

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

From Miracles to Memories...

The Caring Never Ends



We Remember

The HOPE Group
Annual Memorial Service

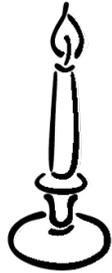
December 14, 2011

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.

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

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



“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

My dear nephew John,
As the years pass, I want you to know that you are not forgotten. I believe you know this as we commune daily through prayer you and I. As you are close by your Mom, Dad, JJ and now younger siblings, always helping them here and there through the struggles of life, I believe you stay near to me as well, alive in Spirit, watching your aunt and her family, working tirelessly, guiding us all to the light. Merry Christmas John. We love you, Aunt Marisa, Uncle Carmine, Michael and Christina.

IN BLACKWATER WOODS by Mary Oliver

in honor of our daughter Nina.

Look, the trees are turning their own bodies into pillars of light,
are giving off the rich fragrance of cinnamon and fulfillment,
the long tapers of cattails are bursting and floating away over
the blue shoulders of the ponds, and every pond,
no matter what its name is, is nameless now.

Every year everything I have ever learned in my lifetime leads back to this:
the fires and the black river of loss whose other side is salvation,
whose meaning none of us will ever know.

To live in this world you must be able to do three things:
to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones
knowing your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.

We love and miss you Nina. Andrea Meyer and Harlan Bosmajian.

IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES By Norma Marek

Submitted by J.P. and Jaime Riggio in memory of their son, Jamison.

If I knew it would be the last time that I’d see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly, and pray the Lord your soul to keep.
If I knew it would be the last time that I’d see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss, and call you back for just one more.
If I knew it would be the last time I’d hear your voice lifted up in praise,
I would tape each word and action, and play them back throughout my days
If I knew it would be the last time, I would spare an extra minute or two,
To stop and say “I love you,” instead of assuming you know I do.
So, just in case tomorrow never comes, and today is all I get,
I’d like to say how much I love you, and I hope we never will forget.
Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one tight.
So, if you’re waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes, you’ll surely regret the day
That you didn’t take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss,
And you were too busy to grant someone, what turned out to be their one last wish.
So hold your loved ones close today, and whisper in their ear,
That you love them very much, and you’ll always hold them dear.
Take time to say “I’m sorry,” “Please forgive me,” “thank you” or “it’s okay”.
And if tomorrow never comes, you’ll have no regrets about today.

TO LOVE, SHARE, GRIEVE

Submitted by Sarah & Mike Garagliano

in memory of their twins Luke Blais & Jack Michael

To love is to live
To share is to give

To grieve is to feel
To hope is to heal

To hurt is to cry
To fight is to try

To lose is to know
To find is to grow

THE LIFE OF A GRIEVING MOTHER, Author Unknown

Submitted by Donna McDonnell

in loving memory of her daughter, Julia Marie

*To those who look away when I grow teary-eyed in the baby department,
look a little deeper. Surely you have some compassion in your heart.*

*To those who change the subject when I speak my daughter, Julia's name,
change your way of thinking. It just might change your whole life.*

*To those who roll their eyes and say that we barely had her at all,
how could we miss her so much,
in our hearts we have seen her live a thousand times.*

We have seen her first steps, first day of school, her wedding, and her children.

We have had her forever in our minds.

To those who say we can have another, my husband Steve and I did.

I thank God for our son, Matthew everyday.

*But even if I have twenty more babies,
I will forever have one in the grave;
and that is one too many.*



*To those who say to get on with my life, I have.
It is a different life, the life of a grieving mother.
One with a tremendous amount to be thankful for,
but also one with a lot to mourn the loss of!*

Do not judge the bereaved mother. She comes in many forms.

She is breathing, but she is dying.

She may look young, but inside she has become ancient.

She smiles, but her heart sobs. She walks, she talks, she cooks, she cleans, she works.

She IS, but she IS NOT, all at once.

She is here, but part of her is elsewhere for eternity.

