



TRINITY TRUMPET

Since 1973 Vol. 53 No. 12

DECEMBER 2025

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



The Wright Angle

Advent Greetings, Church Family,

One thing I reflect on almost every year at this time is the lack of valley fog. It was constant when I was young. It was the scariest part of learning to drive at 16 years of age. Those winter days when you could not see five feet in front of your bumper were terrifying.

Fog messes with your mind. A study on drivers in the UK some years ago determined that people actually speed up in foggy conditions without realizing it. The landscape markers that normally give them a sense of their speed are shrouded and unseen. Without those markers, many drivers instinctively press on the gas to get out of the fog bank more quickly. But the safest thing to do is slow down.

That is a fitting metaphor for life. When we get stuck in the fog of our problems, not knowing what is in front of us, we can become more dangerous without even noticing. The things that assail us, disturb our peace, and take us off track can leave us in ruins by the side of life's highway.

I have gone through foggy stretches in my own life and allowed the negative things around me to hide the useful markers in my journey. It took a stark truth to shake me back into seeing clearly—to pull me out of the fog.

I will share that truth in a second, but let me ask you a question first: Have you ever heard a sermon or read a devotional or a section of Scripture and said to yourself, "Well, that didn't apply to me in the least"? You know the kind—some Old Testament law, some prophet railing against Israel for unfaithfulness, something you feel is far removed from your life. I bet we all feel that way sometimes.

The last half of the first chapter of Romans has always been like that for me. In it, the Apostle Paul calls out the ungodly people of the world for walking away from God. He says God has given them over to reprobate minds. Ouch—sounds harsh, right? He says that although they knew God, they did not glorify Him or give thanks to Him, so their foolish hearts were darkened. Well, I could easily check out of that passage because, after all, I am not one of those sinful reprobates—I am a Christian leader. I can read that and think of all the sinners in the world, yet fail to locate myself in that text.

Until I did. Suddenly and profoundly.



TRINITY UNITED

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Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Craig Wright	Senior Pastor
Rebecca Duque	Administrator
La Mar Owens	Music Director- Contemporary
Wade Patton	Interim 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.

The Wright Angle continued from page 1

I found myself in that list of sinners—but in the most shocking place. And it explained some of the fog I had been living in. Paul said of the sinful: "They did not give thanks to God."

Let me cut to the chase:

The degree of ingratitude we hold in our hearts will quickly equate to the dark fog that enshrouds us.

Paul said they did not give thanks, and their foolish hearts were darkened. That sounds like living in the fog to me.

We all agree that being thankful to God and others is a wonderful thing, but have we paused to consider the reverse—that ingratitude is not neutral but dangerous? It is a pathway toward darkness. While I praise God and seek to live faithfully with all the Lord entrusts to me, I must pay close attention to my thankfulness.

It turns out that ingratitude is not an empty space—it is an emptiness that harms the soul and can leave us crashed on life's highway.

So, if you are driving in the fog, slow down and live.

And if you have not given thanks lately—if you have not counted your blessings, told those around you how much you appreciate them, or bowed your head and told the Lord how thankful you are—slow down and just do it.

Gratitude will lift you above the fog of circumstances, and your journey will be both brighter and lighter. It has been working for me.

One more thing: I am so thankful for each of you and for the privilege of being your pastor.

Thanksgiving and Advent blessings to you all.
Pastor Craig

October 2025 Finance Summary

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

	ACTUAL	
	October	Year to Date
GENERAL FUND		
Receipts	\$71,455	\$122,866
Expenses	\$65,261	\$129,202
Receipts over Expenses	\$6,194	-\$6,336

In October, we received \$71,455 and spent \$65,261, ending the month \$6,194 ahead. That helps, but we're still \$6,336 behind for the year so far.

As we near the end of the year, we hope you'll keep Trinity United in mind as you plan your year-end giving. Each gift plays a part in supporting the mission and ministry of Trinity United.



A Moment with Marcy

December 2025

"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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord."
Luke 2:10-11

The great news the angels brought to the shepherds is still great news today. The month of December finds the children busy enjoying and sharing that great news. The Trinity Kids will present "Let Heaven and Nature Sing" on Wednesday, December 10, as a dinner theater during our Wednesday United meal (5:30 PM). Through song, dance, and sign language, the children will share that Jesus is the reason for

Children's Christmas Celebration

Saturday, December 13, 9:30-11:30



*Crafts, Games, and Snacks
Celebrating Jesus' Birthday*
Trinity United Church, 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto

the season, and Christmas is still a reason to burst forth in praise.

Saturday, December 13, from 9:30-11:30 AM, we will open our campus to our community children for a Christmas Celebration. We will share the Good News of the birth of our Savior, through crafts, games, and snacks. It is an opportunity to "bring good tidings of great joy to all people."



Cassi's Corner

Hello There Family and Friends,

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"
Isaiah 9:6

It's our favorite time of year... the time to teach all the kiddos about the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. It's a time of year where we are so grateful, thankful, and blessed knowing as the kids say it's Jesus' birthday! Happy birthday to Jesus, the King of all kings.

