

Faith Statements

2021 Elders & Deacons Candidates

ELDERS



Scott Bering
Family/ Young Adults Ministries Elder

My name is Scott Bering and the Lord has blessed me with a beautiful, selfless, and God seeking wife, as well as 3 wonderful children ages 7, 4, and 1. I currently work in real estate development.

My spiritual journey began and continues with Trinity. I have attended Trinity for the majority of my life (I still have my second-grade Bible). Growing up, the only church we attended was Trinity. My parents and grandparents attended Trinity as well and it was always a comfort having so many generations together on a Sunday. I did all the Trinity kid stuff; Sunday school, VBS, Gopher Gulch, middle school group, and high school group. The Sanctuary is still and will probably always be “Big Church.”

Getting to know some wonderful friends and families during high school was where my faith became real and I came to really know the Lord during that time. I truly accepted Jesus into my heart on a high school mission trip to Mexico. It was while serving that I could truly feel and see God working around me. I could sense the realness of God and knew that I needed to give my life to following and serving Him.

God and the Bible are my daily guide and anchor in life. In the Bible, I have God’s written word on who He is and how He has interacted with mankind from the beginning and what his plan is for all of us. It is my source of how to live a rich and meaningful life, as well as have a tangible understanding of who God is. In my personal relationship with God, I have an ever-present companion and presence that surrounds me.

I do see God’s calling for me to be an Elder. I have reflected on my past and can see how God has prepared me for this role. I have been fortunate enough to always call Trinity my home. Growing up attending Trinity was a blessing and had a radical impact on my life. Having children of my own and raising them at Trinity has also given me an additional perspective on the importance of having a vibrant youth ministry. I feel that my spiritual gifts of discernment and wisdom will help discern and implement God’s will in our church, to help cast a vision for student ministries that will enable the ministry to be as vibrant as it is today, but for tomorrow for not only my children, but future generations to come.

I am currently involved and serving in a variety of ways at Trinity. Prior to COVID, my wife and I were serving as Kindergarten Sunday school teachers. I’m also serving and involved in Trinity’s community in a number of ways such as, being involved in a small group Bible study, going on the Mexico Home Building trip this year, and hosting a Trinity sponsored exchange student last summer.



Dennis Duncan
Safety & Hospitality Elder

I believe there is one true God: the triune God the father, Jesus the son and the Holy Spirit. I believe that Jesus Christ was fully human yet fully God, and that He suffered and died to save the world from sin and death. That he died to save me.

I believe that the Bible is the inspired, unerring word of God, given to us in love and grace. I believe that the Bible provides us with a roadmap for living. I rely on daily reading of the Word to guide my journey of faith, to answer my questions, to lead my prayer life and to bring me closer to the Lord. One of my favorite verses, one that I have proudly displayed in my office for years is Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.”

As I continue on my own great adventure in Christ, I hope to live my life as a positive example of the love of Jesus Christ, to serve with humility and gratitude, and to seek to be closer to Him every day.



Jenny Joy
Missions Elder

I have been a part of Trinity since 1975. I grew up in a Christian home with parents who loved the Lord and made faith a priority. They were a consistent example to me of Christ’s love. Because of their faithfulness to the Lord and each other, I grew up never questioning my faith and who Jesus was.

My journey with the Lord came alive and my own during the Summer of my 7th-grade year at Forest Home where I officially and publicly professed my faith in Jesus Christ. As time went by my faith grew, but it was not fully genuine or authentic. It wasn’t until the Winter of 2015 when major struggles came my way, and as a result, my relationship with Jesus grew tremendously. It became the most essential and most important relationship in my life and it was more intimate than it had ever been. During those trying years, I learned how important having Jesus as the foundation of my life was. He was and is my solid rock and foundation and because of Him alone, I made it through those difficult years a stronger person and even more confident of God’s faithfulness. I found myself (and still do) craving the word of God and desiring dedicated time with Him daily.

I have been married to my husband, Jason, for 23 years and we have four children. Our number one goal as parents is to raise kids who intimately know and love the Lord. I am blessed to have a husband who is a committed Christian and leads our family well by consistently pointing us back to the cross. Our two boys attend Grand Canyon University and our two girls are still at home.

I have been a part of education in some way for the past 23 years. Currently, I work for a charter school where I am an Educational Facilitator for homeschooled kids. I love coming alongside families in their schooling journey and I daily thank God for giving me a job I love that still allows me to be home with my family.

One of my passions in life is the mission field. Early in my life, I was exposed to world missions and as a teenager, I went on several mission trips. As a 17-year-old girl, I had the privilege to represent the United States at a world mission conference in Germany. That experience along with many other short mission experiences gave me a passion for world missions and a desire to share in missions with my family.

Although I believe world missions are important and something I feel the Lord has called my family to, I feel equally as strongly that my community, neighborhood, and the workplace is also my mission field. Whether working at the local soup kitchen, coming alongside struggling people in the community, loving my next-door neighbor by investing in conversation, being an example of Jesus at work, or loving my own family well by my words and actions, these are just as much my mission field as those who I have loved and served overseas.



