

Listening Hearts



A GATHERING FOR BEREAVED MOMS...

Volume III, Issue 2

March/April 2011



Pennies From Heaven poem
I found a penny today
Just laying on the ground
But it's not just a penny
This little coin I've found.

Found pennies come from Heaven
That's what I've been told
By Angels watching over us
From their clouds of gold.

When an Angel thinks of you
They toss a penny down
Sometimes just to cheer you up
To make a smile from your frown.

So don't pass by that penny
When you're feeling blue
It may be a penny from Heaven
That an Angel's tossed to you.

"In God We Trust" is not a phrase
Just printed on a penny
It's something to remember
When your troubles seem like many.

So when you're down and it seems
Your life has a blue tint
That penny on a sidewalk
May be truly Heaven "cent."

by Charles Mashburn



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Love Gifts

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

Pam & Mike Quade - In Memory of Paul Anthony Kovacs

Kate & John Helms—In Memory of Gabe Miller

Anonymous cash

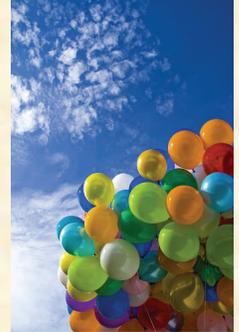
...Thank you!!!

Listening Hearts

March 2011

These children have birthdays this month:

12th Evan Cueto	(mom, Sacha)
27th Hannah Card	(mom, Helena)
30th Michael Dionne	(mom, Anne)



These children have anniversary dates this month:

6th Jim Coniglio	(mom, Lori)
15th Wren Schlecht	(mom, Robin)
16th Chad Raby	(mom, Jane)
18th Evan Cueto	(mom, Sacha)
20th Joey Scarpa	(mom, Linda)
21st Leo McPhee	(mom, Rose)
27th Hannah Card	(mom, Helena)
29th Caleb Dalton Norris	(mom, Becky)



FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

April 2011

These children have birthdays this month:

2nd Bradley Prosis	(mom, Deb)
16th Tyler Strawn	(mom, Elane)
17th Colt Porterfield	(mom, Karen)
19th Cindy Allen	(mom, Barbara)
21st Thomas Wade Buchanan	(mom, Ruby)
22nd Gabriel John Miller	(mom, Kate)
23rd Timothy VanWinkle	(mom, Jan)
26th Caleb Dalton Norris	(mom, Becky)



These children have anniversary dates this month:

5th Curtis Dawson	(mom, Judy)
16th Derrick Salvig	(mom, Tammie)
21st David Giraud	(mom, Cathy)
24th Alexis Goudelock	(grandmother, Bonnie)
26th Brandon Arms	(mom, Connie)
28th Ryan Griffin	(mom, Kim)

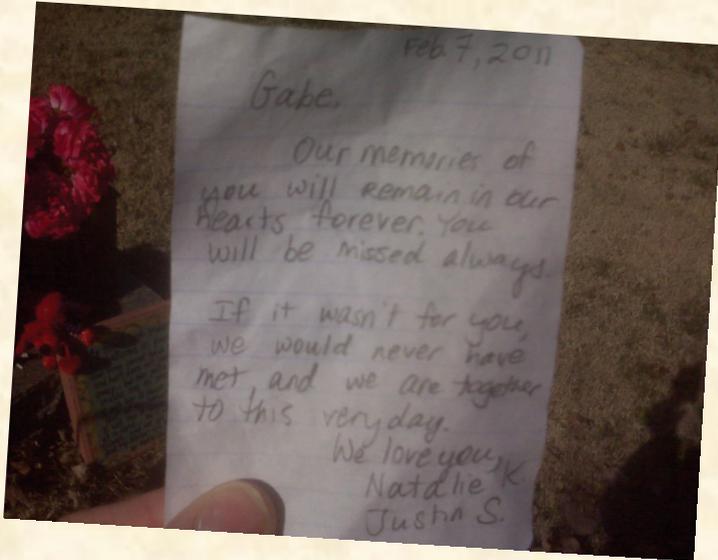


FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

Listening Hearts

What Moms Are Doing

Kate found a sweet note at Gabe's grave. It warms our hearts to know that others remember our child.



