



Since 1973 Vol. 53 No. 1

JANUARY 2025

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



The Wright Angle

New Year's Greetings, Church Family,

Some of you may remember when it was 1965, and 2025 seemed like, well, 60 years away. I clearly recall, at the age of 4, amid the post-Christmas morning chaos, taking a break from playing with my new Lincoln Logs to stare at the dust particles gently dancing through the sunbeams streaming through the living room window. In that moment, I found myself reflecting on the passage of time. I

imagined, as only a 4-year-old could, that in 60 years I would be drafting a newsletter article for a church somewhere in the Central Valley—NOT!

If you believe that, you might need to pray for me—you clearly have extraordinary faith! In reality, no one that young truly understands or even cares to comprehend the passage of time. By the time we begin reflecting on life, much of it is already behind us.

As a kid, I was certain that by 2025, we would live like the Jetsons, zipping around in flying cars. Yet here we are, and I don't see "flying cars" on the horizon—do you? Professor Adam Frank, an astrophysicist at the University of Rochester, wrote an article for ***The New York Times*** titled "***I Was Promised Flying Cars.***" Like me, he grew up imagining a future where personal hovercrafts were the norm. However, as an astrophysicist, he understands that technology is not what's holding us back from achieving those dreams—it's the universe itself. Gravity is the culprit. Frank writes:

"...for all our technological powers, we are still constrained by the deepest structures underlying physical reality. If one force can be easily manipulated at room temperature but another requires the power of a cosmic explosion, then those are facts we just have to work with."

Oh, gravity!

In so many ways, it's easy to look back and feel regret about time and its passing. And in today's fast-paced world, it's hard to predict what might happen in the next five years, let alone the next 60. Yet there is one element of time that is unequivocally ours to command: the present moment. Right now. Today. Each day—and indeed, each moment—is a gift of

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TRINITY UNITED

1600 Carver Road
 Modesto, California 95350
 (209) 529-3228
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
 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.

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time that belongs to us.

The writer of Hebrews instructs us: "...encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today" (3:13). The word "encourage" in this verse comes from the Greek word **parakaléo**. It's worth noting that para means "from close beside," and **kaleó** means "to call out." It's no stretch to understand this as something akin to "YELL IN YOUR EAR!" In other words, while it is still today, we are to encourage, exhort, and speak loudly to one another. God has given us today to soften our hearts and do His work, knowing that someday our rest will come. Today, we have much to accomplish together for Him—in this moment, in this day, and in this next year.

At TUPC, as we walk alongside one another, let us call out and encourage our sisters and brothers. Let us speak loudly into one another's ears, reminding each other that there is still time to do all that God has called us to do. And if today you find yourself disappointed that your car doesn't fly like the sci-fi writers promised, take heart—self-driving cars are the next best thing!

Someone once said: "Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is not here, but today is called the present—and the present is a gift." God's gift to us is today. May we use it to the fullest, bringing joy to this world and glory to our Lord every day of 2025!

Blessings,
 Pastor Craig

November 2024 Finance Summary

Fiscal Year = September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025

	ACTUAL	
	November	Year to Date
GENERAL FUND		
Receipts	54,285	159,247
Expenses	58,531	188,470
Receipts over Expenses	-4,246	-29,223

In November, we brought in \$54,285 and spent \$58,531. This left us with a deficit of \$4,246 for the month.



*Dates with
Destiny*



Finding Life in Small Groups: A New Opportunity to Grow Together

Spring 2025

Have you ever wondered what it might be like to connect with others on a deeper level, beyond Sunday morning greetings? Small groups provide a place to grow, flourish, and even find rejuvenation in your walk with the Lord. Whether you're looking for fellowship, Bible study, or simply a chance to meet new friends, small groups can be a place where God uses us to invest in and learn from one another.

One of the great privileges I've been entrusted with by Pastor Craig is to lead the charge in revitalizing small groups here at Trinity. This is a task I take to heart because I deeply love the Church. I've spent years studying church culture and ministry leadership, and my passion is to see the Church equipped and encouraged in every aspect of life. I truly believe that small groups hold a vital place in the spiritual growth and connection of all believers. I'm thrilled to see how God will use this ministry and what He will do here at Trinity United.

To make this vision a reality, we need your help. We're asking everyone at Trinity United

to take a few minutes to complete a short survey to help us understand the needs and desires of our congregation. Your input will guide us in shaping small groups that reflect the unique needs, life stages, and interests of our church family. If you're already a part of a small group, we'd love to know that as well so we can see how we can support and connect different groups.

Maybe you've been part of a small group before. If it was a great experience, we'd love for you to share that love and help others experience it too. If it wasn't the best fit, I encourage you to try again. Our new vision for small groups is to create spaces where believers can encourage, empower, and challenge one another on a smaller, intentional scale, showing love and grace as we grow together.

