

Trinity Trumpet

Good News!

Since 1973 Vol. 52 No. 2

FEBRUARY 2024

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



The Wright Connection

I have volunteered to bring a simple message to our preschool kids every Wednesday at 10 am.

At first, I thought this would be a piece of cake, these kids are the same age as my grandkids, and I like my grandkids. I thought this would be an easy thing to do—spend a few minutes telling them a Bible story with a message, get some high-fives and hugs, and go back to work. Oh boy did I underestimate what this simple task consisted of? First, once all 30 or so of the 2 to 4-year-olds find your buttons, they will press them all at once. Now they have learned that

I am a bit playful and so they see me as a license to laugh and yell and the like. Second, they swarm me when they give their parting high-fives and hugs. Now, I had no idea that could be so powerful, but it is the difference between being hit by a gentle stream of water and being hit by a renegade ocean wave. But it is a wonderful wave to be sure. To have a bunch of preschool kids hooting and fist bumping and hugging you around the neck will give your spirit a lift. Now being theologically educated for so many years means absolutely nothing to that group of pups. It is hard to take our theological concepts and make them meaningful without being scary or alarming to 3-year-olds. In an adult setting, I can say Jesus loved you so much he went to the cross for you, but that is not the easiest thing to say to a preschooler. You must settle on just the “God loves you” part. They like that we sing “Jesus Loves Me” almost every time we meet. Now, this last week I wanted to tell them how much Jesus wants us to help others, especially others in need, so I settled upon the Good Samaritan parable, and from the start I knew I could not be as open with the story as Jesus was. How do you tell the little ones that an innocent man was robbed and beaten, all his



The Wright Connection continued on page 2

Connect with us
on Instagram
and follow us
on Facebook



SUNDAY MORNINGS

8:30 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM ONSITE AND ONLINE
11:00 AM Fellowship in Telle Center



1600 Carver Road
 Modesto, California 95350
 (209) 529-3228
 Fax: (209) 529-3351
www.tupc.org
 E-mail: tupc@tupc.org
 Preschool
 (209) 578-5625
tupc.org/trinitypreschool
 E-mail: trinitypreschool@tupc.org

Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Craig Wright Senior Pastor
Rev. Les Malakian Parish Pastor
Rebecca Duque Administrator
Becky Pombo Minister to Children
Destiny Robles Director of Youth Ministry

Trinity Preschool

Cassi Torrez Director
Rebecca Duque Administrator

7 days without God
 makes one weak.

Lisa Traugher Managing Editor
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.

valuables were taken, and he was left for dead? How do you tell them a priest and a Levite, the “righteous religionists” saw him and just kept on walking? How do you communicate the social juxtaposition Jesus embraced when he said it was a Samaritan—you know, the despised half-Jew, with the bad theology, who stopped to help and to heal a stranger? This is a visceral parable, with evil out front, corrupt religion center stage, and a stranger’s compassion to the rescue.

All I could tell these young ones was Jesus wants us to help others, and so he told a story about a man who helped another man whom others hurt. That might just be the perfect synopsis. Now grown-ups, yes, I am speaking to you, you know that Jesus told this story when He was asked insincerely by a pharisee, “Who is my neighbor?” No doubt looking for a loophole in the law. Luke wrote “But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus told the story and then asked the Pharisee, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Bad Religion it seems has a way of giving us permission to help some and bypass others, and to feel justified in doing so. The same Jesus that has commanded us to love our enemies and to bless those that curse us, has instructed us brilliantly in this dynamic parable. And no matter how you parse the Greek, no matter how you drag this parable through whatever filter you have, the message is the same one I gave to the precious little ones on Wednesday, “God wants you to help everyone in need.” Childlike faith is not complicated, grown-up faith certainly can be. May the spirit of Christ remind each of us that love means love, help means help and everyone in need means everyone in need. To quote the Mandalorian who stole a line from Jesus, “This is the way!”