Deb has so much talent and she loves Bradley so much. She is spreading this love to others in memory of Bradley.



What Moms Are Doing cont.



Mitzi does work with the March of Dimes in memory of Kelby and in honor of Joshua.

Kelby Lee Akins: June 14, 2007—February 9, 2008

Support the March of Dimes and Congenital Heart Defect Research! Congenital Heart Defects (CHD's) kill more children every year than all childhood cancers combined! They are the #1 birth defect and cause of infant deaths. 1 in 100, that's 40,000 children are born each yr. with a CHD. And 4,000 of those do not live to see their 1st birthday (like our precious Angel Kelby). There is no known cause, no cure; it's a lifelong condition requiring surgeries and care. CHD's can even cause strokes! My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Psalm 73:26

Listening Hearts

Submission from Sean Fewer

Submitted by Sean Fewer



PASS THE BISCUITS

When I was a kid, my mom liked to make breakfast food for dinner every now and then. And I remember one night in particular when she had made breakfast after a long, hard day at work. On that evening so long ago, my mom placed a plate of eggs, sausage, and extremely burned biscuits in front of my dad. I remember waiting to see if anyone noticed! Yet all my dad did was reach for his biscuit, smile at my mom and ask me how my day was at school.

I don't remember what I told him that night, but I do remember hearing my mom apologize to my dad for burning the biscuits. And I'll never forget what he said: "Honey, I love burned biscuits."

Later that night, I went to kiss Daddy good night and I asked him if he really liked his biscuits burned. He wrapped me in his arms and said, "Your momma put in a long hard day at work today and she's real tired. And besides... a burnt biscuit never hurt anyone!"

You know, life is full of imperfect things... and imperfect people. I'm not the best at hardly anything, and I forget birthdays and anniversaries just like everyone else. What I've learned over the years is that learning to accept each other's faults and choosing to celebrate each other's differences, is one of the most important keys to creating a healthy, growing, and lasting relationship.

So...please pass me a biscuit. And yes, the burned one will do just fine! **Life is too short to wake up with regrets... Love the people who treat you right and forget about the ones who don't.**

ENJOY LIFE NOW- IT HAS AN EXPIRATION DATE!

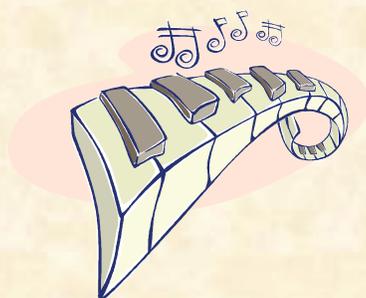
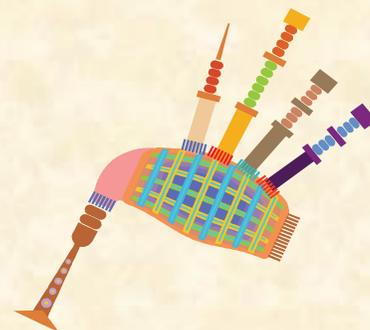
Author Unknown

Book Excerpt

Excerpt from the book, *The Death of a Child, Reflections for Grieving Parents*
by Elaine E. Stillwell

Everything we do is to help keep our child's memory very much alive. As one parent said: "My child's gone; I'm still here. My job is to figure out my purpose now."

My favorite mantra, "If their song is to continue, then we must do the singing," keeps me busy finding many projects to keep my children's memories alive.

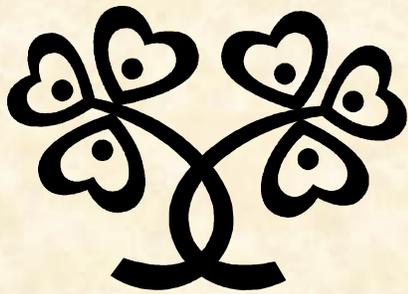


Listening Hearts

Memorial Craft Suggestions



Memorial Craft Suggestions cont.



