

TRINITY TRUMPET

Since 1973 Vol. 53 No. 7

JULY 2025

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



The Wright Angle **Warm Greetings, Church Family,**

At the end of each workday in Guatemala, we gather to share the stories of our day and reflect on how God might be speaking to us through this journey. One thing becomes clear year after year: so many of those who have so little seem to smile so easily. This brings to mind Jesus' teaching:

Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." — Luke 6:20 Jesus says, *"theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* He does not say, *"theirs will be,"* but *"theirs is."* That means those around us who are poor and poor in spirit (Matt. 20) have not just been invited into Christ's kingdom—they are already part of it. Jesus wants us to understand that their inclusion is not merely a future hope, but a present reality.

In the Old Covenant, God refers to the poor as *"My people."* And in Matthew 25, Jesus says that when we see the poor, we see Him. Christ comes directly to the poor and, as God incarnate, embodies the Father's unwavering love for them.

Reflecting on this beatitude from Guatemala feels different than doing so at home. At home, we tend to interpret it as a personal challenge with a future reward: *"When I become truly humble, I'll be qualified to receive the kingdom of heaven."* But in Guatemala, we meet the poor. We engage them with the love of Christ—and we are met with the biggest smiles and the warmest hearts. Their love, their gratitude, their sincere joy does not merely reflect a promise—they confirm what Jesus already knew.

Perhaps Jesus Himself witnessed what we now see: their joy, their zest for life, their openness to give and receive love.

Jesus taught that those filled with the world's goods often struggle with true happiness. But for those who live without such things, happiness comes more easily—through honesty, simplicity, and grace. So, Jesus sits down on a mountainside and teaches the world His kingdom values. He says: *'You, dear ones without the world's wealth or status—come in, sit down. There's a place at my table with your name on it. Your smile, your generosity, your joy shine brightly for all to see. Yours is the kingdom of heaven.'*

The Wright Angle continued on page 2



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Ministerial Staff

Rev. Dr. Craig Wright	Senior Pastor
Rebecca Duque	Administrator
Destiny Robles	Director of Youth Ministry
La Mar Owens	Music Director- Contemporary
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.

Each time we serve in Guatemala, this beatitude comes alive. Our teams are consistently humbled by the striking contrast we experience. Back home, we've been raised to believe that happiness is a byproduct of what we acquire. Many of us arrive in Guatemala carrying backpacks filled with accessories that cost more than the entire net worth of the families we're visiting. And then we step into their homes—simple, sometimes heart-wrenchingly humble—and our hearts are broken.

Subsistence living is hard for us to witness. And yet, there we stand, with outstretched arms and open hearts, as children dance around us like their lives are filled with pure joy. It happens every single time.

We think we're the ones bringing gifts, offering hope, changing lives. But again and again, it's the children, the parents, the extended families who pour joy into our hearts—as though they possess an endless reservoir.

This is why I imagine that when Jesus traveled to Jerusalem—to confront the powerful, to dine with the influential, to endure their cynicism and insults—He left exhausted and overwhelmed by the hardness of heart He encountered. But when He walked the side roads and gathered with the “poor in spirit,” His own spirit was lifted by the same kind of joy we find in Guatemala. The poor aren't just part of the kingdom of heaven—they are its finest emissaries. Through their eyes, and perhaps only through their eyes, we begin to truly understand the heart of Christ's teaching.

So again, who are the poor Jesus refers to? They are the overlooked, the weary, the broken. But call their names, meet their eyes, touch their hands—and they give you something far greater than anything you've brought. They give you joy. What an antidote to despair—spend time with the poor and the poor in spirit. Let them pour their joy into you. *“For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

James put it this way: *“Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom He promised those who love Him?” — James 2:5*

Oh, how I wish you all could experience the Sermon on the Mount from the beautiful hills of Guatemala—and be touched by the hearts of His wonderful people.

Dios te bendiga (God bless you),
Pastor Craig

May 2025 Finance Summary

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

	ACTUAL	
	May	Year to Date
GENERAL FUND		
Receipts	\$64,228	\$568,352
Expenses	\$57,150	\$568,199
Receipts over Expenses	\$7,078	\$153

In May, we brought in \$64,228 and spent \$57,150. This left us with \$7,078 more than we spent for the month, and for the year so far, we have brought in \$153 more than we spent.



