

TRINITY TRUMPET

Since 1973 Vol. 54 No. 9

SEPTEMBER 2026

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



The Wright Angle

Greetings, Church Family!

On the second Sunday of August, I closed out our time in the parable of the prodigal son with a hard question: are we supposed to become the father in the story? Not just forgiven. Not just grateful.

But growing, over a lifetime, into someone who gives grace the way he did. The challenge of that sermon was a pretty high bar to reach, in fact, the highest bar. But this week I want to say something different: not a challenge, but a thank-you.

My father was a better man than his father. That's not a small thing, and I don't say it lightly. But as far as I know, he never set out to become like Jesus. That language, that ambition, wasn't handed to him. I inherited something different. For as long as I can remember, I've prayed some version of these words: *Lord, make me like you*. I'm still praying it. I haven't arrived, and I don't expect to this side of heaven.

But here's what I've noticed, watching that prayer get prayed, not just by me, but by so many others over so many years: it works. Slowly, unevenly, but it works.

I've had the privilege of knowing believers not only here but in churches all over, people who took discipleship seriously, who let the Holy Spirit keep sanding down their rough edges, and who, decades later, are simply the loveliest people. Patient in ways they weren't built to be. Generous past what you might predict. Quick to listen, slow to keep score. I think of the body of Christ sometimes as a bouquet, not one flower, but hundreds of different kinds, different colors, different seasons of blooming, and yet unmistakably arranged by the same hand toward the same beauty. I look out at Trinity some Sundays and I see that bouquet, and it is so beautiful!

That's the part I didn't say loudly enough last week: this call to become like the father isn't a solitary climb, and it was never meant to be one. We have each other: the encouragement, the



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Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Craig Wright	Senior Pastor
Rebecca Duque	Administrator
La Mar Owens	Music Director- Contemporary
Wade Patton	Director of Youth Ministry
Wendy Warner	Music Director- Traditional
Marcy Wright	Director of Children's Ministry

Trinity Preschool

Rebecca Duque	Administrator
Cassi Torrez	Director
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.

correction, the quiet example of someone three pews over who's been at this longer than we have. We have the Holy Spirit, who doesn't just point out the path but does the slow, patient work of growing us along it, often while we're too busy or too tired to notice it happening. And we have Christ himself, who isn't standing at the finish line with his arms crossed, waiting to see if we make it. He's ahead of us, pulling us forward, not shouting instructions from a distance, but living within us until we are formed in his image.

So if last week's sermon felt like one more thing to live up to, let this be the other half of it: you are not failing at an impossible task. Many of you are already doing this. I've watched it happen. I get to watch it happen every week. As Paul told the believers in Philippi, "He who began the good work in you is faithful to complete it!" I know so many of you are praying and investing your time and energy into a faith that is pleasing to the Heavenly Father. It is a joy to know you and to walk alongside you.

Blessings,
Pastor Craig

July 2026 Finance Summary

Fiscal Year = September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026

	ACTUAL	
	July	Year to Date
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>		
Receipts	\$48,457	\$693,937
Expenses	\$62,577	\$679,788
Receipts over Expenses	-\$14,120	\$14,149

In July, we received \$48,457 and spent \$62,577, which means we spent **\$14,120** more than we brought in for the month. For the church year so far, we are still ahead by \$14,149 since September.



A Moment with Marcy

September 2026

"Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

John 1:3

As creator of everything, God is over, or above, everything. That is the simple definition the children are learning of God's sovereignty. Children do not struggle as much as adults with the concept of someone being in charge of them, over them. As adults, we strive for independence and self-sufficiency. While that may be well and good, there is a very real danger of falling into the sin of pride. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon learned that lesson the hard way. Because of Judah's disobedience, **God** had allowed Babylon to conquer them.

Nebuchadnezzar should have recognized God's sovereignty when his dream of the statue representing four kingdoms was revealed to him by **God**. He should have taken to heart that **God** saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the flames he had them thrown into. He should have heeded Daniel's warning when he dreamed of the tree being cut down. But he did not. Instead, he was so filled with pride that he stood on the roof of the palace and declared that great Babylon had been built *"by **my** mighty power and for the glory of **my** majesty."* (Daniel 4:30)

King Nebuchadnezzar's pride was his undoing. Even as the words were still on his lips, he was banished to live as a wild animal for seven years. At the end of the seven years, when

his sanity returned, King Nebuchadnezzar changed his tune. Daniel 4 ends with, *"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble."*

God is creator of all and over all. God is sovereign.



Cassi's Corner

Hello There Family and Friends,

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart... And He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

Our school year has started off wonderfully, and we are looking forward to some cooler weather! Pastor Craig enjoyed being our barista and talking with parents at our Back-to-School event at the end of August. It's always a joy to have Pastor Craig around, especially if he is making us coffee!!