And big blessings and a great big shout out to all our preschool teachers and workers who are experts at loving these kids. Thank them when you see them.

Blessings to you all,
 Pastor Craig

December 2023 Finance Summary

Fiscal Year = September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024

	ACTUAL	
	December	Year to Date
GENERAL FUND		
Receipts	\$ 153,571	\$ 341,816
Expenses	73,389	306,272
Receipts over Expenses	\$ 80,182	\$ 35,544



More from Les

...easily offended...

Leslie and I have been watching “Barney Miller” reruns and find ourselves laughing out loud. Then we stop to realize that much of the material would not be acceptable today. I was watching some old Johnny Carson reruns and realized the same thing; old humor that would be considered inappropriate today. You can hardly tell a joke or make a comment without offending someone. Certainly, some humor and comments are truly inappropriate and should be silenced, but do you think it might be possible we are “wearing our feelings on our shirt sleeves” far too much nowadays? Must our first reaction be to “take offense” let alone assume the worst about the one who spoke? I’m probably exaggerating, but it seems to me everybody is so “uptight,” or at least most everybody. I sometimes even find myself being “easily offended” and try to catch myself before it is too late.

Biblical advice is always the best advice so, for example, look at these Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 13:5, Proverbs 19:11, and James 1:19.

God Bless You,
Pastor Les
Matthew 6:33

Sharing Our Concerns

DEATHS: Marilyn Howell Schindler died on Saturday, January 6, 2024. Her Celebration of Life service and reception was held here on Saturday, January 13, 2024.

Wes Hall died on January 12, 2024. His Celebration of Life service and reception will be held here on Saturday, February 10, 2024 at 2:00 PM.

Bible Study Classes Continue

Book of Daniel—Sunday at 8:30 AM

Daniel served as a prophet of God during the years of the Babylonian/Persian exile. He was also a member of the ancient magi in Babylon, as were his friends: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. This class will study the man Daniel, the historical context for the book of Daniel, the story of God’s people in exile in Babylon/Persia, and Daniel’s amazing prophecies. Most class sessions will have three parts:

- 1) “What?” (what does the text say?)
- 2) “So what?” (what does it mean?)
- 3) “Now what?” (how will we respond?)

The book has 12 chapters, so after a week of introductory information we’ll take on one alluring chapter each week.

Come and join us and be blessed!

Dr. Dale Pederson and Tara McDonnell

Bethel Bible Series—Sunday at 8:30 AM

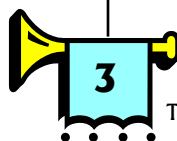
Regardless of how many Bible studies you’ve been in unless you’ve taken this unique overall study approach, you aren’t adequately informed! We are grateful to have a veteran teacher, Dennis Bray, who is willing to offer this class again. Come learn all the “ins and outs” of this GREAT study.

Gospel According to Luke—Tue. at 10:30 AM

Join Pastor Craig in Room #203 as we discover the Gospel according to Luke with a possible bump to Acts too! An obviously educated man who, as Colossian 4:14 tells us, was a physician. Luke learned all that he could about Jesus and shared his findings with us. Thus his Gospel provides a “step-back,” a unique perspective on Jesus’ birth, ministry, death and resurrection.

Wednesdays United

Join us each Wednesday evening for dinner at 5:30 PM in Telle Center then participate in a study until 7:30 PM to help broaden the scope of God’s Word in your life. Dinner, study, and activities are available



for all ages. The MomCo (formerly MOPS) also meets on the 1st/3rd Wednesdays. Childcare is available.

Parenting Classes have begun and a study on The 5 Love Languages will be offered beginning February 7th.



Becky's Bridge



Journey to Bethlehem VBS recap

First of all, I want to THANK Leslie Cooley for her tireless and enthusiastic work for our first Christmas VBS. Our staff was EXTRAORDINARY and the kids that joined us for the three days were so AWESOME to hang out with. We had 82 kids join us throughout the week and about 50+ staff join us. We ended our week with a Bethlehem Dinner on Wednesday evening with approximately 160 joining us. In other words, it was a great week of sharing Jesus with our kids from church, Garrison, our preschool, and the community.