TRINITY
KIDS

*A Moment
with Marcy*

July 2025

The children are continuing to learn about Elijah and Elisha. Through Elijah, God showed His omnipotence on Mount Carmel. Elijah was the messenger God used to warn King Ahab and Jezebel time and again. If you continue reading, you'll find that Elijah's successor, Elisha, was also used by God in mighty ways. While God is not calling us to hike up Mount Carmel for a showdown or to challenge King Ahab, He continues to work through His people. The Holy Spirit has given each of us gifts to use so that God's work may be done.

A huge thank you to everyone who used their God-given gifts to help with VBS! Because of your willingness to serve God by serving others, we were able to share the Good News—that we can trust in Jesus—with the children of our community.



TRINITY
PRESCHOOL

Cassi's Corner

Hello There Family and Friends,

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

Psalm 33:12

As we enter July, we have much to be thankful for and the ways God has blessed the preschool. We were able to purchase a new playground for the preschool side. It is fun, exciting and all the kiddos are having the best time playing on it! Please stop by the fireworks booth to show your support for the preschool—all proceeds will go towards a new playground for the toddler yard!

All the classes have been having fun with all the summer activities and just enjoying the hustle and bustle of the atmosphere of summer. We are looking forward to Farmer's Market week where the children try a variety of fruits and vegetables and learn how each grows.

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

Many Blessings,
Cassi Torrez

Summer Reading Club

Theme: Wacky Scientists

Wednesdays: July 9, 16, 23, 30

4:00 PM-5:30 PM

For incoming 1st-6th graders

Join us for a fun summer reading adventure as we explore books about wacky scientists and amazing discoveries! Each week, kids will dive into exciting stories that spark imagination and curiosity. Volunteers needed to help support our young readers.

See Stephanie Anderson for more details.



Dates with Destiny

Have you ever had someone make a statement or ask a question that lingers with you, one you keep returning to, wondering about its meaning? I've had moments where a simple question caused me to pause and reflect. Especially with those "what if" questions that are asked, as they can be surprisingly revealing, they can expose our deepest fears or illuminate our biggest hopes and dreams.

There's the "what if" that focuses on fear:
What if they don't like me?
What if this never happens?

And then there's the "what if" that invites us to dream:
What if this changes everything?
What if something beautiful comes from this?

These questions often reveal more about our hearts and minds than we realize. I've heard students ask, "What if I am not good enough?" and "What if I fail?"... and it's heartbreaking to see where their insecurities lie. But let's be honest: we've all asked those same kinds of questions, even as adults.

I wonder if it's that kind of fear-based "what if" that keeps some of us from reaching out to others, sharing our faith, inviting someone to church, or even stepping into deeper community. Recently, a student asked me, "Destiny, but what if they won't like me?" And I thought how could that be possible? And my heart responded with its own set of questions:

What if you are exactly what that group needs?
What if being with these people changes your life?

What if others are feeling the exact same way and are waiting for someone like you to break the ice?

And then I'm reminded to ask not just "what if," but "what is?"

What is the truth?

What does Jesus *The Way, Truth, and Life* say about this moment, this situation, this fear?

There's another kind of "what if" too, the kind that dreams courageously, the kind that pioneers and invents. Where would we be if no one ever dared to ask "what if"? What if someone hadn't believed it was possible to build something new, create something better, or challenge what had always been?

"If God is for us, who can be against us?"

So what if we actually believed what God says about us and our situation?

What if we truly trusted that we've been uniquely gifted and placed here, for such a time as this?

Then I begin to wonder about our church, Trinity United...

What if we became a church that boldly reached more people with the Gospel?

What if lives were transformed and healed in our pews and in our homes?

What if multiple generations worshipped and served together... being the Church in our community?

What if our pews were so full we needed 2 or 3 services? Or even needed to open the balcony?

What if preschool families felt so loved that Trinity United became their Sunday home? What if we had so many passionate new Covenant Partners that we had to plan additional classes just to welcome them all?

Dates with Destiny continued on page 5

What if we became a church with such a heart for missions that we sent teams both across the country and around the world multiple times a year?

What if our Tuesday Grounds Crew grew so large that we could begin blessing our neighbors and beautifying yards throughout our city?

What if God gave us an abundance of finances, not for comfort, but for Kingdom impact? What if we could partner with other churches or even plant a new one?

What if our sanctuary echoed with the voices of a full band and choir... recording music, hosting worship nights, and reaching others through song?

What if?

These aren't just dreams, they're prayers. They're vision. They're possibilities waiting on faith-filled action.

And maybe that's the point. Maybe the very "what if" that causes fear... *What if they don't like me? What if I'm not enough?...* is the same door God wants to use to grow your faith. What if He's asking you to see it differently?

What if the question you're afraid to ask is actually an invitation?

