

# 2024 Elder & Deacon Faith Statements



## **Scott Bering**

### **Children's Ministry 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 10, 7, and 4. 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.



## **Peter Feher**

### **Leadership Elder**

I grew up in a Christian family, right here in Orange County. My family regularly attended church at Redhill Lutheran Church (where my parents are still active members). I went through "Confirmation" in 8th grade with my peers and was active in the church's youth group. Upon high school graduation, I attended weekly services on college campus. After graduating college, I continued to attend weekly services, but was not really involved with the church "actively" until I got married in 1999. My wife and I moved to San Diego, and we started to attend local services and became more involved in the life of the church. We moved back to Orange County in 2007 and we returned to Redhill Lutheran Church but

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quickly moved to Trinity for the youth programs. My wife Beth, and children, Lindsey (18), Madeline (17), and Nathan (15), are all active in the programs here at Trinity.

My faith has become more important as my family has grown. With three children in their teens, I have learned to lean on my faith in tough and stressful times. With the help of Trinity's youth ministry programs, my wife and I have been able to build a foundation of faith within our family. We hope our children can further develop their own faith on this foundation. About 5 years ago I joined a small group of Christian men. This small group has helped me ground my faith and further develop my relationship with Jesus Christ. Through mutual experiences and Biblical study, we have helped each other find God's truth in the Word and apply it to our everyday trials and decisions. This group of faithful men has also help me balance my work life. Drawing on their experiences, balancing my life has been easier and has helped me bring spiritual context to challenges we face each day. My work is extremely demanding, but I have felt a calling to be more involved with the church community and develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

Although I can confidently say that I have always been a Christian, I can also affirm that my spiritual life has become more fulfilling in recent years. The complexities of a family and the stress of work have reinforced the need for Jesus and has drawn me closer to my faith. Instead of a day or a moment in my life when I can say I became a Christian, my faith journey feels more like a light switch with a dimmer dial. Over the past 20 years, essentially since my marriage to Beth, the Lord has been slowly, but intentionally, turning the dimmer up, brighter and brighter. God has continued to put me in situations that sharpened my faith and reinforced my need for Him in my life. My faith in Jesus Christ provides me the tools required to be the leader my family needs in a very challenging world. As my we continue to be bombarded by the world, I hope that I can demonstrate, through my words and actions, that Jesus Christ is the only hope for our fallen world.



**Bill Hoyt**

**World Missions Elder**

Though attending church with my parents from childhood, my life-changing commitment to Christ came after graduation from high school. Heading toward a career in social work, I worked with gangs on the Southside of Chicago while at Wheaton College and at a maximum-security facility for juveniles in Minneapolis while in seminary.

God had other plans, clearly calling me to pastoral ministry. I served twenty years in local parish ministry and fifteen as a denominational executive. For more than twenty years I have consulted with churches, denominational groups, mission organizations and other non-profits. It's been my privilege to serve as coach and mentor to young pastors and ministry leaders internationally.

My interest in world missions dates back to my childhood. Our modest, one bathroom house was home to numerous missionary families home on furlough. Their passion for reaching lost people made an indelible impression on me.

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Though my ministry base has always been stateside, God has given Gwyn and me many opportunities for international involvement. Ministry has taken us to places like Romania, Brazil, Latvia, Estonia and Cambodia. I have been involved in humanitarian work and ministry in Vietnam since the early 1990's. We've built two schools for handicapped children, multiple community-sized playgrounds and maintain a clinic in Hanoi that makes free prosthetic devices for handicapped children and young adults who are too poor to afford them. On the ministry side, we train house church pastors throughout Vietnam.

On the personal side, we have two sons and six grandchildren. Sean and his family live in Orange. Chad and his family live in Minnesota.

Though Covenant Partners at Trinity for about eight years, until recently we were part-time residents of Orange County. Much to our delight, full time residency allows Gwyn and me to serve at Trinity. God has used the people and ministry of Trinity to bless us richly. We feel honored to be able to be a blessing to others by serving at Trinity.



