Since 1973 Vol. 53 No. 3

MARCH 2025

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



The Wright Angle

Greetings Church Family,

Here is a good question for us to ponder: "Does anyone other than me think it odd that churches are in decline while we are surrounded by a rising flood of lonely people—people who could use a friend?"

Churches often talk about 'friendship evangelism,' but the lonely in this world might be craving friendship more than another conversation about what happens when they die. Evangelism is great! We are called by Christ to spread the good news of God's love throughout the world. Evangelism is always one of the great ends of the church. You know, don't you, that missionaries—foreign and domestic—have always known that you cannot give gospel literature or evangelistic pleas to people who have had nothing to eat for days. We know we must feed the stomach and meet physical needs if we are to be effective in speaking to others about their spiritual needs.

This idea is intuitive. Someone dying of thirst may well be wondering what will happen when they die, but their primary concern is visceral and present—they need water! Likewise, people around us—apparently half of the people around us at any given moment—are dying of loneliness. Lonely people need to hear the Gospel. Sadly, many of them cannot hear it because of their great hunger for simple human companionship.

I wonder again, does anyone other than me think it is odd that churches are in decline while we are surrounded by a rising flood of lonely people—people who could use a friend?

It is time for us to imagine strategies to make the church a place where people come to find real friendship. It will be something different than what we (most churches) have been doing for quite some time. Cookies, coffee, and choirs—music and TV monitors—cutting-edge social media and fresh-cut lawns don't seem to be feeding the emptiness of the lonely around us.

All of our good intentions, the handshakes and smiles we offer on Sunday mornings, can feel like nothing more than 'concierge' Christianity. An excellent hotel concierge makes guests feel welcome and rises to take care of minor needs. Most concierges, however, are



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DEADLINE FOR PUBLICATION

OF EACH MONTH FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S **PUBLICATION**

Materials are collated on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

ill-equipped to deal with life's deeper issues. It is not their job to invite you to their home for dinner. It is their job to make your experience at the front desk pleasant enough to bring you back in the future.

Is that our objective in the church—to try and make guests' experience pleasant? Can you imagine a church so filled with compassion for the lonely that a visitor would find themselves experiencing a much deeper connection than a simple smile and a handshake? Imagine a church where believers want to get to know you, want to share their lives with you, and want to help bring you to wholeness.

When I imagine that, I see a church bursting at the seams. When I imagine the church strategically reaching out to the lonely, the disconnected, and the isolated, I imagine enough authentic energy to stem the rising tide of loneliness around us. I can hear Christ saying, "Well done, church. I was a stranger, and you invited me in—into your church, into your homes, and into your lives."

Please help me keep this conversation going. Together, we will see if we can turn back this cultural trend of loneliness—for people's sake and for Christ's sake!

Grace and Peace for your journey, **Pastor Craig**

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

	ACTUAL			
	January	Year to Date		
GENERAL FUND				
Receipts	62,429	345,767		
Expenses	69,890	321,401		
Receipts over Expenses	-7,461	24,366		

In January, we brought in \$62,429 and spent \$69,890. This left us with a deficit of -\$7,461 for the month, though our surplus from December leaves us with \$24,366 to date.



2025 ECO National Gathering

January 27-29, 2025

This year's ECO National Gathering at Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas, was truly a memorable experience! The church extended such wonderful hospitality, and throughout the week, I had the privilege of meeting some of their incredible volunteers and greeters. One volunteer shared with me how her grandparents had attended the church, and how much that community had meant to her, her children, and now her grandchildren. Her heart for the Lord and her love for her church family were so inspiring! It's a beautiful testament to the legacy of faith and community.



The week was filled with powerful worship sessions, engaging breakout sessions, and a meaningful pre-conference. One of the highlights for me was the opportunity to lead the call to worship on the first day. Sitting in the "greenroom" beforehand, I joined the worship leaders and ECO leadership team in prayer as we prepared for the service. It reminded me that, no matter the size of the event or the excellence of the technology, instruments, or resources, what truly matters is the heart of worship.

Whether you're leading from a stage, working a 9-to-5 job, volunteering in your church, or simply going about your daily life, you and I share the same calling: to worship God in all that we do. May we always remember that our lives are a reflection of His love and grace and that everything we do is an opportunity to bring Him glory.

2025 Night to Shine



February 7, 2025

For those who may not know, my sister Saylah and her husband, Justin, have been volunteering in the special needs ministry at Shelter Cove. Saylah has always had a heart for working with individuals with disabilities, and it's been such a joy to see how she and Justin have embraced this calling together. Last year, they volunteered at Night to Shine, a celebration of people with special needs that honors their value in such a unique and fun way.

