



Since 1973 Vol. 52 No. 12

DECEMBER 2024

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



The Wright Angle

Holiday Greetings,

Wednesday, November 20th, we gathered for a service titled *“Tidings of Comfort.”* It was a wonderful time to pause, reflect, and remember. Tears, smiles, hugs, music, and candles always make a beautiful combination. The title of the service *“Tidings of Comfort and Joy”* comes from the 16th-century Christmas hymn *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* and was supposedly inspired by the experience of

the shepherds keeping watch in the fields over their flocks at night:

Luke 2: *“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”*

(By the way, I always read this and hear the voice of Linus from A Charlie Brown Christmas reciting it—I loved that show!)

Good tidings of great joy! Or, as the carol goes, *“Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, oh tidings of comfort and joy.”* Another passage from the 16th century comes to mind when I think of comfort and joy. The Heidelberg Catechism, in its opening question, asks: “What is your only comfort in life and in death?” The answer is profound: “That I belong, body and soul, in life and in death, not to myself, but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.”

We all know that the holidays can bring stress, and that annual celebrations often remind us of those we’ve lost. But we are not without comfort, and we are not without joy. The angels declared to the shepherds, “For unto YOU is born a Savior.”

Christ has come for you! Yes, Christ came to save the world, but He also came for you, personally. You are God’s dear child. I can almost hear the shepherds shyly responding to the angel’s message, “Um... are you talking to me?” And the angel would reply, “YES... unto YOU means you, unto you is born a Savior.” Be strong and of good courage, for God became

The Wright Angle continued on page 2



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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 Children's Ministry
 Coordinator

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

flesh to save you, to bring peace to your heart, and peace to this earth.

I am deeply moved at every *Tidings of Comfort* service I have been a part of. As so many join hands in small groups, share stories of loved ones now passed, pray together, and light candles in their memory, I always feel myself a little choked up. The sight of God's people holding each other in their hearts feels like the very presence of Christ in the room—it is wonderful.

So be comforted this season, knowing that YOU belong to Christ. And be comforted as well by the fact that you belong to a wonderful church family called Trinity, and to an even greater family—the body of Christ.

May the joy of Christ strengthen you in all things, merry people!

Blessings,
 Pastor Craig

October 2024 Finance Summary Fiscal Year = September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025

	ACTUAL	
	October	Year to Date
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>		
Receipts	49,906	104,962
Expenses	66,275	129,903
Receipts over Expenses	-16,369	-24,941

In October, we brought in \$49,906 and spent \$66,275. This left us with a deficit of \$16,369 for the month.

As we approach the end of the year, we invite you to prayerfully consider including Trinity United in your end-of-year giving. Your generous support helps sustain our ministries, outreach programs, and the upkeep of our beloved space, allowing us to continue serving our community and spreading God's love. Thank you for being an integral part of our mission.



*Dates with
Destiny*

t&m

trinity student ministries

'Tis the Season

Have you ever walked into a place and been instantly transported by the aroma in the air—perhaps to a cherished memory, a place, or a loved one?

This time of year has a way of evoking those feelings of familiarity and home. The scent of pies baking, homemade cookies cooling, and fresh cups of coffee brewing often fills the air, reminding us of comfort and connection. But as I reflect on these seasonal aromas, I find myself wondering about the aroma we, as Christians, carry into the world.

What if our lives gave off an aroma that drew others to the love of God? I know this may sound a bit unusual, but have you ever met someone who just exudes warmth and joy? Someone who makes you feel at home, even if you've just met them? There's something deeply beautiful about that kind of presence. This Christmas season, I want to be that for others. I want my "aroma" to reflect the joy, peace, and love of the Lord. I want others to sense that I've been "in the kitchen"—in God's Word, spending time with Him—so that His presence is what lingers around me. Not for the sake of being noticed, but because being close to Him is where I want to be.

Paul speaks of this in 2 Corinthians 2:15-16: "For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life."

This verse reminds us that our lives have the power to draw people closer to God—or even challenge them to consider Him for the first time. So, as we gather around friends and family or encounter strangers during this season, let's ask ourselves: Are we carrying the aroma of God's love and joy?

And let us be encouraged by Psalm 34:8:

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him."

May our lives invite others to "taste and see" the goodness of God and experience His love in a way that feels like coming home.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for the gift of Your Son and the joy we celebrate in this season. Help us to spend time in Your presence so that Your love, peace, and joy overflow from our lives. Teach us to carry the aroma of Christ wherever we go—to our families, neighbors, and even strangers. May our lives reflect Your goodness and draw others to You.