## **Gene Longobardi**

### **Student Ministries 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 (42 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 the 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 the Trinity 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

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leadership. And this past year I have become involved in our youth ministry again, serving as an elder to Student and Family Ministries with our exceptional middle school and high school ministry teams. 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".



## **Maria Mancini**

### **Communications Elder**

I grew up in a Christian home, and my first recollection of church is as a four-year-old in the Trinity kindergarten class. I attended Sunday School through my school years up through early College, VBS in the summers as a youth, and summer and winter High School camps. I experienced spiritual growth during these years, especially at church camp, and gave my heart to the Lord at Forest Home in the summer before my senior year. During my 20s and 30s I struggled to find my place at church. I worked jobs where I was required to work on Sundays, and it was hard to keep engaged. I was never far from God but was not regularly in the Word and did not attend church on a consistent basis. In my early 40s, I was deeply affected when my mother passed away after a brief illness. My mother was a very strong and faithful woman, and I knew she would want me to get serious about my faith. I returned to Trinity, attending weekly with my father who was also very faithful man. I still struggled to find my place since I had not attended Trinity regularly for quite a few years. My first step was to volunteer to bake communion bread, which I have been doing for about 10 years now with my friend, Linda. Next, I decided to attend the Crown Financial Ministries class. This was not only a wonderful class, but it led me to be a Crown Leader and to Bible Study Fellowship. By God's hand, I was led to help with Alpha, and then being nominated as Deacon. I served on the Deacon Board for three years as part of the Communion Ministry Team, as the Vice Moderator, and Moderator. During this time a friend had mentioned Stephen Ministry to me and for me to think about being a Stephen Minister. I did not know much about the program and did not feel the call at that time. However, when my Deacon role ended, I began thinking more seriously about Stephen Ministry, and when the next class was held (about a year later), I looked into it, prayed, and attended training. What a blessing it has been to be a Stephen Minister, and now I am also a Stephen Leader. Most recently I was the Elder of Equipping and Chairperson for the Nominating Committee. I truly am blessed to be considered for this elder role at Trinity. In all I do, I do my best to keep my focus on God and keep Him in center of my life.



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## **Karen McBrien**

### **Equipping Elder**

One of my earliest memories is kneeling beside my bed and asking Jesus to forgive my sins and come live in my heart. I am incredibly thankful and blessed that I found Him at five years old and grew up in a house and a church that nurtured and grew that faith. I can't imagine going through life without knowing that God is in control, loves me, and has my life and the whole world in His hands. My relationship with Jesus deepens every day as I seek His wisdom, study His word, and trust in His promises. His love, strength, comfort, and guidance fill my life with peace and joy. The sacrifice God made as He gave up His son for my sins is something I will never fully comprehend, until I meet Him face-to-face. His mercy and grace fill me with awe as I realize more and more how He works, loves, and cares. I'm richly blessed to have family, friends, and a church who have encouraged, supported, challenged, invested in, and prayed for me over the years. Trinity and her ministries are a glorious gift to me and to many.

My husband, Brendan, and I joined Trinity in 1993, and our three children grew up here. I have been blessed to be a part of many ministries over the years including Women in the Word, Session, serving on a PNC and APNC, leading MOPS, playing hand bells, teaching Sunday School, participating in VBS, Crown Ministries, Alpha, and co-leading anchor groups and other small groups with my husband. Trinity has many rich ministry opportunities and I'm so grateful for the opportunities I've been given to serve and to grow my faith.



## **David Morse**

### **Safety Elder**

My early years were unusual for American children. My parents were medical missionaries for the Church of the Nazarene, and I spent my formative years (ages 8-13) abroad in Swaziland and then South Africa, where they served.

My views on racial concerns and materialism were profoundly influenced by being raised in a foreign country, and specifically an Apartheid culture (white minority-rule government and society) while surrounded by abject poverty. For example: having friendships with Africans of mature Christian faith with no hatred for the powerful white minority was deeply influential. Also, that one can be content with modest income and possessions in an affluent and consumer-oriented society.

