



# Good Grief NEWS

PO Box 12865 Wichita, KS 67277 316-612-0700

Nov 2023

Website: [www.goodgriefofkansas.org](http://www.goodgriefofkansas.org)

Email: [info@goodgriefofkansas.org](mailto:info@goodgriefofkansas.org)

## Thanks for the Little While

By Darcie Sims

It was a long time ago, our first holiday season with the *empty chair*. It was dark and cold, but everything was ready. The table was set, the turkey was cooked, the candles lit and the seats filled - except one. I stood at the kitchen sink and wondered how I was going to act as the cheery hostess to family and friends who had gathered to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving! What was there to be thankful for *this* year? It had been a year of struggle, each day being worse than the last until they all had just blurred into a nightmare. Whoever said, "Time heals all wounds" had never been as mortally wounded as I had! Time had healed nothing! In fact, I think I was suffering more as the weeks and months went by.

It was as if I had been frozen in the early days and weeks after the death and only now, months later, was I beginning to thaw. And as I began to defrost out of my icy numbness, it only seemed to hurt *more*. That didn't make sense, but it was true.

And now, the holiday season had arrived and that only served to send my deeper into the gloom. I found myself wanting to hide, to cancel family gatherings. I wanted to run away. I did not want to shop for gifts, and I certainly did not want to send holiday greetings. A snarl or a frown swept over my face more often than a cheery hello.

I kept thinking of all the things I would never enjoy again: the smell of Mom's pumpkin pie, the happy chatter around the table as Dad carved the turkey, the sweet silliness of his happy grin. The list of what I was missing grew longer and longer each day that I survived. Every day brought new discoveries of the most painful kind.

I kept seeing empty spaces at the table and feeling empty places in my heart. It seemed to hurt more now than it did earlier in my grief. Surely I must be slipping into insanity! I thought it was supposed to get *better*, not worse!

I had tried to cancel the family celebration, but they wouldn't hear of it! "Oh, No!" they said. We can't miss ..... (whatever I had suggested not doing). "It wouldn't be the holidays without ....." That was exactly my point! I didn't want the holidays to be here, and I certainly did not want to celebrate *anything*!

I tried passing off certain family "chores" to other members and once in a while that worked. I decided not to send holiday greetings to anyone, and my gift shopping was limited to catalog browsing and telephone ordering. I couldn't bear the mall crowds, the noise and that horrible, *happy* holiday music *everywhere*! Every time I went out, I felt as though I had been assaulted by the Holiday Spirit. The only thing that seemed to sparkle for me were the tears that left little icy streaks across my cheek once in awhile.

I even tried to move, but the family voted to come to my house for the turkey dinner, and so, now, they were gathering in the dining room, waiting for the festivities to begin. The turkey was stuffed, the pies baked, the gravy lump free as best I could without Mother's gentle guidance. But, there was little Thanksgiving or holiday spirit within me. Thank heavens I didn't have to come up with a blessing to say this day!



It is a tradition in our family for the youngest guest at the table to say the blessing and so it fell to our six-year old daughter, now an "only child," to find some words of thanksgiving to share with the ever-growing-smaller family around the table. She refused, of course, adding more stress to an already impossible day.

No amount of yelling, coaxing, bribing, pleading or threatening has inspired her to serve as the family spokesman. It had become a battle of wills between a mother and a daughter, something similar to several "engagements" that my mother and I had endured.

Finally, at the last moment, alone with me in our kitchen, she sighed and relented. "But I will only say grace at dessert," she said.

"Good enough," I said with relief. I had always been thankful for dessert - just like my dad and her grandpa!

It was a quiet meal, filled with awkward moments and many sniffled tears. After the pie was served, our daughter asked us to join hands in a circle (ala Walton style) and she looked around the table, giving each one of us a full moment of her gaze. Then, she drew a long breath and said, in her small, but clear, child voice, "Thanks for the little while..."

Ahhh! What other words could have said so much! It took a child to remind us of the moments we did have!

We each loved someone, and someone loved us. Find those memories and cherish them. Remember *first* that they lived, not that they died. I want to remember the *life*, not just the death!

Live through the hurt so that joy can return to warm your heart. No matter which holiday it is for you, and no matter the season of your grief, say *thank you* for a life well lived and loved. It wasn't long enough - it *never* would have been. But it was a *little while*.

