

From Miracles to Memories...

The Caring Never Ends



*The HOPE Group
Annual Memorial Service*

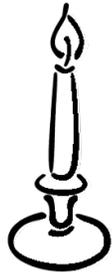
December 8, 2010

7:30 p.m.

We Remember

We Celebrate

...that their light may always shine



- *Welcome and Opening Ceremony
- *Poems and Readings
- *Candle Lighting and Remembrance Service
- *Reading "We Remember Them"
- *Closing Remarks
- *Refreshments and Conversation

Hope is the flower that rises from sorrow.
The seed that sows peace which will blossom tomorrow.
by Ginny Earle, A HOPE member

We light these five candles in honor of our precious babies. The first candle represents our grief. There are days when our grief is overwhelming. If we take it slowly, moment by moment, day by day, we learn to handle the sad days. We are not alone in our grief. We have HOPE.

The second candle represents our courage. Courage to confront our sorrow and face each day with the memory of our children within our hearts.

The next candle represents our memories. Memories of life inside of us, of dreams we all shared of parenthood, and of new memories soon to be created.

The fourth candle is the light of love. As we enter this holiday season, day by day, we cherish the special place in our hearts that will always be reserved for our children. The light of love shines on within us.

The last candle is the light of HOPE. It reminds us that we are not alone. There are women, men, and families that have walked in our shoes and feel the power that the HOPE Group brings. We remember our children each day and build lasting bonds with others who share our pain. May the glow of HOPE shine on in all that we do as we remember our precious children.

NEW YEAR

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 remembered.
For us the New Year comes more like another darkness.
But let us not forget that this 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.

Written by Sascha Wagner
The Compassionate Friends

A RIPPLE

We do not always realize the impact we may have on total strangers.
We may never know how many lives we have changed by a kind word or gesture.
We are like that of a pebble tossed into still waters.
Our "ripple" may travel a great distance.

CLOSING REMARKS

Rindy Huebner
Founding Member of HOPE since 1980

Please join us for refreshments and conversation at the conclusion of this service.

SPECIAL THANKS to:

R.W. Traynham Printing Company, Billerica, MA
Winchester Hospital
Rindy Huebner
Martha Lang for the beautiful music
Sue Powers
Christine Boudreau
Donna McDonnell

And all HOPE members who helped make this service so special year after year

As the Holidays approach us again, our thoughts turn to you and what could have been. Mommy and I always think about that. You live in our hearts and memories always. We help each other through the tough times and always look for ways to honor your memory and all the little friends I know you have up there. Every time it snows I look out the window with your little brother and sisters and imagine your little footprints appearing in the fresh white blanket. I hear a little laugh and I know you must be playing up there in heavens snow. I wish I could be with you but I know you'll save a space for us. Until then we live for you son.

Love, Dad.

In Memory of Alexandra and William Crews

The best and most beautiful things in the world
cannot be seen or even touched.
They must be felt with the heart.

-Helen Keller

Alexandra and William,

We can no longer see or touch you, but we feel you with our hearts every day.
We had so much love to give you and were crushed when we lost you.
You, and the love that we had to share, inspired us to try hard to have more children.
And we did. We are blessed with our son Maximilian
and our daughter Scarlett and they bring us joy as we knew we would have had with
you in our lives. We are grateful that we were able to hold you,
even just briefly, and that we have our memories of you and some special items
of yours to comfort us. Every year we release balloons on your birthday and have you
in our hearts all year round. Every minute that you were with us before and after
you were born was precious.
We love you always,
Mom and Dad.

Dear Dakota,

Seven Easters, Seven Thanksgivings, Seven Christmases.... When will I stop counting
the events that you are not here for? Ever? Never? When do I stop wondering what it
would be like if you were here? When do I stop wondering what you would have been
like? Looked like? Sounded like? Ever? Never?

It's true that it doesn't get easier... It just gets different. I don't think any of us ever
thought life would go on after that February morning that changed our lives forever.
I don't think any of us ever thought we had the strength to survive. Our world stopped

FOR GOOD

A musical selection sung by Kristine and Jeff Buckridge
in memory of their son, Nathan

I've heard it said that people come into our lives for a reason.
Bringing something we must learn.
And we are led to those who help us most to grow
If we let them and we help them in return.
Well, I don't know if I believe that's true.
But I know I'm who I am today because of you.
Like a comet pulled from orbit as it passes a sun.
Like a stream that meets a boulder halfway through the wood.
Who can say if I've been changed for the better?
Because I knew you I have been changed for good.
It well may be that we will never meet again.
In this lifetime so let me say before we part
So much of me is made of what I learned from you.
You'll be with me like a handprint on my heart
And now whatever way our stories end.
I know you have rewritten mine by being my friend.
Like a ship blown from its mooring by a wind off the sea.
Like a seed dropped by a sky bird in a distant wood.
Who can say if I've been changed for the better
Because I knew you, I have been changed for good.