I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior as a young student in South Africa. I then recommitted my life to Him after joining Trinity and, with my wife Muriel, began to raise our family there.

I believe that the Bible of Old and New Testaments is true and the revelation of God, and that Jesus was God's only Son: fully divine and fully human. I worship and believe in the only true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who is both one essence and three persons, The Trinity.

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Muriel and I have been married since 1976 (she serves on the Health Team, Stephen Ministry, and has served as a Deacon and Elder). We have been Tustin residents for forty years, raised two Children in Tustin schools and at Trinity: Carlton, a member of Chancel Choir, and Julia, resident of Arizona.

I strive to live my life in service to Him and others, in fidelity with our Christian Faith and principles. My belief is that we should be the same Christ-centered person in thought, word, and deed in one's personal & family, business, and community lives. Some of the guiding Scriptures in my life are Ps. 100:1-3, Prov. 3:5-6 and from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount: Matt. 6:19-21, 24.

Throughout my life I have been oriented and committed to service, through the Boy Scouts, Rotary, and the personal and business clients I advised on financial, tax, and business consulting matters as a CPA. After 47 years, I fully retired from my CPA practice in December 2022.

My service to Trinity began in approximately 1990. I have served as an Elder twice (for World Missions and Finance), served as Treasurer twice (most recently 2017–June 2023), and on the Safety Team since May 2022.

Thank you for your consideration of my service as Trinity Safety Team Elder, beginning 2024



## **Lesley Stewart**

### **Worship & Music Elder**

I met the Lord when I was 10. It happened one summer in North Carolina during VBS and I remember my cousin, who led my group, warning me that I had to be careful now that I was a follower of Christ because the 'devil was going to try and get my soul back.' How does a 10-year-old handle that? I didn't know what to do and was too embarrassed to tell anyone about my newfound faith, so I stayed quiet and tried to figure things out on my own. I attended church with my mom, but never developed a personal relationship with Christ and by the time high school rolled around, I had lost interest. Through college and young adulthood, I strayed farther and farther away from God, but He never stopped pursuing me. Then, in one of the most difficult seasons of my life, I found my way back to Him. That was 14 years ago. Today, my faith is everything to me; it's the reason I can keep moving forward, it's what I lean on when I am weak, and without it, and Christian family, I don't think I could have gotten through some very dark times.

Trinity and the Worship and Music ministry have played a vital role in my spiritual life since I began attending in 2009. I joined the Chancel Choir in October of that same year, have served as a Deacon for New Members, been involved in the Women's Ministry, the Doorstep Ministry and most recently served as a Worship and Music Elder (2018-2020). Music is how I worship. It's how I memorize scripture, and it's what connects me to God and reminds me who He is. As the Music and Worship ministry begins a new chapter, I felt God calling me to come alongside as one of the Worship and Music Elders.

When I'm not at church, you can find me in my Kindergarten classroom, singing and dancing along with my students. I'm also a single mom to an amazingly talented, recent high school graduate. My loves are

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singing, dancing, reading, traveling, baking, hosting friends for afternoon tea, and helping bring God's love to others through kindness and a friendly smile. I'm honored to serve the Trinity congregation once again.



## **Glenn Weber**

### **Technology Elder**

I grew up in a traditional Episcopal Church in Santa Barbara which I attended with my parents and brother. I was baptized in this church and later confirmed and even worked at the church while in college. I still remember wonderful learning moments from my childhood, and I think being part of a family led by parents with faith in Jesus Christ is a wonderful way to be led to faith in Jesus Christ.

In 1996, shortly after we moved to the North Tustin area, my wife (Kim) and I were invited to Trinity by our neighbors the Pedrozas. Shortly after we attended Trinity a few times, we gave our testimony at a new members class in 1997.

Our faith has grown since 1997, we both continue to study and grow and are both involved with various ministries at Trinity.

In my work career, I currently work doing finance and accounting consulting. I retired from day-to-day work in 2020 although I am now working almost full time again and expect to continue working full time or nearly full time for the next few years.