Small groups don't have to be a huge commitment. They can look different for different people—some may meet weekly, others biweekly. Groups may focus on a specific topic, life stage, or even a shared interest. Whatever the format, there's a place for you.

I've been in small groups where we had little in common (beyond our shared love for Jesus), and other groups that were very similar to me. In both cases, God worked through them, deeply challenging me to grow in different ways. The beauty of small groups is that your story matters. You can learn from others, share your journey, and be a blessing to someone else.

To help us launch this new season of small groups, please take a moment to fill out our survey. Whether you've been in a small group for years, are newer to Trinity, or are considering joining a group for the first time, your voice matters. (Again, please let us know if you're already a part of a group so we can connect with you and hear more about your experiences.)

Dates with Destiny continued on page 4



You can scan here or visit www.tupc.org/smallgroups to find the survey.

For those who aren't as comfortable with technology, no need to worry, we've got you covered! Paper copies will be available both in the church office and in the Narthex. If you choose to fill out a paper copy, please be sure to turn it in by January 22nd.

Let's step into this new season together, discovering the joy of doing life with others. Who knows? God might just use a small group to impact your life, and your faith, in big ways.

A PRAYER FOR SMALL GROUPS:

Lord,

Thank You for our church family here at TrinityUnited. We are grateful for how You have provided such wonderful people and friendships within this church. For those whom may be desiring deeper connections with others, we ask for Your provision of opportunities to extend a welcoming heart toward others. Open our eyes to see those in need of kind words, prayer, or even a shared story filled with laughter.

As we enter this new year, Lord, we pray that as a church, we would learn to love Your people each and every day and offer one another a listening ear and an open heart. Have Your way, Lord.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Youth Winter Camp at Calvin Crest

February 21st-23rd, 2025

A couple of years ago, we learned firsthand how unpredictable the season can be when a sudden snowstorm canceled our plans at the last minute. Even though we pivoted and had an amazing retreat at the church, the disappointment left some hesitant to

dream about camp again.

But this year, we are ready to step out in faith and embrace the unknown as we head to Calvin Crest for winter camp! This weekend is more than just a fun getaway—it is a chance for students to grow deeper in their relationship with God and each other. We believe God has something extraordinary planned for every student who attends.

From powerful worship to meaningful small group time, students will have the opportunity to encounter God in a fresh way and make decisions that could impact their lives forever. We are trusting God to work in their hearts, drawing them closer to Him.

Please keep our group in your prayers as we prepare for this incredible adventure. Pray for safety, unity, and a renewed hunger for the Lord in each of their lives.

A PRAYER FOR THE YOUTH:

Faithful Father,

Thank You for the amazing work You are doing in the lives of our youth. We are in awe of how You continue to show them Your love and guide them through every season. As they head to winter camp, we pray for each student to encounter You in a fresh and powerful way. May this weekend be a time of renewal and transformation as they take steps to grow closer to You.

Protect and guide them, Lord, and may they come home with a deeper understanding of Your purpose for their lives. We trust that You are doing something extraordinary in each of them.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Blessings,
Destiny Robles
drobles@tupc.org



Cassi's Corner

Hello there family and friends,

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

Happy New Year!

What a year it has been, and what a great new year it will be! We just wrapped up a busy holiday season at the preschool and are looking forward to some fresh, cool air to shake off the craziness and wrap ourselves in the warmth of sweaters, blankets, and God's love. We are excited to welcome some new families into the preschool this year and share the word of God with these wonderful kiddos!

Our winter camp for our school-age class will be in full swing this month as schools are out for winter break. The kids will enjoy activities like ice painting, marshmallow building, winter charades, and so much more!

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

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez

Trinity Resource Library

The Trinity Library continues to be open each Sunday following the 10:00 AM Worship Service and during the week as needed. All has been inventoried and new books are labeled and shelved for your reading pleasure. Drop in to the library and say "Hello" to your librarian Vicky Wolff.



Descants by Dina

Dearest TUPC family,

It's hard to believe that 2024 is over. It's even harder to believe that after Epiphany we wrap up Christmas until next December! As the year comes to a close, have you ever taken a personal inventory of the year we're leaving behind? Do you ask yourself about the high points, and maybe even the low points of the year were? Maybe you review the greatest lessons of the year and wonder if you would have done some things differently? Do you ponder what you'd like to accomplish in the year ahead?

