



# Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

*Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss Support*

Volume 29, Issue 1

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## Recurrent Pregnancy Loss



We often talk in our M.E.N.D. support groups about losing our innocence of pregnancy after we lose a baby. Each subsequent pregnancy after loss holds some anxiety after having already experienced the worst possible outcome. While we wish families never experience loss again, it does sometimes occur. This magazine issue shares the stories of families who have experienced multiple losses and how they navigated and coped on this difficult road.

### In this issue...

#### How to Cope With Multiple Miscarriages

This article provides information and methods for coping with multiple losses.

*page 6*

#### Statistics

When we experience loss, we usually hear the statistics, which is never a comfort. Yet Sharayah was able to use those statistics to share a powerful message in her poem.

*page 11*

#### Holding On After Losses

After having two living children, Kristina found herself on a journey of recurrent loss, and shares her struggles and the hope she clung to in this article.

*page 12*

**March/April Topic**

*Representation of Loss:  
Making It Okay to Share  
Deadline: January 31, 2024*

**May/June Topic**

*Mother's Day/Father's Day  
Deadline: March 31, 2024*

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcome. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the magazine. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please send any submissions to our Magazine Editor, Jennifer Harrison, at [jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org). Any submission printed in our magazine will also be posted to our website indefinitely. Because our magazines are posted online, please understand your name will be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

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**Birthday Tributes:** M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding magazine. Tributes must be submitted via the online form at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org).

<u>Heavenly Birthday</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
January/February	November 30
March/April	January 31
May/June	March 31
July/August	May 31
September/October	July 31
November/December	September 30



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## Feature Article

*Feature from our M.E.N.D. President and Founder, Rebekah Mitchell, Mommy to Jonathan and Baby Mitchell*

# Recurrent Pregnancy Loss

My family has six kids, and I am one of the five girls. My twin and I are the caboose of the clan, with more than seven years' difference between us and the youngest of the older four. By the time Rachael and I started our families, our older siblings were pretty much finished growing theirs. None of them had experienced a loss, so miscarriage or stillbirth was nowhere on my family planning radar.

Byron's and my first son, Byron, Jr., who is now an adult, is our only living child. Our second son, Jonathan, was stillborn due to a cord accident. His death shook not only Byron and me to the core, but our families as well. This was the first pregnancy loss either of our families had ever experienced. We were all shocked, horrified, heartbroken, confused, sad, mad, and numerous other emotions I'm sure you have experienced as well.

Out of my need to connect with fellow grieving families, I started M.E.N.D. one year after Jonathan's death. Until then, I only knew one way for a baby to die - a cord accident like what happened to my baby. But our monthly support groups opened my eyes to not only the numerous ways a baby could die, but also how many women endure more than one loss! I could not imagine ever going through this type of grief more than once.

Immediately following Jonathan's stillbirth, I wanted to get pregnant again, but I was strongly cautioned against it by my doctors due to a kidney disease I had been diagnosed with a few years earlier. However, six years later, a subsequent pregnancy was back on the table because I had a kidney transplant. We conceived our third child and prayed like crazy we wouldn't suffer another loss. This little one was supposed to be our "happily ever after" - the end to our sad story and our new beginning. Well-meaning people said to me, "God won't let this happen

to you again." But I knew it could. Lots of women have multiple losses, and I was not loved or more blessed by the Lord than anyone else.

Sadly, the anxiety and fear of losing another baby became a reality when I went for my routine check-up at 10 weeks. Sweet little Baby Mitchell no longer had a beating heart. Once again, I saw my lifeless child on the sonogram screen. My thoughts immediately went to those who were so sure they could promise me it wouldn't happen again. I wanted to scream at them! I wanted to show them the image of my tiny dead baby. I hope they all learned from my second loss to never assure someone something they cannot personally make happen.

Baby Mitchell was Byron's and my last attempt to have another child. My doctors highly advised me to not put my newly transplanted kidney through an additional pregnancy, so we didn't. Even though that baby joined our Jonathan in heaven, and was not our happily ever after, I do not regret trying again. My broken heart was worth knowing that I at least tried. More than twenty years later, I can guarantee my sorrow would be much, much deeper if I were at this stage in my life regretting having not tried again. Although that little baby died, at least I know we did what we could to have another baby. I can cope with knowing that, rather than regretting not trying again and forever wondering "what if?"

I know it's hard to open your heart once more to a potential heartbreak, but I encourage you, if you're physically healthy enough to endure another pregnancy, to try again. One thing is for certain, if you don't try again, outside of adoption, you definitely won't bring a baby home to love and raise. It takes a lot of courage to become vulnerable again, but the risk may be well worth it. And even if you do sadly experience a subsequent loss, you can look back one day and like me say, "at least I tried."



### Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Baby Bowser!

Your 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday is coming up, my sweet love. Mommy thinks about you so much, and Daddy misses you very much as well. I'm so sorry I never got to hold you, but I know you're in a good place now, and I'm so thankful God sent us your little brother. We love you both so very much.

Love,  
Mommy



*Baby Bowser*

*Miscarried December 21, 2021*

*Parents: Keara Gann and Eddie Bowser*

*Little brother: Wilde*

### Happy 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Camden!

Eleven years! It's hard to believe we have lived this long without your earthly presence. My heart still breaks thinking about not getting the opportunity to do life with you.

I also have this deep gratitude for the perspective you have given me, and everything you have taught me through this grief journey.

We love you always and forever, our sweet boy. One year closer.

*Camden Patrick Majcher*

*February 1, 2013*

*Blood clotting disorder*

*Parents: MaryAnn and Patrick Majcher*

*Siblings: Julianna and Jace*



### Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Ashton!

Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> heavenly birthday to my sweet angel baby in heaven. We miss you and wonder who you'd be today and every day. I hope you're up there dancing in the sky with all the other sweet angel babies. I love you, sweetie. Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, Ashton Da'Mir.

*Ashton Da'Mir Brown*

*December 3-18, 2020*

*Neonatal NEC death*

*Parents: Megan Stuper and William Brown*

*Siblings: Candlelyn, Unity, Cordae, Calvin, Aryiah,*

*Aubree and DeKari*



### Happy 6<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Finley and Quinn!

Happy heavenly 6<sup>th</sup> birthday to the little girls who first made me a mommy. The happiness in my heart I felt with you both cannot be measured. I think of you every day and take comfort in knowing I will see you again someday. We love you so much and often share your story as we continue to lift others up who know this kind of grief. You're our sweet little blessings. We miss you dearly and wonder what life would be like if you were here on earth with us. Your brothers talk of you as well, which brings a bittersweet emotion but welcomed nonetheless as a reminder of the reality you were ours.

*Finley Dawn and Quinn Delane Horton*

*February 9, 2017*

*TTTS*

*Parents: Telina and Matt Horton*

*Siblings: Rogue and Ryker*



### Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Princess!

Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> heavenly birthday, Princess. Three years and yet it still feels like yesterday you were drooling on Mommy's chest minutes after you graced the world with your presence - a true gift! I prayed so hard for you! What I wouldn't give to be able to have you earth side, watching you grow into your own. No matter where life takes us, you will always be Mommy's and Daddy's greatest gift. We know you're looking down on us. We love you so much, Ava, but never too much! Keep flying high, my little butterfly!

*Ava Josephine Lacy*

*January 29 – February 5, 2021*

*Heart Failure due to*

*Several Congenital Heart Defects*

*Parents: Jennifer Malave and Willie Lacy IV*



### Happy 27<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Olivia!

Happy 27<sup>th</sup> birthday in heaven, sweet baby girl. You were our very first, but you did not stay long before God called you to be with Him in heaven. It was so long ago, but you will forever be our baby girl. We love you so much!

*Olivia Sophia Donnelly*  
Miscarried February 24, 1997



### Happy 26<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Jessie!

My eyes well up with the memories we had planned on making with you.

My mind goes to these places... of childhood milestones, and adult milestones too.

Twenty-six years is a long time... without you. Would you be a mama now, caring for your own children?

Although they never were, I ache to hold them in my arms.

Today I try to remember to breathe, and my nose stings as the tears well up in my eyes.

Tomorrow I will focus on where you are... in heaven with your Creator, the Author of love.

You know you are loved. That is what gives me enough peace to live on.

Happy birthday in the heavenly realms, where you live on, embraced in love.

*Jessie Marie Donnelly*  
Stillborn February 12, 1998

Also remembering  
*Levi Ernest Donnelly*  
Miscarried May 16, 2000

Parents: *Joe and Genevieve Donnelly*  
Siblings: *Moirah, Isaac, Aiden and Aunyah*



### The Garden in Winter

Author Unknown

Winter fades the garden now  
Where laughter used to flower.  
It makes us sad to linger here.  
The minutes seem like hours.

But though we only see the loss  
Of what we used to know,  
In time the warmth of memory  
Will make the garden grow.

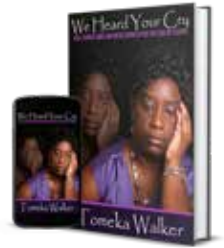
And shades of love we thought we'd lost  
Once again will show.  
Peeking through the snow.

irisremembers.com

### Book Review

"We Heard Your Cry"

Written by Tomeka Walker



**W**e Heard Your Cry is written from a mother's perspective following the loss of her son after delivering him at only 22 weeks. The writing style could be described as descriptive journaling. Through her own grieving, she has taken it upon herself to bring awareness to other loss moms. Walker's desire to guide loss families is apparent throughout the book. You can feel the connection she has to them as she shares the research and resources she has put together.

Personally, I felt this book's foundation was inspired by the loss of Tomeka's son, Kahairi. Tomeka begins with her personal journey and then shares brief stories of eight other women who lost their children at various stages (miscarriage, stillbirth, infant loss and even a child who was killed in a car accident). However, the message through the book puts an emphasis on bringing awareness to maternal health; including a resource list of Level 4 NICUs by state. This book details the importance of a support system after infant loss, an emergency course of action and even outlines a grief model. There is a bonus 30-day journal section at the end as well.

Although the book is only 116 pages, not including the bonus journal, there is a lot of information packed in those pages.

Reviewed by Kady Eastman,  
M.E.N.D.-MidMichigan Assistant Director

## Chicagoland

M.E.N.D. Christmas Tree  
Decorated by M.E.N.D. families and  
displayed in the Brookfield Zoo



# How to Cope With Multiple Miscarriages

Written by Alex Vance on November 28, 2022, on VeryWell Family.

The journey to pregnancy and parenthood is not always easy. Miscarriage, or the loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks gestation, is a common occurrence for those trying to conceive.

For some, repeated miscarriages—also known as recurrent pregnancy loss—can occur. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists defines this term as having two or more miscarriages. It is estimated that 1% of women experience repeated miscarriages.

Sheena Dohnal, a mother of one daughter in Norfolk, Virginia, has experienced multiple pregnancy losses, along with a roller coaster of emotions. "Having a total of six losses in less than three years left me with varying degrees of painful emotions," she says.

After each loss, her initial gut-wrenching pain and grief were followed by lingering questions. "Did I do something wrong?" she would ask. "Why is my body not capable of sustaining a pregnancy?"

## Causes of Multiple Miscarriages

The most common cause of miscarriage is a chromosomal abnormality or an issue with the genetics of the pregnancy, Dr. Levine notes. "Unfortunately, this is something that happens at the earliest stages of development but may not be recognized until quite far along in the pregnancy," he explains.

While most will go on to have healthy pregnancies after a miscarriage, there are factors that lead to multiple occurrences, he adds. "If there is tissue left inside [i.e., not completely expelled], or there is a cause of the genetic abnormality, the miscarriage can be a cause or a symptom of a bigger problem," Dr. Levine explains.

Structural disorders of the uterus, such as fibroids, polyps, septums, or scar tissue, can also play a role in recurrent miscarriages. Dr. Levine shares that there is ongoing research showing that treating patients for endometriosis can improve embryo implantation and lead to positive pregnancy outcomes.

"It's unclear how endometriosis could or does cause miscarriage, but it's definitely on my radar when a patient has a history of miscarriage," he says.

## Testing and Examination

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists states that in 50-75% of those experiencing repeated miscarriages, no specific cause can be found. While clues may be present, there is typically no sure answer.

That said, there are certain tests and exams that may be conducted to try and determine the root of the problem. This includes physical and pelvic exams, a review of your medical history, and blood tests to detect genetic causes or issues with your uterus or immune system. If a specific cause is determined, your healthcare

professional may be able to provide treatment to help prevent future miscarriages.

## The Emotional Impact of Multiple Miscarriages

As a perinatal, child, adolescent, and adult psychiatrist, Nicole Derish, MD, has spoken to a number of people experiencing multiple miscarriages.

"It's normal to experience a wide variety of emotions," she says. "Sadness, anger, and disbelief are common, but oftentimes patients also mention feeling numb, detached, or even relieved in some cases."

She explains that some feel very isolated after a loss, which can have a significant impact on personal relationships. They may not be sure how to share it with others, or feel that others may not be able to relate to their situation.

## Unnecessary Guilt

For Dohnal, each of her six miscarriages was followed by feelings of isolation, incompetency, and guilt. Ultimately, that guilt translated to a moment that would otherwise bring waves of excitement: telling her husband.

"[I felt] guilty even telling my husband I was pregnant again, not wanting to 'get his hopes up,'" she admits. "[I felt like] I was a burden to him or anyone I [told] early on that I was pregnant. Every positive test left me feeling more anxious instead of feeling joyful."

Even in the midst of so much pain, she and her husband remained hopeful that one day they would be given their chance. "Hope came from wanting to try again, knowing I tried everything I could, [and] so I wouldn't feel regretful later on in life."