We will be honoring Jesus by having our annual Christmas pageant where all the classes, Toddlers through School-Age, will perform songs on stage in the sanctuary. It will be on Friday, December 19 at 6:00 PM. Please come and watch and enjoy some hot cocoa and cookies afterwards.

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

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez

Words
from Wade

tsm

trinity student ministries

Hello Trinity!

God has been so faithful with our students. You've probably seen a few of the students a little more in morning worship. That's because of the faithful volunteers we have that connect with our students. May God continue to strengthen and encourage them as we continue to move forward. Our average youth population in the room has been between 12 and 15 students.

Currently our focus has been on giving the room back to the students by making it functional. This means getting rid of clutter and repurposing spaces for practical use. Feel free to stop in and see some of the changes made. We know we're doing this right by the response of the students. When students use the couch space, we know we've done something right. We also know we are doing something right when the kids feel comfortable enough to take a selfie picture as a prank or just because they can.

We recently taught on three words, "Respect, Honor, and Reverence." These three words build upon each other both biblically and morally. Each word focuses on seeing or assigning value to a person, relationship, and God. We are using this as a building ground to help change the culture of the youth group and atmosphere within the Youth Center.

Please enjoy these pictures of our youth!



Trinity Kids Present



Dinner Theater - 5:30

Wednesday, December 10

Trinity United Church 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto



Wendy's Writings



A child is born to us! A son is given to us! And He will be our ruler! He will be called "Wonderful Counselor", "Mighty God", "Eternal Father", "Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

Dear Friends,

How do we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Christ? He came to us as a baby, just like any other baby. But He was not like any other.

In the Gospel of Luke (2:52) it is recorded that ***"Jesus grew both in body and in wisdom, gaining favor with God and [people]."***

In some ways He was very much like any other child. But from our vantage point, looking back on the history of His life, death, and resurrection, we can see clearly that He was, and is, our Lord and Savior, the Prince of Peace!

The question remains - How do we celebrate His birth?

That is a question for each one of us!

We may want to follow the example of the Wisemen and give gifts to those who are special to us.

We may also prepare a lavish feast as we would in honor of any other newborn.

We may want to publish an announcement of the birth of a relative or friend.

We may want to shout the announcement in song from the mountaintops! Or very quietly sing a lullaby to the wee baby.

Or we may want to do ALL of the above!

On Christmas Eve, we will be invited to sing "Hallelujah" in full voice for the baby! But then, we will whisper "Silent Night" to lull the Babe to sleep.

Join us on Christmas Eve at 4:00 PM.

Blessings,
Rev. Wendy Warner

Prime Timers

Submitted by Marilyn Sena

Joyful Sounds Will Ring Out at Prime Timers December Gathering

Sounds of Christmas will ring out at the Prime Timers gathering Saturday, December 6, when the group hosts the Joy Sounds Choir Christmas Program. The group represents the Christian Berets, whose passion is to care for and serve people with special needs. They continue to do performances at local churches, senior retirement homes, and recently sang the national anthem at the Miracle League of Stanislaus County. The group is under the direction of Brice and Sandy Ringsby.

A special tri-tip dinner prepared by Pastor Craig Wright will be served at noon, complete with holiday "fixings" and dessert, for a suggested \$15 donation. Table service and utensils will be provided. There is no adult age restriction and all are invited to come and enjoy the entertainment and fellowship. Reservations can be made with Char Wickman at (209) 523-6570.

At the group's November meeting, Margaret Wolfe displayed a 16-block quilt explaining the secret network of people, safe houses, and directions slaves in the South used to escape to freedom before the Civil War. The different blocks told the slaves which paths to travel, where to safely stay, how to dress to avoid capture, where to get food, even to watch the birds and geese for directions as well as the North Star. The program was thoroughly enlightening as to the issues faced by the people who lived through that period.





Happy December from the Women's Ministry Team!

The New Year is just around the corner! It is our desire to provide fellowship opportunities in 2026 for all Trinity ladies and friends.

These activities are for ladies of all ages and life situations. Listed below are the events we have scheduled thus far. Please put the dates on your calendars and plan to join us in fellowship. Details will follow.

Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study

Every Thursday morning from 9:15 to 11:00 AM in Room 203 we meet for fellowship, prayer, Bible study, coffee, and delicious treats. All women are welcome... please join us!

Lovin' Your Neighbor - Brunch and Valentine Card Making Party

Saturday, January 24, 2026 from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM

Calvin Crest Women's Retreat

April 24-26, 2026

Women's Garden Party Luncheon

Saturday, May 16, 2026... Pombo Garden
And more events to come!

Stay up to date on our website page,
www.tupc.org/women.