The new year always carries one, important theme for us all... HOPE. We hope and pray for good health, fewer visits to the doctor, and more time with our family. Though our lives seem to get busier and busier with each passing year, we ask ourselves how we can fit in a little more prayer time. So, you're driving down the street, you hear a beautiful, Christian song come on your playlist, you feel the urge to pray, and when you reach your destination, you take a moment to do just that. In fact, after you pray, you can't seem to get the repeated lyric out of your head. Not only can it be part of your prayer, it can be a part of your praise time! In fact, when you're sitting in church and the lyric of a hymn or praise song sticks in your head, you may find yourselves singing it throughout the week! Sometimes you find yourselves thinking about the words of the song while you carry out your daily tasks.

That's what music can do to us. It can draw us in and ministers to us in ways we might

Descants by Dina continued on page 6

never expect. Music can speak to our hearts and touch our souls. With praise music, we feel a lightness of spirit while we lift our hearts and voices in praise. With more contemplative anthems, we take a moment to pause and listen to what the Lord may be saying to us through song.

In the coming year, it is my personal prayer that the music we present to you offers you a myriad of opportunities to pray, praise, contemplate, and meditate. When you feel the need to lift your hearts and hands to God, the praise music will be there to light the way. When what you feel you need is a spiritual respite so you can take pause and reflect, the anthems will be sung to offer the quiet moment to you all.

What's your music aspiration for this coming year?

Happy New Year to you all!
Dina

Prime Timers

Submitted by Marilyn Sena



"SOUPS ON" FOR PRIME TIMERS & GUESTS AT JANUARY 4TH SOCIAL

Bring your "soup bowl and spoon" and be prepared to enjoy delicious, homemade soups and toppings at the Prime Timers' meeting on Saturday, January 4th. Lunch will be served at noon and includes salad, bread, and dessert for a donation of \$10.

Attendees will be entertained with games and music following a brief meeting and devotion. All Trinity adult attendees and guests are invited to join in the New Year gathering to socialize, enjoy good food, and be entertained.

Reservations maybe made by calling Char Wickman, 209-523-6570.

Children's Ministries

Submitted by Marcy Wright

January 2025

On Sunday mornings, follow Jesus as He goes into the desert and stands strong against temptation, cools off by the sea and calls His disciples, and attends a wedding where He performs His first miracle of turning water into wine.

During our Wednesdays United program, put on your construction hats and get ready to build as we learn that, as both man and God, Jesus is the bridge from man to God.

PDA Mission Trip

Submitted by Ted Benson

Oroville Mission Trip Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Oroville, California April 27-May 3, 2025

PDA Organizational Meeting

Sunday, January 12, 2025

11:30 AM after worship and fellowship
Telle Center #503

Summer has gone, Fall has fallen, Winter is here, and it's colder than it ought to be...

Which means January is the perfect time to gather amid the warmth of good friends and fellow Christians to begin planning for Trinity United's Presbyterian Disaster Assistance trip to Oroville—a fifth year of mission outreach to wildfire survivors in Butte County.

Our first organizational meeting is Sunday, January 12, at 11:30 AM in Telle Center Room 503.

See you there!

Women's Ministry

Submitted by Leslie Cooley

Happy New Year from the Women's Ministry Team!

We're excited to provide fellowship opportunities in 2025 for all Trinity ladies. These activities are for women of all ages and life situations. Below are the events we have scheduled so far—mark your calendars and plan to join us in fellowship!

Thursday Morning Bible Study

Every Thursday morning from 9:15 to 11:00 AM in Room 203 we meet for fellowship, prayer, Bible study, coffee, and treats.

In January, we'll begin with a new book by Max Lucado, "You Are Never Alone." In this study, we'll be looking at the miracles of Jesus as told in the Gospel of John. All women are welcome... please join us!

Women's Conference

Saturday, March 8, 2025 – Telle Center

Diane Pehl Vaccaro will be our morning speaker, followed by a delicious lunch provided by your Women's Ministry Team.

Calvin Crest Women's Retreat

April 4-6, 2025

Women's Garden Party Luncheon

Saturday, May 17, 2025 – Cooley 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!



Blackhawk Museum Church Trip

Submitted by Margaret Wolfe



Blackhawk Museum, Danville

January 24, 2025

Join us for an exciting trip to the Blackhawk Museum in Danville! Explore six permanent exhibits, including:

- Classic Car Collection
- Spirit of the Old West
- Introducing China
- Art of Africa
- Pat's Compacts
- World of Nature

We'll enjoy lunch at the Olive Garden in Pleasanton. The church bus, driven by Walt, will be used. Space is limited to 25 riders, so sign up soon!

Cost: \$70.00 (includes transportation and museum entry). Reservations and payment must be completed by **January 12, 2025**.

Schedule:

- **Bus Loads:** 8:30 AM
- **Bus Leaves:** 8:45 AM
- **Bus Returns:** Approximately 5:00 PM

Questions? Contact Jeanne Nelson at 209-402-1506 or Margaret Wolfe at 209-996-8449

The trip committee is also planning more outings for 2025. Stay tuned!