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Light one candle, take my hand,
move closer to each other, all who want to smile again.
In this blessed time of year, with your sorrow and tears
Come together to remember and light one candle.
The light is for strength to face the pain welled up inside.
The light reminds us of shattered dreams not to be denied.
The light is for courage to beckon others to our side.
For every tear we've cried, we light one candle.
We all know the reason that we value so this flame.
It's a commitment to each other to remember every name.
And a promise made that in our hearts forever they'll remain.
Out of love we came, to light one candle.



We now ask each family to approach the front table one at a time, light a candle in
memory of your child or children. Accept a flower and announce their names.

Accept the new me, this loss is forever a part of me.
Trying again will not bring back my child.

GARDEN OF STONE

I wiped away the snow and laid down a single rose.
Thinking of what might have been, a pain only the bereaved knows.
Another tear falls in a garden of stone.
He could have been president, a ballplayer or won a Nobel prize.
But it'll never come to be, and we'll never look into his eyes.
They said it was routine, Don't worry, we do it every day.
But something went oh so wrong, now they don't know what to say.
Another tear falls in a garden of stone.
We watched the doctors and nurses, and they said that he was gone.
A life snuffed out too early, never to see the dawn.
Another tear falls in the garden of stone.
Another day passes and we're all alone.
The world gets older but he's still newborn.
Our beautiful son, our hearts are torn.
He'll never ride a two wheeler, Or take a bus to school.
All we have are our shattered dreams, we've lost our precious jewel.
Never play in little league never steal a first kiss,
We think of all those things he's going to miss.
Never go to college, never walk down the aisle,
Never know the joys of parenthood, we miss him all the while.
Another tear falls in the garden of stone.

Submitted by Mia Moran
in memory of her son, Jonathan

Were you watching over your baby sister Emma when she was born? Do you watch over your cousins Teddy and Lilly as they encounter each challenge ahead of them? Do you enjoy a beautiful Fall day such as this one like I do? I like to think so. I hope you do. I'm a right brained, logical, organized individual. I love when an equation has an answer and always struggles with tapping into my "creative" side. Then something so illogical happened....I lost my son. And nothing made sense. No one could tell me why this happened to a healthy, fit (well pretty fit) 30 year old woman with an -up to that point - uneventful pregnancy. No one could tell me why, with no risk factors, my placenta tore from the uterine wall. But they're the doctors....who I always trusted. Medicine had always seemed to make sense. There were symptoms, there-

were treatments. When suddenly there were no answers. What now? How can I accept this uncertainty? Things don't make sense anymore. Nothing has it's neat little place. Nothing fits. And then I'm supposed to grasp the concept of my little boy, my Charlie, -up in the sky somewhere, my angel in Heaven. Why can't my brain let me accept it fully like my heart wants it to? I literally feel a voice from somewhere inside of me telling my mind that it's okay. It's okay that it doesn't add up. Please, let it go. Let it go I say to all of my natural and logical tendencies. Please, let me be free of this pull from some place inside me that's holding me back. Of course he's in heaven. Where else would he be? And yes, he has to be somewhere. He is my son. He is somewhere. He is not alone. And someone is rocking him. I just wish it were me. When will I stop asking these questions and trying to understand what is not meant to be understood? When will I accept you as always with us. As our angel. I'm getting there. Not for my sake, to get me through the day. But for you. Because you deserve that. You are just an innocent little baby boy. And you deserve to see the sun, feel the cool breezes as the seasons change. You deserve to laugh with your sisters and watch them grow up. You deserve to feel the love all around you from your Mommy and Daddy who would give anything just to hold you again. You deserve to feel all of those things...even if it's from heaven.

