

TRINITY TRUMPET

Since 1973 Vol. 53 No. 2

FEBRUARY 2025

A Newsletter for Covenant Partners and friends of Trinity United Presbyterian Church, Modesto, California



The Wright Angle

Greetings, Church Family,

Churches are interesting creatures. They have history, personality, and distinct identities. Some are young, some are old, some are big, and some are small. All churches find themselves in one of two positions: they are either growing or shrinking. Shrinking is clearly concerning for churches because, like all living organisms, they do not want to die or be in poor health—they long to thrive and make

a mark on this world for the cause of Christ.

All churches start with the vibrancy and determination of a stubborn seed. They are typically planted in places where there are no others like them. This explains why there are so many “First” churches in communities. Like a healthy plant, new churches pop up full of zest for life, reaching for the sun, clear about their purpose, and looking out of place until they grow into beautiful “people gardens” and become part of the landscape of the communities where they take root.

Trinity certainly fits this model. For many decades, TUPC has been a beautiful “people garden” in the landscape of Modesto—always reaching for the sun, always seeking to fulfill the purpose for which we were planted, always serving Christ by serving others.

Now, I do not know much about plants (in fact, they often uproot themselves and run when they see me coming their way), but I do know that Christ compared the church and its effectiveness to plants—specifically fruit trees. We cannot escape the repeated teaching in both the Gospels and the writings of the Apostles that the church is planted to bear fruit. When a church bears fruit like a healthy tree, God is honored, and the life cycle of that tree is sustained. The fruit contains the seed, and the seed of today’s harvest becomes the fruit of the future harvest.

But what does a church do when it produces no fruit? How will it re-seed? How will the next season of harvest be bountiful? Growing churches are constantly bearing fruit; shrinking churches are not. This is not rocket science—it is simply life. The purpose of the fruit tree was set by God in the first chapter of the Bible:

The Wright Angle continued on page 2



TRINITY UNITED

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Preschool

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Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Craig Wright Senior Pastor

Rebecca Duque Administrator

Destiny Robles Director of Youth Ministry

Dina Guentensperger Music Director-
Traditional

La Mar Owens Music Director-
Contemporary

Marcy Wright Director of
Children's Ministry

Trinity Preschool

Cassi Torrez Director

Rebecca Duque Administrator

Char Wickman Circulation Manager

Thanks to many Volunteers!

DEADLINE FOR PUBLICATION

15TH

OF EACH MONTH FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S PUBLICATION

Materials are collated
on the fourth Tuesday
of each month.

The Wright Angle continued from page 1

"Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.'" (Genesis 1:29)

Here we see that a fruitless tree has no food value for humanity. Likewise, a church that bears no fruit offers nothing to sustain humanity—body, soul, or spirit.

I am so thankful to be part of a church committed to growing, a church that is faithfully fulfilling the purpose of bearing fruit for the cause of the Gospel. TUPC is a thriving "people garden," and we are providing nourishment to many, both locally and around the world. The fruit of any church is the service it offers humanity in the name of Christ—**GROWING CHURCHES SERVE OTHERS!** You see, it is not rocket science; it may not seem profound, but this truth is woven into the very fabric of creation. Churches die because they serve others less than they once did. Churches grow when they serve the world with diligence and joy!

All praise to God, because TUPC is a growing and serving church! Thank you for your faithfulness to the ministries of this particular "people garden." Thank you for the fruit you bear, and thank you for the contributions you give—your time, talent, and treasure. Whether you are a lifelong covenant partner or a recently planted friend in this beautiful garden called Trinity United, your service is the fruit that feeds the world, and we will thrive because of it.

Blessings,
Pastor Craig

December 2024 Finance Summary

Fiscal Year = September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025

	ACTUAL	
	December	Year to Date
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>		
Receipts	124,092	283,338
Expenses	61,760	251,951
Receipts over Expenses	62,332	31,387

In December, we brought in \$124,092 and spent \$61,760. This left us with a surplus of \$62,332 for the month and helped to cover our previous month's deficits.



