

The Compassionate Friends

Modesto~Riverbank Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A self-help organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved families that have experienced the death of a child.

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org

June 2020

tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETING

7:00 PM

Bridge Covenant Church
2201 Morrill Road
Riverbank, CA 95367
(Corner of Oakdale Rd & Morrill Rd)

The meeting scheduled for
Monday, June 8th

**Will be conducted as a
Zoom (online) meeting
(instructions to follow)**

Upcoming Meetings

July 13th

August 10th

September 14th



Our Mission

The mission of The Compassionate Friends:

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

A father is neither an anchor to hold us back, nor a sail to take us there, but a guiding light whose love shows us the way.



MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

*If you leave a message
a steering committee member
will return your call.*

2020 Steering Committee

Tracey Parker – Chapter Leader

Devon Homme – Secretary

Elsie Freeman – Treasurer

Kris Leitner – Newsletter Editor

Janet Neal – Outreach Coordinator

Lori Leitner – Hospitality & Library

Chad Homme – Public Relations

Mike & Suzanne Casity – Website

Visit us on Facebook
The Modesto-Riverbank
Area Chapter of TCF



Find us on Instagram at
[modestoriverbank_tcf](https://www.instagram.com/modestoriverbank_tcf)



Happy
Father's
Day

Letter from the Leader

Dear Friends,

I want to talk about dealing with what I refer to as the “tender days”. You know, those days where our grief is extra difficult. Their birthday, the anniversary day, or maybe the day they graduated, or maybe it’s a certain holiday that was special to your loved one, or maybe it’s a Tuesday. I am facing one of those days this month. My son’s birthday is this month. He should be turning thirty-one on the 17th. But he isn’t. He is forever twenty-four. And, as you all understand, it breaks my heart all over again.

Since 2014, my family and I have gotten together and have done a variety of things to celebrate James’ birthday, and more importantly, his life! To me, it’s not just about remembering him, it’s about celebrating the twenty-four years that he lived. This year, with the pandemic, I am unsure of what we will do. I had wanted to do something unique and fun, like go to the zoo or go camping. But even though some of the restrictions have been eased, I am not sure that I would be comfortable with my grandchildren out in public. So, it will probably be a family dinner at my house. Maybe. I don’t know and can’t decide what is the best way to balance what I **want** to do with keeping my family safe.

What I **do** know is that these types of days were already difficult, and when you add in a world-wide pandemic and orders to shelter in place it can become overwhelming. One thing I have learned on this journey of mine is that I have to adapt. What worked one year doesn’t necessarily work the next year. And that is especially true in the times we are living in. I want to encourage each and every one of you that if you are having a “tender day”, no matter the reason, to give yourself permission to just do the best you can. There is no wrong or right way to do this.

~Tracey Parker Chapter Leader & James’ Mom



While all events and activities remain cancelled or postponed, until further notice,

please remember

*we're all
IN THIS
together*



Chapter Phone Tree

If you are struggling and need to talk, we are here for you. We have set up a phone tree and someone is available day or night. You can call or text us at (209)622-6786 and one of the Steering Committee will get back to you as soon as possible. You may also reach someone through the email address, tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com, or on our private Facebook page, which you can find by searching for *The Modesto-Riverbank Area Chapter of TCF*.

If you would like to be a part of our phone tree and be available for other members, please contact us through one of the above mentioned methods and we will add your name and number to our list.

Dads Grieve Too

And They Need Other Grieving Dads



Dads grieve too.

The people in our loss community say it often and we say it with such passion.

Dads grieve too.

However, right after we finish that statement the discomfort settles in. A question inevitably arises:

Yes, dads grieve, but, *how do we support them in their grief?* There's a lot we can do.

We can:

- ♥ Listen to their stories and to their silence.
- ♥ Recognize and honor their fatherhood in its many iterations.

But, there is something we can't do for them. ***We can't be fathers.***

Grieving dads need other grieving dads.

They need the words and the support and the companionship of other fathers like them.

- ♥ Fathers who have known loss and who are living lives touched by grief.
- ♥ Fathers who know what it's like to hold the hands of their child's mother (or partner) as the helplessness takes hold.
- ♥ They need to share experiences with someone who has also paced hospital floors in despair and sat in uncomfortable chairs while receiving devastating news.

Dads need each other.