Gene Longobardi
Leadership Elder

I grew up in an Italian/Catholic family in Brooklyn NY, living with my mother, grandmother, and sisters. My father had mental illness and couldn't be a father to us, but I had a father figure – Uncle Gene – who was a very godly man and devout Catholic. I did religious instructions, was an altar boy, and received Holy Communion and Confirmation. Then, without much home role modelling, I walked away from “church”.

Having been spiritually empty for more than 20 years, life and the Lord got my attention. While I can remember believing in Jesus as a young boy, I did nothing related to “church” from 6th grade until age 32. I had a wonderful wife, Babette (39 years now!), two young daughters, a home, and a good job, but I felt there was something significant missing in my life, robbing me of true joy and peace. I now know this was the prompting of the Holy Spirit, informing me of the “God-shaped hole” in my life.

Around end of 1988 Babette and I were invited by our best friends Kathy and Nathan Dotson to a Christmas handbells and choir celebration. It was beautiful – not what I thought of “church”! Then, around May of 1989 we were invited to a high school musical and that tipped us over the edge – we wanted our daughters to grow up like those “kids”. (Those “kids” were people like Rob Blaney, Ashley Sparks, Jeff Wagner...!) At that point I was coming to Trinity “for my kids” but God soon showed me that he was seeking my heart through my kids.

Not long after, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior and committed my life to Him at the Enquirer’s Class at Trinity.

From early men’s group formation in 1991 with mentors like Scott Hendry and George Munzing, my faith grew and my involvement at Trinity did also. I have served as a Sunday School teacher for 24 years, helped form and run Confident Kids support program, and have been active in youth and men’s ministry leadership. I have enjoyed serving on three capital campaigns, the discernment committee, and other leadership teams. As an elder in the mid-90s I led the Community Outreach committee where I discovered a passion for serving some of the lost and least of our community.

More than half of my life has been walking with Jesus now. I couldn't imagine life without the Lord in my life and I want to follow Him more closely and serve Him more faithfully the rest of my days. I believe God has gifted me with a passion for love, laughter and leadership and I want to use those gifts to glorify God, make disciples for Christ and serve the church I love, especially at “such a times as this”.



Lars Walton
Communications Elder

I grew up in an agnostic household in Northern California, rarely attending church aside from occasional instances when visiting my grandmother in Pennsylvania. After moving to Southern California in my mid-20s, I felt my life lacking a significant purpose and began attending Mariner’s Church with friends. It was during this time that I recalled my childhood visits to my grandmother’s church and asking my cousin about how I could become a Christian and what was God’s plan for me. I vividly remember my cousin walking me through

the simplicity of asking God for forgiveness and accepting Jesus as Savior. Fast forward to my journey now and the meaning of God’s love for his children has been amplified as my wife Tracie and I have grown our family with our children, Oliver (8) and Maggie (5). Tracie and I began attending Trinity just after having Oliver and have furthered our spiritual journeys and engagement with the church since joining. I have been involved in Pastor Doug’s L3D program, volunteered at the Southwest Service Center and Homes for Hope in Mexico, helped grow the Men’s Friday Fellowship program and participated in a Men’s small group for the last three years. As I deepen my relationship with Christ, I realize there is no perfection to be found in this relationship and each day I am thankful for what He has provided in

my life, both the blessings and the challenges. As the world and our community has been challenged during 2020, I see it as an opportunity--both big as the entirety of the Christian faith and small as a church on the corner--to expand our influence through new methods of communication. Just as we have seen the breakout of churches going 'digital' we've also seen the fundamental need God has placed in us for face-to-face communication. I'm excited to be considered to lend my talents to Trinity at this time and am hopeful the future during these uncertain times.



Jan Wilson
Equipping Elder

We came to Trinity many years ago and got to know other families through Christian Family Focus class. I have been married to Bill for 51 years and have two sons, Bret and Eric.

I retired from being a Resource Specialist teacher for 38 years.

I have served two terms as deacon, and three years on Nominating committee. I've been a Stephen Minister for 18 years, am currently Co-leading Continuing Education and did serve as Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator Leader for 11 years. I have served in Women's Ministry and am currently assisting with Inner Healing Prayer. I belong to a women's Bible Study and a couples Bible Study. I'm involved with NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness and offer hope to those who have family members who are struggling.

I was raised in a Christian home and was part of the Methodist congregation. I can't remember a time when I wasn't a Christian. However, this summer, I came across a letter I had written from church camp when I was 12 about walking forward to receive Christ when there was an altar call. I am sure I didn't know the true meaning of being a Christian until much later. I've grown in my understanding of who Christ is and am amazed at the sacrifice He made for me. Over and over, I have recommitted my life to Him and each time it has had a deeper meaning to me. Adversity has been what has drawn me closer to Him and I have been blessed to feel His grace and mercy. Trusting God and having faith is the only way I can get through life. I am thankful to be at Trinity where I can continue to grow and have an opportunity to serve.



MaryAnn Sniff
Worship & Music Elder

God has blessed me throughout my life.