They lived, We loved them. We still do.

Thanks for the little while.

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Nov/Dec 1999

**\*\*All meetings are for those that have lost a loved one, be it a spouse, child, parent, sibling or friend.**  
**You are welcome to attend any or all meetings as needed.**  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
**If you would be interested in training to be a facilitator for one of our groups please contact Janet Cook at 316-900-1340**



## SCHEDULE OF GROUP MEETINGS

*Please keep in mind.....*  
***All meetings begin at the designated times***

**Mondays: 7:00 - 8:30 PM      \*\* NEW LOCATION\*\*      SOUTH WICHITA**

*\*\*Discover Church (1826 W. Maple)*  
**Facilitators: Deona Madrigal, Christy Rector**

**Tuesdays: 10:00 - 11:30 AM      CENTRAL WICHITA**

RiverWalk Church of Christ - (225 N Waco)  
 Use **South Office Entrance**, Fireside Room  
**Facilitators: Marjorie Watkins , Donald Septer**

**Tuesdays: 6:30 PM      now meeting weekly      WEST WICHITA**

West Heights UMC—(745 N Westlink Ave) Use North parking lot off Delano St,  
 Building **Entance A2 "CHAPEL"** (just west of A1 Entrance)  
**Facilitators: Marsha Huffman, Tom Downer**

**1st and 3rd Wednesday: 7:00 - 8:30 PM      CENTRAL WICHITA**

W.A.Y. (Widowed and/or Young) For those, ages 20's, 30's, 40's, 50'S  
 RiverWalk Church of Christ—(225 N Waco) **SW Entrance, Fireside Room**  
**Facilitators: Julie Montgomery, Kendra Spencer**

\*\*\*\*\*  
**SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS**

**Mondays: 6:30 - 8:30 PM      CENTRAL WICHITA**

RiverWalk Church of Christ in downtown Wichita (225 N Waco) Note: **Go to the NW door #7 closest to the river.** If the door is locked, please knock loudly. The Monday night meetings begin at **6:30 p.m.**  
 If you have questions or plan to attend this group, **please call the facilitator** prior to attending your 1st meeting so session handouts may be prepared for you.  
**Facilitator: Jim Yoder 316-727-0663**

**Tuesdays Bi-weekly: 6:30 - 8:30 PM(see calendar for dates)      ARKANSAS CITY**

106 S Summit St (Chamber of Commerce meeting room) Arkansas City  
 If you have questions or plan to attend this group, **please call the facilitator** prior to attending your 1st meeting so session handouts may be prepared for you.  
**Facilitator: Kathy Harbert 620-441-7271**

*If you or someone you know is in need of help, be sure to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255.*

**You are welcome** to attend any support group of your choice. It is normal to feel confused, forgetful, crazy, lost and alone, plus a wide range of other emotions. It may not feel like it just now, but it does get better . . . let us help. **Please commit to attend at least three times.** The first two times may be difficult but you will begin to feel a difference in your grieving as you are able to share about your loss and other issues that come along at this time. You might want to visit several groups until you find the one you feel most comfortable with.

**BAD WEATHER POLICY**

**Wichita:**  
 If there is a threat of severe weather...  
 If EARP (Emergency Accident Reporting Plan) is in effect no meeting will be held.