She stresses the importance of reaching out to others, even when you don't think you should. "I felt bad for needing support when I did have a loss," she says. "[Thinking] I shouldn't have told anyone and should suffer in silence was damaging to my self-worth and left me feeling like I didn't deserve support."

## Finding Strength

Ashley Bowles, a mom of four children in Clarksville, Tennessee, was ultimately able to grow her family after an unspeakable tragedy: infant loss.

"I've had two miscarriages and an infant loss, so I am no stranger to pregnancy loss," she says. She explains that her firstborn died at 15 days old from being born prematurely, suffering from brain bleeds. She adds, "I give you that background because that unbearable loss helped me with the miscarriages that followed as we grew our family."

Following Bowles's tragic loss, she was able to give birth to twin boys. After, she experienced another miscarriage. She reveals that she initially felt shock and

# Dallas/Fort Worth Christmas Candlelight Ceremony



Our 27<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony was beautiful, as always. The music was heavenly, with M.E.N.D. dad Jonathan Nymeyer opening on the violin, then M.E.N.D. Advisory Board member, Paula Schear, followed with a wonderful Christmas

medley on the piano. M.E.N.D. Vice-president, DaLana Barsanti sang, as did the big sister of a M.E.N.D. baby, Leah Bateman. Rebekah Mitchell delivered the inspirational message, encouraging everyone to turn their sorrow into something sacred, even if for just a day. We hope you'll plan to join us next year on December 5, 2024.

Thank you to our sponsors!

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## Recurrent Loss

*Written By Elizabeth Aroh*

*Mommy to Lemuel, David Ephraim, Violet, Evie and August*

M.E.N.D. — *Nationwide Online Support Group*

Staring at the screen alone in my own universe, I knew something was terribly wrong. It was almost unimaginable. I had been through enough ultrasounds to know that the silence and stillness meant that once again, my joy over my positive pregnancy tests had been, not the first step to meeting our new baby, but the first stage in a yearly cycle of grief. I numbly sat in the car after the scan, phone in my hand, not having the heart to dial. My husband and I had planned to meet at the park afterward on his lunch break.

We hadn't planned for bad news again - this baby had made it further than any of my other miscarried babies. I had all the right signs - a strong, early positive test, unmistakable pregnancy symptoms, zero signs of a threatened miscarriage. Our reproductive endocrinologist had looked us in the eyes and assured us there was no reason we should have another loss. There was no way I would have tried again without that. I had known my heart couldn't handle another miscarriage. The debilitating, draining pain for weeks. The grief insomnia. The isolation. Bearing the magnitude of the loss of a child alone, as only my world stopped. And yet here I was, preparing to bury my dreams of a baby a fifth time. We would later learn that he had a chromosomal abnormality incompatible with life, an accident of biology that could happen to anyone.

I couldn't even pray. I was stunned. For two weeks I was in limbo while the baby's gestational sac continued to grow, and my body desperately tried to hang on to the pregnancy despite the fact the baby was gone. I finally had to use abortion pills to miscarry, since the larger the sac and placenta grew, the more I risked severe hemorrhaging, and I was already anemic. It was heartbreaking to choose. I came to a baby boutique, filled with onesies and heartbeat bears for a final elective ultrasound confirmation before taking the pills. Just in case. Holding on to hope against hope. I don't know why I always still hope, every time, that somehow this one will make it. But the baby was clearly gone.

I knew physically what to do now, after four previous losses, but somehow I was still as completely blindsided emotionally as I was the first time. In a fog, I made my preparations to give birth to death. I bought my postpartum supplies to contain the bleeding, and wrote my painkiller schedule to take them proactively during the labor pains I knew I'd experience. Heating pad, Epsom salts, miscarriage tea. Stocked up on

water by my bedside. Cleaned my bathroom. Got soup. Bought a colander for the worst purpose. Arranged childcare for my living two children. While I was going through all the motions of daily life, my womb was a tomb again, my soul daily brushed up against the sacred separating act of dying, and I was going through the most incongruous feelings of whole-heartedly treasuring this little lost soul that was about to bring me so much pain.

Those first few weeks, you just have to survive, just have to make it through the physical side of the miscarriage. And sometimes you think you're doing better than you are just because you're still in shock and can't afford to let go enough to feel the loss. I knew that. I knew everything. But it was still just as hard to walk through again.

With my first two losses, I had held on to the hope that I could have another baby, that it was just a fluke. And I did get pregnant within a few months, and despite being breathlessly terrified for months that something would happen, we did have a beautiful healthy live baby. And then another living baby, 17 months later. I didn't realize then that I hadn't properly grieved the first two losses - I had shoved that grief under the rug and tried to pretend everything was fine... when it wasn't. When I had a third and fourth loss after my two living children, and didn't get pregnant with a living baby afterward, I realized just how deep my grief was, over ALL of my lost babies. I hadn't ever "replaced" my miscarriages with my living children. I had deferred my grief. My grief insomnia at that point was so intense I knew I needed help in order to function as a normal person again and in order to be present for my family. M.E.N.D. helped me to heal. Months later, I finally felt I was in a positive place: thankful for these little lives, for the depth and empathy they had brought me. For the precious gift they had been. I was sleeping again. I felt like I had learned the lesson God had given me. And I didn't see a need to go through it again.

But this time, the fifth time, something beautiful happened, and it didn't happen through me.

Previously, I had kept a baby book where I wrote to my lost babies. But with each loss it took me longer and longer to pick up the pen. Weeks, then months. After my fifth loss, I kept opening the book, rereading my letters and poems to my previous babies, looking at their ultrasounds, the tiny baby shoes I had bought, the pregnancy tests I had kept, staring at the blank page that said "fantastic five," meant to record a babies' fifth birthday, where I intended to memorialize my beloved fifth loss. And I just had no words. The loss was so profound. I didn't have the strength anymore to memorialize this baby myself.

At the same time, I realized that I needed to heal,



that I needed to find out how to be okay, regardless of whether I ever had another baby. I needed to take steps towards choosing joy and choosing life in the face of unthinkable disappointment. I auditioned for a musical, surprisingly got a small role, and performed in the Sound of Music around the time of my baby's due date. It was incredibly special and gave me a good, bright thing to look forward to week after week.

What really healed my heart after this miscarriage was a gift sent to me by my younger sister on the baby's due date. She sent me a "grandma quilt" - sewn in the style that our beloved grandmother, who passed away nine years ago, would make for us frequently when we were growing up. My sister embroidered all five of my babies names in the corner. Lemuel, David Ephraim, Violet, Evie and August. In that act, my babies were incorporated into a family tradition of love, joy and comfort that Grandma's quilts had always signified. They were remembered. Several family members reached out with flowers, cards, or mementos that showed me I wasn't alone, that I didn't need to bear the grief alone this time, that I didn't need to bear the brunt of memorializing my lost babies by myself.