Thank you, Trinity, for investing in the lives of our kids. The time, money, facilities, etc. are well worth it when we know that we have been able to plant seeds into their lives for these three days. Not only the kids but their parents and grandparents too. We may never know the impact of what we did this week, but we were called to be kingdom builders and we did it!

Thank you to our Journey to Bethlehem TEAM who worked tirelessly for 6 months.

- Leslie Cooley (chair), Stacy Hoekman, Pat Mason, Chris Ott, Destiny Robles, Paula Sherman, Cheryl Smith, and Cassi Torrez

Many of our staff played dual roles: being on the ministry TEAM, baking for our Bethlehem Dinner, preparing crafts, t-shirts, nametags, set up, and take down.

- Our woodcutters (many thousands of pieces were cut): Walt Cooley (chair), Mike Sherman, and Don Jepson

- And the many others... Sue Ellwanger, Cindy Zellman, Marlin Sena, Cindy and David Tinajero, Sandy Cooper, Kathy Cunningham, Pat Mason, Chris Ott, Paula Sherman, Char Wickman, Walt Cooley, Marilyn Sena, Cheryl Smith, Kylie Hallford, Verna Stroud, Mike Sherman, Rick Crabtree, Catalina Pacheco, Tami Massie, Juliana Gouveia, Bri Cummings, Jenni Calbreath, Teresa Mejia, Sherry Borders, Michele Bray, Linda Dickinson, Gloria Smith, Renee Fellows, Liz Benson, Jeff Chin, Payton Jones, Destiny Robles, Michelle Siemens, Cassi Torrez, Stacy Hoekman, Danielle VanZwaluwenburg, Tim and Judy Tweedie, and Jim Bucknell

- And, of course, our PASTORS: Craig Wright and Les Malakian

It was a pleasure to serve in ministry with all these people.

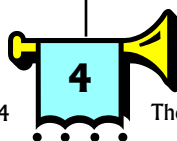


MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Wednesday March 27

AMAZING RACE FAMILY EASTER EDITION

5:30-8:00 PM



While enjoying a fun, Amazing-Race-style game to different locations in the story of Holy Week, kids will learn about Jesus' last week on earth. Families will be given clues to take them from location to location. In order to receive their clues, they must perform a task (game, activity, review, etc.) at each station. Their race will finally land them at the empty tomb where you can celebrate the fact that He is risen indeed!



Wednesday April 3
CALVIN CREST PARENT INFO NIGHT
5:30 PM Dinner
6:00 PM Program

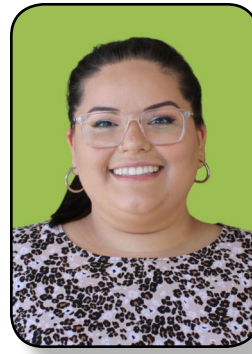
Our Camp Registrar (Cindy Zellman) will talk about registration, camperships, what to bring, our camp counselors, etc.

We hope you will join us!

July 22-26
TWISTS AND TURNS VBS
9:00 AM-12:30 PM

Spin the spinner, beat the clock, skip ahead, level up, and play to win! You'll need to bring your A-game for this VBS. Twists & Turns is a fantastical celebration of games of all kinds. From classic tabletop games to video games and more, kids will play their way through VBS while learning that Jesus guides them through all the twists and turns of their lives. They'll find that even when they mess up it's never "game over."

We would love for you to join us for these four days as we guide our kids in the Twists and Turns of Life with Jesus. If you already know that you want to join us, please call or email me. We will have recruitment time in May.