Do not dismiss us; we have shaped more than just the future generation.

We have released all the tiny angels who are watching over you.

Open your eyes to US, and you just might see THEM.

My beautiful Julia Marie, Happy 13th Birthday little girl!

I love you up to the moon and back! Love, Mommy

DEAR DAKOTA, Love Auntie Francine and Uncle Bill

You would have been eight soon. So much has changed. Yet so much is still the same. I have spent the years wondering what our lives would have been like if you were still here. I have wondered what you would have looked like and what your personality would be like. I have wondered, 'how tight would you have wrapped mommy and daddy around your beautiful little fingers'. How tight would you have wrapped the rest of us?

I know you would have been beautiful on the outside. But there is no deeper beauty than the beauty that someone has on the inside. I know how beautiful you are on the inside because I saw a glimpse of perfection and grace when I held you in my arms. I still remember that cold February morning as I held you in my arms. I remember standing in front of the hospital window as the sun was rising. It engulfed me as I stood there holding you. I remember how incredibly warm and comforting that it felt. I remember feeling bad that I was feeling such peace at such a sad time. I still believe the warmth and peace that I felt was your love. That moment in time is forever in my soul. That one moment with you will be with me for the rest of my life. I remember not wanting to walk away from the window, because once I did, I thought you would be gone forever..... I was wrong, you have never left us.

Your short time with us brought more to us, than some can bring to us in a lifetime. The lessons I have learned from you cannot be taught in books. You have shown me what is important. You have taught me how precious life is. You have softened me. You have taught me that the "What ifs" in life don't matter. They are only unanswered questions to uncertainty. You have taught me that what is important is the "what is". I have learned I cannot change the "What ifs". I have been learning to accept the "what is". It is more comforting to accept what I know for sure than to always question what I may never know.

For many years, I wondered what you would have been like? What would you have looked like? I have started to realize it doesn't matter. I would love you no matter what you looked like. I would love you no matter what your personality was like? I would love you no matter what your religious or political views were. None of that matters. What I know for sure, is that what matters is that brief period of time that you hugged my soul. I also know for sure that I will never let go.

"Turn, Turn, Turn"

A musical selection sung by Martha Lang

DAKOTA

Submitted by Christine Boudreau in memory of her daughter

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.

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 your 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.

I THOUGHT OF YOU, Author Unknown
Poem submitted by Julie Richardson
Mother of Chase David and Kenley Blake

I thought of you and closed my eyes, And prayed to God today.
I asked what makes a Mother, And I know I heard him say:
A mother has a baby, This we know is true.
But, God, can you be a mother, When your baby's not with you?
Yes, you can he replied, With confidence in his voice.
I give many women babies, When they leave is not their choice.
Some I send for a lifetime, And others for a day.
And some I send to feel your womb, But there's no need to stay.
I just don't understand this God, I want my baby here.
He took a breath and cleared his throat, And then I saw a tear.
I wish that I could show you, What your child is doing today,
If you could see your child smile, With other children who say:
We go to earth and learn our lessons,
Of love and life and fear. My mommy loved me oh so much,
I got to come straight here. I feel so lucky to have a mom,
Who had so much love for me. I learned my lessons very quickly,
My mommy set me free. I miss my mommy oh so much,
But I visit her each day. When she goes to sleep,
On her pillow's where I lay. I stroke her hair and kiss her cheek,
And whisper in her ear. "Mommy don't be sad today, I'm your baby and I'm here."
So you see my dear sweet one, Your children are Ok.
Your babies are here in My home, They'll be at heavens gate for you.
So now you see what makes a mother. It's the feeling in your heart.
It's the love you had so much of, Right from the very start.
Though some on earth may not realize you are a mother, until their time is done.
They'll be up here with Me one day, And you'll know that you're the best one!

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 to miss him too.

DEAR A.J.,

Submitted by Jeana Catarino in memory of her son, A.J.