An invitation to trust Him more.
To step out.
To speak up.
To dream big.

Maybe today, some of us need to begin by going back to that first question the student asked... the one that lingers sometimes for us too: *"What if they won't like me?"*

And let's reframe it:

What if they do?

What if you belong more than you realize?

What if God is already going before you?

What if this step of faith changes everything... not just for you, but for someone else too?

Let's ask bold questions. Let's believe for holy answers.

Let's live like we know the One who holds every "what if" in His hands.

With gratitude,
Destiny

Celebrating 90 Years of Blessing!

Submitted by David and Cindy Zellman

We're excited to announce that Twilla Zellman is turning 90 years young on Sunday, July 27th! We, her family, would be delighted if you could join us for an extended fellowship time immediately following the church service that day. Please come celebrate with us as we honor Twilla and the incredible life and many blessings she has shared with our family and church community. Your presence is truly the only gift we ask for, but if you'd like to do something, cards are welcome.

We can't wait to celebrate with all of you!

Prime Timers

Submitted by Marilyn Sena



Prime Timers Agree to Summer Hiatus

The group will reconvene in September for food, fellowship, and various entertainment in the Telle Center the first Saturday of each month at 12:00 PM. Sam Graham has agreed to be the Master of Ceremonies for the year and will head the group's monthly committee meetings.

Other volunteers will be announced following a committee meeting in August.



Out of the Ashes

Submitted by Ted Benson

"God comes alongside us when we go through hard times... before you know it, He brings us alongside others who are going through hard times so that we can be there for them, just as God was there for us."

II Corinthians 1:4 (The Message)

Forests need fire. As incongruous as that may sound given all that Trinity United's Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been doing in Butte County since 2021, fire is a good thing for trees.

Forest fires were part of nature long before Manifest Destiny "civilized" the Golden State. An essential element in the process of clearing undergrowth, fire allows healthy trees to flourish. Following God's plan for forest management, California's native inhabitants utilized fire ecology long before the advent of the US Forest Service in 1905. Under the USFS, decades of total fire suppression resulted in forests ripe for burning. By the time the forest managers changed their tune, the match had already been struck.

As Smokey the Bear sowed, Butte County reaped. Beginning with Paradise in 2018, 23 significant fires have raged around Oroville, 16 of them in the past 3 years. Three-quarters of a million acres burned is just the beginning of the story. Timber lost is one thing; lives and property lost take the price of wildfire to a terrifyingly different level.

Prior to Paradise, the events that unfolded in

and around Berry Creek in 2020 would have stood apart for their sheer devastation. Sixteen deaths with nearly 200,000 acres burned in 24 hours would be headline news anywhere other than an American West already grappling with a hellish barrage of wildfires.

Amid a swarm of lightning-sparked blazes beginning in mid-August 2020, the event known as the North Complex ultimately charred 319,000 acres by early December. Fighting flames on multiple fronts, officials simply monitored the situation above Berry Creek until September 8, when winds gusting at 50 MPH drove the Bear Fire into the hamlet of 1,200 souls almost as fast as the "Code Red" evacuation alerts could be issued.

Sandwiched between Paradise in 2018 and the widespread devastation of Dixie in 2021, the Bear slipped off the national news radar quicker than the inferno began. Berry Creek became the forgotten fire—a footnote of despair in a blackened moonscape.

Fire survivors never forget their own. Witnessing the destruction of Paradise after losing her own home to a wildfire 10 years earlier, Alyssa Hofman reached out to the community by learning how to build tiny homes for the latest survivors.

That goal was admittedly optimistic. Having little experience of her own, Alyssa turned to online resources to learn construction skills. Buoyed by faith and a gift for rallying others to the cause, Hofman established Tiny Homes for Fire Survivors in December 2018 with the goal of building 10 tiny homes through donations and volunteers. Starting with portable houses on trailers, 20 dwellings were completed in the first year.

Trinity United joined the cause two years later. Focusing our mission outreach on northern California following a year's hiatus during the 2020 pandemic, Trinity's PDA team helped

Out of the Ashes continued on page 7

what was now the Tiny Pine Foundation move into a new distribution center at Oroville in 2021. While our construction work that year was limited, the enthusiasm for Tiny Pine had no bounds. By 2024 we were helping the group construct foundation-built permanent structures on survivors' land in two Butte County locations. Returning to Tiny Pine in 2025 was a unanimous conclusion.