Take a moment to consider what it has meant for you, as a mother who knows loss or infertility (or both), to read about another mother with an experience like yours. It means everything to you to know that there is someone out there who can empathize with your story.

Now, take a moment to consider what that could do for the fathers we know.

I considered this very idea and I reached out to this incredible community with a request: Please share resources for fathers created by *other fathers*. For me, it was crucial to gather content that was from other dads because that is what dads need. It was necessary to find dads with varied experiences who offered a variety of options.

Because that's what our fathers need. They need the options that the mothers in this community have. Instead of offering up one dad, I wanted to offer a community. I can now say with confidence that grieving dads are out there. There is a community of fathers out there and they are eager to connect with other fathers who have experienced the heartbreak of building a family and the overwhelming love that fathers have for ALL of their children.

Please share this list of resources with the dads in your life. Besides our own love and support, the greatest gift we can give our dads is the love and support of one another. Because dads grieve too, and they need other grieving dads.

RESOURCES FOR GRIEVING DADS

Blogs and Websites:

- [A Father's Grief](#)
- [Pine Cones and Study Days](#)
- [Daddy To A Rainbow & A Star](#)
- [Dads Grieve Too Series on Hannah Pontillo: Trying To Navigate Life After Child Loss](#)
- [Mia's Legacy](#)
- [Diary Of An Almost Father](#)
- [Shoebox Full Of Memories](#)

- [Pillars of Strength](#)
- [Grieving Dads](#)
- [36 Things To Do For Those In Grief \(Essay\)](#)
- [I Am Still A Father \(Essay\)](#)

Facebook Community Pages and Groups:

- [Dad Minus One \(Facebook Page\)](#)
- [Grieving Dads – To The Brink and Back \(Facebook Page\)](#)
- [Grieving Fathers \(Facebook Page\)](#)
- [Diary Of An Almost Father – Men’s Group \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [Sad Dad’s Club: MISS Foundation Support & Social Group \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [Grieving Fathers \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [Pregnancy After Loss Support – Group for Dads \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [The Grieving Dad’s Project \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)

Instagram Accounts:

- [@pine cones and study days](#)
- [@stilldads](#)
- [@pops and roos dad](#)
- [@robcruss](#)
- [@dadsgrivetoo](#)

Books (Links will bring you to Amazon page for book):

- [A Guide For Fathers: When A Baby Dies by Tim Nelson](#)
- [Grieving Dads: To The Brink and Back by Kelly Farley](#)
- [From Father to Father: Letters From Loss Dad To Loss Dad by Emily Long](#)

Retreats:

- [A Memory Grows](#)
- [The Uncharted Trail](#)

Article and Resources written by: Rachel Whalen

<https://stillstandingmag.com>

Let the Light In



Bleak. Exhausting. Raw. There will be plenty of days like this.

You know the ones. The days when no matter how hard you try, you cannot manage to see past the pain, when the weight of it all feels far beyond what you can bear.

The days when the future seems nothing short of daunting, when it seems you will always be surrounded by darkness. The days when everything feels like a trigger, when tears are ever-present and threaten to spill over at the slightest provocation.



Yes, there will be plenty of days like this. But on occasion, you may notice something more – a glimpse of light, of hope, perhaps even joy.

When these moments arise, please do your aching heart a favor. Grant yourself permission to feel something beyond the pain and despair. Quiet the guilty voices in your mind, and embrace these moments, no matter how fleeting they may be. No one can survive within grief's deepest trenches forever.



It is necessary to come up for air, to rise to the surface and find life again. I assure you, doing so does not mean that you have moved on, nor that you have forgotten your child. No, certainly not. It means, rather, that you are finding courage in a world that feels so very different from anything you have ever known.

It means that you are choosing to live, an opportunity never afforded to your child. And in doing so, you are honoring this precious child of yours.

In the time that has passed since my daughter's death, I have found that her presence feels most palpable when I open my eyes and my heart to the wonder that remains in her wake.

I think of these moments, when life somehow feels beautiful despite her gaping absence, as gifts from my sweet girl. I encourage you to do the same.

When you feel a lightness taking hold, imagine that your child is speaking to you. This is your child urging you to lean into life, to soak up every ounce of it.

This is your child reminding you that you are worthy, that you deserve to feel the sun's warmth upon your face, to feel your heart soar.