Another Christmas is upon us, and boy do I miss you more than ever... It's Mommy's most favorite time of year; the crisp winter air is filled with magic! The buzz of the season, the jolly Christmas carols, the inherent smile in your soul and the time spent with beloved family and friends. I especially love watching the wonder of the season through your little sisters' eyes, it's truly enchanting and it's one of the most joyous gifts I've ever received. I see you in her eyes every day, and I want to thank you for that. You sent our family an early Christmas gift this year; it didn't go unnoticed, my love. You delivered your little brother, Angelo, safe and sound to Mommy's arms. He is so beautiful and perfect and he looks so much like you...you're both so handsome. You would have been such a great big brother. We "went to Santa's house" (as Angelina says) for a very special visit just a few weeks ago, and for the first time I thought about how much you would love that! It was so surreal, as if you were actually here. You were there, though, weren't you? Did you like Santa's house? We hung your stocking on the mantle this year, like we always do...the only thing missing is you. You are in line with Angelina and Angelo, and man, is it bittersweet. I long for the day your siblings ask about you so that I can tell them how amazing you are, and how much you've given to our family and to me. I love you. I miss you. I feel you every day. You are my shooting star, you are my ray of sunshine, you are the warm breeze that engulfs me, you are my lighthouse and my home, you're the melodious crashing of the waves at shore, you are the smile from a stranger and the angel atop our tree...you are the beginning and you are my Christmas. You fill my soul with love and life and the willingness and desire to go on to be my best until we meet again in heaven. Merry Christmas my angel baby, I miss you more today than I ever thought imaginable. All my love, Mama.

THESE SHOES

I wear a pair of shoes. They are ugly shoes, uncomfortable shoes. I hate my shoes. Each day I wear them and each day I wish I had another pair. Some days my shoes hurt so bad that I do not think I can take another step. Yet, I continue to wear them. I get funny looks wearing these shoes. They are looks of sympathy. I can tell in others eyes that they are glad they are my shoes and not theirs. They never talk about my shoes. To learn how awful my shoes are might make them uncomfortable. To truly understand these shoes you must walk in them. But, once you put them on, you can never take them off. I now realize I am not the only one who wears these shoes. There are many pairs in this world. Some women are like me and ache daily as they try and walk in them. Some have learned how to walk in them so they don't hurt quite as much. Some have worn the shoes so long that days will go by before they think about how much they hurt. No woman deserves to wear these shoes. They have made me who I am. I will forever walk in the shoes of a woman who has lost a child.

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?

I WILL BE THERE FOR YOU

Submitted by Christine Boudreau in memory of her daughter, Dakota.

When I have no one to turn to and I am feeling kind of low,

When there is no one to talk to and nowhere I want to go,

I search deep within myself. It is the love inside my heart

That lets me know my Angels are there even though we are miles apart.

A smile then appears upon my face and the sun begins to shine.

I hear a voice, so soft and sweet saying, "Everything will be just fine"

It may seem that I am alone but I am never by myself at all.

Whenever I need my Angels near all I have to do is call.

An Angel's love is always true on that you can depend.

They will always stand behind you and will always be your friend.

Through darkest hours and brightest days our Angels see us through

They smile when we are happy, and will cry when we are blue.

Thanks for being my Angel my friend

I will be there for you until the end.

My nephew...John Kevin. Rhymes so wonderfully with Heaven. I dream of Heaven as being this really cool and wonderful place. Full of fluffy clouds and pretty walkways and streams, and chirping birds. And all kinds of people, our family and friends milling about. I would much rather have you, John Kevin, sitting with us and playing with us in song and laughter. Do you see the pretty stars shining at night? I do. And I think of you, so far away. The darkness of the night always makes them shine so bright. Little pathways to Heaven. This makes it all real to me now, I can walk the path to you. But, a dream is all it is. The little hugs and kisses I long for will have to wait. But for now, when you want to reach us too, please shine your light to our awaiting hearts. So, I will know to cherish the leaf that falls and lingers, the "snow star" that warmly melts upon me, and, of course, the soft rain that nourishes but especially the one glittering star, its brilliance reminding me of you.