Listening Hearts

In Loving Memory of Zach Griffin

Zach taught us how to love
He wasn't afraid to love.
He would hug you with a bear hug
He looked at you with those big brown eyes and beautiful smile
He loved to laugh and make you laugh
He taught us how to love and not be afraid to love
He wasn't afraid of anything not even love
He made sure that you knew he loved you
He showed it in his eyes and smile
He worked hard to please
He was a wonderful son and brother
That was our Zach he taught us how to love
He made us fall in love with him and
Now we can't wait to see him again
Our beautiful beloved Zach we had 22 years.

From Deb Griffin
In loving memory of Zach



Zachary Ryan Griffin

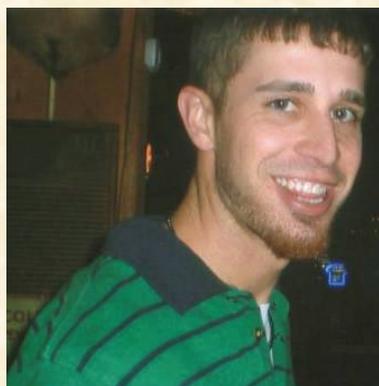
In Loving Memory of Chad Raby

I woke, this early morning, to a room of silence. I would like to here my son's voice again. Oh, how I wish I could have kept one of his voice mails. I am afraid of forgetting him one person says. I chime in on this same sentiment. Life just will never be the same. One person says apart of her heart has been torn out. I find it hard to describe. For me it was as if I was in a tornado and I just came apart into many pieces. My mind, body and spirit just crumbled, and like Humpty Dumpty I thought I would never be put back together again.

But, life moves on, another grand child has been born and another one on the way. While I feel glad for my daughter and step daughter-in-law, I feel less responsive. I am not sure when or if it will return. I know that they say in 4 or 5 years depending on how your grieving goes. I know it is hard to believe that it has been 2 years for me.

It feels like its been just a few months. I guess because I don't remember the first few months; or my mind and body just can't seem to go there. I think it is because I don't know where I went. All I could do is back myself up against the wall at the head of my bed and hold on to pillows and cry.

Such a precious gift he was, that I can not replace.
Chad, I miss you son. (February 27, 1984-March 16, 2009)



Chad Raby

It was meeting the people at Listening Hearts, that I realize I was not going crazy. I have a safe place to come and pour my heart out to people that understand and are supportive. Thank you Listening Hearts for being there.

Listening Hearts

In Loving Memory of Jim Coniglio



Jim Coniglio
6/03/1983 - 3/06/2009

Two years gone my fun loving boy.
You are missed in so many ways.
Your smile, your laugh, your wit and humor.
Your charm, your music
and your Hugs.
How could this happen?
The Angels must have needed you more.
Loved and missed every moment of every day.

Jim Coniglio

Barbara Kingsolver quote:

"In my own worst seasons I've come back from the colorless world of despair by forcing myself to look hard, for a long time, at a single glorious thing: a flame of red geranium outside my bedroom window. And then another: my daughter in a yellow dress. And another: the perfect outline of a full, dark sphere behind the crescent moon. Until I learned to be in love with my life again. Like a stroke victim retraining new parts of the brain to grasp lost skills, I have taught myself joy, over and over again."

Please Ask

Please Ask

Someone asked me about you today.
It's been so long since anybody has done that.
It felt so good to talk about you.
To share my memories of you,
To simply say your name out loud.
She asked me if I minded talking about
What happened to you...
Or would it be too painful to speak of it.
I told her I think of it every day
And speaking about it helps me to release
The tormented thoughts whirling around in my
head.
She said she never realized the pain
Would last this long...
She apologized for not asking sooner.
I told her, "Thanks for asking."
I don't know if it was curiosity
Or concern that made her ask,
But told her, "Please do it again sometime...
Soon."

By Barbara Taylor Hudson



"Believe when you are the most unhappy that there is something for you to do in the world. As long as you can sweeten another's pain, life is not in vain."

-Helen Keller

Listening Hearts

Discussions On Comment #1

How do you respond to these comments? Here are some responses from other moms.