Making new memories can be hard after loss. The next couple of trips we took, I brought the quilt along, and it warmed my heart to see my son sleeping under it in his carseat. For the first time I had a positive way

of including the babies while making new memories as a family. After an unexpected pregnancy announcement stirred up that bittersweet milieu of grief and joy familiar only to loss parents, I brought my quilt into our hotel to cuddle with and cry. Wrapped up in its warmth, I was comforted and fortified to lay aside my feelings and be happy for the expecting couple the next day.

When the weather turned cold this month, my body remembered before my mind did, that this time last year I was newly pregnant. It was hard to sleep again. I know now when these things happen, I need to sit with my grief. Remember my lost little loves fondly. Spend time to honor their memory. But now I can do that wrapped in the love and support of my family, who remembers them with me.



## Greater Houston Area Christmas Candlelight Ceremony



### I Still Burn Bright Author Unknown

Light a candle, see it glow,  
Watch it dance when you feel low,  
Think of me, think of light,  
I'll always be here, day or night.  
A candle flickers out of sight  
But in your heart I still burn bright.



# Multiple Losses

*Written by Genevieve Donnelly,  
Mommy to Olivia Sophia, Jessie Marie and Levi Ernest  
M.E.N.D. — MW Washington Assistant Director*

By the time I was 21, my husband and I had experienced the loss of three babies. As I help direct our monthly M.E.N.D. support group, I have gained a keen understanding of the guideline to not compare one person's grief with another. It is human nature to compare in an attempt to make sense of things, especially when it makes no sense that our baby died, but there is no measurement scale that proves the death of my baby was more grief-worthy than the death of your baby.

I do not compare another's baby loss grief with my own, but I do find myself comparing the depths and differences between my own three baby loss experiences because each one grew within me. Each one gave me a sense of joy and hope, and fear. Each one of my first three pregnancies ended in death and grief. During our first loss, I was 12 weeks along in my pregnancy. I was just 19, and was to be married in less than one month. I had a D&C. I was in great physical pain, so emotionally shattered, and so confused, and asked my now husband, "Do you still want to marry me?" He wanted me, not just because I had been pregnant with his child.

Almost one year later, at age 20, we lost our second baby. I was 24 weeks along with her. Labor was induced, and I delivered her still body. With this loss came so many decisions I didn't have to make with my first loss. We were asked if we wanted to hold her, bathe her, baptize her, clothe her, etc. I was in such shock. My body thought I had a living baby to nurse, and began producing milk for her. The grief of the second loss overlapped the first. It complicated things in my mind. It brought more confusion, but something about the second loss felt like a gift. Because my family and close friends had seen my growing belly,

our Jessie Marie had been recognized as a child within me, and therefore I did not feel so alone while grieving this time. A deep depression encompassed me for two years. I did not allow myself joy. I did not listen to music. I self-loathed.

The third loss, I have almost no recollection of. I chose not to be there mentally to experience it. I was 6 weeks along, and just one week shy of my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. The grief of my third loss overlapped the second. They compounded onto one another making it more difficult to cope. I could not understand why God would give me these babies that I deeply desired, and then take them back. I just wanted to be their mama. My innocence was lost. All three losses were connected now. During my second pregnancy, I thought, "Okay, I just need to get past 12 weeks." During the third, I said, "Now I need to get past six months!" During the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh, I had to think only of a happy outcome, but I was no longer innocent. I knew all too well what could happen because it had happened to me... and after the six-month mark, I could feel a measure of relief throughout my body.

After having more than two decades to process the darkest depths of my grief, I can see it from an aerial perspective, and have come to a place where I have chosen to continue to live this life. I am proud of myself for enduring emotionally, mentally, spiritually and physically... and for pushing forward. God gave us three that He took back, but He also gave us four more we get to raise; Moirah, Isaac, Aiden and Aunyah. My pregnancies with them were not ideal. After being diagnosed with Cervical Incompetency, I was on bed rest with each one. They are not perfect. Life is not perfect, but I have allowed Joy back in, over time, and I choose life, with all God has to give.



Joe and Genevieve after delivering their daughter Jessie Marie Donnelly

"How to Cope..." continued from page 6.

disbelief that her body was "giving up" on the ability to carry a child again.

Then the rush of emptiness from her infant loss set in. She describes it as a feeling of void: "Something was missing, and I am certain that is why we wanted to try again."

Her advice to others experiencing multiple miscarriages is simple but profound: it's not your fault. "Having a miscarriage does not mean that you did anything wrong," she says.

Dr. Derish offers her professional tips: "For those dealing with multiple miscarriages, my advice is to be kind and patient with yourself. Take time to heal, whatever that may look like for you. That might mean taking some time off work or bringing in extra help at home. There are times to give and times to receive, and this is a time to receive."

To read this article in its entirety, please visit <https://www.verywellfamily.com/coping-with-multiple-miscarriages-6746579com/holiday-grief-support/>.

# Statistics

*Written by Sharayah Pranger  
Mommy to Shiloh and Birdie*

If I had a choice  
(I wasn't given a choice)  
I would not have picked this.

I read up on the stats.  
Just enough to get my heart pounding  
Two percent will have  
Two losses in a row

That would be so reassuring  
(Surely I'm among the ninety eight)  
I was,  
until I wasn't.

Two percent.  
So few.  
So many.  
We talk to each other, you know.  
It's a club.  
Joined against our will and we hate it,  
And there aren't any snacks.

I thought I might get stuck on those stats.  
So easy to find your identity  
in a number  
what happened to you  
how much it hurts  
this must be who I am now.

But  
I was already somebody.  
And Somebody  
in a club so much  
smaller than mine

1 in 117 billion

Told me I'm already His,  
and nobody else can  
have me.

So let's write some new stats

One hundred percent  
of women whose babies  
Died  
are dearly loved by Christ

One hundred percent  
of women who have trusted  
in Christ  
will see their babies again  
and hold them  
like they were supposed to.

One hundred percent of us  
have fallen short

One hundred percent  
need something we don't have

And 1 in 117 billion  
has it held out  
in hands with holes

Numbers don't matter so much  
when you're loved by One  
who matters so much.

## East Valley Arizona Christmas Candlelight Ceremony



# Holding On After Losses

*Written by Kristina Witt*

*Mommy to Josiah, Bennett, Aubrianna and Hope*

Our journey with pregnancy loss began with the loss of our third son, Josiah, on November 21, 2019, at 13 weeks. I went for a normal check-up, and, after a few ultrasounds confirming he passed away, I was sent to Labor and Delivery to be induced to deliver our baby boy. I had two healthy pregnancies prior to losing Josiah, so we all believed it was just a "fluke," and I'd have a healthy pregnancy next time.