First, I was born into a Christian family in a Christian community attached to a small Christian college. My parents read Bible stories to me from birth, and we attended church and Sunday School every week. At age 7, I asked my father to baptize me, and from first grade through high school, I attended Bible classes and chapel services daily.

Second, in the college across the street, I took enough Bible classes to list one of my minors as Biblical Studies. In addition, throughout high school, and college, I sang in an A Cappella Choir, which toured much of the United States over the years.

After college, I married and moved to California, where we attended a church in Redlands. There, the third blessing, perhaps the most consequential of my faith journey, occurred. Our preacher started a Bible Study, and about 5 couples joined it. During that Bible Study, we began to study more about the Holy Spirit. I remember reading Acts in a modern version and marveling at all I had missed growing up. About the same time, my marriage was falling apart. One night, I prayed fervently for Jesus to accept my whole life and for the Spirit to indwell in me, and in a vivid dream of living streams of water, He answered me.

I changed overnight, and others noticed. I became happy, confident, no longer intimidated by my abusive husband. Of course, my change hastened the end of the marriage.

I then moved to Irvine where my career led to my teaching English at University High School in Irvine and at Harbor Day School in Corona del Mar. I also developed a strong interest in Christian Apologetics, especially Intelligent Design; my brother is well published and speaks internationally on the subject. Eventually, I remarried, had two beautiful children, and raised them in Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Irvine from 1985-2012. During those years, God blessed me again with a Christian son-in-law from a wonderful Christian family.

Another significant event happened in 1999, when life's circumstances led me to start a Thankful to God journal, and it has made so much difference in my life. I love looking back through that journal to reaffirm how much God has blessed me over the years. Now, He has brought me to worshipping at Trinity United Presbyterian Church and to singing in a choir again, a more blessed late chapter in my life I could not have ever imagined!

My prayer is that God will give me the wisdom and strength to learn what He has for me to learn and to do what He has in mind for me to do in His service at Trinity.

DEACONS



Andrea Altenberg **Deacons' Disability Team**

I was raised in a Christian/Presbyterian home. I attended church regularly. I went to camps and was in the youth program. I gave my life to Christ at an Alter Call at Calvary Church Costa Mesa when I was in Junior High School. My brother who is a Presbyterian pastor was my mentor and spiritual guide.

I trust the Lord and the plans He has. We are a prayerful family. I have peace that non-believers do not. I love people first because you never know the situation they are going through.

I first became involved at Trinity when I was on the MOPS steering committee. I helped launch evening MOPS for working moms. I was a bus driver for the disabled who wanted to attend Trinity and would drive the elder seniors on excursions. I have helped decorate the sanctuary for Easter and Christmas. I helped out in the Trinity kids' music program when my children were in productions. I have taken the Alpha course and participated in Precepts for the first time this year. I have been in a bible study with women from Trinity for about 15 years. These godly women are such an inspiration and role model.

I feel like now is the right time to become a Deacon. I have felt honored to have been ask for many years. I was unable to commit, for several reasons, my mother was on hospice for 3 years, my husband was out of work and I didn't know if we would be moving. Our lives were uncertain and up in the air. Currently things seem to be stable.

I'm blessed to have a husband, John who I have been married to for 31 years. My daughter, Hillary and son in law live in Seattle. She is a special education teacher and he is an engineer. They just purchased their first home. In addition, we own a Condominium 5 miles from their house. We are hoping to spend summers there when my husband retires and visit often when grandchildren come along.

My 25-year-old son, Blake just started a government job in St. Louis, Missouri.

I am one of six kids tend to take care of details with my elderly father and mother in law. I live the closest to both. I also have a sister who is disabled and in a group home in Long Beach. Sometimes things come up with her and I am the touch point as well. I spend lots of time with friends and playing tennis. I enjoy hiking and reading.



Jim Baker
Deacons' Community Pantry

I was fortunate to have parents who had a deep and outwardly expressed faith. Attending church and related activities were central to my young life. Being raised in a small community in central PA with more churches than restaurants, gas stations or even signal lights reinforced the importance of God and worship. It was at a church youth event during my middle school days when I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. While this didn't feel like a life-altering event, the foundation was laid.

My faith journey took a hiatus during my college years. Fortunately, the Holy Spirit didn't abandon me. After college I "felt the need" to return to church and rekindle my relationship with God. My relationship with Jesus really started to grow when my wife, Karen, and I moved to Tustin, found a welcoming church home and became actively involved. After our first child was born, I found a Christian radio station on my commute to work with programs providing guidance for raising children and spiritual development. Just what I needed. My desire to understand the Bible, its context and how it applies to my life and my family really grew during this time as did my resource library.

I wanted to be an involved parent so I would quiz our children about their middle and senior high Sunday school experiences. Dismayed with their responses I did what came natural; complained to my wife. Well... after an interesting turn of events, Karen volunteered me to teach the Sr. High Sunday school class! What's truly fascinating is the way God prepared me for this. It was such a growth experience and I couldn't complain about the curriculum since I created it.