-Submitted by Lindsay Perrin in memory of her son-

"Turn, Turn, Turn"

A musical selection sung by Martha Lang

MAYBE I'M LUCKY

Maybe I'm lucky after all. I wouldn't have said or thought this twenty or thirty years ago. I always wanted one child, that one little being to complete my home and heart. But, as life unraveled and time passed, that just wasn't meant to be. I am fortunate though to have the love and completeness of sharing a sense of family...with my nieces and nephews. It's fun getting caught up with their discovery of life, the drama of their lives and the joy that is truly complete in knowing them. Every day is a new experience through their eyes. But, as with all happiness, there is the reality of heartache and loss. That is where I'm thinking perhaps I'm lucky...never having been a parent, I was spared the sorrow of losing a child. I am grateful, in my own way, that I did not have to bear that sorrow. In January of 2004, our family experienced the loss of a stillborn child. As an aunt, I still feel the tremendous loss of not having my nephew with me, but I cannot imagine the heartache a parent feels, each and every one of you, each and every day, parents who truly are unfortunate enough to experience such loss. How sad..

Aunt Sandra.

Dear A.J.,

We sat around the dinner table tonight, just Daddy, Angelina and me. In the midst of family discussion and "How was your day", we asked Angelina, "Where is A.J.?" She pointed to the living room. Could it be, were you there? Do you ever leave? Is it true that the sudden sense of tranquility, in the brief moments of clarity I so often feel...is it truly you? I was driving home recently after a particularly exhausting day. I was all alone with my thoughts and all of a sudden,

Peace Comfort Love.

These beautiful feelings were so overwhelming I smiled from the inside. It was so undeniable; it was you my sweet baby boy. I looked up to the sky and saw a shooting star so close I swear I could have captured it in the palm of my hand. Thank you. I love you. I miss you. You will always be my first born. So this Christmas, we will hang your ornament on the tree. We will keep your garden lit all winter and smile as the snow seems to melt upon the white lights. We will make snow angels with your little sister. And I will pray that she will always point, just over her shoulder when asked, "Where is A.J.?"

All my love, Mama.

TO GORDON ON YOUR 5th BIRTHDAY

Written by Kristen Grein, for her son.

Twinkle twinkle little star
how I wonder what you are.

The brightest star could it be
you shining down at me?

Is that your face I see in the moon,
but the image fades way to soon.

When the darkness comes and there's no more light
is that your way of saying good night?

The rain drops that fall from the sky
are those the tear drops from your eye?

The breeze I sometimes feel on my skin
is that your presence that comes from within?

When the limbs on the trees start to sway
is that your spirit heading my way?

What about when the ocean turns still
are you showing me a piece of good will?

But then the tide changes and the ocean becomes rough



Dear John,

Another year has gone by and it seems like yesterday I was holding you and staring into your precious beautiful face. Wow! I can't imagine how tall you would be now! I know that on Sunday afternoons you are with your sister Sophia and brother Anthony, giving them support on the soccer field. I wonder if you would like to play soccer, or if you enjoyed another sport instead. Either way it would not matter to me, because as long as you enjoyed doing something, I would have supported you anyways. John, I think of you everyday and wish I could just see you again. I know that one day we will all be together one day as a family. We all love you with all our heart!

Love J.J.

Dear John,

I am grateful to have tonight just for you because there are many days in this month that are filled with so many Christmas celebrations for your siblings, that is so important for me to take this time to reflect on my precious son. Almost seven years have gone by and the pain is still deep which I know I will live with the rest of my life. You are my child and I am unable to hold and kiss you every day like my other children. There is not one day that goes by that I don't wonder what you would look like now, how your voice would sound, what your personality would be like all these little things that can so easily be taken for granted in our living children. My love grows for you each day and I know one day we will be all united together and I will no longer have this heartache. I am thankful to all of my family and friends, the ones who have truly "got it" and talk to me about John and understand the importance of this. They have been there for my tears, Prayer services in the bitter cold year after year, masses, annual walk and here tonight. Thank you for keeping John's memory alive.

Love Mom/Nadia.

A musical selection sung by Martha Lang

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Society says that I don't get to talk about my child.

Society says that I need to get over this.

Society says that we can just try again.

I don't want your society.

I will not stop talking about my child, because that talk is all I have.

I will not get over this, you can not make me forget about my child.

I will not pretend that another child will replace the child I have lost.

Together we can write a new social contract

Listen to me talk about my child, it is ok for you miss him too.

Now the months I carried you seems like no time at all.
It seems I only had you a moment before you heard God's call.

You were born with out a cry, without a single sound.

It seems I lost the treasure that I have only found.