**Outside Wichita:**  
 Check with your facilitator.

***Never put yourself at risk.***  
***If you think the weather too dangerous, do not attend the meeting.***

**Office Hours:**  
 Mon and Fri 8 am - 10 :00 am  
 Please leave message if unavailable.

**Office Supply Needs:**

**Envelopes:**  
 #6 Security (\$Tree envelopes are fine)  
**Copy Paper:** White 8.5x11

## Schedule of Regular Socials:

**Tuesdays: Breakfast at 9:00 AM**  
**Livingstons - Webb & 21st**  
 (Hosts: Cindy Swan, Mike Hertzler)

**Thursdays: Lunch/Brunch at 10:00 AM**  
**Country Breakfast Café - 2804 S Seneca St**  
 (Hostess: Lois Pardee)

**Saturdays: Breakfast at 10:00 AM**  
**Spears Restaurant - 4830 W Maple**  
 (Hostess: Janet Cook)

# November 2023

*Live simply..... Speak kindly.....*

*Care deeply..... Love generously.....*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>PLEASE NOTE!</b> The South Group has a new location: Discover Church 1826 W. Maple</p>			1 W.A.Y. Group 7:00 pm	2 Brunch/Lunch 10 am Country Café  <i><u>TLC MTG 5 PM</u></i>	3	4 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
5 <i>Daylight Savings Time Ends</i>  	6 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	7 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:30 pm SOSL Ark City 6:30 pm Breakfast 9 am Livingston's  	8	9 Brunch/Lunch 10 am Country Café	10	11 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant   <b>VETERANS DAY</b>
12	13 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	14 Central Group 10 am  West Group 6:30 pm  Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	15 W.A.Y. Group 7:00 PM	16 Brunch/Lunch 10 am Country Café	17	18 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
19	20 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	21 Central Group 10 am  West Group 6:30 pm SOSL Ark City 6:30 pm Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	22	23 	24	25 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
26	27 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	28 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:30 pm Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	29	30 Brunch/Lunch 10 am Country Café		 <b>SAVE THE DATE</b> <b>DEC 9th</b> <b>CHRISTMAS GATHERING</b>

Contributions for last month(s) totaled \$413.00  
 THANK YOU for your donation which makes it possible for  
 Good Grief of Kansas to continue to serve the bereaved.

## October Contributors:

*Connie Westerfield*

*Michael Tate*

*Patricia Mahan*

*Les Shepherd*

*South Group*

*Carmen Suter*

*Jim Gorsuch*

*Network for Good*

*Jim Denning*

Donations can be mailed to

PO Box 12865  
Wichita, Ks 67277

Or

Online at  
goodgriefofkansas.org



## Memorial Gifts

In loving memory of  
**Bob Pitzer**  
 By Theresa Pitzer

\*\*\*\*\*

In loving memory of  
**Cora McBride**  
 By John McBride

\*\*\*\*\*

*Remembering*  
 you is easy.  
 I do it every day.  
*Missing you*  
 is the heartache  
 that never goes away.

### Love Gifts

At this time there are no dues or fees to belong to Good Grief of Kansas. However, your gift is very important.

**We depend on donations from individuals and organizations to meet our program expenses and to keep the Good Grief office open.**

Please help make sure that others who need Good Grief will hear the message that we can and will help them through their grief. Gifts may be designated in honor or memory of a special individual or occasion. We also appreciate monetary gifts to help with the expense of producing and mailing this newsletter.

**Note:** For memorials with a special remembrance date, submit information one month early for timely publication.

Donations can be sent to:

Good Grief of Kansas  
 2622 W Central Suite 401B  
 Wichita, Ks 67203

# November Birthdays

<i>Terry Seifert</i> .....	1
<i>David Eck</i> .....	5
<i>Bonnie Workman</i> .....	6
<i>Rod Wake</i> .....	10
<i>Kirk McConachie</i> .....	11
<i>Gracie Swanberg</i> .....	12
<i>Carol Schmitz</i> .....	13
<i>Julie Montgomery</i> .....	14
<i>Janet Cunningham</i> .....	15
<i>Sue Griffin</i> .....	17
<i>Beverly McGee</i> .....	17
<i>Christine Tullis</i> .....	17
<i>Mary Conner</i> .....	18
<i>Pat Brueggemann</i> .....	20
<i>Darlene Byrd</i> .....	22
<i>Heather Glenn</i> .....	22
<i>Connie Seigler</i> .....	22
<i>Dawn M Kail</i> .....	23
<i>Richard M Escareno</i> .....	24



**Please Note**

You now have the option to  
**DONATE ONLINE**

We have added information on our website allowing you the opportunity to make a donation to Good Grief of Kansas electronically. Just log into [www.goodgriefokansas.org](http://www.goodgriefokansas.org)

Scroll down until you find the form to make your donation.

Thank you in advance for your generous support.

## Sign up Today!

### Dillons Community Rewards

#### Dillons Plus Card Instructions

- Step 1:** Go online to [www.dillons.com](http://www.dillons.com)
- Step 2:** (If you already have an online account please go to instruction below.)  
Click on Community/then Community Rewards. Click on Create Account, enter email address and password, select preferred store, then click on create account at the bottom of the page.
- Step 3:** Add Dillons Plus Shoppers Card - Enter the 12 digit number from the back of your Dillons Plus Card or alternate phone number and your last name, then click on save.
- Step 4:** This will bring up Account Summary page, scroll to bottom of page and at Community Rewards, Click Edit button.
- Step 5:** You will be asked your organization number - enter AQ480 to see organization name, select, then click on "enroll to complete your enrollment". You are done!