*Dates with
Destiny*

tsm

trinity student ministries

This Month in Youth Ministry February 2025

This month, our youth ministry is diving deep into God's love. We're asking: What does God say about us as His beloved children, and how does that shape the way we see ourselves and the world around us?

We've got an exciting lineup of activities and opportunities ahead, and I can't wait to share them with you!

Here's what's coming up:

- Guest Panel: We're inviting a few couples from our church to join us for a fun version of The Newlyweds Game, where they'll share wisdom about relationships, faith, and life in an engaging way.
- New Youth Bible Study: We're starting a small group study focused on The Lord's Prayer, diving into what it means to pray and connect with God.
- Winter Camp: Yes, you read that right—WE ARE GOING TO WINTER CAMP!



Our students are so excited about this chance to get away, experience Calvin Crest in a winter wonderland, and grow deeper in their faith while making unforgettable memories.



Many of our students need winter and snow clothing to stay warm and safe—especially if it snows! If you have extra gloves, snow pants, boots, or anything that might help, please reach out to me as soon as possible. Your generosity makes such a big difference in helping these students have an amazing and comfortable time at camp.

Let's make this February one to remember as we focus on God's love and all the incredible ways He's moving in the lives of our youth!

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for the many opportunities You have given the youth ministry this winter to grow deeper in faith and community. We ask that You would guide them and open their hearts to Your leading and direction. Help us to remember to pray for our youth daily.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen.*



Cassi's Corner

Hello there, family and friends,

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” —John 3:16

How wonderful it is to know that God loves all His children so much that He gave His one and only Son. Teaching this concept to the kiddos in the preschool is so humbling. Seeing their little faces light up as they grasp how much God loves them fills your heart with warmth. It is truly special to hear the preschoolers give thanks to God for Jesus.

To celebrate the theme of love in February, each class will have Valentine parties filled with food, goodies, crafts, games, activities, and much more.

I'm excited to share that we're making some wonderful additions to our campus! Permanent shade structures are being installed in both the preschool and toddler play yards. Be on the lookout over the next few months for these great improvements.

As always, please keep the preschool in your thoughts and prayers.

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Welcome Eliana Jane Bishop, born January 1, 2025. Proud parents, Rebecca and Brian Bishop and proud grandmother, Terri McNabb.



Descants by Dina

Is Christmas Over, yet?

How many of you still have a few random Christmas decorations up at home?

Are you still singing Christmas carols to yourself? Me? I still haven't taken down the hanging sleigh bells in my foyer and am considering leaving them up year-round... just in case I need them for a choir piece, right?

The question is often asked: When is the official end of Christmas? There are people who claim that Christmas is over on December 26th. Still, others stand by January 6th to include all 12 days of Christmas, marked by Epiphany. Then there are those who wait, and wait, and wait. Is there a religious reason to wait so long? [Drum roll, please!] The answer is, YES!

February 2nd is Candlemas! Yes, you read that word correctly... Candlemas! Many of you may be asking, What's Candlemas? Although said to be one of Christianity's earliest religious celebrations, there are not many denominations still observing Candlemas. Of course, those of us who take our time putting away Christmas decorations now have an official excuse!

In many traditions, Candlemas is known as the Feast of the Presentation. It reflects the day that Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to be dedicated. If you read Leviticus 12, you'll see that women went to the temple for purification 40 days after giving birth. It was at that time that mothers took their newborns for dedication, consecration, and redemption in the temple.

Descants by Dina continued on page 5

Interestingly, there is some controversy as to whether Jesus was dedicated or simply presented on that day, as He had already been announced as the Son of God by the angel Gabriel and was born to redeem all of mankind. [I'm sure if we check with Pastor Craig, he'll be able to set this controversy straight!]

Why, then, is Candlemas called Candlemas? Wikipedia tells us this:

"The Roman church's custom of blessing candles by the clergy found its way to Germany. The German conclusion that if the sun appeared on Candlemas, a hedgehog would cast a shadow, making a 'second winter,' was the origin of the modern American festival of Groundhog Day, as many of Pennsylvania's early settlers were German."

The farmer's year began on Candlemas, and the servant's year ended. Also, the Virgin of Candelaria has been claimed in the Canary Islands to represent the candles and light.