I am retired from a 40-year finance career and currently serve on the board of a nonprofit as the finance chair. We have two adult sons, one recently married and one engaged to be married – now postponed due to COVID until 2021. Seeking a deeper faith experience led us to Trinity after the kids left the nest. And how blessed we have been. I serve on the Mission's Stewardship team, and with Karen participate on the Marriage Matters team, as substitute ushers and host the Welcome Cart. In this season of life, I am able to commit more time in the Word which truly inspires me and guides my life. I am honored to be considered to serve as a deacon and look forward to being blessed by it.



Judy Combs
Deacons' PrimeTimers Team

Whenever I am asked to write my Statement of Faith or my Faith Journey, I hesitate because it is still in process. During my life being reared in a home where we went to church, said grace before dinner and I attended a Methodist youth group, but never learned anything about Jesus. My Mother was always reading her Bible or on her knees praying and yet she didn't share her faith with me. Christianity was not discussed. It was as though it was to be kept private. I seem to carry that with me even now.

Fast forward to a very difficult time in my life. Having nowhere else to turn, I turned to church. At the time I was seeing a therapist who suggested I go to the singles group at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach. I promised her I would go three times.... became a member and stayed over 20 years. At St. Andrew's I really found Jesus. There was never a startling aha moment, but I found that He is with me and loves me. I can see His work in my life, not so much at the time, but revealed to me later. My knowledge of The Lord started in that single's group with Rev. Dr. Bill Flannigan. He was a teacher like no other. He, along with Rev. Dr. John Huffman, were instrumental in my growth in Christ through their sermons and their prayers. I will be forever grateful.

Coming to Trinity is giving me the opportunity to continue my growth in Christ. Being called as a Deacon at this time allows me the chance to serve God by using the gifts He has given me and allowing me to meet and love more of the people of God. Presently, I am involved in the OC Rescue Mission mentoring program and greeting.

I am blessed to have two adult children, my son Ralph, and my daughter Melinda. Both live & work locally so I do see them as time permits. It is always a special time for me when we can all be together. Oh yes, I have a labradoodle by the name of Bailey Irish Creme. She is 10 years old and thinks she is 2!!

I have been retired as an Executive Director of a non-profit organization for several years. I presently am a volunteer coach for non-profit program and/or executive directors of several charitable non-profit organizations.



Karen Ferguson
Deacons' Community Pantry

I grew up in North Tustin in a Christian home, going to church with my family. As an adult I continued being involved in Christian communities throughout my life, most of the time here at Trinity. I have served in various children and youth ministries over the years. While I have always known Jesus, it was at Indian Village at Forest Home summer camp when I dedicated my life to Christ.

In my daily life, I see God working and guiding my steps. Although sometimes it's in hindsight, but God's timing is incredible. I see by the things that happen in my life and around me, that God indeed has his plan and good does come out of even what can be considered hard and difficult circumstances.

When asked to consider being a Deacon I prayed about it and talked with my husband. While I don't feel the most qualified, I do feel led to serve in this way at this time in my life. Especially as it would be a good compliment to other ways I am involved in the community. At Trinity I regularly attend Sunday worship services and am part of a home group.

I have been married to Victor Ferguson for 21 years, have 2 daughters, 1 son-in-law, 3 wonderful grandkids and a fur baby. In my daily life I like to exercise, walk our dog, spend time with family and friends and I work as a real estate agent.



Jim Foster
Deacons' Assistance Fund

I think I am similar to many other people. I spent a large portion of my early life hoping to find a "church home" and ministry that would help me personally connect with God.

I grew up in the Roman Catholic tradition. But I found I needed something more as I grew up. So, from early adulthood I was somewhat of a religious nomad. I had serious questions and doubts about God and faith. But I had yet to find answers.

Approximately 20 years ago our young family began attending youth programs at Trinity. It was not long after that beginning that my wife, Barb, and I along with our four children began regular church attendance at Trinity. I was basically attending to support my family and hoping to hear something from the pulpit that would fill my needs. A few years after that point things began to positively change.

Since becoming a member of Trinity over ten years ago my spiritual journey has positively grown. Many of my doubts and questions have been answered. For the first time I feel I have a personal relationship with my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He has helped me overcome obstacles and reach new heights in my personal and professional life.

Presently, I am a member of a Bible Study group and serve on the Finance and Investment committees. I also served as a member of the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University introductory team.

Since retiring from my career almost two years ago, I have become an adjunct instructor of Finance at Vanguard and Concordia Universities. I have also continued to work in the real estate brokerage world. I now have more time available to become more involved at Trinity.

Barb and I have been married 34 years and live in North Tustin. We have four grown children and four beautiful granddaughters. Today, we enjoy spending a good portion of our time travelling to visit our children and grandchildren.



Sara Gustavson
Deacons' Communion Team

I was blessed to be born into a family of many believers. My precious grandmother Medie was a true and constant prayer worrier. She stressed not rituals and church organization differences but encouraged a personal relationship with Jesus. She wanted her grandchildren to know that Jesus cared about everything in our lives.

As a seventh grader I stood before the cross in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church and declared my love for Jesus and I know that He has forgiven my sins. Ever since I have been an active member of my church. One of my favorite memories was attending a small German Evangelical church with my German/English dictionary trying to be a part of their faith community.