Springtime in the Sierra foothills is a glorious time of year. Driving to our work assignments above Lake Oroville on April 28th, it was impossible to ignore the velvety green hillsides sprayed with the blues, oranges, reds, and yellows of various wildflowers. Amid the blackened remains of still-standing trees around Berry Creek, the vivid colors of spring jumped out in a silent witness of resurrection. If anyone needed reminding of Who was leading us here, the evidence was all around.

Forests need fire. The first sign of life following a major blaze are the wildflowers. Arriving at our first worksite on Bald Rock Road in Berry Creek, homeowners Ray and Teanea Bartley pointed out the colorful array at their door. "We're seeing wildflowers we've never seen before." It took fire to cleanse the forest floor, bringing seeds long buried back to life—death to bring rebirth.

In the case of Ray and Teanea, who were swindled by an unscrupulous contractor leaving them an incomplete dwelling with substandard workmanship, Tiny Pine was able to step in to correct the problems and move the job forward.

The first thing you notice about the Bartleys' place is the size. This is no tiny house—it's two stories with 4,000 square feet. While the primary focus of Tiny Pine remains small houses, it is possible to occasionally assist with larger qualifying projects thanks to Alyssa Hofman's general contractor's license. The big house is not just for Ray and Teanea,

either. Three generations of family live on the property; all will share in the new living space in the future.

Trinity's role in the Bald Rock house was a familiar one: installing insulation and sheetrock, followed by painting. Following a one-day blitz by the entire TUPC crew, our team split into thirds, with Jim Bucknell, Rick Crabtree, Rob DeKasha, Bob McGrew, and Mike Sherman installing siding on a tiny house outside Feather Falls while Esther Bradfield, Reva Burchett, and Jan Delavan stayed in Oroville organizing items for sale at Tiny Pine's discount store.

The rest of the crew—Liz Benson, Shirley Brooks, Kathy Evans, Patty Howard, Duane and Susan Kirk, Katie McGrew, Becky Pombo, Paula Sherman, and Jim Waterman—continued to work in Berry Creek. In all, some 19 team members participated, 2 of them (Kathy and Becky) first-timers with another 4 returning after extended absences.

At day's end, Trinity Presbyterian Church in Oroville was a welcome sight, offering more than just a place to shower, eat, relax, and sleep. PDA site coordinator Mike Ratto and various members of "the other Trinity" joined us nightly for dinner and devotions, extending the sense of family. The "why" of next year's return was never in doubt; it simply was a matter of "when"—the week of May 3–9, 2026.

Working with facilitators like Alyssa and Mike is an honor for us. As fire survivors, they're here for the duration. Working beside those who've made it through the Camp, Bear, Dixie, and other fire disasters, Trinity United's PDA team knows that recovery is a long-term commitment.

Our Trinity United Presbyterian family shares in that dedication. You've been an integral part of the PDA team from Day One. You've been there over the course of 18 mission trips in 19

Out of the Ashes continued on page 8

years. Your financial donations and prayers of support make all the difference. We couldn't do it without you—and we wouldn't even think of trying without the Lord's hand over all of this. The glory is His alone.

With humble thanks, your Trinity PDA Mission team:

Liz and Ted Benson, Esther Bradfield, Shirley Brooks, Jim Bucknell, Reva Burchett, Rick Crabtree, Rob DeKasha, Jan Delavan, Kathy Evans, Patty Howard, Duane and Susan Kirk, Bob and Katie McGrew, Becky Pombo, Mike and Paula Sherman, and Jim Waterman

Guatemala Missions Update

Submitted by Marcy Wright

This year the family that really stands out in my mind is not malnourished, though we met those and immediately pulled out snacks. They are not grieving over the loss of their beloved son and wondering how they will ever pay for his burial expenses, though we empathized with those parents. They are not awaiting medical help for a misdiagnosed injury nine months ago, though we were thoroughly frustrated that the spunky grandmother raising her orphaned granddaughters was left struggling to work due to her injuries. The faces of this family are not heavy with scars of physical abuse, though one dear lady's is.

This family does not stand out because of the horror of their situation. This family stands out because of their love for God and family. We were moved and challenged by being in their presence.

Darwin and Karin Lopez are raising seven children. They have very little. They do not even own the land they are living on. Both mom and dad attend church regularly. All the children come with them. Darwin works hard five or six days a week in the fields, but will not allow his teenage sons to quit

school and help support the family. These parents see the value of an education. They see the importance of giving their children the ability to move beyond the hard meager existence they are able to provide. They are completely committed to doing everything within their power to ensure that upon reaching adulthood, their children have a strong relationship with God and the ability to earn a living and escape the cycle of poverty. Darwin and Karin model God's love, a love full of action, committed to putting the needs of their children above their own needs.