The kiddos were excited to start chapel back up with Mrs. Marcy, as they love to hear the Word in "big church." Marcy does chapel with the 2-year-olds and our Preschool and Pre-K classes on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM if any of you would like to join.

We have welcomed six new students, and they are doing well and thriving with new friends and teachers. As always, please keep the preschool in your thoughts and prayers.

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez

Just like that, we're back in school, and fall is drawing closer.

Our focus continues to be on the Family of God. All of our students have been blessed to come from some kind of family support. However, when they come to church, many of them don't see the church as a family. With much prayer and intentional event planning, we are introducing the students to the family of God. This will include visiting other youth groups and looking at family connections at Trinity. We will be highlighting key characteristics of family units and their daily functions. We intend to show how God set up the family in homes to model His own family. We solicit your prayers as we move in this direction.



A great start to this is the picture above. One of our own students participated in a summer CNA course through MJC and their high school.

What aspect of family does this picture show? Great question. It shows love and support. In this picture, we see the student's family, as well as the church youth group, coming alongside her and celebrating her accomplishments. What a great example of how families support

one another. This is also what God has done with His family. The greatest example is how He loved us, the world, enough to send His Son as a true support of His Kingdom. This is our focus for the coming fall.

Calvin Crest Men's Camp 2026

Submitted by Walt Cooley

Men of Trinity, make plans to join us for Calvin Crest Men's Camp, November 6–8. This annual weekend brings together men from around the Central Valley for worship, fellowship, teaching, great food, and plenty of time to enjoy the mountains.

Whether you come for the encouragement, the conversations, the outdoor activities, or even a round of Irish road bowling, Men's Camp is a great opportunity to step away from the usual routine and spend a weekend connecting with God and with one another. Reservations can be made at calvincrest.com/mens-camp. Rooms are available in Cedar Lodge and the Mountain View Cabins.

For more information, contact Walt Cooley at 209-402-3661 or David Zellman at 209-521-6396.

We'd love to see a full church bus headed to Calvin Crest this November!





Wendy's Writings



Dear Friends,

THE CHOIR IS BACK!

The choir thanks you for the summer break but is anxious to be singing as a choir again! But first, we want to thank those who have provided special music for us this summer: Joanne Neuffer, flute; Michael Cash, tenor; Wade Patton, baritone; Cindy Versperman, clarinet; Marissa Meredith, alto; Bruce Merchant, tenor; Robert Stone, trumpet; and Beverly Vanderlinden, piano and organ when needed! What a wonderful wealth of talent our friends have provided for our worship this summer! Thank you!

You may ask yourself, "Why all this music in worship? Why singers and different instruments? Is this something new?"

Let us take a short look at the book of Psalms to answer some questions!

The book of Psalms is the longest book in the Bible! It has been referred to as "the prayer book of the church." Many of the Bible's main ideas are expressed in the psalms, such as praise to God, thankfulness, faith, hope, and sorrow for sin. The psalms can be sung or

prayed by individuals or groups. Many of the psalms were written by King David, but there were other authors as well. Jesus used the psalms when he preached and taught, and they were referred to by other writers of the New Testament as well.

At the beginning of many of the psalms, there are notes "for the choir director" or "for the music leader," depending on the translation of the Bible. There are even instructions for the choir director for some of the psalms, such as "use stringed instruments" or "use flute."

But my personal favorite is Psalm 150, the second half:

**Praise God with trumpets
And all kinds of harps.**

**Praise Him with tambourines
And dancing,**

**With stringed instruments
And woodwinds.**

**Praise God with cymbals,
With clashing cymbals.**

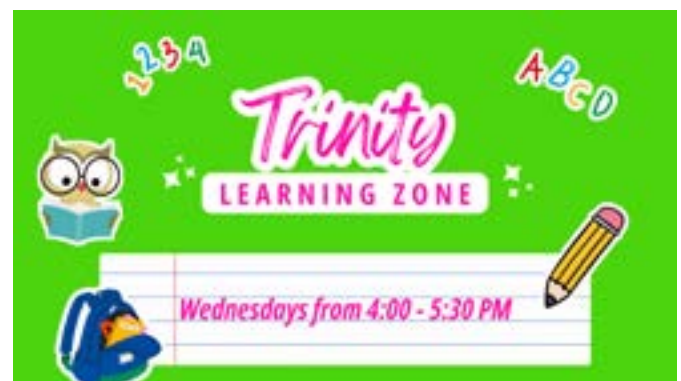
**Let every living creature
Praise the Lord.**

Shout praises to the Lord!

Amen.

Blessings to all!

Rev. Wendy Warner



Prime Timers

Submitted by Marilyn Sena



Prime Timers Luncheon Saturday, September 12, 2026

Please Note: The Prime Timers Luncheon will be held on the **SECOND SATURDAY** in the month of September due to a scheduling conflict. Then we will be back to our normal schedule of the first Saturday of every month. We will be celebrating the Red, White, and Blue as we observe Labor Day, Patriot Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, as well as Gold Star Mother's Day during the month of September. So be prepared to wear your Red, White, and Blue as we recognize our patriotism and dedication to our citizens.