Jesus has been my savior since childhood. I continue to listen for His voice and direction.

My husband Phil and I have been active members of Trinity for over 45 years. I would be proud to serve Trinity as a Deacon.



Juliet Hilde
Deacons' Congregational Life

Though I was raised with a Christian mom and attended church since childhood, I didn't really come to know the loving kindness of my heavenly Father and Jesus until I became an adult. Life challenges and circumstances helped me to see and hear Him more clearly, as I began to turn towards His Word. His Word humbles me. Through faith, I bring greater patience, love, kindness, and gentleness to the relationships that are so dear to me - my spouse, my children, my coworkers, friends, and students that I work with. In Zephaniah 3:17, I am reassured that "The Lord your God is with you, a mighty warrior that saves. He will rejoice over you with joy, quiet you with his love, making no mention of past sins. He will sing praises of joy over you."

What amazing unconditional love! Though I am newer to Trinity, I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in the Marriage Matters Ministry, which has greatly given back to my family - my husband Erik, and two children, Mitchell and Marisa. As a teacher who supports other teachers, students, and families, I seek to build relationships and connections as a way to support learning. By accepting the honor of serving as a Deacon of Congregational Life, I hope to create connections within the church and to further my faith. I am led to this role

through the encouragement of those within the church. I humbly accept and look forward to serving as I support the relationships of the those in the Trinity Presbyterian Church community.



Simon Liao
Deacons' New Covenant Partners Team

My faith journey began in Taiwan, where I was born and raised. My uncle and aunt, the only Christians in my family, first shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ with me when I was a young child. My parents and I immigrated to the U.S. and moved to Guam in 1982 when I was a high school freshman. My older brothers Jason and Alex had to stay in Taiwan to fulfill required military service. I moved to Orange County in 1986 to study Electrical Engineering at University of California, Irvine. Tragically in March 1987, my mother was murdered in a robbery at our store in Guam. I was devastated and felt hopeless at times. After my brothers joined me here in 1988, Alex became a Christian and often shared the Gospel with me. I was arrogant and didn't think I needed God in my life, but I was intrigued by Alex's transformation and trust in Christ when God provided opportunities for him as a sculptor. In December 1989, I was visiting my family in Taiwan when my Christian uncle was infected with hepatitis B. I witnessed many brothers and sisters in Christ praying for him and supporting his family. I joined them in prayers and asked God to reveal His healing power, but my uncle eventually passed away. On May 19, 1990, as I was driving my brothers to celebrate Alex's birthday, we got into a major accident with another car approaching our driver side. I could have been seriously injured or killed if I were driving slightly faster. I realized that God had saved me for His plan and purpose. He was calling me to surrender my life and follow Him. Alex led me in prayer to accept Christ as my Lord and Savior. I was baptized two days later May 21, 1990.

My wife Anna and I have been married since November 1995. Our daughter Katrina is a freshman at Concordia University Irvine, and our son Garret is a junior at Foothill High School. Our friends had introduced us to Trinity worship music programs before we arrived here from our previous church. Katrina joined the children's choirs in 2010, and we visited Trinity whenever she sang with the choirs on Sundays. As we came to appreciate Pastor Doug's preaching and all the ministries here, we eventually made Trinity our home church in 2013 and became covenant partners in 2015. I've enjoyed serving with the worship music ministry and singing in Chancel Choir for the past four years. I've also enjoyed serving with local and global missions. Professionally, I had the privilege of working in software test engineering on industrial printers for 29 years, before I was laid off in June 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. As I continue seeking God's guidance for new opportunities, I've been able to consider leadership roles within our church to meet the needs of our congregation during this challenging time. I've sensed God's calling to use my spiritual gifts in building up the body of Christ and advancing His Kingdom through Trinity.



Leanne Martin
Deacons' Disabilities Team

I have been going to church for as long as I can remember. I grew up in the Lutheran church. I sang in the choir from the time I was 5 until 16. I attended confirmation classes for 3 years and became a member of my congregation at age 14. I belonged to the youth group in Junior high and half of high school. I continued to attend church but on a less consistent basis. In my college years until I had children, my church attendance waned substantially to maybe 5-6 times a year.

Once my children were school age, I decided I wanted them to have Christ in their life as I felt it helped me get through hard times growing up. That's when we came to Trinity. I had heard that the youth program was excellent, so after

attending Trinity a few months, I decided to become a member. I've been a member of Trinity for approximately 13 years. Both children have been heavily involved in the youth groups both as a participant and as counselors. They became members of Trinity in High school through the Dive program. Since being at Trinity, I've been involved in small groups and a number of Bible studies in the past 3 years. I feel these smaller engagements have helped to solidify my faith and my relationship with God.

I don't know that there was a specific time that Jesus became my personal savior. I always remember praying and relying on him in situations throughout my life.

I believe that faith makes a difference in my life first of all by giving me a heart that is compassionate. Most recently, my faith has kept me from drowning in my current family crisis. My daughter was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma and throughout this journey with her, I see God's hand in everything. Through scripture, He told me she would be healed, and I have hung on to his Word for the past 5 months with more peace than I thought I would have. I am learning to turn to him in my worry and anxiety and am finding more peace in the chaos.