I went into our next pregnancy with so much hope that this baby would make it into our arms safe and sound. When we passed the 13-week mark and everything was looking great, I started to let myself become more excited for this boy, our fourth son, Bennett. Despite passing the timeframe of our first loss, I continued to listen for his heartbeat each night. For some people that causes more anxiety, but for me, it was exactly what I needed to calm the anxiety and fear. On September 27, 2020, I had an uneasy feeling that something was not right. I hadn't felt him move as much, and I couldn't find his heartbeat. My husband and I agreed I needed to get checked immediately. I went to the hospital only to learn our worst fear was happening again. Our son had passed away and was going to be stillborn. The second time we've had to go to Labor and Delivery to deliver a baby who had already passed away. Our precious Bennett joined us on September 28, 2020, and our world shattered once again.

After Bennett passed away, I was officially labeled with "recurrent pregnancy loss." I underwent so much in-depth testing. I prayed so hard for answers, and, at the time, I believed I had gotten the answers we needed. I was diagnosed with MTHFR and Factor V Leiden, both issues that affect blood clotting and could cause me to have blood clots blocking nutrients to the baby. I struggled with so many mixed emotions. Guilt because it made me feel like my body caused our babies to die, but also hope because we had a plan of action for our next pregnancy.

On March 25, 2021, we discovered we were expecting again. I immediately started baby aspirin and lovenox injections daily and began frequent monitoring by my OB. Our doctor was so gracious knowing our history that he always checked the babies heartbeat immediately at the appointments before we did anything else and made sure we had more frequent monitoring. It helped so much with the constant fear of loss. I also began to listen to her heartbeat like I did with Bennett to calm my anxiety at home. Yet on June 13, 2021, I began to have the same

uneasy feeling I did with Bennett the day we lost him. Although she was only 15 weeks, I felt her moving for a few weeks regularly and hadn't felt her that day. I hoped it was just her position, but when I pulled out the Doppler, I couldn't find her heartbeat. I was always able to find her immediately. So after about five minutes, we decided I should go to L&D to get checked.

At first, we had a nurse who tried to convince me she found our daughter's heartbeat. I knew, though, that it was my heartbeat (my heart was racing) because I knew what hers sounded like. They then did two ultrasounds that confirmed our biggest fear. Our daughter had passed away. On June 14, 2021, our daughter, Aubrianna, entered the world sleeping like her two brothers.

I had never felt as defeated as I did that day. We thought we had answers, yet our baby still died. I remember countless nights crying out to God, asking why. I was completely hopeless, and I had nothing left in me. I desired to have a third living child so deeply, and I just couldn't understand why I kept losing my babies in the second trimester after having two pregnancies with no issues.

After Aubrianna passed away, I sought additional doctors for help. I had all of my placenta slides from the hospital sent to Yale University to be studied. I was willing to do anything and everything. The doctor at Yale said all three babies had the same issue with their placentas that represented a genetic abnormality that cannot be tested for yet, which explains why nothing had shown up on any previous testing. Although this meant we couldn't do anything to prevent a loss, it also took some guilt away because it meant there was nothing I could or couldn't do to prevent it. We still had a 50% chance at another successful pregnancy. I clung on to that 50% chance.

We found out we were expecting again in December 2021. I prayed so hard for this baby, just like I had all of them.

However, this baby we lost earlier than the other three. This baby we named Baby Hope, even though we didn't know the gender. God spoke to me so clearly to not lose hope through this loss and to not give up.

We pushed through, and we tried what we said would be our absolute last try. After four straight losses, our hearts could not take anymore loss. The day



after Mother's Day, May 9, 2022, I opened up the verse of the day and read Isaiah 41:10 "Do not fear for the Lord your God is with you..." A few hours later, I found out I was expecting again. I fell to floor crying because I was so scared. When I walked out of my room a song was playing in my sons' room that said "I don't have to be afraid." In that moment, I knew that verse and that song were God speaking to my heart. Recurrent pregnancy loss stole so much joy from me and my family. I could no longer have naive pregnancies. God already knew that and from the very beginning made sure I knew He was there. I still listened for her heartbeat every day and had extra monitoring along with taking baby aspirin and lovenox injections, but this time I repeated those words from God every single day. Every day for 37 weeks, I repeated those words to myself until our daughter, Ruth, was placed safely into my arms.

I am so blessed to have a miracle baby after four losses in a row, but it's not lost on me that some women suffer from recurrent pregnancy loss and never get a "rainbow" baby. I wanted to share

this ending because when I was in the depths of recurrent pregnancy loss, I spent many days looking for someone who eventually had a living child after multiple losses in a row. I needed to see it was possible.

In memory of our babies in heaven, my husband and I were accepted into a study at Yale that is studying in-depth recurrent pregnancy loss. Although we are done having babies, our prayer is that this study will help other families enduring this painful continuous loss and help find more concrete answers. If you are in the depths of recurrent pregnancy loss, please know you are not alone. God sees you struggling, and He is there by your side. He never left me through each loss, and He will never leave you either.



## NW Washington Christmas Candlelight Ceremony



## Tulsa Christmas Candlelight Ceremony



# In Loving Memory

## **Addilynn Grace Barnes**

May 1, 2021

Given by parents Nakia and Thomas Barnesi

## **Colton Hunter Birch**

October 8, 2022

Parents: DeAnn and Hunter Birch

Gifts given by

Donna Bickerstaff

Judy Lee

Lisa Kern

Edith Hagan

Jane Wood

Charla Birch

## **Jackson David Crowe**

August 22 – September 9, 1998

Congenital heart defect

Given by parents Marie and David Crowe

## **Abigail Grace Crump**

July 1, 2003

Trisomy 18

Given by parents Gerald and Jaimie Crump

and little sisters Cami and Karli

## **Riley and Parker Davis**

November 14, 2006

Premature birth

Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis

and siblings Annalise and Owen

## **Logan Wayne Fish**

September 17, 2002

Skeletal Dysplasia

Given by parents Brittany and David Fish

## **Paislee Ann Frette**

April 4-5, 2012

Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome

Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette

Little sister: Colbie

Given by

Grandparents James and LuAnn Junkin

## **Lauren Paige Grimes**

March 6, 1999

Unknown cause

## **Baby Angel Grimes**

Miscarried January 25, 2001

Given by parents Paula and John Grimes

## **Lily Hadden**

August 20, 2005

## **Landon Hadden**

July 1, 2006

Parents: Amy and Andrew Hadden

Given by HaddenHailers Custom Game Calls LLC

## **Serenity Harrison**

Miscarried December 3, 2009

Given by parents Curt and Jennifer Harrison  
and siblings Levi, Ziva, Evie and Baby Harrison