This is your child telling you to hold on, that there is indeed beauty left for you in this life.

Go ahead. Let the light in.

Your heart deserves it.



Written by: Sarah Burg

<https://stillstandingmag.com>

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What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. You can choose from over one million organizations to support. (click on the link above for further information).

LOVE GIFTS

Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, sibling or grandchild in any amount. Donations received are used for our annual Candle Lighting Program each December, for sending our monthly newsletter via US mail and for community outreach. We are here to reach out to other bereaved families who may not be aware we are here to lend our support after the death of a child. Please send your tax-deductible donation to the PO Box below.

In loving memory of ALL our beloved children

If you wish to make a Love Gift donation, please fill out the information below and send with a check to:

The Compassionate Friends
Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter
PO Box 578713
Modesto, CA 95357

☐ Child, ☐ Sibling or ☐ Grandchild _____

Date of Birth_____/_____/_____ Date of Passing_____/_____/_____

Donation amount_____

Your Name_____

Telephone_____ Your email address_____

Your address_____ City_____ Zip_____

Would you like your gift listed in our monthly newsletter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling?

The amount will remain anonymous Yes ___ No ___

The Compassionate Friends is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible



Thank you 7- Eleven stores at
2500 Geer Rd., Turlock, CA and
3225 McHenry Ave., Modesto, CA
for sponsoring our monthly
newsletter!!

**Check out our closed Facebook page,
Modesto-Riverbank Area Chapter of
TCF. Make a request to join the page &
an Administrator will approve your
request.**

**Join us on our Instagram
account page. You can find us at -
*modestoriverbankarea_tcf.***

Our Steering Committee wants to provide the best possible support to each of our TCF Chapter members and friends. Please contact a member of the Steering Committee with any concerns you have or any ideas about how our Chapter can be of support to you and others. We're also available if you'd like to talk about your child or some aspect of the challenges of your bereavement journey. You can reach us by email at: tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com or by phone at 209-622-6786 or on Facebook.



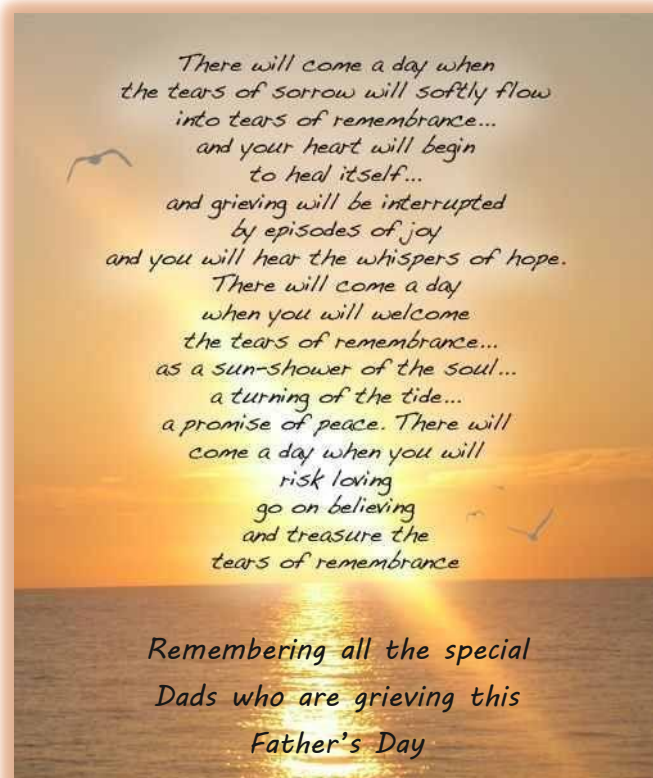
Visit our website for
information and to
stay up to date on
chapter events.

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org

Even in the
darkest night
the sun will
rise again



You can still get photo button made of your child, grandchild or sibling with our new button machine! Buttons can be made at 6:30 pm on our meeting nights. Bring an extra copy of a photo or a photocopy of it that can be cut into a circle 3" in diameter. Close-up photos usually work the best. You may bring a graphic design instead of a photo, if you wish. This will be a wonderful way to get acquainted with each other's children! Magnets are also available!!



Please remember to send in your child's
photo so that it can be added to the new
TCF Modesto-Riverbank website.

[Send photos to: scasity@comcast.net](mailto:scasity@comcast.net)