I have always been someone who has served my community, as my kids were growing up. I was almost always in a leadership position at the schools, National Charity League and in sports. I believe that the timing is right for me now to take these skills into a position that will help others through the church. I will have the time to devote to this as my daughter will be through her treatments and back to college as well as my son. And I know that serving on the disabilities' ministry will be a blessing to me and to others.

I currently serve on the Community Ministry Team as the liaison for Christian Outreach in Action. I also serve to provide childcare for MOPS. Or at least I did when we were able to gather. I have also spent the past year helping to find housing for a woman who is disabled with two children. She was homeless for the past year and just recently found permanent housing assistance that she will have for the rest of her life. During Covid, while she was in a shelter, I did her grocery shopping and supported her throughout this time. During this time, I also believe that my friend's faith has grown, and she is also learning to trust Jesus.

I have been married to my husband Gregg for 25 years. We have 2 adult children (Ryan - 22 and Lauren-20). We have lived here in Orange County for almost 19 years. My husband and I are both retired engineers from Boeing. We were enjoying our time together and began traveling throughout the US when the kids were at college. We hope to be able to continue some of that travel in the spring of next year.



Carlo Van Niekerk
Deacons' Disabilities Team

I grew up in a Christian family and attended a Dutch Reformed church in a small town in South Africa with my parents and two younger brothers. During my final year in high school, I made the conscious decision to accept Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

It wasn't until I had come to the US in the late 1990's though, that I realized my need for and dependence on Christ and recommitted my life to serve Him. Putting my trust in Jesus means that I am no longer living for myself, but that I have a purpose and can find peace in the knowledge that He is in control of my daily circumstances.

Philippians 1:6 has always been a life verse: Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

My faith growth is not complete and being called to be good stewards of our time in service, I feel God is calling me at this time to step out in faith and serve the Trinity community as a deacon.

My family and I have been attending Trinity for almost three years now. I have been involved in a men's small group Bible study and have been attending Man Night on a regular basis. I am committed to lead my family, by example, in a life with Christ and in community with our Trinity family, helping my kids to know and love and follow Jesus.

I live in Tustin with my wife, Rachel and two kids, Kayla (9) and Christopher (7). I work as an IT Architect for First American Title in Santa Ana.



Rachel Van Niekerk
Deacons' Communications Team

I was born and raised in a Christian home with two loving parents. I grew up in the Third Christian Reformed church in Denver, Colorado. We attended church every week; I went to Sunday school and then Catechism. I attended Christian elementary through high school and then went to Calvin College for one year. I joined the church and started to recognize my faith as my own as a senior in high school when I professed my faith before the elders and then the church.

I attended Calvin for a year and then married a man who had been doing an internship at my home church in Denver and was finishing his degree at Calvin. We married and he then accepted a call to serve as senior pastor at a small church in Sacramento. We went and served there for 3 and ½ years. I continued to pursue a nursing degree and enjoyed being a pastor's wife and serving in children's ministry and music including playing the organ and leading worship. From there my husband accepted a call to serve a church in Rochester NY. We moved from CA to NY in Jan of 1996. I was able to enter directly into a clinical nursing program at the Uni of Rochester and completed my BSN. I enjoyed serving in children's ministry and in music - playing in a hand bell choir and using my piano abilities to accompany evening worship services. In May of 1998, my husband was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cancer that ultimately took his life in Jan of 2001. This is when my faith really started to grow. On Sept 11, 2001 I packed up my car, my three 4 legged children and moved to Irvine, California. Honestly, in spite of growing up in a stable loving Christian home, attending church my whole life, becoming a pastor's wife, it was not until I moved to southern CA and saw the lives of friends affectionately called "the prayer moms" and in joining Irvine Presbyterian church that I truly began to know what it means to be a Christian. It was through the loss of my husband and needing to figure out what my life was going to be like that led me to develop and have a true relationship with the Lord. In 2003, I started teaching as adjunct faculty at Biola University in their nursing program and again was amazed at the level of faith and relationship with Christ of the people I worked with including the students. In 2009, the Lord gave me another opportunity to marry an amazing man who grew up remarkably similar to me but a world away in South Africa. We were married in June of 2009 and had our daughter in 2011 and our son in 2013. My journey has not been without challenges and doubts, but I can with confidence and joy say God has been with me through it all. Even in those times where I did not know, feel, or see him, even in those times when I was not actively seeking or pursuing him. I can truly see how he was guiding my every move. I am so thankful to be where I am today and pursuing him in all areas of my life.

After being long-time active members of Irvine Presbyterian church, we felt, for a variety of reasons, that it was time to look for a new church home. We attended Trinity one Sunday, loved the intentionality of the worship, the music, the children's ministry program, and felt this would be a wonderful place to raise our family. We all love coming to church weekly and taking part in the various activities including the new online platform! Honored to begin serving as a deacon.