Hearing about their experience inspired me to get involved this year, and I also encouraged a few of our students (Payton, Catalina, and Kylie) to join as "buddies" for the event. Each of them was paired with a guest to accompany throughout the evening.

The night was unforgettable! Guests were welcomed with a red-carpet entrance, complete with cheering crowds and paparazzi.

Dates with Destiny continued on page 4

There were hair and makeup stations, shoeshines, limousine rides, karaoke, a catered dinner, a sensory room, and a respite room for parents and caregivers. The night ended with dancing and a crowning ceremony, where every guest was honored as a king or queen—just as God sees them every day!

It was an incredible experience for all of us, and I look forward to involving even more of our students in serving at Night to Shine in the future.



Last Month in Youth Ministry February 12, 2025

This past month, our youth group celebrated Valentine's Day with a fun and insightful themed night. We were joined by two amazing couples: Mike and Paula Sherman, and Justin and Saylah Harvey, who played a version of The Newlywed Game. Through plenty of laughs and thoughtful questions, our youth got a glimpse into the beauty of love and marriage, rooted in faith.

A big thank-you to both couples for sharing your stories and wisdom with us. It was a night our youth won't soon forget!



PRAYER FOR THE YOUTH:

Lord, thank You for the many opportunities You have given our students to encounter Your love and grace. We ask for Your protection over each teenager: their minds, hearts, and overall well-being. Guide our church to see them with Your eyes and to make meaningful connections, showing them Your truth and love in every way. Bless our youth ministry, and bring the right people alongside them to encourage, support, and lead them closer to You.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



Breastplate of St. Patrick

What do you know about St. Patrick? Not many of us know very much about his history, except for the fact that we celebrate his death every year on March 17, hoping we don't get pinched if we accidentally forget to wear green that day!

A bit of trivia also helps us solidify our knowledge of St. Patrick's teachings by recalling the legend that St. Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the teaching of the Holy Trinity to the Irish, explaining the three persons in one God.

Let's look a bit at St. Patrick's history:

First of all, it's more or less agreed upon that St. Patrick was a missionary during the late 4th to early 5th centuries. He's known for bringing Christianity to Ireland, concentrating on converting the pagan culture. By the 7th century, Patrick was already well known as the patron saint of Ireland. Although he was never officially canonized as a saint in the Catholic Church due to the fact that he lived prior to canon law as it is known today, he is still referred to as Saint Patrick.

We also know that Patrick was captured by pirates when he was 16 years old, spending those years as a shepherd. He later became a cleric, which introduced him to writing. Two known works are still with us today: *The* Declaration, and The Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus.

Another writing many may recall is The **Breastplate of St. Patrick.** It is known as a lorica or hymn and is often referenced as *The Deer's* Crv.

You can listen to a beautiful rendition of The Deer's Cry in song here: https://www. youtube.com/watch?v=X3d3mzqqM58

Let us pray this prayer as we arise every morning in March.

In Christ, Dina





Bagpipes and Irish Pageantry to greet Prime Timers at March 1 Gathering

Prime Timer attendees will be treated to a rousing display of Irish music, history, and pageantry on Saturday, March 1, to celebrate St. Patrick's Day—albeit a little early!

Lunch, featuring Irish stew, salad, warm bread, and dessert, will be served at noon in the Telle Center.

Vicky Wolff has invited her Irish friends, Michael and Elisa Akard, to perform on the bagpipes and share their heritage with the group. Jim Bucknell will be cooking up the meal.

Guests are asked to bring their soup bowl, utensils, and a \$10 donation.



Hello Family and Friends,

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God." Psalm 20:7

God is good all the time! He continuously brings new families to tour our center and keeps us busy with getting families enrolled and off our waiting list.

We've had a few upgrades around campus to help improve the quality of care given. Umbrellas have been installed on both playgrounds to provide a shaded rest area for all ages. A beautiful plexiglass wall has been installed in the infant area to separate the sleeping area from the day-to-day activity areas while being able to supervise the sleeping children at the same time.

The preschool will be gearing up for Saint Patrick's Day, which will include festive photos, fun activities, and classroom parties to enjoy.

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

Many Blessings, Cassi Torrez



MARCH 2025

Oroville Mission Trip

Submitted by Ted Benson

PDA Oroville, California April 27 - May 3, 2025

Paradise, Times Five Fundraising Brunch Sunday, March 23, Telle Center 11:30 AM after worship

"Blessed are flexible, for they will not get bent out of shape"

You won't find this verse in any Bible, but you will find it practiced at every Trinity United Presbyterian Disaster Assistance outreach. Over the course of 17 missions in 18 years, we've spread the gospel of flexibility from the Gulf Coast to Tennessee, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, and at long last, northern California.

