

Brian's Story

Five days after I returned home from Cincinnati, I received a phone call from a mother named Pat, whose son had been murdered in northern Minnesota just three weeks before Chris disappeared. She apologized for not calling sooner to express condolences for our loss. During our conversation she asked if I believed in visits, or messages, from deceased loved ones. I shared Steve's dream the night before Chris's memorial service. Steve felt that Chris had come to him and communicated key points for Steve to emphasize in his eulogy for Chris.

Not wanting to offend me, Pat cautiously shared a dream, or visitation, she had had the previous night from her son, who had been only a few months older than Chris. Her son told her, "Check out the drowning." Although her son did not mention Chris's name, she said she knew he was referring to Chris and his suspicious drowning. I thanked her for finding the courage to call me and assured her we had believed for many months that Chris was the victim of a terrible crime.

Then I told Pat about the recovery footage and my message from Chris. We spoke of the challenges parents face in trusting the connections they sense with their deceased child. Because burying a child is incomprehensible, we agreed many parents struggle to reconnect with their son or daughter. The desire to continue the sacred parent-child bond seems equally important to the child, as evidenced by the experiences of a reputable oncologist at Children's Hospital in Minneapolis. That doctor assured a dear friend of ours that every parent he has ever worked with who lost a son or daughter to cancer has received a message from that child.

In the case of our murdered sons, Pat and I both agreed we longed to hear what happened, and understand why killers attacked Brian and Chris. Murder further complicates the injustice in the death of a young person. How many parents of murdered children ever know what happened to the beautiful child they brought into the world and lovingly reared? Parents of murdered children must face their child's heinous death and endure whatever treatment they receive from law enforcement and the criminal justice system.

Over the years, Steve, Sara, and I learned we were powerless to bring justice to Chris. Yet by courageously speaking our truth, and actively pursuing an investigation, we gained self-respect and honored Chris. We believe the truth about our journey, expressed in these pages, likely represents the only justice Chris Jenkins will ever receive.