Kierstyn Vining
Deacons' Disabilities Team

I grew up in a Christian household! My mom always made sure that my brothers and I attended church or in Sunday school. From a young age I knew who my Lord and savior was, Jesus. He has been my rock!! When I was three and half years old, I got sick with Viral Meningitis and then was sick on top of that! For three months I was in ICU only able to blink. Jesus answered my parents', family members, and friends' prayers. I started to recover, but my life was completely changed. I went from being a three-year-old able to walk to being paralyzed from the waist down and relearning how to do everything. I wasn't alone though every hardship Jesus was with me.

In middle school my church youth group had an opportunity to go to a Billy Graham crusade. I signed up to go. The crusade was held at the A's Coliseum in Oakland. There were so many people at stadium! I even spotted my friend who was on the ground floor from the top bleachers where I was sitting. It was so exciting to hear live Christian music artists (DC Talk and Rebecca St. James) and listen to Billy Graham's message; what a powerful message it was! I had always known who Jesus was, but that night I wanted to take another step in my faith!

So, there was part of the night when we could come down and accept Jesus as our lord savior. So, I did; I have never looked back!

Prayer has always been one of the most important things in my life to my faith. I can't remember time when I haven't prayed sometime during the day. Especially during quarantine these last several months I have started writing a prayer list on chalk board. I also strengthen my faith by reading my bible, reading devotionals and trying to do some kind of study either in a group or independent study. Having my Christians friends near me keeps me centered in my faith.

I feel much more prepared this time around on what my role as a Deacon is. I learned a lot about myself and what I was capable of doing. I am excited to continue to serve God's will in our congregation and the community. I am blessed that I can serve our church again!

In our community I am very involved with being a leader for Capernaum, Young Life. When I am not doing Young Life, I also serve in our children Ministry as being a group leader for VBS and MOPS teacher. I am still involved with our Disability Ministry team.

I moved down to Orange county when I attended CSUF and majored in Liberal Studies. I live with my cat Antionette who thinks she's a dog and my Grandma Betty. I keep pretty busy being my grandma's caregiver. As mentioned, before I also work as MOPS Teacher.



Janet Wuchner
Deacons' Samaritan Care Team

My faith journey started when I was very young. I always attended Sunday School and Church in a small town in Michigan. At the age of 11, I got Rheumatic Fever which caused me to be in bed for one year. During that time, I asked Jesus to come into my heart and forgive me of all my sins. I felt that because I was so sick, God saved me, and I wanted to be a Missionary or do something for God in my life.

Through the years, my faith continued to grow and mature. I had four children and worked at the church as a teacher in Sunday School for many years, a planner and teacher at Bible School, and served on the Board of Christian

Education, while my husband was a Deacon. This was a United Church of Christ in Sawyer, Michigan. So when we moved from Michigan to Irvine, CA in 1978, we joined the Church of the Foothills which also was a part of the United Church of Christ.

During this time, my first husband, Tom, passed away from a heart attack at the age of 52. I was working and if I did not have Jesus besides me, I don't think I would have made it through. I attended a Grief Group in Huntington Beach at St. Simon and Jude Catholic Church and after a year, was trained to be a Facilitator helping others who lost their spouse.

Also, during this time, I met my future second husband, Felix, who had also lost his wife the same year. We married after seven years and he too passed away over six years ago. During our marriage, I opted to leave the Church of the Foothills and found Trinity United Presbyterian Church thanks to Hal and Norma Massey who live across the street from me.

Since I joined the church in 2011, I just love it here, everyone is so full of the Lord and it spreads. I could not be happier. I joined an anchor group led by Mike and Debbie Costello and now also Karen and Bruce Chalmers and we are still a group after all these years. I feel this church is such a teaching church that I have grown in my spiritual life by being here.

I joined as a Partner of Samaritan Care shortly after Felix passed. I am a Lead, a Scheduler, and on the Board at SCC and working lately on the Task Force to reopen the SCC with in-house and remote Partners.

With the two losses and different surgeries, I prayed to God to use me in whatever he needed me to do that I could handle with these surgeries. Every opportunity, I reach out and pray for others even strangers and pray for the people I am assigned to call weekly during this pandemic for SCC. I feel the Holy Spirit is using me in many ways.

I thank you for considering me for a Deacon position and feel I could do a good job with God leading me every step of the way. I have prayed to God and commit to the time and schedule commitments that were sent to me.

I love the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind.



Beverly Wunderly
Deacons' New Covenant Partners Team

I was raised by strong Christian parents. I was taught strong Christian values by both of my parents. During my childhood, my family moved a lot and were never in one place more than a year or two. We never had the opportunity to get affiliated with one church.

When I reached adulthood, I enjoyed attending many Bible studies and learning and growing in the Word of God. Later as a single mom with children and a job I was very busy but still found time to attend church and Bible studies.

When I retired about fifteen years ago my biggest prayer was that God would use me to serve His church. My prayers were answered when St. Andrews Presbyterian Church offered me the opportunity to be a New Member Coach and I coached for 8 years. St. Andrews also offered the opportunity to be a deacon and I accepted for the next six years. As a deacon for St. Andrews I was assigned to Regents Point Retirement Community where I would visit the sick, attend their Bible studies and their evening Vespers service. The people became like family and I loved them all.