November 8, 2018 marked a turning point for the city of Paradise, California, and Trinity United's PDA team. At the end of another dry summer, wind gusting at 50 miles per hour roared out of the Feather River Canyon, snapping worn-out components on a 97-year-old PG&E power line, sparking an inferno that claimed 86 lives and 11,000 homes in Paradise, Magalia, and other communities in Butte County. Life in the idyllic mountain towns would never be the same.

Three hours away in Modesto, Trinity United's PDA team had spent years trying to explain how multiple levels of bureaucratic roadblocks made it nearly impossible to work in California. The expensive trips east of the Mississippi were getting old, as was our team. What would it take for us to work closer to home? Sadly, it would start with 86 lives lost, followed by an ongoing horror show of wildfires beginning with the holocaust in Paradise.

Getting started took some time. Missing a year due to a pandemic, supply chain shortages, and a permitting process moving with glacial rapidity, it was 2021 before our team was able to christen the PDA volunteer village at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Oroville and go to work in Butte County. Flexibility has been the watchword of every PDA mission outreach since 2007; California has been no exception.

Oroville's Tiny Pine Foundation became our first real outreach in the region. Alyssa Hofman, Tiny Pine's president and founder, introduced us to the world of tiny houses—dwellings small enough to fit on a 16-foot flatbed trailer. Our first week at Tiny Pine in 2021 found a few team members working on the 400-square-foot homes while most of the crew helped establish a distribution center serving fire survivors. All of this was new for us. Going with the flow made for an exhilarating week.

Returning to Tiny Pine last April, we were excited to find the organization entering a state of transition. Gone were the trailer homes, replaced by 650-square-foot permanent dwellings built on foundations at the homeowner's site. With the need for direct donations to fire survivors winding down, Tiny Pine was generating construction revenue through discounted sales to the public at the Oroville distribution center.

Half of the Trinity United team went into the field at a couple of work sites; the rest set to work at the distribution center, organizing, shelving, and pricing items throughout the warehouse. A few volunteers were able to stay an extra day, helping to serve a crowd of 500 customers at Tiny Pine's monthly Saturday sale.

An aura of homecoming permeated 2024's mission week in Oroville. Our commitment to 2025 was never a question of "if"—it simply was a matter of "when." Now that time is at hand. Starting on Sunday, April 27 and continuing into Saturday, May

Oroville Mission Trip continued on page 7

3, we'll write Chapter Five in Butte County's ongoing success story. Once again, our team will be housed at the "other Trinity"—Trinity Presbyterian Church, Oroville. For the third time in five years we'll be working with Alyssa at Tiny Pine, where our commitment to Paradise began in 2021.

The Trinity United Presbyterian family knows a lot about commitment. You've been an integral part of the PDA team from day one. You've been there over the course of 17 mission trips in 18 years. Your financial donations and prayers of support make all the difference. We couldn't do it without you—and we wouldn't even begin without the Lord's hand over all of this. It's our Trinity family that makes the difference in helping to bring hope out of chaos.

A tasty way to learn more about PDA's 2025 mission outreach comes in the form of a brunch in the Telle Center on Sunday, March 23 at 11:30 AM. We'll share stories and images from the 2024 mission trip along with our plans for this year's outreach—along with toothsome tidbits.

As always, there's no charge for the event; a freewill offering will be available. All you need to do is come with a healthy appetite, plenty of questions, and ample enthusiasm.

See you at the brunch on Sunday, March 23!

Guatemala Missions Update Submitted by Marcy Wright

We had a wonderful time of fellowship enjoying a tri-tip luncheon complete with homemade tortillas, highlighting the Guatemala Mission trip. Thanks to your generosity we have already raised \$7,400 towards our \$20,000 goal for materials. This money goes directly to the cost of wheelchairs, houses, bathrooms, beds, stoves, wash stations, and Bibles. Please pray for our team members and the families we will be ministering to in Guatemala.





March 2025

The transfiguration is our final week on Jesus' miraculous signs, showing He is God. It immediately leads into the Triumphal Entry and Last Supper.

Don't miss the completion of our bridge at Wednesdays United, hammering in the fact that Jesus is both man and God and, as such, is the bridge from man to God.

Communion Class: Wednesday nights, March 26 to Holy Week

This is an opportunity for children to learn what communion is all about. What do the Exodus and Last Supper have to do with what we do when we celebrate the Lord's Table?

Thank you for the abundance of egg cartons! We have all we need and are ready to move forward in sharing the Good News of Jesus' resurrection through our Resurrection Eggs at our Community Eggstravaganza. We are now in need of plastic easter eggs and individually wrapped small candy. If you would like to volunteer to lead a resurrection craft or game or come hide Easter eggs on Saturday, April 19, from 9:30-11:30, please let Marcy know.