#1 “You are so strong.”

“I'm not strong. I just wasn't given a choice.”

(People who haven't lost a child just have no idea. It's not because we're strong, though I do think we find strength we didn't know we had.) -Cindy Outlaw, mom to BJ, Wayne and Buck.

“I really haven't had the first one said to me.” -Lori Coniglio, mom to Jim.

“I usually respond that I loved my son more than life, and I am not strong, I want to die everyday but have no choice but to keep breathing . I have a family, my husband, my daughter, and grandson need me, and someone must love them as I loved my son. (Underlying all of the dialogue I forever know that no one understands the pain....unless they've experience it....so I try not to engage people who really don't care, or just like to "talk".) -Linda Torma, mom to Joe

“I am not strong far from it, I just have no choice but to travel this hard journey. This is the path God has taken me and for what reason I don't know yet but one day I will.” - Claudia Lindley, mom to Rocky.



Discussions On Comment #1 cont.

How do you respond to these comments? Here are some responses from other moms.

#1 "You are so strong."

"It may appear that way, but it sure doesn't feel like it." (The things people say...yes, there are the standard questions and statements made, then there are the ones that stick with you. Sometimes because they contain wisdom or uncanny empathy from a parent who has not suffered the same loss, sometimes because they showcase just how out of touch the speaker is. Either way, they all have good intentions. Even those who say things that hurt you are in no way trying to be malicious. I keep that in mind. I know how uncomfortable most of them are even broaching the subject. They feel obligated to say something...but what? What is the right thing to say? All I want to hear is what their heart has to say, nothing more. I give great latitude here and am not offended very easily.

I'll give you an example. Our next door neighbor, who is a wonderful woman and has been very good to us said perhaps the most unwelcome comment. Damon being much younger than our other two children, was just getting to the age where he could be left alone for short periods. After his passing, our neighbor remarked "Well...at least now you guys are free to go and do things now." A most insensitive comment for sure, but we know her and realize she probably wished dearly she could take those words back. She loved Damon. We never dwelled on any remarks or questions because we know people are in very sensitive territory and feeling very uneasy as they express their feelings. Sometimes I will give a short answer, or a thank you and change the subject if the moment becomes too awkward.) - Sean Fewer, dad to Damon



Listening Hearts

Discussions On Comment #1 cont.

How do you respond to these comments? Here are some responses from other moms.

#1 “You are so strong.”

“Since losing my son, Alex, I have heard both statements and felt even more wounded than I already was. When a close friend said, “you are so strong, I answered that I feel damaged, destroyed, and devastated, how is that strong? She explained that she was trying to encourage me and that she admired my apparent strength that I showed in public. I told her that she will also see me smile, laugh and shop in public because my life goes on and I have to keep functioning for my family, but to understand that I need her support even on my best days and no matter how strong I appear to be, I am deeply wounded on the inside.” - Tammie Wolfe, mom to Alex.

“After my sons funeral, someone called me a “Steel Magnolia” I didn't know what they meant. I had seen the movie of the same name but it never crossed my mind what the meaning was. She was from the south so I thought it was just something people in the south said. I later learned it is a term used when a woman (usually a delicate flower) had to endure a very difficult time in her life (like a child's death), and did so with her head up, her shoulders back and heart steady to help comfort those who were not so strong. It was one of the nicer things anyone every said to me. So I was strong when I needed to be and when I was in my room alone I could let it all out. I think people who don't have a relationship with the Lord suffer more because they don't believe they will see their child again. I know I will see mine again. Thank you Jesus!!” -Pam Quade, mom to Paul Anthony



Discussions On Comment #2

#2 “If anything happened to my child, I would just die.”

“No, you wouldn't. You would just want to die, but because of other children or family that still needs you. You continue on.”

(And who do they think they are to say they would die if they lost a child? Does that mean they love their children more than we love ours? I don't think so! Ok so those things make me upset. All I can say is the ones that say these things better pray they never have to find out just "what" they would do.) -Cindy Outlaw, mom to BJ, Wayne and Buck.