I know that you're in heaven, and there for me you'll wait.

One sweet day, honey, I'll meet you at the gate.

Until that day comes we still are not apart,

because my little Dakota, you are always in my heart.

I'll Hold You in Heaven.

My arms are empty, but my heart is full.

It was hard to let you go, for you are such a precious jewel.

You my beautiful daughter left a hole that can't be filled.

At first I thought the pain alone would be enough to kill.

To most you are forgotten, they never say your name,

but the love I have for you always remains the same.

You are with me always, in my heart and mind.

Some people say you never lived, oh, but how they are wrong.

Though your death brought great pain,

your brief life brought us a beautiful song.

Your life had meaning and value and as great was the pain.

I would not have missed it, because having you was my greatest gain.

I loved you before you were born, and today I love you still.

And no matter how much time passes I know I always will.

You touched me in away that no one else could.

And no matter how short your life, your light shined bright and good.

The years since I've held you have now been almost seven.

But what has kept me going is I KNOW, I'll hold you again in Heaven.

submitted by Christine Boudreau
in memory of her daughter Dakota.

Dear Alexis Victoria,

You are such an important member of our family. We are so grateful for you being close to us at all times. We love to feel your strong, loving, comforting presence. You are our strength to help us through this world. You have changed our lives forever. You are now a Saint in heaven, which is what we all aspire to be. We love you Lexi Lex! This Christmas Day we will celebrate your Second Birthday but know that we celebrate you EVERY day. Looking forward to an eternity of your hugs and kisses.

Love, Mommy, Daddy, Joslyn, Connor, and your baby brother Evan xoxoxoxoxo

is that when you feel you've had enough?

Sometimes when the sky is so blue

is that my sadness that's come from losing you?

Every morning when I awake

I pray the lord why your soul did he take,

the only answer I know for sure

is that here on earth you are no more.

But that doesn't mean any less I care

for you are with me everywhere.

"All our Hopes and Dreams, now carried on Butterfly wings..."

"As a butterfly graces our lives with one moment's fragile beauty, so too has your baby's presence blessed you, and those that surround you with their short life, and unique spirit. May you find peace, and joy with each butterfly that passes, knowing that your baby lives on in the hearts of all they touched."

JUST THOSE FEW WEEKS

by Susan Erlin

Submitted by Michelle and Ken Kingdon for their Kingdon babies

For those few weeks I had you to myself

And that seems too short of time

To be changed so profoundly.

In those few weeks I came to know you

And to love you.

You came to trust me with your life.

Oh, what a life I had planned for you!

Just those few weeks

When I lost you, I lost a lifetime of hopes,

Plans, dreams and aspirations.

A slice of my future simply vanished overnight.

Just those few weeks

It wasn't enough time to convince others

How special and important you were.

How odd, a truly unique person has recently died.

And no one is mourning the passing.

Just a mere few weeks

And no "normal" person would cry all night

Over a tiny unfinished baby,

Or get depressed and withdraw day after endless day.

No one would, so why am I?

You were just those few weeks my little one-
You darted in and out of my life too quickly.
But it seems that's all the time you needed.
To make my life so much richer
And give me a glimpse of eternity.

I SAID A PRAYER FOR YOU TODAY

I said a prayer for you today, and I know God must have heard.
I felt the answer in my heart, although He spoke no word.
I didn't ask for wealth or fame...I knew you wouldn't mind.
I asked Him to send treasures of a far...more lasting kind.
I asked that He'd be near you, in all things great and small.
But it was for his loving care...I prayed for most of all.

I love and miss you sweet Angel baby AJ.
Gramme, XOXOXO

I love you Jeana & Anthony and hope that each year in passing,
your heart becomes lighter with the burden of grief,
and feel A.J. presence within your hearts everyday.

John Kevin, your love is still with us after 6 years.

Never fading always growing.

We think of you always, knowing you're smiling down on all of us.
All Our Love, Uncle George, Auntie Elaine, Chelsie and Madison.

Mary says:..."A mother never renounces her creature unless she is forced to. Whether her heart is asked to renounce her creature by her country or by the love of a spouse or even by God himself, she will resent and struggle against the separation. It is natural. A son grows in our womb and the tie that links him to us can never be completely broken. Even if the umbilical cord is cut, there is a nerve that always remains: it departs from the mother's heart and is grafted into the son's heart: it is a spiritual nerve, more lively and sensitive than a physical one. And a mother feels it stretching even to exceedingly severe pangs if the love of God or of a creature or the need of the country take her son away from her. And it breaks, tearing her heart, if death snatches her son from her."

