



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Speare Memorial Hospital
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Candle Lighting Ceremony for Children Gone But Not Forgotten
Service for bereaved families part of the 12th Worldwide Candle Lighting

PLYMOUTH, N.H. --- Joining hundreds of organized memorial services around the world, members of the Plymouth/Speare Memorial Hospital chapter of The Compassionate Friends will light candles Sunday, December 14 in an act of symbolic remembrance for families grieving the death of a child. The candle lighting will be held as part of special service at 7 p.m. at the Plymouth Congregational Church featuring readings, poems and an opportunity for grieving parents to share something about their child. A fellowship hour will follow the service.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

The loss of our children is the loss of our children, no matter how, when, why or at what age," says Tracy Duval, facilitator for the Plymouth chapter of The Compassionate Friends. "Being with other who have been through the same experience and understand what it feels like helps to continue the grief process."

Parents or other family members who are coming to the Plymouth candle lighting are invited to bring a picture of their child to share with others, and their names will be read during the service. Among the names will be Duval's own: a son who died at age 11 when he was hit by a car, and her youngest son who passed at age 18 from suicide. Former facilitator and long-time Compassionate Friends supporter Alice O'Conner will also be attending in honor of her son Billy.

The Compassionate Friends is a national self-help support organization for families who have suffered the loss of a child. This year marks the 12th anniversary of the Worldwide Candle Lighting, which has grown larger every year with formal services in all 50 United States, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico, as well as a dozen countries around the world. The number of formal services has grown by more than 50 percent in the past three years.

The Plymouth chapter, the northern most chapter in New Hampshire, meets the second Monday of every month in the Social Services Conference Room at Speare Memorial Hospital from 7 – 8:30 p.m. For more information about the Plymouth chapter of Compassionate Friends or the

Candle Lighting Service on December 14, contact Tracy Duval at (603) 744-0330.

Speare Memorial Hospital is a 24-hour, acute care, non-profit community hospital and health care provider serving Plymouth and the communities of central New Hampshire for more than a century

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