## **Taylor Faith Heil Knight**

Given by mommy Jamie Knight

## **Kavya Marie Kurishungal**

December 17-31, 2009

Complications from omphalocele

Given by parents Tina and Pravin Kurishungal

and twin siblings Jacob and Kyra

## **Rocky Theodore Mackinson**

Miscarried December 6, 2019

Maternal infection

Given by parents Katie and Scott Mackinson

## **Sophia Rose McGhee**

Stillborn March 29, 2010, at 33 weeks

Unknown cause

## **Baby McGhee #1**

Miscarried July 2002

## **Baby McGhee #3**

Miscarried January 2009

## **Baby McGhee #4**

Miscarried April 2009

Given by parents Matt and Stacy McGhee

## **Liam Mendoza**

July 28, 2023, at 18 weeks

Fibroids

Given by mommy Melissa Chavez

## **Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord accident

## **Baby Mitchell**

Miscarried December 2001

Given by parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

## **Rebekah Tikvah Nymeyer**

July 16, 2015

## **Amasiah Nymeyer**

October 2010

## **Jonah Nymeyer**

June 2012

Given by parents Terri and Jonathan Nymeyer

and siblings Isaac, Abigail, Esther and Tirzah

## **Shiloh Pakunpanya**

Given by anonymous

## **Margo Lily Perry**

Stillborn June 10, 2013

Cord accident

Parents Marisa and Brandon Perry

Siblings Adeline, Bennett, and Noelle

Given by grandmother Mary Lorentz

## **Baby Seven Rinaldi**

Miscarried July 4, 2014

## **Madison James Rinaldi**

Stillborn April 13, 2006

Given by parents Corley and Matt Rinaldi

and little brother Rush

## **Brayden Ryan Sade**

Born sleeping December 28, 2012

Given by parents Steven Sade

and Heather Stockford-Sade

## **Morgan Shear**

Miscarried March 28, 2006

Given by parents Paula and Nobel Shear

and big brother Issac

## **Carson Mitchell Shaw**

Stillborn April 1, 1999

Unknown cause

Given by parents Aimee and Randy Shaw

## **Everett Michael Venegas**

December 4, 2022

Limb-body wall complex

Given by parents Elna and Justin Venegas

and big brother Josiah

## **Micah Wagner**

Miscarried February 2000

## **MinaBelle Wagner**

Miscarried April 2022

Given by parents Tim and Christal Wagner

and siblings Titus and Lincoln

## **Gifts of Support:**

Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO

William Turner

The PepsiCo Foundation

Edison International

OneHope, Santa Anna, CA

Jennifer and Kyle Yates

Menchie's Windsong Ranch

M.E.N.D. gratefully acknowledges these gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend or given by someone just wanting to help. These donations help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s mission by providing this magazine and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. For more information on how you can support M.E.N.D., please see the "About M.E.N.D." section in the back of this magazine.



## Pérdidas Del Embarazo Recurrentes

Artículo de Presidente y Fundadora, Rebekah Mitchell, Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y bebé Mitchell

Mi familia tiene seis hijos y yo soy una de las cinco niñas. Mi gemela y yo somos el furgón de cola del clan, con más de siete años de diferencia entre nosotros y el menor de los cuatro mayores. Cuando Rachael y yo formamos nuestras familias, nuestros hermanos mayores prácticamente habían terminado de hacer crecer las suyas. Ninguno de ellos había experimentado una pérdida, por lo que el aborto espontáneo o la muerte fetal no estaban en mi radar de planificación familiar.

El primer hijo de Byron y mío, Byron Jr., que ahora es adulto, es nuestro único hijo vivo. Nuestro segundo hijo, Jonathan, nació sin vida debido a un accidente del cordón umbilical. Su muerte nos conmovió no sólo a Byron y a mí hasta lo más profundo, sino también a nuestras familias. Esta fue la primera pérdida de embarazo que alguna de nuestras familias había experimentado. Todos estábamos conmocionados, horrorizados, desconsolados, confundidos, tristes, enojados y muchas otras emociones que estoy segura que ustedes también han experimentado.

Debido a mi necesidad de conectarme con otras familias lamentando, comencé M.E.N.D. un año después de la muerte de Jonathan. Hasta entonces, sólo conocía una manera de que un bebé muriera: un accidente del cordón umbilical como le pasó a mi bebé. Pero nuestros grupos de apoyo mensuales me abrieron los ojos no sólo a las numerosas formas en que un bebé puede morir, sino también a cuántas mujeres soportan más de una pérdida. No me imagino pasando por este tipo de dolor más de una vez.

Inmediatamente después de la muerte fetal de Jonathan, quise quedar embarazada nuevamente, pero mis médicos me advirtieron enfáticamente que no lo hiciera debido a una enfermedad renal que me habían diagnosticado unos años antes. Sin embargo, seis años después, un nuevo embarazo volvió a estar sobre la mesa porque me hicieron un trasplante de riñón. Concebimos a nuestro tercer hijo y rezamos como locos para no sufrir otra pérdida. Se suponía que este pequeño sería nuestro "felices para siempre": el final de nuestra triste historia y nuestro nuevo comienzo. Personas bien intencionadas me decían: "Dios no permitirá

que esto te vuelva a pasar". Pero sabía que podía hacerlo. Muchas mujeres tienen múltiples pérdidas y yo no fui amada ni más bendecida por el Señor que nadie.

Lamentablemente, la ansiedad y el miedo de perder otro bebé se hicieron realidad cuando fui a mi chequeo de rutina a las 10 semanas. El pequeño y dulce bebé Mitchell ya no tenía el corazón palpitante. Una vez más vi a mi hijo sin vida en la pantalla del sonograma. Mis pensamientos inmediatamente se dirigieron a aquellos que estaban tan seguros de que podían prometerme que no volvería a suceder. ¡Quería gritarles! Quería mostrarles la imagen de mi pequeño bebé muerto. Espero que todos hayan aprendido de mi segunda pérdida a nunca asegurarle a alguien algo que no puedan hacer realidad personalmente.

Baby Mitchell fue el último intento de Byron y mío de tener otro hijo. Mis médicos me recomendaron encarecidamente que no puciera a mi riñón recién trasplantado por otro embarazo, así que no lo hicimos. Aunque ese bebé se unió con nuestro Jonathan en el cielo y no fue nuestro 'felice para siempre', no me arrepiento de intentarlo de nuevo. Mi corazón roto valía la pena saber que al menos lo intenté. Más de veinte años después, puedo garantizar que mi dolor sería mucho, mucho más profundo si estuviera en esta etapa de mi vida arrepintiéndome de no haberlo intentado nuevamente. Aunque ese pequeño bebé murió, al menos sé que hicimos lo que pudimos para tener otro bebé. Puedo afrontar el hecho de saber eso, en lugar de arrepentirme de no volver a intentarlo y preguntarme siempre "¿y que si?".

Sé que es difícil abrir tu corazón una vez más a una posible angustia, pero te animo, si estás lo suficientemente sana físicamente como para soportar otro embarazo, a que lo intentes de nuevo. Una cosa es segura: si no lo intentas de nuevo, fuera de la adopción, definitivamente no traerás un bebé a casa para amarlo y criarlo. Se necesita mucho valor para volver a ser vulnerable, pero el riesgo puede valer la pena. E incluso si tristemente experimentas una pérdida posterior, un día puedes mirar hacia atrás y decir, como yo, "al menos lo intenté".