So, there you have it! Candlemas on February 2nd marks the very last day of Christmas! Seeing the shadow of light on Candlemas or Groundhog Day, we'll know that the season is changing and that Lent is just around the corner. You can finally remove all of your Christmas decorations and prepare for spring! Before we know it, we will be singing of the joy of the resurrection at Easter!

God Bless You All,

Dina

Celebration of Guatemala Missions Luncheon

Submitted by Marcy Wright

Please join us for an all-church luncheon following the service on February 2. We will enjoy a time of fellowship over a tri-tip lunch and get a close-up look at the work Trinity United is doing in Guatemala.

Prime Timers

Submitted by Marilyn Sena



Prime Timers to Remember Childhood Days at February 1st Social

Attendees at the February 1, Prime Timers gathering are invited to reminisce about their childhood by bringing a photo of themselves as a young child (under age 14, if possible) and sharing with guests, who will attempt to identify them.

The group will be celebrating Valentine's Day with delicious food prepared by Trinity Chef Jim Bucknell, at 12:00 PM in the Telle Center, followed by Lisa Traughber playing handbells, a devotional by Dana Coates, and prayers.

All adults are invited to attend the social time with fellow Trinitarians and guests. A donation of \$10 per person will be accepted. Advance reservations may be made by calling Char Wickman, 209-523-6570.

Worship Service, Sermons, and Info Online at tupc.org

Use your computer, laptop, iPad, or smart phone to livestream online worship Sundays at 10:00 AM through the Trinity United website, on the TUPC Facebook page, or on YouTube.

Miss an online worship service? You can watch past worship services by logging on to Trinity United's website at: www.tupc.org and selecting "MEDIA" then "Worship" or "Sermons Video" from the menu.

You can also find other important information about the life of Trinity United on the website such as current and past Trumpet Newsletters and an active monthly calendar. Use social media as a tool to connect with Trinity United family through Facebook.

Children's Ministries

Submitted by Marcy Wright

February 2025

Sunday:

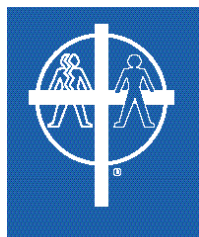
What are the "signs" John is talking about? Why do they matter? Join us to learn more about Jesus' power over creation.

Wednesdays United:

Keep those hammers swinging as we continue working on our bridge, reminding us that Jesus, as both man and God, is the bridge between man and God.

Children's Department:

The children's department is collecting empty egg cartons (1-dozen size) to share the gospel through Resurrection Eggs. Please give your empty egg cartons to Marcy.



Stephen Ministers

For information,
please contact: Liz Benson at
209-522-2390
All is confidential.

Bear one another's burdens and in this way
you will fulfill the law of Christ.

—Galatians 6:2 NRSV

Stephen Ministry provides one-to-one, confidential, Christ centered care to people in the congregation and the community experiencing life difficulties.

If you or someone you know is experiencing difficulties due to Covid, or for other reasons, and would like to discuss having a Stephen Minister, call Liz Benson at 209-522-2390.

Due to life transitions, Stephen Ministry periodically needs to recruit and train new Stephen Ministers. If you are interested in this ministry, please feel free to call Liz Benson at 209-522-2390 to discuss more fully.



Grace's food pantry stands just inside the narthex to the left as you enter the center doors of the sanctuary. You can help fill the pantry with non-perishable food items (please be mindful of expiration dates on each product) and when full, those items are taken to a larger local food pantry for distribution.

Bring your non-perishable food items (please be mindful of the expiration date) to Grace's Pantry, located just inside the narthex when entering the center doors.

- Canned Fruits and Vegetables
- Canned Meat or Fish such as:
 - Tuna, Chicken, Salmon
 - Chili, Stew
 - Corned Beef
- Cereal
- Dried Milk Products
- Grain Products
- Peanut Butter
- Pasta
- Soup

Trinity Resource Library

The Trinity Library continues to be open each Sunday following the 10:00 AM Worship Service and during the week as needed. All has been inventoried and new books are labeled and shelved for your reading pleasure. Drop in to the library and say "Hello" to your librarian Vicky Wolff.