Challenge us to be intentional in showing Your love through our words, actions, and attitudes. Let us be a reminder of Your grace and a source of hope to those who are hurting. As we celebrate Christmas, may we never forget the reason for the season and the opportunity we have to share the gospel.

Use us, Lord, for Your glory, and help us to be a light that points others to the true home found in You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Blessings,
Destiny

Prime Timers

Submitted by Marilyn Sena



TIDINGS OF JOY to greet attendees at the Prime Timers December Holiday Celebration!

A musical yuletide celebration of the season will entertain guests attending the December 7th Prime Timers gathering at noon in Telle Center. Festive Christmas decorations will fill the hall as Trinity Choir members entertain attendees with holiday music.

Jim Bucknell, Trinity's resident chef, is preparing a special and delicious lunch served on real plates with silverware for the festivities. Guests are asked to donate \$15 toward the luncheon. All adults are invited to attend the event and join in the holiday celebration. Attendees may sign up in advance by calling Char Wickman at 209-523-6570.

Children's Ministries

Submitted by Marcy Wright

December 2024

Celebrate Jesus' birth Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights through Bible stories, games, songs, and crafts!



Cassi's Corner

Hello there family and friends,

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

—Isaiah 9:6

Happiness, joy, and love are what you will find around our preschool campus, especially during this Christmas season. All the fun festivities, activities, and learning about the birth of our Savior are happening within the classrooms. All the children love the Nativity story and learning about baby Jesus. They seem to relate best to the baby version of Jesus!

Our annual Christmas Pageant will be held on Friday, December 13th, at 6 p.m. All the classes will sing some songs on stage, and we will all enjoy hot cocoa and cookies afterward. This is such a fun event, and I would like to extend the invitation to anyone who would like to come.

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

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez





Descants by Dina

Dearest TUPC family,

Isn't Autumn wonderful? The air is crisp and clean, the temperatures are cooler, and anticipation is mounting for the upcoming celebratory months! Indeed, the holidays are upon us!

As we transition into a season filled with hope and renewal, it is with great excitement that I invite you to join us! The music department is buzzing with anticipation as we prepare for the season of Advent; a time, not only of anticipation, but one which is sure to uplift the spirits of everyone in attendance as well as those who are participating.

Music has the extraordinary ability to connect us to one another as well as to God. It transcends barriers, evokes emotions, and fosters a sense of belonging. This season, we want to intentionally embrace that power and invite each of you to engage with our music ministry in meaningful ways. Whether you are a seasoned musician or someone who simply loves to sing or play an instrument, your voice and talents are welcome here. For those of you with musical backgrounds, we invite you to consider participating in one or more of our ensembles: Choir, Brass, Handbells, Praise Team, or Percussion.

Each Trinity United Presbyterian service presents a unique opportunity to express gratitude, celebrate the season, and share the message of hope through music. We are reaching out to you, the congregation, to join us in this joyful endeavor. Invite friends, bring

your extended family, and enjoy expressing our love of Jesus through music! I encourage you to attend rehearsals and listen in, even if you are not yet ready to share your talents.

Our choir is always looking for new voices, and we encourage singers of all ages to come and lend their talents to our worship services. If you play an instrument, whether it's a piano, guitar, flute, or any other, we would love to incorporate your skills into our services. Music is a collective effort, and together, we can create an atmosphere that honors God and moves the hearts of our congregation.

As we embark on this new season together, let's remember that music ministry is not just about the notes we sing or play together; it's about the hearts we touch through our devotion to God and one another. Your involvement can make a profound impact, and together, we can create an atmosphere of worship that resonates deeply within our congregation and the community as a whole.

I encourage you to reach out, whether it's to ask questions or express your interest in participating. We understand that everyone's schedules can be hectic, especially during the holiday season, but our music leads are always willing to work with those who are extremely busy. Take that first step and come join us!

Please feel free to contact me directly after church or through email. Let us join hands and voices in this journey, as we bring our talents to honor God and share His love through music.

Blessings!

Dina Guentensperger



**BASKET OF
HOPE**

COMMUNITY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Every third Friday from 10:00 - noon

Packing Party Blessing

Submitted by Leslie Cooley



What a special time we had on October 27 at our Trinity Soup Luncheon and Packing Party for Operation Christmas Child! Thank you to the volunteers who brought delicious soups: Sandy Cooper, Chris Dickinson, Don Jepson, Sue Pehl, Marilyn Sena, and Paula Sherman. Thank you to ALL who have been bringing items to church since January. Thank you to those who filled those boxes with items for boys and girls in the name of Jesus! Thank you for writing love notes to each child... the notes of "Jesus loves you" and "I'll pray for you" and "Keep God in your heart." At the end of the day, you filled 101 boxes... 101 blessings sent to children around the world! Please continue to pray for the Operational Christmas Child ministry and the children and families who will come to know Jesus.