# M.E.N.D. CHAPTER UPDATES

## NW Washington

Thank you to all the families who attended our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony on December 1. It was a beautiful night of remembrance for our babies. As we enter 2024, we will continue to love, comfort and support these families as well as the new families who will join us this year.



*Katherine*

## Greater Houston Area

Thank you to the families that attended our Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony and to the families who also donated to our events and to the Teddy Bear fundraiser. Your support makes it possible to continue to host events and bring support to the Houston area.



*Nikisha*

## National Online Support

Losing a child is gaining a hole you'll never fill in your lifetime. We will meet our babies in heaven. As I remember my daughter, I find comfort in this verse:

"I will never forget this awful time, as I grieve over my loss. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning." Lamentations 3:20-23 NLT



*Mallory*

## Columbus, Ohio

"But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings as like eagles." Isaiah 40:31 NLT

As we enter a new year, let us all be reminded of the newness of life and the strength that was needed to make it to this point. Sometimes starting something new can be scary, or even overwhelming. But the LORD will strengthen you and M.E.N.D. will support you on your journey. We are available to encourage you and be the community you need to grow...and soar. Your presence at our support groups and private Facebook group can bless others. Let's start the new year helping each other...You're NOT alone!



If you need M.E.N.D.–Columbus services or desire to serve, contact me at [latrina@mend.org](mailto:latrina@mend.org).

*LaTrina*

## Southwest Missouri

M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri had a beautiful evening at our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony. While we felt broken, we are Broken Together, as our theme focused. Brianne Mansfield blessed us by reading a poem she wrote that went along with the beautiful stained glass ornaments created by her for each family. We heard the heartbreaking story from Amber Ennis of infertility, losses, and even a child born with multiple issues, yet still trusting God to see her family through it all, and Robin Rees blessed our hearts with the song and reminder to "Take It To Jesus."



I am beyond grateful for the help of my assistant, Stacy Lynn, for all her graphic design work and assistance in coordinating this event, and for the work of Stacy, Brianne, Stacey Parris, my husband, Curt, and the staff at Second Baptist in helping set up, and the volunteers from Second Baptist who assisted us during the event. We are also grateful for our sponsors, Mercy, Jonathan and Heather Fann, and Christal Wagner, and for Maksym Sydko for providing the beautiful photographs of the event.

*Jennifer*

## Tulsa, Oklahoma

M.E.N.D.–Tulsa held their 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Candlelight Ceremony. It is always a beautiful time to remember our babies together during such a busy and emotional time of year.

As I reflect on 2023, I am grateful for the many people who have supported us throughout this year. Without the generosity of countless individuals, we wouldn't be able to serve grieving families.



As we are beginning a new year, I am in prayer for all of the families in the Tulsa area we will be serving and the many ways God will work through our ministry this year.

*Cat*

## Pregnancy and Parenting After Loss Support

M.E.N.D. – Pregnancy and Parenting After Loss Support Group is for parents who are pregnant after a loss or who are considering trying to conceive again after a loss. Our support groups resume in January, meeting via Zoom at 7:30-8:30 PM Central time on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month.



*Marisa*



**East Valley, Arizona**

M.E.N.D.–East Valley Arizona had a very lovely Christmas Candlelight Ceremony. It was so nice to celebrate everyone's babies in heaven!



We look forward to some fundraisers in the new year. Our first one is in Queen Creek at Backyard Taco on January 29! Join the East Valley Arizona chapter Facebook group to keep up-to-date!

*Danielle*

**M.E.N.D. en Español**

¡Estamos en el procesó de establecer más apoyo para la comunidad hispana! Aunque, por ahora, lo que ofrecemos es nuestra página de Facebook



donde podemos brindarles apoyo y un lugar seguro donde pueda compartir sobre su bebé, expresar sus emociones, o hacer preguntas de otras familias en duelo, nuestro gran anhelo para el futuro es poder

ofrecer otros servicios en español como grupos de apoyo en línea o en persona. Para todos interesados en más información únase a nuestro grupo de Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/mendenespanol/> o mande correos electrónicos a [jessica@mend.org](mailto:jessica@mend.org).

*Jessica*

**MidMichigan**

Happy New Year from M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan. In 2024, we hope to reach a record number of new families who are grieving a pregnancy or infant loss.



Please let us know if you'd like some brochures to share with your doctor, church or group to help us spread the word about this valuable resource. You are not alone!

*Karen*

**Men of M.E.N.D.**

Let us come together and talk about our babies. Men of M.E.N.D. holds a monthly Zoom support group every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 8:00 PM CST. I am looking forward to seeing you. If you can't make it, I pray you have some comfort and peace.



*Matt*

**Chicagoland**

M.E.N.D. - Chicagoland gathered before Thanksgiving to decorate our tree at the Brookfield Zoo Tree Trim for Holiday Magic. It was a beautiful way to start the holiday season remembering our babies.



Thank you to everyone who attended and anyone who visited our tree. We hope you will join us in this new year, as we continue to love and miss our babies.

*Becky*

**SW Missouri  
Christmas Candlelight Ceremony**



## About M.E.N.D.

M.E.N.D. is a Christian nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through monthly support groups, this magazine, and our website at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org). For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the magazine, contact us at:

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Donations make the printing and distribution of this magazine possible. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the address listed above. If your gift is made in memory of a baby, please include that baby's name (if named), date of birth and/or date of death, the parents' names, and the name of the benefactor. You may also include the cause of death (if known).

M.E.N.D. is a member of  
First Candle/SIDS Alliance  
Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance



## M.E.N.D. Leadership

### Board of Directors

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Co-Editors: Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

### Magazine Volunteers

Rachel Dell, Sara Elliott  
and Becky Johnston

## M.E.N.D. Support Groups in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex

Mommies AND Daddies are welcome at all M.E.N.D. support groups.

**Irving Archives Museum, 801 W Irving Blvd, Irving, TX 75060.**

For more information, call (972) 506-9000.

M.E.N.D. chapter support groups meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM

Daddies group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., at 7:30 PM

Moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups.

### Rowlett Satellite Chapter

A satellite chapter in Rowlett holds support groups to serve families in the eastern area of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex.

Support groups are held the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday at 7:00 PM at the Veterans Resource and Outreach Center,  
4210 Industrial St, Rowlett, TX 75088.

Visit our Facebook group or email [terri@mend.org](mailto:terri@mend.org).

## M.E.N.D. Chapter Information

### M.E.N.D.–NW Washington

Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 6:30 PM

GracePoint Church

8278 WA-303

Bremerton, Washington 98311

Chapter Director: Katherine Sandoval  
katherines@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

### M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM

Project H.O.P.E.