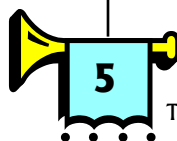
Dates with Destiny

As February unfolds, my thoughts are drawn toward the approaching February 14th, a day that holds significance beyond the widely celebrated Valentine's Day. This year, February 14th also marks Ash Wednesday, coinciding with our regular "Wednesdays United" program. It signifies the beginning of the Lenten Season, a period devoted to reflection and preparation for the observance of the cross and the joyous celebration of our Savior's Resurrection.

Traditionally, Christians embrace the challenge of giving something up during Lent as a form of spiritual discipline, a practice that directs their focus toward Christ. While contemplating this Lenten Season, I propose a complementary idea: not only giving something up but also picking something up—love.

Considering the harmony of Valentine's Day and the beginning of Lent, it seems fitting to choose love as a focus this year. In Colossians 3:14, Scripture encourages us, saying, "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony." Therefore, as we embark on this Lenten journey, let us intentionally embrace love as a central theme. May you, throughout this season, clothe yourself in love, experiencing the boundless love of Christ and sharing this love with others.

For all we know, our blessings are not the fruits of our prayers alone. . .but those of another praying for us.





Cassi's Corner

Hi Family and Friends,

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

—John 3:16

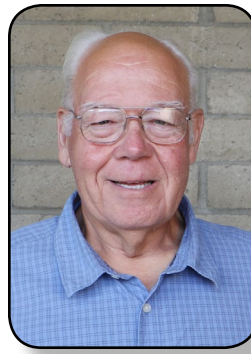
We can love because He loved us first. This is my favorite topic from the Bible to teach little ones. It is pure joy to hear the kids say that Jesus loves them and that they love Him back! The month of February brings this scripture to life because of Valentine's Day, and it brings all warm feelings to know that God loved us first. All the classrooms will be celebrating Valentine's Day with parties, activities, and passing out cards to one another. It is such a fun time, and it brings lots of parent involvement.

We will be welcoming a few more kiddos this month. We still have a hefty waitlist for all classrooms with tours and phone calls daily. What a blessing to have so many families wanting to send their kids to Trinity Preschool. Our two-year-old classroom had new flooring installed over Christmas break and the class is thoroughly enjoying it. It looks so great and really brightens and opens the room up.

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

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez

*When you feel you are "drowning"
in life's situations . . .
don't worry, your lifeguard
walks on water.*



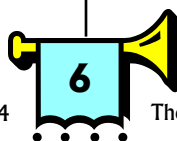
Meet Your Elder

My name is Donald Jepson. I am an Elder on Session. I became a member of Trinity United back in 1968. I became a Christian in 1967 when I was 20 years old. Trinity United has been my first and only church home. I was introduced to Trinity United by my girlfriend Kathy Taylor. We were married in 1969 in the first sanctuary built here at Trinity United on this site in 1963.

I moved to Modesto with my parents in 1947. Modesto was a small agriculture-based town of just over 25,000 people. I attended elementary school K through 4th grade at Tuolumne Elementary School. I finished elementary school at Beard Elementary and went to Roosevelt Jr. High. I graduated in 1959. We moved back to Kansas for two years while my dad built missile bases for the Air Force. I attended Dickenson County Community High School my Freshman and Sophomore years. I played football and golf. I really enjoyed golf. In 1962, my dad's missile base project ended and we moved back to Modesto. I enrolled in Thomas Downey High School. I majored in science. Also, I played football and lettered in golf. I graduated in 1964.

I enrolled at MJC the following year. My major was Chemistry. I met Kathy at MJC and we had a really nice group of friends with whom I still stay in touch. I transferred to Stanislaus State in 1967. I majored in Chemistry and have the first Bachelor's degree in Chemistry conferred by Stanislaus. Also, a group of us golfers started the first NCAA golf team at Stanislaus. I have my college letter.

Kathy and I got engaged in 1968, I had accepted Christ and joined Trinity United that



same year. In my senior year at Stanislaus, I was hired as a lab tech at Campbell Soup Co. I graduated in 1969. I started full-time as a Chemist for Campbell Soup. We were married at Trinity United a month later. I became involved in the life of Trinity United. Kathy and I worked with the Jr. High Youth group for several years. Kathy loved working in the nursery school program and eventually served as Director for 22 years.