It will be good to get together once again as we start our fall season.

Ladies' Bible Study

Submitted by Marcy Wright

Ladies' Bible Study will begin Tim Keller's study of Romans 1-7 on September 10. All ladies are welcome to join us each Thursday from 9:15-11:00 AM for a time of sharing, prayer, and study.

For more information, please see Marcy Wright or Julie Anderson.



Attention all you Knitters and crocheters!

Submitted by Leslie Cooley

We would love to have you make small (7" x 7") washcloths for our Operation Christmas Child boxes.

Please use 100% cotton yarn (available at Hobby Lobby, Michaels, and Walmart). You can put your finished washcloths in the OCC Joy in a Box in the church office.

Questions? Please contact Leslie Cooley at 209-402-1653.

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Our prayers of love and support are extended to family and friends of Louise McCluskey who died on August 13, 2026.

*We are devoted to love for one another,
joyfully welcoming the stranger,
eagerly expecting heaven's surprises!*

(Hebrews 13:1-2)

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

SEPTEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Deidre Wolfley Craig and Marcy Wright	2 Adelle and Joseph Yonan Jim Young	3 David and Cindy Zellman Twilla Zellman	4 Bob and Tippy Achterberg Cameron and Stephanie Anderson	5 Jeff and Julie Anderson Randy and Doreen Anderson
6 Ryan and Kate Anderson Twyla Anderson	7 Donna Bakker Diana and David Beal	8 Krista Beal Martha Beasley	9 Rob and Susan Beasley Silvana Beasley	10 Robert Beltran Ted and Liz Benson	11 Virginia Berry Barbara Bianchi	12 Joyce Blank Elizabeth Blixt
13 Esther Bradfield Phillip Bravard	14 Clayton and Lacey Bray Dennis and Michele Bray	15 Emily Bray Shirley Brooks	16 Marilyn Brown Elizabeth Bucknell	17 Jim and Monique Bucknell Lee and Sandy Bucknell	18 Reva Burchett Debra and John Carlisle	19 Greg Cash Mike and Barbara Cash
20 Mike and Kim Caskey Karen Chamberlain	21 Debbie Chin Rich and Sue Colla	22 Loi Collins Walt and Leslie Cooley	23 Sandy Cooper and Ron Meyer Marty and Karen Cox	24 Rick and Bonnie Crabtree Bryan Crabtree	25 Charlie and Sherry Crane Jenny Currie	26 Milt David Delma Davis
27 Leonard Davis Carol Decker	28 Chris and Linda Dickinson Tim and Trish Duncan	29 Rebecca and Earl Duque Robert Edson and Joyce Decker	30 Robin Eldaly Twyla Engel			

- Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt
- Bethel Ministries International
Bryan Crabtree
- Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney
- Calvin Crest
Tiffany Staman
- Cru
Kelly and Vicki Londoni

- InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
Lo McDermott
- Mesa Global
Todd and Sarah Hunnicut
- Modesto Gospel Mission
Jason Conway
- Modesto Pregnancy Center
Erin Koolhaas
- Operation Christmas Child / Samaritan's Purse

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Liz Benson
- Reclaim, Bangladesh
Dr. Jay Litchfield
- Rock of Ages
Sidney Stone
- Trinity United Basket of Hope Food Distribution
Jim Bucknell and David Zellman
- Trinity United Guatemala Mission Team
Marcy Wright

- 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.



TRINITY UNITED

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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, September 15, 8:30 AM

DEACON MEETING: Tuesday, September 1, 3:30 PM

SESSION MEETING: Tuesday, September 8, 6:30 PM

PRESCHOOL COMMISSION: Tuesday, September 22, 10:30 AM

STEPHEN MINISTRY: 2nd/4th Mondays, 3:00-4:30 PM

TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, September 14, 10:00 AM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, September 18,

9:00 AM-12:00 PM in the North Parking Lot

TUESDAY GROUNDS CREW: Tuesdays, 7:00-8:00 AM

TUTORING: Wednesdays, 4:00-5:30 PM

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

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

Starting September 10

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sundays, 9:00 AM, Youth Center

PRAISE

COMMUNION: Sunday, September 13

WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

FELLOWSHIP

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

FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM

MEN'S MINISTRY EXPERIENCE - CASTLE AIR MUSEUM:

Saturday, September 5, 8:00 AM

OVER 80's BRUNCH: Sunday, September 27, 11:30 AM

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, September 12, 12:00 PM

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

WOMEN'S MINISTRY - FALLING IN LOVE WITH JESUS: Saturday,
September 5, 9:30 AM, Telle Center

OFFICE CLOSED: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 FOR LABOR DAY

Electronic Version Online at www.tupc.org

See Online Calendar for changes.

Worship Services are livestreamed on www.tupc.org



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