

Listening Hearts



A GATHERING FOR BEREAVED MOMS...

Volume III, Issue 1

January/February 2011

Excerpt from the book, *A Broken Heart Still Beats*
by Anne McCracken and Mary Semel

The Legacy of Loss

I felt pain beyond anything I could possibly have imagined: pain so searing it raised goose bumps on my arms, made me nauseous, left me panting and wondering how soon I could die so I wouldn't have to feel it anymore. I learned that I could live, work, and love in spite of excruciating pain. And what's more, a lot of very ordinary-looking people are out there, more than I ever suspected, who also live with extraordinary wounds. Time and care do temper the pain. It is not always as sharp, but it is always there.

...left a crater in the family.....words like healing, recovery, resolving my grief, and bringing closure infuriated me.....I knew from the first moment that I would never get over Allie's death, that I would hurt for him forever, that our family would never be whole again. That was precisely why I was in such agony.

Giving bereaved parents the message that there is a time when we should have worked through our loss can be interpreted as suggesting that we have failed somewhere if we continue to mourn. Bereaved parents do not need to be made to feel worse about anything. We are doing well when we get out of bed and put one foot in front of the other. The most truthful and helpful words along these lines that anyone ever said to me were, "It will not always be this bad."

I looked for things I could do that would bring relief, knowing full well it would be short lived, maybe lasting only an hour at a time. When I found something that worked, I indulged myself as much as I could. I thought of myself as finding stepping stones across a river of pain.

And the pain does lessen; our eyes do stop weeping. Like a watercolor wash, time does soften our suffering. We laugh again. We enjoy our work, our family, our friends. We move on, but there's no great resolution—at least none for me.

We move on because we know we must. Otherwise, our time here is wasted.
"You have to give up the life you planned to find the life that is waiting for you."

We've been ripped away from the land we loved, a place where children outlive their parents, and thrown down on heartless, arid soil. We can't go home, and we can't give up. We have to stay and make the best of it.

"You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along' "

In this issue:

- ♥ Calendar, pgs 2-3
- ♥ What Moms Are Doing, pg 4
- ♥ In Memory of Carson, page 5
- ♥ In Memory of Joey Hernandez,, pgs 6-7
- ♥ A Broken Heart Still Beats, page 8
- ♥ Certainty, page 9
- ♥ Love Never Dies, page 10
- ♥ Stillborn, page 11
- ♥ Tears In Heaven

Love Gifts

Generous donations make it possible to reach out to other grieving mothers through this newsletter, group sessions and the web site. ...**Thank you!!!**

- *Ruby & Mack Buchanan
In memory of Wade.
- *Scarlett & Jack Powell,
In memory of Sean.
- *Karen & Dana Archer
In memory of Colt.
- *Kate & John Helms
In memory of Gabe.
- *Debra & Alan Reagan
In memory of Clint.
- *Anonymous

Listening Hearts

January 2010

These children have birthdays this month:

Scott Ward	January 5th	mom, Lorna
Wren Schlecht	January 10th	mom, Robin



These children have anniversary dates this month:



FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

February 2010

These children have birthdays this month:

Elyse Cannon	February 16th	mom, Libby
Alexis Goude-lock	February 15th	grandmother, Bonnie
Chad Raby	February 27th	mom, Jane



These children have anniversaries this month:

Alan Armstrong	February 25th	mom, Pam
----------------	---------------	----------



FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

Listening Hearts

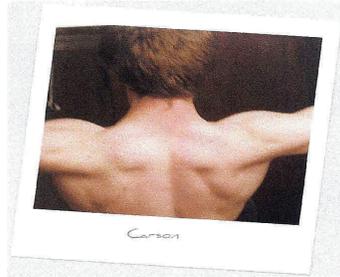
What Moms Are Doing



Candle Lighting Ceremony



In Memory of Carson



On the wings of a snow-white dove

He sends his pure sweet love

A sign from above

On the wings of a dove

When troubles surround us,

When evils come

The body grows weak

The spirit grows numb

When these things beset us

He doesn't forget us

He sends down His love

On the wings of a dove

Chorus

When Noah had drifted

On the flood many days

He searched for land in various ways

Troubles he had some

But wasn't forgotten

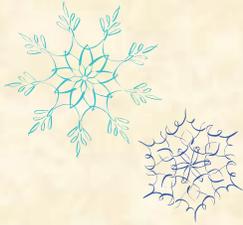
He sent them his love

On the wings of a dove

Chorus

Listening Hearts

In Memory of Joey Hernandez



My son was a mama's boy as he was our only son. We also have three beautiful daughters.