I went back to school part-time at UOP in Stockton. I completed my Master's in 1974 and PhD in 1991 in Analytical Chemistry. I worked for Tri Valley Growers and Seneca Foods. I retired in 2012 as Director of Engineering and Technical Services for Seneca Foods in Modesto.

I have served on Session four or five terms. I enjoy helping wherever I can. I currently serve on the Finance and Personnel Commissions. When my wife Kathy passed away two years ago, I needed a focus and purpose. My prayers were answered just two weeks later. I helped coordinate and start the Basket of Hope Project that is a joint venture between Trinity United, Salvation Army, and Community Hospice. We are feeding over 60 families each month and have 20 committed volunteers to help every month. God is Good!



BASKET OF HOPE

COMMUNITY FOOD DISTRIBUTION



3rd Friday of each month
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Trinity United North Parking Lot
Call Church Office at (209) 529-3228
if interested in picking up food.

\$5/person (suggested donation)

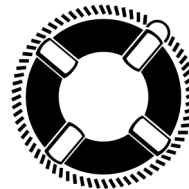


FEBRUARY 2ND

Ladies
BUNCO
Night

TRINITY UNITED
DOORS OPEN AT 6PM
SAVORY SNACKS + DESSERTS





Mariners Luncheon

February 3, 2024

12:00 Noon, Telle Center

Happy Valentine's Day luncheon, devotional, and program. Please RSVP to Char Wickman at (209) 523-6570 by Wednesday, January 31 for food preparations.

All Trinity United adults and guests are invited and welcome. Lunch cost is \$10.00 per person and please bring your own table service. This is a good time to visit and fellowship with others!

SAVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY
22

*Sciabica's
California Olive Oil*

OCTOBER
24

Apple Hill

DECEMBER
12

*Sierra Repertory
Theatre*

Join the Seniors Ministries on a trip in 2024

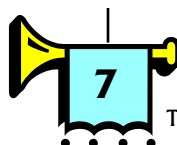
Sign up on the patio or contact Jeanne Nelson at 209-402-1506

Save the Date—April 26-28 Calvin Crest Women's Retreat Session II

Nurture Your Soul

Women rarely get a chance to get away and just BE. This weekend is a chance to be served and loved without having to worry about any details.

Join us for a beautiful weekend of worship, learning, rest, and recreational activities to replenish your soul.



FEBRUARY 2024

The Trinity Trumpet



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

Oroville Mission Trip

PDA Oroville, California

April 14-20, 2024

Stay tuned for future details and mark your calendars now to join us in serving others.

Paradise, Chapter Four

Fundraising Brunch

Sunday, March 10, Telle Center

11:30 AM after worship

Trinity's Presbyterian Disaster Assistance team is returning to Oroville for the fourth time, continuing the wildfire relief work that began in the Paradise community in 2021. Join us for a tasty, informative presentation outlining our ongoing effort to help our neighbors in northern California. Contact Ted and Liz Benson for more details.



Guatemala Mission Trip

Submitted by Marcy Wright

Join our team as we feed the hungry, house the homeless, listen to the hurting, and share the love of Jesus in Guatemala. We have two weeks available, choose one or stay for both, June 5-12 and June 14-21. For more information, please contact Pastor Craig or Marcy Wright.



Grace's Pantry

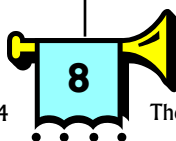
We continue to collect non-perishable food items and partner with the food bank of Big Valley Grace for distribution. Drop your items just inside the narthex Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM or on Sunday before or after worship at 10:00 AM.

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.

We continue to collect non-perishable food items and partner with the food bank of Big Valley Grace for distribution. Drop your items just inside the narthex Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM or on Sunday before or after worship at 10:00 AM.