Thank you from the Women's Ministry Team

2025 Operation Christmas Child

Submitted by Leslie Cooley

What a wonderful time we had on November 16 at our Trinity Soup Luncheon and Packing Party for Operation Christmas Child! Thank you to the volunteers who brought delicious soups. Thank you to those who brought cookies. 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 over 100 boxes... for a grand total of 224 boxes... so many 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

Submitted by Marlin Sena, Church Relation Coordinator

"It's all about Jesus!" Praise the Lord that millions of boys and girls around the world will hear the Good News and open their hearts to God's love through the gift of a simple shoebox filled by you and other caring individuals. Thank you for caring and giving. Trinity Covenant Partners and guests were able to pack 224 shoeboxes this year.

God heard our prayers and answered them and now children somewhere in the world will experience His Love as well as your concern for them through your notes of encouragement and photos of you, your family, church, or other personalized mementos which are often the children's favorite shoebox items.

Once again, many thanks and blessings for your participation in this wonderful and very meaningful project to get the Message of Jesus and His Love to children around the World.

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

DECEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Tom and Liz Seaver Marlin and Marilyn Sena	2 Mike and Paula Sherman Mike and Shell Siemens	3 Lucille Sigala Linda and Butch Silveira-Odom	4 Kathy and Stephen Smart Bill Smith	5 Clay and Cindy Smith Sookie Smith	6 Donna Solari Nancy Speltz
7 Rose Steele Mike and Loretta Sutherland	8 Kadyn Sutherlin Julia Swager	9 Abel and Terrie Tagre Bev Thomas	10 David and Cindy Tinajero Matt and Cassi Torrez	11 Dwight and Lisa Traughber Tim and Judy Tweedie	12 Alma van Aalsburg Burt and Polly Vasche	13 Geneva Vasquez Chick and Lynda Venturini
14 Connie Vierra Kristi and Rob Warren	15 Char Wickman Judy Wiegman	16 Lynne and Chris Wilkinson Jenny and Ken Willmarth	17 Milly Wing David Witt	18 Margaret Wolfe David and Vicky Wolff	19 Deidre Wolfley Craig and Marcy Wright	20 Adelle and Joseph Yonan Jim Young
21 David and Cindy Zellman Twilla Zellman	22 Bob and Tippy Achterberg Cameron and Stephanie Anderson	23 Jeff and Julie Anderson Randy and Doreen Anderson	24 Ryan and Kate Anderson Twyla Anderson	25 Donna Bakker Diana and David Beal	26 Krista Beal Martha Beasley	27 Rob and Susan Beasley Silvana Beasley
28 Ted and Liz Benson Virginia Berry	29 Barbara Bianchi Joyce Blank	30 Elizabeth Blixt Esther Bradfield	31 Phillip Bravard Clayton and Lacey Bray			

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|--|--|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt 2. Bethel Ministries International
Bryan Crabtree 3. Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney 4. Calvin Crest
Tiffany Staman 5. Cru
Kelly and Vicki Londoni | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Intersarsity Christian Fellowship
Lo McDermott 7. Mesa Global
Todd and Sarah Hunnicutt 8. Modesto Gospel Mission
Jason Conway 9. Modesto Pregnancy Center
Erin Koolhaas 10. Operation Christmas Child /
Samaritan's Purse | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Liz Benson 12. Reclaim, Bangladesh
Dr. Jay Litchfield 13. Rock of Ages
Sidney Stone 14. Trinity United Basket of Hope Food Distribution
Jim Bucknell and David Zellman 15. Trinity United Guatemala Mission Team
Marcy Wright | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Valley Recovery Resources
Steve Berkowitz 17. Vine House
Cheryl Van Horn 18. Youth for Christ
Ken Sylvia |
|--|--|--|--|

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



TRINITY UNITED

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NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #131
MODESTO, CA

WORSHIP WITH US!
8:30 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Onsite and Online
Fellowship after Worship in Telle Center
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 4:00 PM

or Current Resident

LEADERSHIP

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMISSION:

Tuesday, December 16, 8:30 AM

DEACONS: No December Meeting

SESSION MEETING: Tuesday, December 9, 5:00 PM

TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, December 1, 10:00 AM

WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM MEETING: Wednesday,
December 2, 12:00 PM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, December 19,
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

NO WEDNESDAYS UNITED: DECEMBER 24 AND 31

**OFFICE CLOSED: DECEMBER 24, 25, 30, 31 AND JANUARY 1
FOR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY**

STUDY

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

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

PRAISE

COMMUNION: Sunday, December 14

WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: December 24, 4:00 PM

FELLOWSHIP

CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION: Saturday,
December 13, 9:30 AM

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

CHURCH TRIP-MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET: Thursday, December 4,
Bus loads 9:30 AM; Bus leaves 9:45 AM; Oakdale Pickup 10:10 AM

FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM

OPUS CHRISTMAS CONCERT: Sunday, December 14, 4:00 PM

PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: Friday, December 19, 6:00 PM

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, December 6, 12:00 PM

TRINITY KIDS MUSICAL DINNER THEATER: Wednesday,
December 10, 5:30 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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