I have always felt God's presence in my life. When my Mother got sick and eventually died fourteen years ago. I strongly felt God's presence. During my Mom's health crisis, I was attempting to get a hold of her, but her phone appeared to be off the hook. I drove to the senior center where she was staying and went to her door. I discovered two days of newspaper outside her door. My key would not work in the lock. I went to see the manager and as I got off the elevator a woman, a stranger, approached me and asked me if anything was wrong. I told her the situation

and she informed the manager at the apartment. The manager went up to my mother's room and found her on the floor unconscious. He called 911. The woman who met me at the elevator had her Bible with her and prayed with me while we waited for the ambulance. She then offered to go with me to the hospital and pray with me. I felt she was truly an angel sent by God. God works in amazing ways in our lives sometimes when we need it most and least expect it. Another time when I was leaving the hospital after a visit with my mother, I was met in the hospital parking lot by a man carrying a Bible and asked if he could pray for me. It turned out the man was the hospital Chaplain. He was kind enough to visit my mother for the rest of her hospital visit.

Jesus Christ has always been my Lord and Savior as long as I can remember. I believe that the holy spirit has guided my life and lives within me. I look forward to God leading in my deacon service at Trinity.



Steve Wunderly
Deacons' Communion Team

I was raised by parents of different faiths. This led to conflict between my parents which faith I would follow. I felt that I had to choose one parent over another. I found this intolerable and blamed God for my misery. Eventually I decided there was no God. In early adulthood I was successful, I obtained a PhD in Chemistry and worked as a researcher. I moved to the west coast to escape the pressure of family forcing religion on me. I was married with two children.

I remained an atheist until I was 39. During my 39th year my family began to suffer from medical and psychological issues. We were isolated from friends and family, however I heard that churches could supply support, so we sought help. We sought churches without emphasis on God and were quite successful, however they were no help. Finally, in desperation we found a church with God and with help. I became convinced about Jesus and Christianity through the teaching of Chuck Missler and his emphasis on the witness of creationism. My life has been forever changed and I know Jesus as my savior and Lord. However, the help did not prevent my first wife from leaving me.

My life has since been devoted to witnessing and teaching God's word. I led weekly Bible studies at work for 20 years and led home small group studies. I taught courses on how science declares the glory of God at Church groups, home groups, and work. I have been a deacon at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church for 6 years and New Member coach for 8 years. I sang with St. Andrews choir and currently sing with Trinity's choir. My wife and I also serve the folks at Regents Point where we would visit the sick, attend their Bible studies and their evening Vespers service. The people became like family.

My wife, Beverly, and I have sought to be active in God's work since we both retired in the same year. We feel God calling us to serve Trinity as deacons and are excited about the opportunity.

Beverly and I have been married for almost 15 years. We have four children, however only one lives in California. I am a retired research chemist. I specialized in organic synthesis, nuclear isotope detection and DNA synthesis and sequencing during my career with Beckman Instruments.



Donell Peck
Nominating Committee

Declaring my faith in Jesus Christ and baptized at the age of 13, I have grown in faith through Bible studies and Christian relationships. I believe that God has prepared me to serve Him in various ways over the years leading me into areas I would never have gone alone and without His help. I believe the Old Testament is the covenant, prophecy, and history for God's people while The New Testament is the fulfillment of God's promises of a Redeemer for all people in the form of Jesus Christ. I believe that all have sinned and are need of daily forgiveness with those is leadership held to a higher standard.



Greg Tippin
Nominating Committee

I grew up in a loving, Presbyterian home and was involved in the junior high and high school programs at our church.

I've been a believer for as long as I can remember, was active in our church as a youngster but like so many young people, went away from the church as young adult. Then I met my wife, Paris and everything changed. We dated, got married in 2003, began attending church together and started our family in 2007. We had been attending Trinity for a while and several months following our daughter Ryan's birth in late 2007, we had a family emergency where she had to have exploratory surgery. Until that point in my life, I had never felt so helpless and out of control. I prayed relentlessly for Christ to release these burdens from my life. Through ongoing prayer, I was finally able to give everything to Christ and the most amazing thing happened before she was taken into surgery.....the immense pressure and anxiety of the situation disappeared and I knew everything would be OK, regardless of the outcome. Ryan came out of the surgery with no issues and from that moment on, I dedicated my life to Christ. Ryan continues to thrive and will soon be 13 (wow, how time flies).

My faith impacts every aspect of my daily life. From my interactions with my family and friends, to the direction and decisions I make in business, Christ is with me and drives me to lead the life he wants for me.

I feel called to lead at Trinity because I believe we are at a critical juncture in the life of our church and I want to be a part of the vision for spiritual growth as well as the size of the congregation. I also want to help lead us out of what we are all now experiencing with Covid19.

I am currently co-leading a small group and am part of the steering committee for the growth of Men's Ministry.

I have been married to my beautiful, amazing wife Paris for over 17 years and we have three children (Ryan, 12; Grace, 10; and Grant, 6). For the past 22+ years I've worked as a commercial real estate broker, advising office and industrial tenants/buyers from the Irvine office of Newmark Knight Frank, headquartered in New York, NY.