



# Good Grief NEWS

PO Box 12865 Wichita, KS 67277 316-612-0700  
Website: [www.goodgriefofkansas.org](http://www.goodgriefofkansas.org)

Dec 2023

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

## Coping with Christmas

Grief is like periodontitis: it gets right down to the root of your nerves. And once they are exposed, well, then even the tiniest spoon of ice-cream or a mere sip of hot coffee makes you flinch with pain. Should this condition coincide with the holiday season, with its additional socio-culinary emphasis on hot and cold, sweet and more sweet, you have all the ingredients for abject misery: you may feel reluctant to participate in anticipation of the pain you have learned to expect, and you may also feel lonely and isolated as people around you fail to understand the extent of your – invisible – anguish.

It is helpful to understand why Christmas is so tough on the bereaved. Several factors converge here. Ever since the loss of your loved ones, numerous Sundays and Thursdays, first and last days of the week, new months have come and gone. We have developed a certain routine in coping with "normal" dates. Not so with Christmas. It poses a new situation.

Not only that, but the holidays are intimately associated with family. To those of us who have lost a close relative, Christmas seems to serve only as an especially painful reminder of how our lives have changed.

For many of us, the already highly emotionally-charged event of Christmas will be further marred if the death of our dear ones occurred around that time. We struggle to juggle anniversary time with celebrations, memories of Christmas past with Christmas present. At the same time, we might still need to function, do the Christmas thing, for other members of the family, regardless of the sap to our own energy in this dark time of the year.

And there is another thing. All of this goes on forever. The building up to Christmas, the day itself, the aftermath, New Year. It is all pervading. Everywhere we go, festive lights, abseiling Santa's, strains of "Dreaming of a White Christmas," and constant rejoinders of have a "really merry Christmas" produce that familiar dull ache. Christmas is a real pain.

So what can we do? After experimenting through five Christmas seasons and conferring with assorted bereaved friends, I have come up with the following strategies, suggestions or adjustments.



\*Remind yourself – frequently – that the holidays constitute an exceptional situation which, however, is restricted to a foreseeable period of time. They will pass.

• \*Put the holidays in their place. By that I mean, cut them (and the potential agony) down to December 24 and/or 25. You can achieve that by reducing preparations to a minimum and simply keeping those additional festivities, such as over-cheerful office parties, at bay. Conserve your energy.

• \*If your family situation allows, you might consider eliminating Christmas from your calendar altogether. Going away on vacation would be the ideal solution – if it brings relief, why not? It doesn't have to become a fixed routine.

• \*You can still involve your loved ones in Christmas: e.g. each December my son receives a new present (a new dried flower arrangement, picture frame, plants for the grave, etc.) from me. Any Christmas cards that turn up, we display in his corner of the living room. In my head – and sometimes out of it – I have long chats with him about what we are doing. It helps to imagine that he somehow gets the picture and so remains an integral part of our family Christmas.

• \*If Christmas Day gets you down, pour your thoughts out onto paper. Memories of shared holidays, how you feel today, anything you like. Dedicate them to your loved one, seal them in an envelope and keep it near you until the holidays are over. They are your "lifelines."

Above all, remember this, if the going gets tough: toothache is inevitably at its excruciating worst as soon as the dental office has just closed for the weekend. Come Monday morning, it has miraculously disappeared.

by Sue Grant

**\*\*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

**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.



## 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.*

**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)

# December 2023

*Every day may not be good....  
But there is something good in every day*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
3	4 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	5 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:30 pm SOSL Ark City 6:30 pm  Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	6  W.A.Y. Group 7:00 PM	7  Brunch / Lunch 10 am Country Café	8	9 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant  Christmas Party 5 pm River Walk Church
10	11 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	12 Central Group 10 am  West Group 6:30 pm  Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	13	14  Brunch / Lunch 10 am Country Café	15	16 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
17	18 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm  South Group 7:00 pm <i>*note new location</i>	19 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:30 pm SOSL Ark City 6:30 pm  Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	20  W.A.Y. Group 7:00 PM	21  Brunch / Lunch 10 am Country Café	22	23 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
24 CHRISTMAS EVE  31	25 	26 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:30 pm  Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	27	28  Brunch/Lunch 10 am Country Café	29	30


**Christmas Party**

**December 9th 5:00 PM**


RiverWalk Church of Christ 225 N Waco (enter at NW door)

Bring your favorite dessert. As an alternative to our usual gift exchange, we will instead be collecting food items for Simple House to be given out for the holidays.