**Every time you use your Dillons card, your total \$\$'s will be credited to Good Grief of Kansas.**

#### Already have a Dillons Account?

- Step 1:** Go online to [www.dillons.com](http://www.dillons.com)
- Step 2:** Click on Community/then Community Rewards
- Step 3:** Sign In - enter email and password, then enroll now.
- Step 4:** You will be asked your organization number, enter AQ480 to see organization name, select, then click on "enroll to complete your enrollment". You are done! Every time you use your Dillons card, your total \$\$'s will be credited to Good Grief of Kansas.

**Ask friends & family to select us too!**

## Do you have Facebook?

Did you know you can do a Facebook Fundraiser for your Birthday!!

This is a super easy way to help out Good Grief of Kansas **AND** celebrate your birthday at the same time. It's easy peasy and Facebook won't charge any fees for this. The fundraiser will last the entire month of your birthday and a check will automatically be sent to Good Grief of Kansas.



**Do this 15-30 days before your birthday**

### PC/Laptop Browser

In the Search box at the top-left of your FB screen - type '*fundraisers*' and hit enter.

Click the ">" button under Facebook Shortcuts.

Click the blue button, '**Select Nonprofit**', then type '*Good Grief*' in the search, then click on '**Good Grief of Kansas Inc**'.

On the left side, edit the Goal Total\$, End Date, text in the Title & Explanation, and add photo, if desired.

Click the blue button on the lower-left, "Create", to post and share your new Fundraiser!

### Phone / Tablet

Tap the Search button at the top of your FB screen - type '*fundraisers*'.

Tap the "**Fundraisers**" button under Facebook Shortcuts.

Tap "Create Fundraiser", then tap "Nonprofit".

Enter '*Good Grief*' in the search, then tap on '**Good Grief of Kansas Inc**'.

Edit the Goal Total\$, text in the Title & Explanation, and add photo, if desired.

Tap the "Create" button in the top-right of screen, to post and share your new

## I Want To Help Support Good Grief of Kansas

Enclosed is a memorial gift in memory of (Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my monthly support of:

\$20 \_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_ \$100 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Send Memorial acknowledgment to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**ANONYMOUS PLEASE**

I would like more information

My phone # is ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_



# Reclaiming Our Joy

By Linda Flatt

Shortly after my son's suicide in 1993, a wise counselor told me not to let death take away my joy. At the time, those words fell on deaf ears. But, as the days passed and healing began, that guidance became my mission to somehow reclaim my joy after experiencing the incomprehensible suicide death of my child.

The powerful and overwhelming emotions that embody the grieving process tend to be magnified during the holidays – a time when memories of our missing loved ones are especially painful. Family gatherings are wearying reminders of the stark reality of our own loss. Here are some steps that we can take together to endeavor to recover our God-given joy during a difficult holiday season.

Plan ahead for the pitfalls of holiday bereavement. Educate yourself in the fine art of surviving the holidays and equip yourself for the season. Beware of the expectations of others and choose to get through the holidays your way!

Give yourself permission to grieve during the holidays instead of denying your emotions. Resist the urge to “shut down” emotionally until next year. Trust me, the feelings will still be on that shelf on January first, and they may be even more powerful and destructive than they were in December.

Choose to be around safe, supportive people during the holidays – people who will let you have your grief. Make a conscious decision to stay connected to God and His people at a time when you may prefer isolation. We serve a loving, comforting God, and there is great healing in His community. Reach out and take the light and love that others offer during the holidays, and in turn, give whatever you can to those who reach out to you.

## *Tis the Season of “Firsts”*



No matter where you may be in your grief journey, chances are you are facing a “first.” Perhaps, it's the *first* Christmas or Hanukah without your loved one. Or your loved one's *first* “after-death” birthday or anniversary.

Maybe it's the *first* time you'll see certain people or send out cards signed with your name only. Maybe it's the *first* time you lit the Hanukah candles without your loved one, or put up a Christmas tree, attended the office party; the first time you, alone, had to worry about chains for the car, a leaky roof, or the selling of a house.

As much as we might wish we could ignore the season of “*firsts*”, we know we can't and are often surprised when the anticipation turns out to be worse than the actual event. The day itself, whether it's a birthday or holiday, is seldom as bad as the days leading up to it.