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

FEBRUARY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Karen Chamberlain Jeff and Debbie Chin
2 Rich and Sue Colla Loi Collins	3 Hal and Lucy Conkey Walt and Leslie Cooley	4 David and Mary Couchman Marty and Karen Cox	5 Rick and Bonnie Crabtree Bryan Crabtree	6 Charlie and Sherry Crane Jenny Currie	7 Delma Davis Leonard Davis	8 Carol Decker Chris and Linda Dickinson
9 Bill and Leanne Donahue Tim and Trish Duncan	10 Rebecca and Earl Duque Robin Eldaly	11 Twyla Engel Renee and Fred Fellows	12 Elvio and Susan Filippi Frank and Betty Flaim	13 Bill and Joy Fox Debbie George	14 Darlene Ghiorso David and Judy Glaister	15 Sam and Claire Graham Roger and Janice Gray
16 Sarah and Chris Haberman Dick and Teresa Hagerty	17 Lynnsey Hardy Alicia Heim	18 Melinda Heim Chris and Marty Hennings	19 Devon and Rosalie Hill Brian and Stacy Hoekman	20 Lois Holm Sue Husted	21 Don Jepson Helen Johnson	22 Sharon Johnson Doris Jones
23 La Mar Owens Dave and Gayle Kerr	24 Duane and Susan Kirk Lilly Knight	25 Nannette Knockum Dyann LaMantia	26 Marilyn Lewis Sally Lindberg	27 Bert Lippert Robb Loeser	28 Sue Lorenz Eunice Lovi	

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| 1. Advancing Vibrant Communities
Michael Douglass
2. Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt
3. Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney, Bryan Crabtree
4. CRU Zimbabwe
Kelly and Vicki Londoni
5. Guatemala Trinity United
Mission Team: Marcy Wright | 6. IDEAS, Bangladesh
Dr. Jay Litchfield
7. Intersivity Christian Fellowship
Lo McDermott
8. LOVE Modesto
Jeff Pishney
9. Mesa Global
Todd and Sarah Hunnicut
10. Modesto Gospel Mission
Jason Conway | 11. Modesto Pregnancy Center
Erin Koolhaas
12. The MomCo
Marisa Hooper
13. Operation Christmas Child / Samaritan's Purse
14. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Liz Benson
15. Rock of Ages
Sidney Stone | 16. Servant Partners
Liz Heim Fung
17. Shalem School
Pastor Helcias Reyes
18. Valley Recovery Resources
Steve Berkowitz
19. Vine House
Cheryl Van Horn
20. Youth for Christ
Ken Sylvia |
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Pray for one of our supported Mission Families each day of the month.



TRINITY UNITED

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(209) 529-3228 | WWW.TUPC.ORG

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U.S. POSTAGE
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MODESTO, CA

WORSHIP WITH US!
8:30 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Onsite and Online
Fellowship after Worship in Telle Center

or Current Resident

LEADERSHIP

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMISSION:

Tuesday, February 18, 8:30 AM

DEACONS: Tuesday, February 4, 6:30 PM

SESSION MEETING: Monday, February 10, 1:00 PM

TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, February, 3 10:00 AM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, February 21,

10:00 AM-12:00 PM in the North Parking Lot

PDA MEETING: February 9, 11:30 AM

TUESDAY GROUNDS CREW: Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00 AM

WEDNESDAYS UNITED

5:30-6:00 PM Dinner in Telle Center

6:00-7:30 PM Bible Study Programs for everyone!

Childcare Provided

STUDY

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sundays, 8:30 AM, various locations
on campus

BIBLE STUDY: Tuesdays, 10:30 AM, Room #203

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Thursdays, 9:15 AM, Room #203

PRAISE

COMMUNION: Sunday, February 9

WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

FELLOWSHIP

CHOIR REHEARSAL: Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 PM

FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, February 1, 12:00 PM

THE MOMCO: 1st/3rd Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30 PM

TRINITY QUILTERS: Mondays, 12:00-3:00 PM, Telle Center

Electronic Version Online at www.tupc.org

See Online Calendar for changes.

Worship Services are livestreamed on www.tupc.org



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