Your Auntie, with love.

Dear John, Soon it will be another Christmas with all your siblings full of excitement and we will do our tradition by purchasing a new ornament for the tree in memory of you. The kids continue to ask us so many questions about you, what did you look like? Did they meet you and why did he leave us?? I continually ask similar questions to myself of what you would look like today or how your personality would be. My heart still aches for you and I know this will never stop till we meet again. You are a part of us in all we do. We are so thankful to our Family and friends who keep your memory alive and support us. Tonight as we take this special time to reflect on your life we also remember your Uncle Christopher(Kevin's Brother) who recently passed away. We take comfort in knowing he is with you. We Love you!

Mom, Dad, JJ, Sophia, Anthony, Carissa, Gianna, and Nadia.

Dear John, Another year has gone by so fast. I cant believe that you would already be 7 years old. At this point you would be in the 2nd grade which was one of my favorites when I was in elementary school. Running around the school yard and learning basic reading and writing. Also at your age is when I first started sports such as karate, baseball and basketball. I wonder if you would be doing the same sports or something different. Either way, it would not matter to me what you chose to do as long as you were happy doing it. Time seems to go by so much faster as your siblings grow older. Between baby Nadia already communicating in her own way all the way to Sophia carrying full on conversations with people. I can only imagine what you would be doing at this point in life. I pray that you spread your wings in heaven and safeguard us from any dangers that may come our way. All of your brothers and sisters love you and so do mom and dad. Happy holidays.

Love JJ

TO OUR BELOVED CHILDREN
Alexandra Emily and William Thomas Crews
Submitted by Eric and Allyson Crews

We thought of you with love today, but that is nothing new,
We thought about you yesterday and days before that too.
We think of you in silence and sometimes speak your names,
All we have are memories, no pictures for our frames.
Your memory is our keepsake with which we'll never part,
God has you in His keeping, we have you in our hearts.

"Tears in Heaven"
A musical selection sung by Martha Lang

ANGEL'S KISS, Author Unknown
Submitted by Mia and Louie Moran in memory of their son, Jonathan.

We go through life so often not stopping to enjoy the day,
And we take each one for granted as we travel on our way.
We never stop to measure anything we just might miss,
But if the wind should blow by softly you'll feel an angel's kiss.
A kiss that is sent from Heaven a kiss from up above,
A kiss that is very special from someone that you love.
For in your pain and sorrow an angel's kiss will help you through,
This kiss is very private for it is meant for only you.
So when your hearts are heavy and filled with tears and pain,
And no one can console you remember once again.....
About the ones you grieve for because you sadly miss
And the gentle breeze you took for granted was just.....
"an angel's kiss."

COLIN, OUR LITTLE ANGEL
You are forever in our hearts.
Submitted by Kellie and Chris Jenke

"Sunny days seem to hurt the most. I wear the pain like a heavy coat.
The only thing that gives me hope,
Is I know I'll see you again some day."
Love, Mommy, Daddy, Wrigley and Lillie

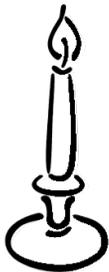
FOR GOOD

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.

HUGS

Submitted by Karen Huebner Calandrelli
in memory of her brother Mark Huebner

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

FOR OUR BELOVED SON, Jamison John Riggio

We miss you so much you Magnificent Angel. Your Sister stares into
Your pictures as to know that you will always be there to protect her
and watch over her. Thank you for always sending us the beautiful
signs of your presence. It was a permanent scar on our hearts when
you left us and we never miss a breath with out remembering your
wonderful memories we have from those five short weeks. We will
always speak of your smiles, giggles, cuddles, and those bright blue eyes
filled with infinite love. You are forever imprinted in our mind, body,
and spirit. We love you JJ.

Momma, Daddy, and Melody, Pork Chop too.