Joey was always into something, if it wasn't a new sport, girls, music. He had so many friends. We found out our son experimented with drugs at an early age and he was open about it but he turned his live around as he became an amateur boxer and they would drug test him every week. He was doing good for about three years. When he turned 20 he slowly stopped caring about boxing as two of his best friends had passed away from accidental drug overdoses,. We saw a change in him and he was so rebellious. It was like he was bipolar. One day he would be so happy, then the next he would be angry with the world. When he passed away he had just been promoted at work and was going back to college as he decided that he wanted to be a personal trainer as he was afraid that he would get hurt boxing if he did go pro as a lot of his friends have gotten real hurt and can't even speak normally anymore.

The day he passed, he had went out with some friends and came home early. It was like midnight and that was early for Joey. My husband saw him in the kitchen making something to eat as he was always eating and my husband told him to be quiet as the girls were sleeping and everyone had to wake up early for work. He told my husband "I love you Dad", see ya tomorrow. Well, he stayed up on the phone until like 8:30 in the morning so he told me to wake him up at 2:00 for work. So, me and my daughters went to do errands as my grandmother had just passed away and we had buried her on Friday and we were going to go to my mother's to check on her and take her something to eat. So, I knocked on Joey's door but he did not answer and the door was locked. I got scared because Joey was a light sleeper and he would have yelled out that he heard me or he was getting up or something. I told my daughter's boyfriend to knock the door down as I was beginning to worry. When I walked into the room Joey was lying in bed so peacefully and he had his phone up to his hear. I said Joey why did you not answer me. I turned his face around and his eyes were closed but his lips were blue and he had blood in his nose but he was so warm. I immediately started CPR but I knew it was too late as I am in the medical field and he was starting to get rigid. When EMS got there they said there was nothing that they could do and that he had been gone for at least 2-3 hours. I was like in shock. My husband was at work and I told my daughter to call him and tell him to come home but not tell him about Joey as I did not want him to get into an accident. My mother and sisters and father got to the house and the police had to rule out foul play so they would not let us into his room.

Continued...

In Memory of Joey Hernandez cont.

I don't know if I knew something was wrong that day as my daughter said she heard him talking on the phone at around 9:30 and I called him at around 12 but he did not answer. My daughter said he was snoring loud and make gurgling noises but he had a deviated septum from boxing so he always made noises. I keep thinking maybe I should have woken him up earlier and that this wouldn't have happened or he could have gotten to the hospital earlier and they could have saved him.

The death certificate stated that he died from sudden cardiac death due to cardiomegaly (enlarged heart) and opiate toxicity. He did not have enough drugs for an overdose or a lethal dose but because he had an enlarged heart a Tylenol PM could have killed him as his respiratory rate dropped so low when he slept that his heart just stopped.

My husband feels like he was not a good enough father. We did everything for Joey even when we should have made him move on his own as he could be so disrespectful sometimes. But we knew he had the strength in him to do what he set out to do as he had won three Golden Glove Boxing Championships and was so talented.

He like to hang out with friends who did drugs and for some reason he felt like he needed something to make him feel good or make him numb. I don't know why he was in so much pain. My daughter said that he was real sensitive and that he got real hurt when he broke up with his last girlfriend. He put up a bravado though, it was like he was the life of the party. There was no standing room at his funeral. So many people were there. I heard so many stories about him from his friends at work (who were in their 50s and 60s), and on his guestbook people I don't even know write how Joey changed their lives and got them off of drugs or out of an abusive relationships. I guess God needed him more than I do. I still don't understand. My grandmother died March 8, Joey died March 13, and my grandfather died March 30. My mom was told that my grandmother came for Joey and that Joey came for grandpa. My grandparents were married 70 years and were 89 and 91 but Joey was only 21. It hurts so much that I won't see him get married or have children. I miss him so much.