Basket of Hope Project

Submitted by Donald Jepson

2024 Update

I wanted to take a minute to thank the wonderful volunteers who have enthusiastically supported the Basket of Hope Program these past two years. Our church has supplied 2,000 hours of volunteer labor to make this program a success.

The second year of the Basket of Hope Program was a big success. We have grown and expanded the amount of food provided to families in need of food. The Basket of Hope program has grown very fast over its first two years in existence. Since we started the program, we have distributed 1,950 baskets of food to over 1,460 families, which represents 4,600 individuals who were in need of food. The Basket of Hope program is reaching out into our neighborhood, our congregation, as well as partnering with a non-profit hospice group. We have seen growth in meeting needs in all of these areas. We are meeting the needs of families who are food insecure, and we are praying with family members who are requesting prayer and support to help them through times of crisis.

Basket of Hope at Trinity is one program that is part of a larger effort to feed the hungry people in Stanislaus County. We partner with the Salvation Army, which is the County Coordinator for food distribution. They supply the food to us, and we package and manage the local distribution for our program. The total annual need in Stanislaus County can be characterized from the following data: there are 100 distribution centers like ours in Stanislaus County, some larger and some smaller. We have 255,000 families, which represents 1,175,000 people who are in need of food in our county.

Again, I just want to say thank you for

your prayers, support, and your hard work to make the Basket of Hope program at Trinity a successful community outreach that is bringing Christ's love to our community in need.

JOHN 21:17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

Happy New Year!

Celebration of Guatemala Mission Luncheon

Submitted by Marcy Wright

Save the Date: February 2

All are invited to a Tri-tip Luncheon to celebrate Guatemala Missions following our worship service.



Trinity United will be busy serving God by serving others in Guatemala June 10-17. We have the opportunity to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and give the gift of mobility—all while sharing the Good News of Jesus' love. You are all invited to a Tri-tip Luncheon following our worship service on Sunday, February 2. We will take the opportunity to share more of the work we are doing there and raise funds for the materials.

For more information visit:

bethelministriesinternational.com

For more information, please contact Pastor Craig or Marcy Wright.

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

JANUARY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Mike and Loretta Sutherland Kadyn Sutherlin	2 Julia Swager Abel and Terrie Tagre	3 Bev Thomas David and Cindy Tinajero	4 Matt and Cassi Torrez Dwight and Lisa Traugher
5 Tim and Judy Tweedie Alma van Aalsburg	6 Burt and Polly Vasche Geneva Vasquez	7 Chick and Lynda Venturini Connie Vierra	8 Kristi and Rob Warren Char Wickman	9 Judy Wiegman Jenny and Ken Willmarth	10 Milly Wing David Witt	11 Margaret Wolfe David and Vicky Wolff
12 Deidre Wolfley Craig and Marcy Wright	13 Lynne and Chris Wilkinson Adelle and Joseph Yonan	14 Jim Young David and Cindy Zellman	15 Twilla Zellman Miriam Acevedo	16 Bob and Tippy Achterberg Cameron and Stephanie Anderson	17 Jeff and Julie Anderson Randy and Doreen Anderson	18 Ryan and Kate Anderson Twyla Anderson
19 Donna Bakker Diana and David Beal	20 Krista Beal Martha Beasley	21 Rob and Susan Beasley Silvana Beasley	22 Ted and Liz Benson Virginia Berry	23 Barbara Bianchi Joyce Blank	24 Elizabeth Blixt Esther Bradfield	25 Phillip Bravard Clayton Bray
26 Dennis and Michele Bray Emily Bray	27 Shirley Brooks Marilyn Brown	28 Grace Brummel Elizabeth Bucknell	29 Jim and Monique Bucknell Lee and Sandy Bucknell	30 Reva Burchett Greg Cash	31 Mike and Barbara Cash Mike and Kim Caskey	

1. Advancing Vibrant Communities
Michael Douglass
2. Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt
3. Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney, Bryan Crabtree
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
(209) 529-3228 | WWW.TUPC.ORG

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

or Current Resident

LEADERSHIP

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMISSION:

Tuesday, January 21, 8:30 AM

DEACONS: Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 PM

SESSION MEETING: Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 PM

TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, January 6, 10:00 AM

WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM: January 6, 10:00 AM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, January 17,
10:00 AM-12:00 PM in the North Parking Lot

PDA MEETING: January 12, 11:30 AM

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

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED: January 1 and 20, 2025

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, January 12

WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

FELLOWSHIP

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

CHURCH TRIP TO BLACKHAWK MUSEUM: January 24,

Bus Loads 8:30 AM, Leaves 8:45 AM, Returns 5:00 PM

FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON: Saturday, January 4, 12:00 PM

THE MOMCO: 3rd Wednesday, 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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