1419 S. Enterprise Ave

Springfield, Missouri 65804

Chapter Director: Jennifer Harrison  
jennifer@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

### M.E.N.D.–Columbus, Ohio

Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, at 6:30 PM

Paul Mitchell-The School of Columbus

3000 Morse Road

(Upstairs Conference Room)

Columbus, Ohio 43231

Chapter Director: LaTrina Bray  
latrina@mend.org (614) 530-5128

### M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland, Illinois

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM

St. Paul Lutheran Church

545 S. Ardmore Ave.

Villa Park, IL 60181

Chapter Director: Becky Luedtke  
becky@mend.org, (630) 267-9134

### M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area

Kingwood Area, Texas:

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 6:30 PM

Lone Star College Kingwood

Classroom Building A (CLA) Rm 113

20000 Kingwood Dr.

Kingwood, TX 77339.

Chapter Director: Nikisha Perry  
nikisha@mend.org, (346) 235-4714

### M.E.N.D.–Tulsa, Oklahoma

Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM

The Office Tulsa

5401 S Harvard Ave

Tulsa, OK 74135

Chapter Director: Cat Markham  
cat@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

### M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, at 7:00 PM

Christian Celebration Center

6100 Swede Ave

Midland, MI 48642

Chapter Director: Karen Kilbourn  
karen@mend.org, (989) 577-5755

### M.E.N.D.–East Valley, Arizona

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, at 6:30 PM

Queen Creek Library

Edward Abbey room

21802 S Ellsworth Rd

Queen Creek, Arizona 85142

Chapter Director: Danielle Radler  
danielle@mend.org, (602) 699-6228

## Online Support

### Subsequent pregnancy group

meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday

from 7:30 - 8:30 PM via Zoom.

Please visit [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org) to join.

Led by Marisa Perry:

marisa@mend.org

For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.

### M.E.N.D.–

#### Nationwide Online Support Group

Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 8:00 PM (CST)

Please visit <https://www.mend.org/virtual-support-group-links>

Chapter Director: Mallory Gallagher  
mallory@mend.org

### Men of M.E.N.D.

Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 8:00 PM (CST)

to join, contact,

Chapter Director: Matt McGhee

Matt@mend.org

Facebook Group:

[www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND)



The Garden of Hope is a place of peace and solace where families can come for a quiet time of reflection, prayer, or even to celebrate the life of their loved one.

The Garden of Hope was established by M.E.N.D. in 2016, and is located on property of Calvary Church in Irving, Texas.

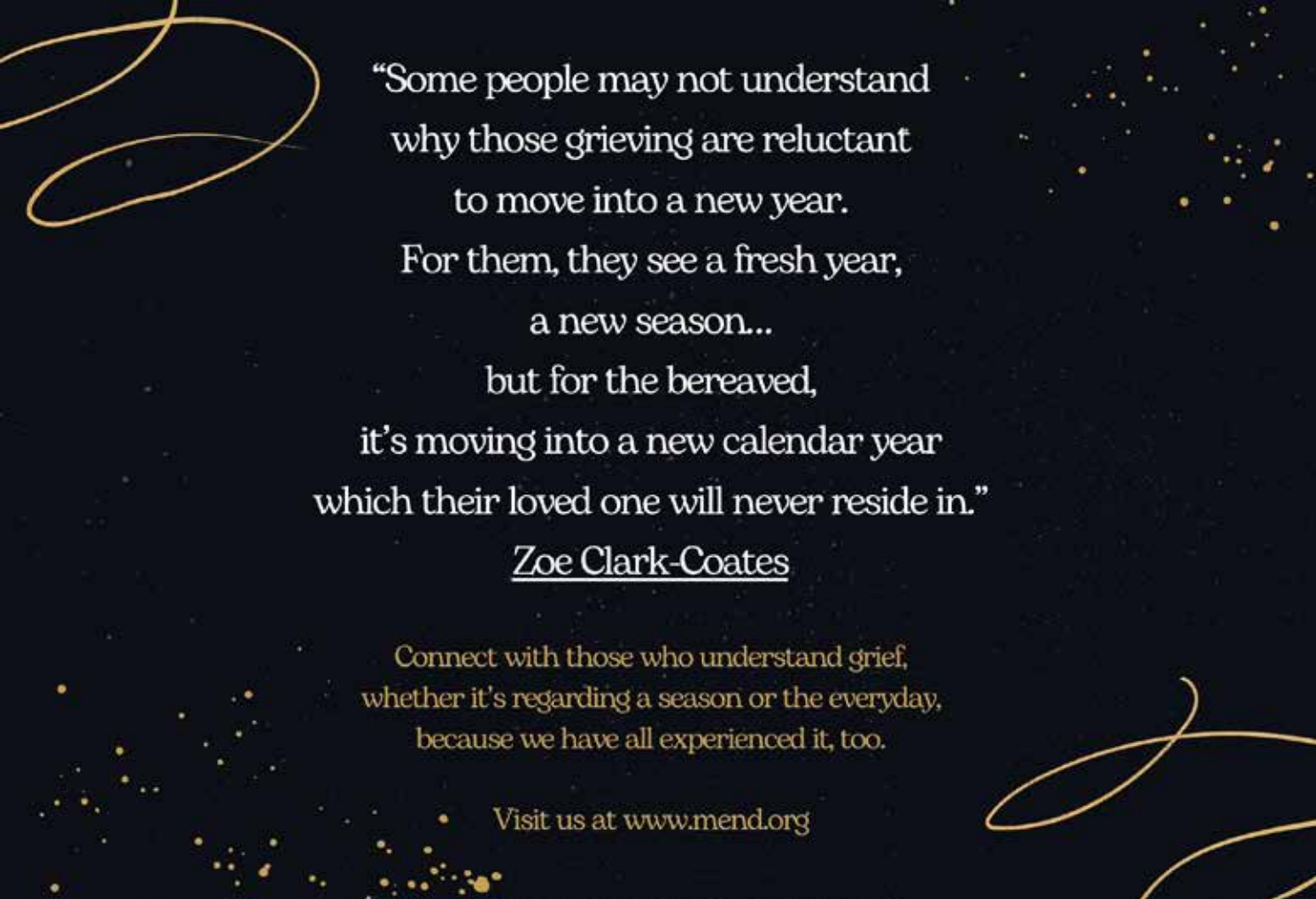
You can remember your loved one by purchasing a brick in the Garden of Hope. Brick purchases can be made at <https://www.mend.org/garden-of-hope>.

The order deadline for 2024 installation is July 15, 2024. To ensure the bricks are ready for the 2024 Walk to Remember, brick orders will be closed from July 16 – October 4, 2024.



M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death  
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(972) 506-9000  
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“Some people may not understand  
why those grieving are reluctant  
to move into a new year.  
For them, they see a fresh year,  
a new season...  
but for the bereaved,  
it’s moving into a new calendar year  
which their loved one will never reside in.”

Zoe Clark-Coates

Connect with those who understand grief,  
whether it’s regarding a season or the everyday,  
because we have all experienced it, too.

Visit us at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org)