Gina Hernandez



Listening Hearts

A Broken Heart Still Beats

Excerpt from the book, *A Broken Heart Still Beats*
by Anne McCracken and Mary Semel



George McGovern

In mid-December of 1994, Eleanor and George McGovern's forty-five-year-old daughter Terry was found frozen to death in a parking lot in Madison, Wisconsin. She had fallen asleep in a snow bank while in an alcoholic stupor. After years of unsuccessful attempts to help Terry treat her alcoholism and depression, the McGoverns "had decided-with the encouragement of a counselor-that it might be best for both Terry and us not to be deeply involved for a time."

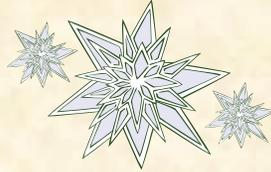
Why did it take her death to trigger this search for understanding of the affliction that scarred her troubled life and in the end brought her to an untimely grave? Why couldn't I have gained my present knowledge and understanding of my daughter and her disease in time to have helped her more effectively than I did?

I can't give satisfying answers to these questions. What I can tell you is that the sorrow of losing one of your children is almost unbearable. It is sad beyond any measure that I had imagined. If you have a troubled or addicted daughter or son, do not ever imagine that you or your child might be better off if death were to steal her or him away. Death is devastating and final and agonizing for a parent. There is no way you can avoid a full measure of painful regrets and might-have-beens.

Your friends and counselors will tell you: "Don't blame yourself. It's not your fault-you did the best you could." This advice is well meant and my even be true. It doesn't help much. You'll be sad, and you will hurt when you lie down to sleep, when you awake in the night, when you rise in the morning, when you go to beach where she swam, when you drive past her school, when hear her children laughing, when you see a Christmas tree, or whenever you recall her dancing eyes, her lingering embrace, her glorious smile when she saw you at the airport-or her anguish when she feel from intoxication. I'm especially sad on June10-her birthday and on December 13- when she died in the snow.



Certainty



Certainty

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 sure 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.

-Sandy Goodman, 1997



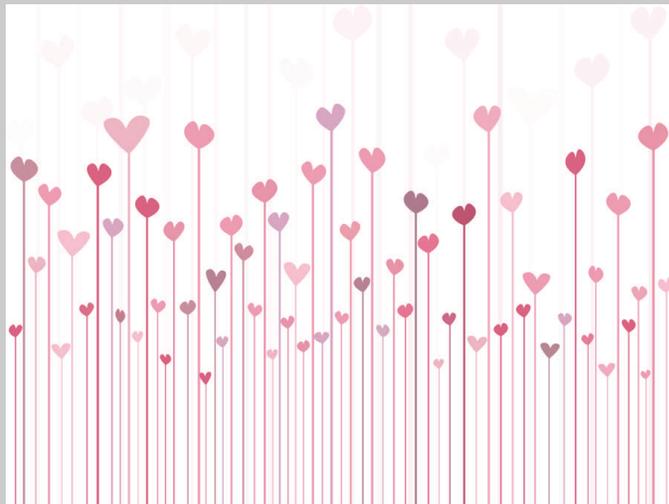
Listening Hearts

Love Never Dies

Excerpt from the book, *Love Never Dies*
A Mother's Journey from Loss to Love
By Sandy Goodman

Do I still hurt? Yes. I hurt when I hear a mother scream at her child to shut up and leave her alone. I hurt because it took a catastrophic loss to propel me out of apathy and onto the path. I grieve because I could have spent my time with Jason talking about love and feelings and laughter instead of how messy his bedroom was or how he needed to find a job. I hurt because I said, "You'll have to wait, I am working right now" too often and too willingly. I hurt because I have so much wonder inside of me that can only seep out at convenient moments with specific individuals. I ache because while I know my son lives, many others believe he is gone. I hurt because I cannot say to my colleagues over lunch, "I talked to Jason last night. He's fine and we had a good talk." I hurt for those who have so much fear mixed in with their spirituality they can't get close enough to touch the love. And I hurt because many of us are so afraid of death we are incapable of living.

I hurt because right now, at this moment, there's a mom out there somewhere, sitting at a table with a cold cup of coffee. She's feeling like she can't breathe and hoping she won't. Detached from the activity around here, she sits in silence and watches the hands on the clock....tick....tick....tick..... In just a few hours she will go to the mortuary to tell her child good-bye. I hurt because no one is going to tell her that good-bye isn't necessary and because even if someone did, she still has to find the meaning of that on her own, in her own time.