Items needed are Canned ham & chicken, canned sweet potatoes, gravy, stuffing, green beans, cranberry sauce, individual puddings and cookies.

Contributions for last month(s) totaled \$547.91  
 THANK YOU for your donation which makes it possible for  
 Good Grief of Kansas to continue to serve the bereaved.

## November Contributors:

Janet Cunningham

Carmen Suter

South Group

Michael Tate

Jim Gorsuch

Les Shepherd

Kroger/Dillons

Judith Purdy

Network for Good

Donations can be mailed to

PO Box 12865  
Wichita, Ks 67277

Or

Online at  
goodgriefokansas.org



## Memorial Gifts

In loving memory of  
 Phyllis L Gadaire-Sauer  
 12-11-2003

By Terry L Sauer

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

# December Birthdays

Jane Easley.....	1
Diana Wendling.....	2
Shelly Cannady.....	3
Ron Hutson.....	3
Dustin Teitruck.....	3
Melody Hunter.....	7
Craig Burris.....	8
Debra Clements.....	9
Michael Briley.....	15
Les Shepherd.....	15
Maria E Garcia.....	17
Suellen Robbins.....	19
Hilda Cerday.....	21
Logan Richardson.....	21
Kelly Childers.....	23
Sharon Kay Jefferson.....	23
Raine Daly.....	25
Jim Gorsuch.....	25
Bob Hirschmann.....	26
Melissa Warnken.....	26
Jim Commerford.....	27
Sally Duque.....	28
Celestra Snyder.....	30
Jon Sandefur.....	31



**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**

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

Thank you in advance for your generous support.

**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

**Sign up Today!**

**Dillons Community Rewards**

**Dillons Plus Card Instructions**

**Step 1:** Go online to

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

**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!**

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

# THE HOLIDAY ARMY

Here it comes again – the Holiday Army in its annual march against us. Its generals are called Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.

No respecters of the heart-broken and emotionally wounded, its troops are merciless, and they take no prisoners! We will participate in their joy and nostalgia or they will mow us down with their militant tanks of holiday spirit. Sometimes they declare their war on us openly, without shame or remorse. Sometimes, they wait for us in ambush. Their intelligence operators have been working diligently all year, waiting for the Thanksgiving Day (or sometimes Halloween!) Trumpets signal to begin their attack. They just don't seem satisfied to have their celebrations and parties and dinners and festivities unless they can recruit ALL of us into their ranks. Actually, we wish them well. All we really want is for them to leave us alone and let us mourn in peace and quiet.

We prefer our "Silent Nights" to their "Deck the Halls" and "Jingle Bells." We don't intentionally spoil their fun; it's just that our pain makes them, uncomfortable. They've been conditioned to believe that "the Holiday Season" should have no blemish of suffering or lace of frivolity. We must not only bandage our wounds in their presence, but cover them with taffeta and sequins besides. They are convinced that all we need is to "put on a happy face" and all our sorrows will magically evaporate.

In their mad pursuit of happiness, they shoot us with the bullets of shopping, piped-in music, special holiday foods and fragrances, gift-wrapping, decorations (especially the

angels!), joyous children with happy smiles, cards, invitations, parties, and gift exchanges. Any other time of year, snow is considered a nuisance to shovel and plow through. At the holiday season, though, it is touted as romantic and is linked to sleighs and starry nights in front of fireplaces, snuggled close to those we love.

The most devastating bombs they drop into our lives are the images of reunion – times of greeting and hugging folks who are much loved and sometimes not often seen for a while. They may only be separated by geography; our absent loved ones cannot cross the chasm of loss that looms before our tear-filled eyes. They remind us of things we should be thankful for (and we are more thankful for many of those things than they can ever imagine!), they prod us with their spears of delightful togetherness, never realizing that what they celebrate is what we cannot now enjoy.

We would not dream of attacking them in these battles for holiday survival. With our noses pressed against the glass that divides us, we actually long to be able to be part of their happiness. We remember the times we joined in their fun and we, too, were part of their army of nostalgia and joy. Our broken hearts and bleeding wounds do not excuse us from being gracious, however.