So relax. Take a big breath and try not to project how you will feel or behave on any given day. Every “*first*” we conquer makes us stronger, moving us from one point of our grief to the next. Moving us ever closer to healing.

by Margaret Brownley

Simi Valley, CA

## *Because We Love -- Grieving Through the Holidays*

*“La Vida es sueno y sueno de Suena.” Life is a dream and a dream of a dream. — Caldron*

Dreams of the past...a swelling rush of powerful recollections never to be felt again. The mystic element and enchantment of the holidays within our midst; holly, mistletoe, the glitter of the Kwanzaa and Chanukah lights to enjoy. Bah...humbug! What about the myriad broken hearts floating upon a sea of grief filled with sorrow?

When an individual has lost a loved one, the season for cheerfulness not only eludes the bereaved, it can be downright devastating; somehow the void in our lives is too intense. The pressure to “fit in” or to exclude gladness and delight seems to evade us. Instead we may be overcome with feelings of anger, panic, depression, regrets, and loneliness. We cannot be fixed on a course of jubilation if we are consumed by negative sensations. As waves of emotion pour over us, we are carried away to thoughts of yesteryear. A simple tune, an aroma, a familiar face may be too much for us to bear.

The Jewish high holidays are specially difficult to deal with. The theological concept of the sacred day of Atonement states that it shall be “a holy convocation to you and you shall afflict your souls.” It is so profoundly agonizing to endure this particular day without the scores of loved ones who have gone beyond the outer reaches of the universe. An so we plead for courage, wisdom, and order to find grace within ourselves. We beseech our Creator to lead us to a healing place. “Mima amakim, krati’cha.” — Out of the depths, I call to you.

Grief may be unpredictable and events once anticipated with pleasure may not necessarily make us feel happy nor merry. Although holidays, anniversaries, and birthdays produce unique challenges, there are definitely ways to cope and make some sense out of these stressful times. For the bereaved, it is important to stay connected to your feelings. Express your emotions, be gentle with yourself and learn to address your pain. Incorporate memories of the deceased into your present life by making a memory quilt, writing a poem, releasing a balloon or lighting a candle. Find ways of giving little bits of yourself through an act of charity or a good deed. These are surely acts of love and gratitude. Be concerned about another’s feelings and thoughts. Create light where there is darkness. As a metaphor for peace and healing, radiance represents a balance between sadness and hope. We are blessed with the ability to regenerate life and find fulfillment once again. It is perfectly acceptable to express sensitivity, sentimentality, and spirituality to symbolize our innate desires to recapture that which was lost. T.S. Eliot said,

*“Footfalls echo in the memory  
Down the door we never opened  
Into the rose garden.”*

At holiday time, when we become reflective and engrossed in our thoughts to find a relevant means to assuage our grief, it is worth remembering that our souls need not be imprisoned in the past. We are capable of discovering new passages, new doors to open and eventually of stepping into a garden that is purposeful and awesome in its majesty.

We are stronger than our tears!





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PO Box 12865 Wichita, KS 67277

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Good Grief News

### Executive Board

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Mary Evans, Treasurer

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Jim Yoder

### Program Director

Janet Cook

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Phyllis L. Gadaire-Sauer

### Office Manager

Marsha Huffman

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Janet Cook	Christy Rector
Tom Downer	Donald Septer
Kathy Harbert	Kendra Spencer
Marsha Huffman	Cindy Swan
Deona Madrigal	Marjorie Watkins
Julie Montgomery	Connie Westerfield
Lois Pardee	Jim Yoder

### **Mission Statement:**

Good Grief of Kansas provides grief support for persons who have lost a loved one through death.

### Program Outreach:

- Widowed Support Group
- Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group
- Other Adult Family Loss Support (parent/child)
- Social Support
- Seminars/Workshops
- Community Presentations
- Counseling Referrals



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Newsletters may also be viewed on-line by going to [www.goodgriefofkansas.org](http://www.goodgriefofkansas.org)

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- Memorials, Gifts & Donations

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If you feel that you have been discriminated against, you have the right to file a complaint with

Good Grief of Kansas, Inc. by mail or to

## PLEASE NOTE

New address  
PO Box 12865  
Wichita Ks 67277

Phone number remains the same  
316-612-0700