- 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

*Always pray to have
eyes that see the best in people,
a heart that forgives the worst,
a mind that forgets the bad,
and a soul that never loses Faith in God.*



Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

FEBRUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Lee and Sandy Bucknell Reva Burchett	2 Greg Cash Mike and Barbara Cash	3 Mike and Kim Caskey Karen Chamberlain
4 Jeff and Debbie Chin Rebecca Clover	5 Rich Colla Loi Collins	6 Hal and Lucy Conkey Walt and Leslie Cooley	7 David and Mary Couchman Marty and Karen Cox	8 Norrine Coyle Bryan Crabtree	9 Rick and Bonnie Crabtree Charlie and Sherry Crane	10 Jenny Currie Milt David
11 Delma Davis Leonard Davis	12 Carol Decker Chris and Linda Dickinson	13 Bill and Leanne Donahue Tim and Trish Duncan	14 Rebecca and Earl Duque Robin Eldaly	15 Twyla Engel Kathy Evans	16 Renee and Fred Fellows Kay Fether	17 Elvio and Susan Filippi Frank and Betty Flaim
18 Bill and Joy Fox Liz and Jonathan Fung	19 Greg Fusi Debbie George	20 Darlene Ghorso David and Judy Glaister	21 Sam and Claire Graham Roger and Janice Gray	22 Sarah and Chris Haberman Dick and Teresa Hagerty	23 Lynnsey Hardy Tom Hardy	24 Saylah and Justin Harvey Melinda Heim
25 Chris and Marti Hennings Devon and Rosalie Hill	26 Brian and Stacy Hoekman Lois and Rex Holm	27 Sue Husted Don Jepson	28 Helen Johnson Sharon Johnson	29 Doris Jones Irma Kaelemakule		

- Advancing Vibrant Communities
Michael Douglass
- Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt
- Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney
- CRU Zimbabwe
Kelly and Vicki Londoni
- Guatemala Trinity United
Mission Team: Marcy Wright

- IDEAS, Bangladesh
Dr. Jay Litchfield
- Intervarsity Christian Fellowship
Lauren McDermott
- LOVE Modesto
Jeff Pishney
- Modesto Gospel Mission
Jason Conway
- Modesto Pregnancy Center

- Erin Koolhaas
- The MomCo
Jenny Currie
- Operation Christmas Child
Liz Benson
- Rock of Ages
Sidney Stone
- Samaritan's Purse

- Servant Partners
Liz Heim Fung
- Shalem School
Pastor Helcias Reyes
- Trinity Preschool
- United World Missions
Todd and Sarah Hunnicut
- Valley Recovery Resources
Steve Berkowitz

- Vine House
Cheryl Van Horn
- Youth for Christ
Ken Sylvia

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

WORSHIP WITH US!

8:30 AM Sunday School

10:00 AM Onsite and Online

Fellowship after Worship in Telle Center

LEADERSHIP

DEACONS: Tuesday, February 6, 6:30 PM
SESSION MEETING: Tuesday, February 13, 6:30 PM
STEPHEN MINISTRY: 2nd/4th Monday, 4:00 PM
STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING: Tuesdays, 3:00-5:00 PM
TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, February 5, 10:00 AM
WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM: Thursday, February 8, 3:00 PM
WORSHIP COMMISSION: Tuesday, February 20, 6:30 PM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, February 16,
10:00 AM-12:00 Noon 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

PRAISE

COMMUNION: Sunday, February 11
WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

FELLOWSHIP

LADIES BUNCO: Friday, February 2, 6:00-8:00 PM, Telle Center
B.L.A.S.T. and JOURNEY: Wednesdays, 2:00-5:30 PM
CHURCH TRIP TO SCIABICA'S OLIVE OIL: February 22
FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM, Telle Center
MARINERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, February 3, 12:00-2:00 PM
MUSIC REHEARSAL: Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 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



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram