and to endless grief.

And then it happens: - from the bitter sky, a timid sun strides to his silent battle against the gray and hostile universe—it changes ice to roses, sky to song.

And then it happens that your heart recalls some distant joy, a gladness from the past, a slender light at first, then larger, braver, until your mind returns to hope and peace.

Let memories be beauty in your life, like song and roses in the winter sun.