Excerpt from "The Virgin Mary in The Writings of Maria Valtorta"

In honor of John Kevin Purfory

We love you always,

Aunt Marisa, Uncle Carmine, Michael and Christina.

that day. I still wonder how we were ever able to pick up the pieces and get to where we are today. The only answer is - You. You were there to make sure that we survived. You were there to guide us out of the darkness. Every time the sun hits my face, I remember standing in the hospital room looking out the window with you in my arms feeling the sun on my face. I thought it was the most perfect, beautiful and horrible moment all at the same time.

I recently heard a woman speak. She said that grief was a heart opener. It creates compassion and unites us all. It is evident by all of the friends at HOPE that we have met since we lost you. She said that we feel the loss. But that those on the other side don't, because they know we will be together again. I thought that what she said was so true. I think that knowing that we will be together again some day helps us go on. I know that you are around us and that helps. I know that your love is here and that you are never far from our family.

The brief period of time that you had with us opened our hearts. You have taught me perspective. I don't get frustrated in traffic or long lines at the grocery store. I held a still baby in my arms. Nothing could possibly be worse than that. You help me through the tough days. And you help on the happy days. You have taught me what is important. It is not material items. It is time. It is family. It is friends. It is love.

I will never stop wondering -Would you talk as much as Madisyn? Would you be like Mason? I am not sure that you would have been like either of them. I think your purpose was too large for you to fulfill on earth. I think that you had more of an impact during those few hours on that February morning in 2004, than you could have in a lifetime here. I will never stop missing you and wishing that you were here. I am grateful every day for all of the lessons that you have taught me. You have taught me patience, tolerance, love and forgiveness. I am a better person for having you in my life. There still is not a day that I do not miss you and think of you. I love you.

Love, Auntie Francine and Uncle Bill

2010

"Tears in Heaven"

A musical selection sung by Martha Lang

DAKOTA

It is two-thirty in the morning, but sleep is far from me.

You my little angel are in everything I see.

I think of you daily, you are in my every thought.

It seems we lost the battle that we so desperately fought.

Please extinguish all candles once the candle light ceremony is completed.

Thank you.

The light of a flame has always been symbolic to the human world. The eternal flame stands for the remembrance of those gone before; the light of a candle has come to represent rebirth and renewal. These two meanings are incorporated into the light of these candles as we remember our babies. Let the light signify the ever present love and memory of our babies that will always live on in our hearts. At the same time, let it symbolize life without our beloved babies as we strive to walk on with others.

WE REMEMBER THEM

At the rising of the sun and it's going down

We remember them

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter

We remember them

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring

We remember them

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer

We remember them

At the rustling of the leaves and the beauty of autumn

We remember them

At the beginning of the year and when it ends

We remember them

When we are weary and in need of strength

We remember them

When we are lost and sick at heart

We remember them

When we have joy we crave to share

We remember them

When we have decisions that are difficult to make

We remember them

When we have achievements that are based on theirs

We remember them

As long as we live

As we remember them

From the Gates of Prayer
Reformed Judaism Prayerbook



HUGS

There's something in a simple hug that always warms the heart;
It welcomes us back home and makes it easier to part.

A hug's a way to share the joy and sad times we go through,
or just a way for friends to say they like you 'cause you're you.

Hugs are meant for anyone for whom we really care,
from your grandma to your neighbor, or a cuddly teddy bear.

A hug is an amazing thing - It's just the perfect way
to show the love we're feeling but can't find the words to say.

It's funny how a little hug makes everyone feel good;

In every place and language, it's always understood.

And hugs don't need new equipment, special batteries or parts -
Just open your arms and open up your hearts.

To my brother, Mark

I love you.

Your sister, Karen

I hope this poem shows you how special hugs are to people.

I am only able to dream of hugging my brother.

"The Rose"

A musical selection sung by Martha Lang

"Hope" Is The Thing With Feathers

By Emily Dickinson

Submitted by Michelle and Ken Kingdon in memory of their Kingdon babies

"Hope" is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul

And sings the tune without words
And never stops at all

And sweetest in the Gale is heard
And sore must be the storm

That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm

I've heard it in the chilliest land

And on the strangest Sea

Yet, never, in Extremity

It asked a crumb of Me