At the end of each day, we were asked where did you see God today. We saw God's great love for us mirrored in these parents' love for their children.

Senior Ministries have two more trips planned for 2025

Submitted by Margaret Wolfe

The first trip is August 13, 2025 to Angel Island. We will take the Tiburon Ferry to the island and explore it on the Tram. A box lunch will be included. The church bus will leave the north parking lot at 8:45 AM and return about 6:00 PM. Cost is \$110.00. Please reserve and pay by August 1, 2025.

December 4, 2025 is the second trip to enjoy the Million Dollar Quartet Christmas play in Sonora. Lunch at Standard Pour. Bus will leave the north parking lot at 9:45 AM with pickup in Oakdale at 10:10 AM and return about 5:00 PM. Cost is \$90.00. Please reserve and pay by November 24, 2025.

The committee hopes you will join us on one of these remaining trips. If you have an idea for a trip, please contact a member of the trip committee.

Contact Jeanne Nelson @ 209-402-1506 to reserve your seat.

Trinity United Family Prayer Calendar

JULY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Craig and Marcy Wright Adelle and Joseph Yonan	2 Jim Young David and Cindy Zellman	3 Twilla Zellman Bob and Tippy Achterberg	4 Cameron and Stephanie Anderson Jeff and Julie Anderson	5 Randy and Doreen Anderson Ryan and Kate Anderson
6 Twyla Anderson Donna Bakker	7 Diana and David Beal Krista Beal	8 Martha Beasley Rob and Susan Beasley	9 Silvana Beasley Ted and Liz Benson	10 Virginia Berry Barbara Bianchi	11 Joyce Blank Elizabeth Blixt	12 Esther Bradfield Phillip Bravard
13 Clayton Bray Dennis and Michele Bray	14 Emily Bray Shirley Brooks	15 Marilyn Brown Grace Brummel	16 Elizabeth Bucknell James and Monique Bucknell	17 Lee and Sandy Bucknell Reva Burchett	18 Greg Cash Mike and Barbara Cash	19 Mike and Kim Caskey Karen Chamberlain
20 Jeff and Debbie Chin Rebecca Clover	21 Rich and Sue Colla Loi Collins	22 Hal and Lucy Conkey Walt and Leslie Cooley	23 Marty and Karen Cox Rick and Bonnie Crabtree	24 Bryan Crabtree Charlie and Sherry Crane	25 Jenny Currie Milt David	26 Delma Davis Leonard Davis
27 Carol Decker Chris and Linda Dickinson	28 Tim and Trish Duncan Rebecca and Earl Duque	29 Robin Eldaly Twyla Engel	30 Kathy Evans Renee and Fred Fellows	31 Elvio and Susan Filippi Frank and Betty Flaim		

1. Advancing Vibrant Communities
Michael Douglass
2. Bethany Christian Services
Sandra Hiatt
3. Bethel Ministries International
Ben and Emily Mooney, Bryan Crabtree
4. Calvin Crest
Tiffany Staman
5. Cru Zimbabwe
Kelly and Vicki Londoni

6. Guatemala Trinity United
Mission Team: Marcy Wright
7. Intersarsity 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. Operation Christmas Child /
Samaritan's Purse
13. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Liz Benson
14. Reclaim, Bangladesh
Dr. Jay Litchfield
15. Rock of Ages
Sidney Stone

16. Servant Partners
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

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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, July 15, 8:30 AM

TRIP COMMITTEE: Monday, July 7, 10:00 AM

SERVE

BASKET OF HOPE DISTRIBUTION: Friday, July 18,
9:00 AM-12:00 PM in the North Parking Lot

FIREWORKS BOOTH: June 28-July 4, Standiford and Prescott

TUESDAY GROUNDS CREW: Tuesday 7:00-8:00 AM

*"Devoted to love for one another,
joyfully welcoming the stranger,
eagerly expecting heaven's surprises."*

Hebrews 13:1-2

STUDY

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

PRAISE

COMMUNION: Sunday, July 13

WORSHIP ONSITE and ONLINE: Sundays, 10:00 AM

FELLOWSHIP

FELLOWSHIP: Sundays, 11:15 AM

HIGH SCHOOL CAMP AT CALVIN CREST: July 13-18

JR HIGH SCHOOL CAMP AT CALVIN CREST: July 6-11

SHERWOOD CAMP AT CALVIN CREST: July 6-11

SUMMER FAMILY NIGHTS: Wednesdays, 5:30 PM, starting July 9

SUMMER READING CLUB: Wednesdays, 4:00 PM, starting July 9

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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