“Yes, you do feel like you will die and maybe you want to die, but that is not the answer. Some days you don't want to get out of bed. Some days you don't want to leave the house. And as time goes on, some days you feel better and some days you don't. Allow yourself the time to feel your feelings and know that you are not alone.” - Lori Coniglio, mom to Jim.

“My response is, you will die inside (forever) , but for some reason you will keep waking up and life keeps going on one moment at a time.” (My son Joe died on 9/30/06, and as I recall I didn't respond to many comments, or conversations during the first year or so. So much is a blur now, and most I found were too hurtful. Those that I did respond to only severed relationships because I felt so alone, frightened, sad, and in shock and there was a such a lack of understanding by the closest people in our life about what we were going through as a family....no support - life goes on kind of an attitude. People just wanted the old me back, the person they could call on, to listen to them complain about insignificant life events as I had done in the past...I will never be the same person I was before that morning I found my son dead in his bed, never, nor do I want to be. Joe was and remains my heart, soul, pride and joy, and no one ever "got" it. Still don't. I have had to change so much of my life in order to survive - all of it hurts more than words could describe.) -Linda Torma, mom to Joe.

Listening Hearts

Discussions On Comment #2 cont.

#2 “If anything happened to my child, I would just die.”

“A part of you dies when you lose your child and you are never ever the same. You keep your child’s memories and love wrapped so tight within your heart. Only a parent who has lost a child can understand.” -Claudia Lindley, mom to Rocky.

“For awhile, I wanted to, and you never get over it...you just learn to carry it.” - Sean Fewer, dad to Damon.

“ I answered, I wanted to die, I've wished I could join my son, but it's not a choice worth entertaining when my remaining children need me very much. I keep going because I know I will be reunited with Alex someday.” (That statement implies that her love for her child is greater than my love for mine, or that my loss wasn't so great because I am still alive! I can only say that others who haven't experienced such pain, do not know how those words can wound you. They mean well, but they simply cannot understand. I pray for peace for all those in pain.) -Tammie Wolfe, mom to Alex



Discussions On Comment #2 cont.

#2 “If anything happened to my child, I would just die.”

"If anything happened to my child, I would just die." I thought the same thing. Then it happened. I tell people, that would be easy, to just die. The worst thing, is that you live through it. You have to get up every day and go on for the rest of your family, loved ones and sometimes yourself. I would rather have died, then the pain of losing my child would be over." (For me at least. But what about the other people in pain. Who is going to comfort them. It hurts, it hurts a lot. My heart is truly broken, and that will never be the same. The pain is always there but I'm able to put it aside to do what has to be done at the moment. There were some really dark days in the beginning. But anything loved is never really lost. Its just somewhere you cannot go right at this moment. Its just hard get over losing something so precious to you. I still long for the day I can talk to my older son about his brother. Maybe with time...") —Pam Quade, mom to Paul Anthony



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.

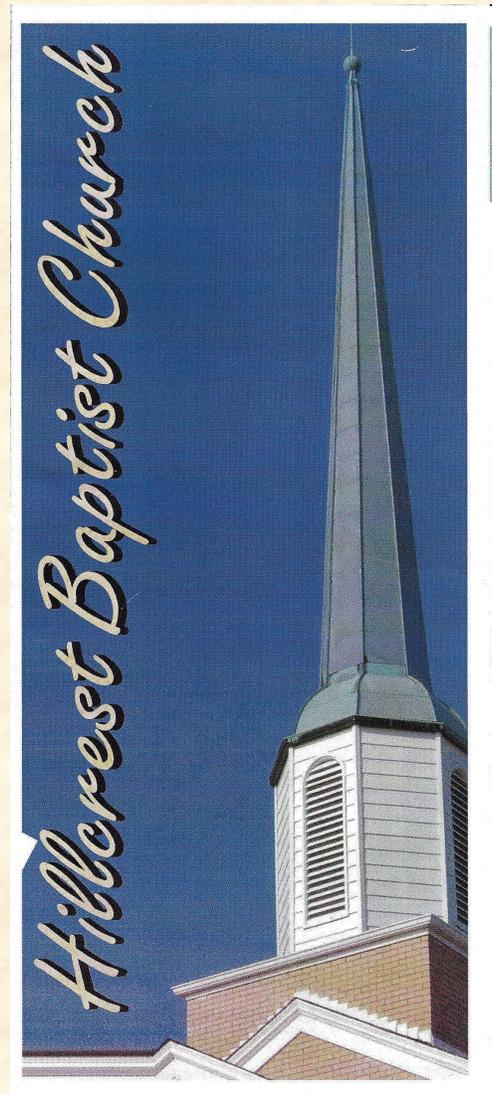
We also have a new second meeting place in Morristown. See below.