Stillborn

Stillborn

With love I conceived and I bore you,
I dreamt of you when I was a child.
As I felt you grow I adored you,
With your first feeble flutter I smiled.

Happily I hummed an old lullaby,
While I readied your room and layette.
With thumps and bumps I felt you reply,
Playing percussion in a happy duet.

Each day that passed our future I planned,
Where we would go and things we would do.
We'd take trips to the beach and play in the sand
And go to the circus and visit the zoo!

Nine joyful months together we spent,
Looking ahead to all that would be,
Quickly you came, and just as quick went,
And the two of us now is just me.

A past that has passed and a future that's gone,
Everyone's back to normal again.
While here I am, lost and alone,
Torn by thoughts of what might have been.

Memories die out like an ember,
I struggle to hold them, and yet,
It's very hard to remember,
When you were not here to forget.

*Dedicated to those whose legitimate losses are discounted or ignored.
Who have few, if any, memories to offset their shattered hopes and dreams.*
by Richard A. Dew, M.D.
from his book, *Rachel's Cry, A Journey Through Grief*

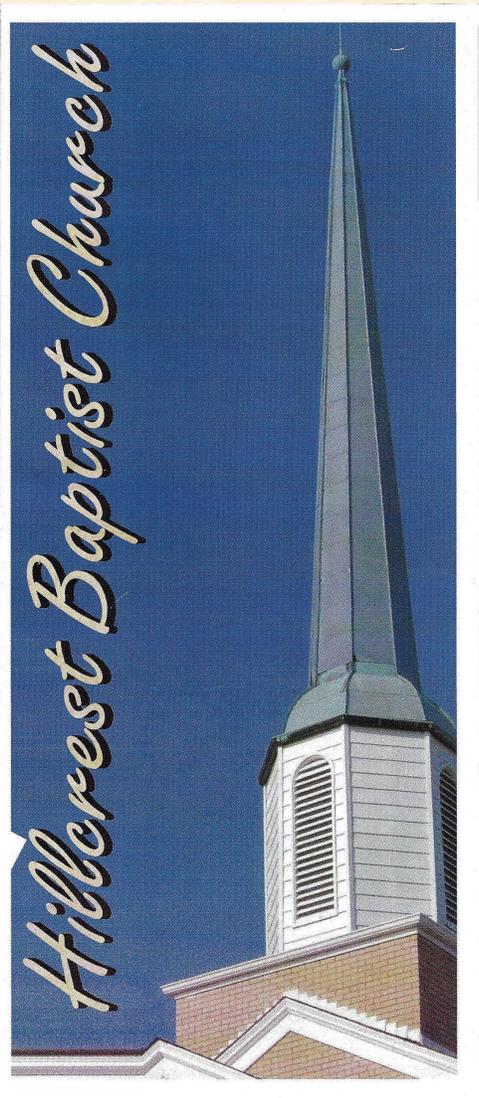


Listening Hearts

Listening Hearts is a gathering of bereaved moms. We wish every day that there was no need for such a group. Since we can't change things that are out of our control, we work to help ourselves and each other to process this devastating and life altering loss. We work to find ways to carry the loss and love in the same heart.

Our group meets every other month in Knoxville at the Eye Institute Conference Room located at 2020 Kay Street, Knoxville, TN 37920. The dates and times can be found at our website: www.listening-hearts.memory-of.com.

We also have a new second meeting place in Morristown. See below.