Grief does not give us permission to be rude and selfish. While we take no overt action against their aggression, we are not without defenses in these battles. We can shield ourselves with the armor of dignity with kind but direct and simple explanations: "We understand your need for celebration, but this year we prefer quiet and private reflection and meditation." "Right now it's hard for us to function in large groups and to appreciate laughter and high spirits." "Our energy is so limited, we'd appreciate some quiet one-on-one time with you in a more spiritual atmosphere."

We can gently remind them of how important it is to us to remember those we love that are gone. These are statements that clarify our position without judging or criticizing them for theirs. In kind and non-threatening ways, we need to tell them what's good for us, because they won't think of it on their own and they can use the education.

We also can exercise the muscles of our sense of humor. It will take some effort on our part, but so does anything that is worthwhile and good for us. We can teach ourselves not to fall into the trap of thinking that our grief makes us the center of the universe.

We can limit our demands that others treat us in "special" and "deferential" ways because of our pain. We can cut them a little slack and remember that once upon a time, we were just like they are now. It's good and healthy for us to review our perspectives now and then and decide if we're being fair and reasonable.

We can express our love in simple and unhurried ways without all the frenetic, expensive and often hysterical hype that the holidays can generate. And we must exercise the expression of our love. Grief does not rob us of our ability to love, it reminds us ever more dramatically of our need to both give and receive love while we are here.

Whenever we can take some control in our situations, we empower ourselves, and then we feel less like victims in what seems like a war of "peace on earth, goodwill toward men." Anytime we can educate and inform with mercy and compassion, we have given a truly spiritual holiday gift of love that will keep on giving forever.

May your season be filled with genuine blessings of peace.

*By Andrea Cambill*

# 'TIS THE SEASON OF MIRACLES

Feeling depressed, lonely, disheartened and down-trodden? Lucky you. According to pastor Jeff Cheadle of the Simi Valley Presbyterian Church in California, you are a candidate for a miracle. What a wonderful season this is; both Hanukkah and Christmas celebrate miracles.

When the Macabees defeated Antiochus' army and the Jewish Elite, they celebrated their victory in the Temple in Jerusalem. They found a small cruse of oil containing enough for only one night of light, but the oil miraculously burned for eight days. The "miracle of lights" is celebrated each year with the lighting of candles for eight days. Christians celebrate the miraculous birth of Christ, born to the Virgin Mary.

Celebrating miracles becomes somewhat of a challenge following the loss of a loved one. During the darkest days of our grief, we might even question whether miracles even exist. A miracle, Webster's Dictionary tells us, is an extremely outstanding or unusual event, thing or accomplishment.

Miracles are getting harder to come by these days. Modern medicine and technology have made even ~~the extremely outstanding an everyday occurrence. Our ancestors would have thought traveling across~~ country in only a few hours was a miracle. Still, miracles exist for those of us who pay attention — and we don't have to look far. Life is a miracle. When you consider all the millions of cells that have to come together just to make life possible, it is a wonder any of us are here.

The brain is a miracle, allowing us to learn and grow and process our world, allowing us in an instant to recall a loved one's face, a loved one's laugh. The heart is a miracle, allowing our love to transcend death. The soul is a miracle, allowing us to commune with God and feel a loved one's presence.

Today, look for miracles in your life. Take a walk in nature, study the family photo albums. Think of the miracle of birth. If you can't celebrate the holidays, celebrate a miracle.

*By Margaret Brownley, Simi Valley, CA  
Bereavement Magazine Nov/Dec 2003*



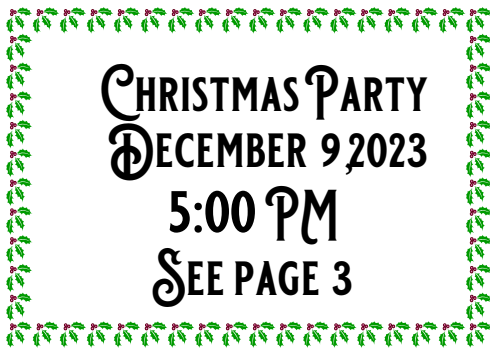


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Good Grief News

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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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- 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**