Collection Update

Submitted by Marlin Sena, Church Relations Coordinator

268 children will receive the encouraging word of love and faith in God through your Shoeboxes this year. Thank you for your participation in Operation Christmas Child's Shoebox project. Many of the children who receive a Shoebox, will hear the Good News of Jesus and His Love for them for the very first time and be able to attend a twelve-week disciple training class, called "The Greatest Journey," educating them in Christianity.

Again, many, many thanks for your help in spreading the Good News through a Shoebox.

An Opus Handbell Christmas

Submitted by Lisa Traugher



Sunday, December 15, 2024, 4:00 PM

Trinity United Presbyterian Church
1600 Carver Road, Modesto, CA 95350
\$20/person at the door

An Opus Handbell Christmas is a collection of timeless traditional carols from our 2009 CD including:

- Christmas Angels Medley
- Gift of Peace
- Shalom Chaverim
- A Merry Christmas
- Swedish Christmas Medley and Wassail Song

You'll also be treated to:

- Believe from the Polar Express
- Ukrainian Bell Carol
- Coventry Carol
- and the lovely melody of Gabriel's Oboe

Please join us for this and more, as we reflect in bronze many Christmas favorites sprinkled with love and peace!

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Trinity Partner Willie Loeser died on November 3, 2024. A memorial service is planned for early next year.

Welcome Elora Noelle Fung, born November 11, 2024. Proud parents Liz and Jonathan Fung and proud grandmother Melinda Heim.

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

DECEMBER 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Christina Latino Merylyn Lewis	2 Sally Lindberg Bert Lippert	3 Robb Loeser Sue Lorenz	4 Eunice Lovi Wendy Lucas	5 Luther and Vicky Lundeby Monica Maddock	6 Les and Leslie Malakian Catherine and Alex Martinez	7 Patricia Mason Myrna McDaniel
8 Bob and Katie McGrew Richard and Isabell McKay	9 Ross and Lee McKenzie Ross and Kellie McKenzie	10 Terri McNabb Felix and Teresa Mejia	11 Judy Michaelis Jeanine Monteith	12 Jeanne Nelson Kathy Nelson	13 Roberta Ohland Tony and Chris Ott	14 La Mar Owens Debbie and Clark Pearson
15 Donna Pedersen Dale Pederson and Tara McDonnell	16 Sue Pehl Jim and Patricia Phillips	17 Dave and Rowena Pollard Becky Pombo	18 Dave and Peggy Prevette Gisele Pritchard	19 Mark Purdom Frank and Diane Quaresma	20 Diane and Mervin Reed Tom and Patti Reed	21 Jean Reeves Charlotte Reid
22 Denarly Reyes Alan and Patricia Reynolds	23 Dolores Roberts June Sargis	24 John and Tawn Shaffran Peggy Schaffran	25 Andy Schindler Tom and Liz Seaver	26 Marlin and Marilyn Sena Mike and Paula Sherman	27 Mike and Shell Siemens Lucille Sigala	28 Linda Silveira Kathy and Stephen Smart
29 Bill Smith Clay and Cindy Smith	30 Sookie Smith Donna Solari	31 Nancy Speltz Rose Steele				

1. Advancing Vibrant Communities
Michael Douglass
2. Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt
3. Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney
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

Pray for one of our supported Mission Families each day of the month.



TRINITY UNITED

1600 CARVER ROAD MODESTO, CA 95350
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WORSHIP WITH US!

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

LEADERSHIP

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMISSION:

Tuesday, December 17, 8:30 AM

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COMMISSION: Sunday,
December 8, 11:15 AM

DEACONS: Tuesday, December 3, 6:30 PM

SESSION MEETING: Tuesday, December 10, 5:30 PM

TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, December 2, 10:00 AM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, December 20,
10:00 AM-12:00 PM in the North Parking Lot

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

NO WEDNESDAYS UNITED: December 25 and January 1

**CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED: December 25, 27, 30, and 31,
2024 and January 1, 2025**

STUDY

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

BIBLE STUDY: Tuesdays, December 10 and 17, 10:30 AM

PRAISE

COMMUNION: Sunday, December 8

WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: Tuesday, December 24, 4:00 PM

FELLOWSHIP

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION, Saturday,
December 10, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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

CHURCH TRIP TO EAST SONORA THEATRE: December 12,
Bus Loads 8:15 AM, Leaves 9:30 AM, Returns 6:30 PM

FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM

PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: December 13, 6:00 PM

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, December 7, 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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