***Listening Hearts
A Gathering of Bereaved
Mothers***

***....now has a second meeting
place.....***

***Hillcrest Baptist Church
410 S. Liberty Hill Rd.
Morristown, TN 37813***

***All bereaved moms are
invited.***

Volume III, Issue 1

Hillcrest Baptist Church
410 S. Liberty Hill Rd.
Morristown, TN 37813

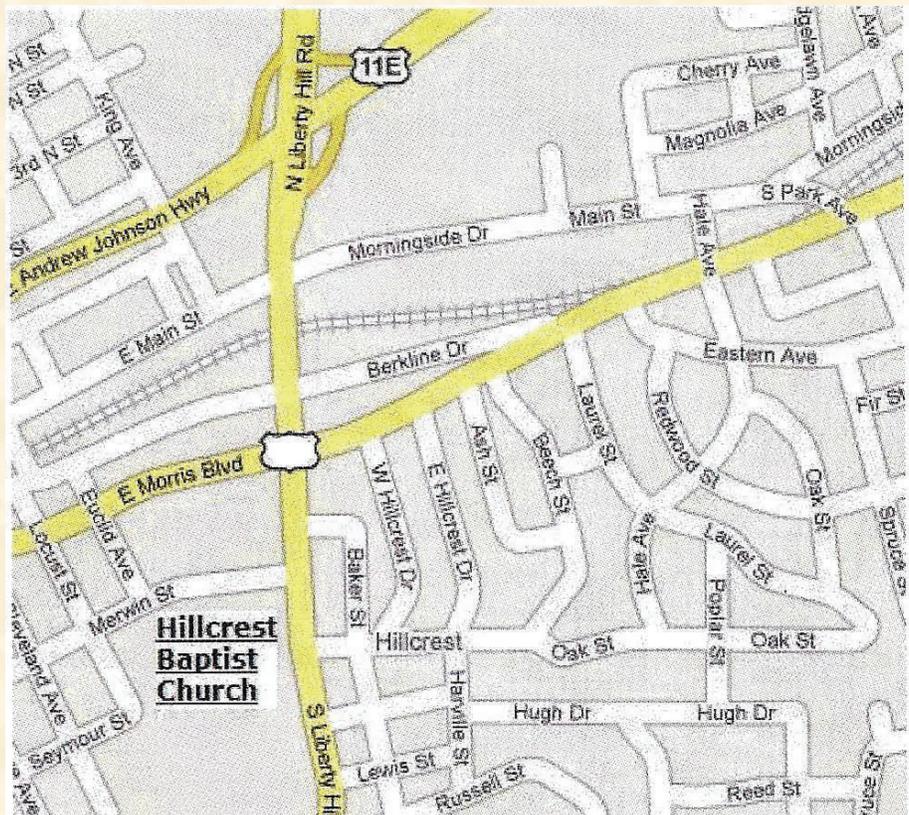
Phone: 423-586-0693

Fax: 423-586-0653

www.hillcrestbaptistchurch.net

E-mail: office@hillcrestbaptistchurch.net

...The Caring Place



Listening Hearts

Tears in Heaven by Eric Clapton

Tears In Heaven
By Eric Clapton

Would you know my name
if I saw you in heaven?
Would it be the same
if I saw you in heaven?
I must be strong
and carry on
'cause I know
I don't belong
here in heaven.

Would you hold my hand
if I saw you in heaven?
Would you help me stand
if I saw you in heaven?
I'll find my way
through night and day
'cause I know
I just can't stay
here in heaven.

Time can bring you down;
time can bend your knees,
Time can break your heart;
have you begging please
...begging please.

Beyond the door
there's peace I'm sure
and I know
there'll be no more
tears in heaven.

Eric's son, Conor (b. August 1986), died on 20 March 1991 when he fell from a window in his mother's New York City apartment.



A gathering for bereaved moms...

LISTENING HEARTS

Donations may be mailed to
Listening Hearts
P.O. Box 51674
Knoxville, TN 37950

E-mail: listeninghearts@yahoo.com

Website:

<http://listeninghearts.net>



We're on

facebook



Listening Hearts Knoxville 2011 Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held on Saturdays

- ♥February 5th
- ♥April 2nd
- ♥June 4th
- ♥August 6th
- ♥October 1st
- ♥December 3rd

Listening Hearts, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, is a self-help gathering of bereaved mothers from all walks of life.

It does not matter the age of the child or the cause of death. Nor does it matter the length of time since the child's death.

No one should travel this journey alone. Join us as we help each other find ways to carry the pain of this loss and the joy of the love for our child in the same heart.

Contributors this issue:

Reneau Howard
Gena Hernandez

Editors:

Debra Reagan
Heather Reagan

Thank you to everyone. We are honored to share the love and memories of your precious child.

Unless otherwise noted by the contributors, the submissions may also appear on the website.