***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.***



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

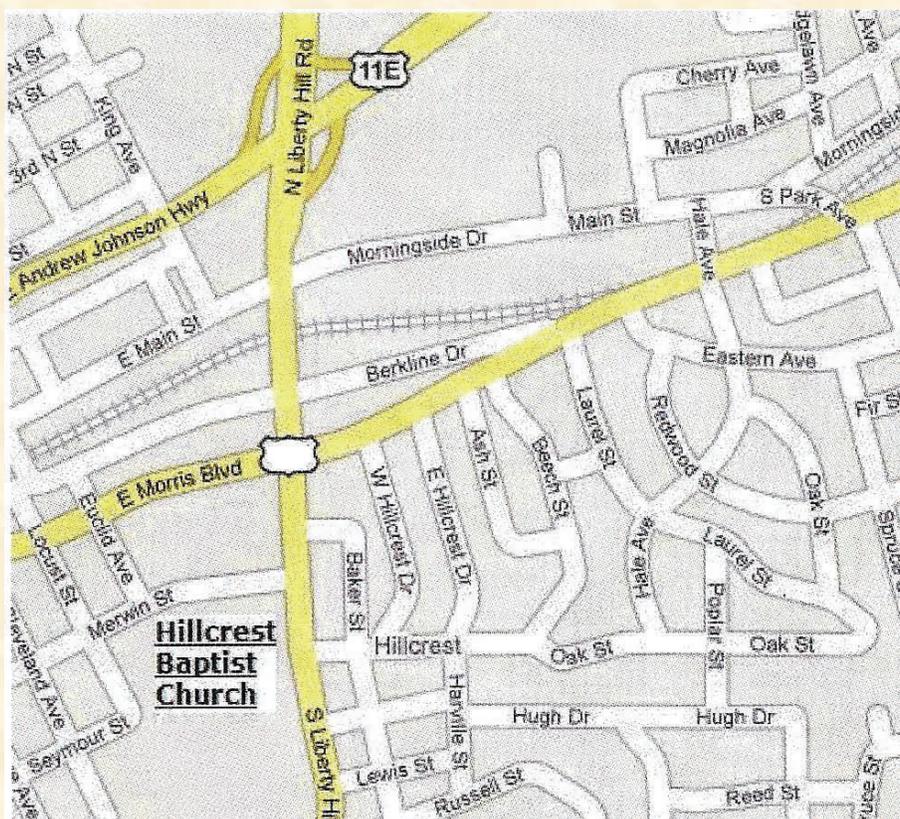
Phone: 423-586-0693

Fax: 423-586-0653

www.hillcrestbaptistchurch.net

E-mail: office@hillcrestbaptistchurch.net

...The Caring Place



Listening Hearts

Mention My Child's Name

The mention of my child's name
May bring tears to my eyes
But it never fails to bring
Music to my ears.
If you really are my friend
Let me hear the beautiful music
Of her (his) name.
It soothes my broken heart
and sings to my soul.

-Author Unknown

Heather

Eric J.

Chad

Gabe

Timothy

Zach

Eric

Caleb

Kevin

Calvin

Michelle Lee

Colt

Clint

Alan

Carson

Byron

Sean

Wade

Cindy

Bradley

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:

Sean Fewer
Deb Griffin
Jane Dunham
Cindy Outlaw
Lori Coniglio
Claudia Lindley
Linda Torma
Tammie Wolfe
Pam Quade

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.