Sharing Dur Joys and Concerns

Trinity Partner Jean Reeves died on February 5, 2025.

MARCH 2025



Calvin Crest Women's Retreat April 4-6, 2025

Submitted by Leslie Cooley

Hi Ladies... the Calvin Crest Women's Retreat is just around the corner! Trinity's Women's Ministry Team invites you to join us for a weekend away April 4-6. In this gorgeous mountain setting, you will experience connection with God, others, yourself, and Creation. This event is for women of ALL ages!

Registration for this Women's Retreat can be made by calling Calvin Crest directly at 559-772-4040. You may also register online at www.calvincrest.com

We will enjoy two nights lodging, five delicious meals, inspirational worship and teaching, and fun activities and adventures with other women. Lodging options include Mountain View Cabins or Cedar Lodge rooms.

Pricing:

Cedar Lodge - \$280.00 per person (Multiple Occupancy); Mountain View Cabins -\$230.00 per person (Multiple Occupancy)

**Campership financial aid applications are available upon request.

Our Women's Ministry Team is praying that ladies from TUPC will be a mighty presence at Calvin Crest this year. We are available to help you with registration or to answer your questions. Please contact Leslie Cooley for details at 209-402-1653.



Breathe Again Women's Conference March 8, 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

The Women's Ministry Team would like to invite you to a Saturday mini-conference with speaker Diane Vaccaro. Registration cost is \$15. You can register online here or on the patio.

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.

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar MARCH 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Wendy Lucas
						Luther and Vicky Lundeby
2 Monica Maddock	Alex and Catherine Martinez	4 Myrna McDaniel	5 Ross and Lee McKenzie	6 Terri McNabb	7 Judy Michaelis	8 Jeanne Nelson
Les and Leslie Malakian	Patricia Mason	Richard and Isabell McKay	Ross and Kellie McKenzie	Felix and Teresa Mejia	Jeanine Monteith	Kathy Nelson
9 Roberta Ohland	10 La Mar Owens	11 Donna Pedersen	12 Sue Pehl	13 Dave and Rowena Pollard	14 Dave and Peggy Prevette	15 Mark Purdom
Tony and Chris Ott	Debbie and Clark Pearson	Dale Pederson and Tara McDonnell	Patricia Phillips	Becky Pombo	Gisele Pritchard	Diane and Frank Quaresma
16 Diane and Mervin Reed	17 Charlotte Reid	18 Alan and Patricia Reynolds	19 June Sargis	20 Peggy Schaffran	21 Tom and Liz Seaver	22 Mike and Paula Sherman
Tom and Patti Reed	Denarly Reyes	Dolores Roberts	John and Tawn Schaffran	Andy Schindler	Marlin and Marilyn Sena	Mike and Shell Siemens
23 Lucille Sigala	24 Kathy and Stephen Smart	25 Clay and Cindy Smith	26 Donna Solari	27 Rose Steele	28 Kadyn Sutherlin	29 Abel and Terrie Tagre
Linda Silveira	Bill Smith	Sookie Smith	Nancy Speltz	Mike and Loretta Sutherland	Julia Swager	Bev Thomas
30 David and Cindy Tinajero Matt and Cassi Torrez	31 Dwight and Lisa Traughber Tim and Judy Tweedie	Advancing Vibrant Comr Michael Douglass Bethany Christian Servic Sandra Hiatt Bethel Ministries Interna Ben and Emily Mooney, CRU Zimbabwe Kelly and Vicki Londoni Guatemala Trinity Uniter	Dr. Jay Li es 7. Intervars Lo McDe ational 8. LOVE Mc Bryan Crabtree Jeff Pishi 9. Mesa Gli Todd an	itchfield E sity Christian Fellowship 12. T ermott M odesto 13. C ney S obal 14. F d Sarah Hunnicut L	Modesto Pregnancy Center irin Koolhaas The MomCo Marisa Hooper Operation Christmas Child / Jamaritan's Purse Presbyterian Disaster Assistance iz Benson Rock of Ages	 16. Servant Partners Liz Heim Fung 17. Shalem School Pastor Helcias Reyes 18. Valley Recovery Resour Steve Berkowitz 19. Vine House Cheryl Van Horn 20. Youth for Christ



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, March 18, 8:30 AM DEACONS: Tuesday, March 4, 6:30 PM SESSION MEETING: Tuesday, March 11, 6:30 PM TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, March, 3 10:00 AM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, March 21, 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

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, March 9
WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

FELLOWSHIP

BREATHE AGAIN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE: March 8, 8:30 AM-12:00 PM CHOIR REHEARSAL: Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30 PM FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM PDA MISSION BRUNCH: Sunday, March 23, 11:15 AM PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, March 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