At Trinity, I am part of the choir on Thursday night rehearsal and Sunday morning worship. I play Pickleball in the Center on Wednesday mornings and Sunday afternoons. Also, I am in a small group with other Trinity men on Wednesday mornings. I've also served on the T3-Trinity Technology group for about 10 years.

I very much enjoy both my men's group and my choir group as part of my faith journey. In our men's group we normally study the current sermon series or another study and share our prayer requests with each other. In choir we study and learn the anthems to hopefully show the congregation the joy of Jesus Christ as we sing each Sunday.

I believe that when I sing with the choir, we both serve and use the power of the holy spirit to work through us to make music and deliver the message. Our gift is to be willing and able to serve. The same applies to Technology elder although I see T3's role is a little less visible but still very necessary.

I am answering this mostly on the expected calling of serving as the T3 leader.

On a technology side, I think the team has done well to balance the available funds and needs for technology in Trinity's various programs. Worship and music are massive users of the IT and sound technology that T3 helps manage and I have a close relationship with this user group.

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As a T3 group, I would like us to continue upgrading and maintaining the technology to support church and our members and leaders by upgrading existing equipment as it reaches end-of-life and support technology improvements either requested by others or seen as necessary by the T3 team.

I believe I conform to the essential tenets of ECO.



## **Steve Canto**

### **New Covenant Partners Deacon**

My journey as a Christian started at home when my mother started to attend Calvary Chapel with Chuck Smith... although my parents were catholic, she renewed her faith as a Christian and fortunately I was brought into the fold. I was just 15 years old in 1980 when I gave my life to the Lord as my Lord and Savior. From that moment on I have been on a wild journey with the Lord. The Lord is so, so good. The relationship I have with Jesus is the center of my life. Honestly, I do not know how those who do not know him get by... Through trial and tribulations, through times of restoration, He is by my side. As a Christian we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ here on earth. For too long, I remained silent and sat on my hands. I believe service is an important part of our faith. Faith is a verb, we should not stand still and wait idly by, so we serve and jump in. Currently I am serving in Trinity HSM as a counselor to the Sophomore boys (they're awesome), member of the Chancel Choir (they're awesome too), have been in my men's small group for over 15 years, participate in missions both locally and abroad. As the Lord leads, I will follow. I am blessed to be married to my wife Kerry for over 20 years, we have 2 daughters... Reagan, a freshman in college GCU and Danica a senior at Olu. My day job consists of helping owners of commercial property find the right financing for their needs. I grew up in Irvine but now live in Tustin for the past 6 years, I'm a USC fan and alumni. Did I mention God is good? ... all the time... He is...



## **Jill Citron**

### **Congregational Life Deacon**

I grew up in a Christian home where I was baptized and believed in Jesus Christ; however, it was later in my life that I understood that Christ wanted a personal relationship with me and that is where my spiritual walk with our gracious Lord grew. Jesus is my Lord and Savior, and I can't imagine not having Christ in my life. It is overwhelming to think He died on the cross for my sins so that I could be forgiven; He wants to have a relationship with me; allowing me to be a child of God; to serve Him and to have eternal life in Heaven. It doesn't get any better than that! Although in my life there have been seasons in my spiritual journey of ebbs and flows where I was very close to God and other times, I felt distant or disconnected. I'm definitely a work in progress and grateful God never gives up on me and that I have the "Living" Word, the Bible, to guide my steps in my walk with the Lord.

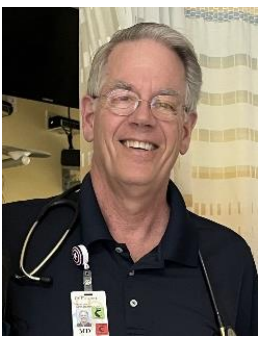
When my son, Connor, was born in 1990, I realized it was important we should be going to church, so the search began to find a church community. I found Trinity and it has been our church family ever since. A



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turning point for me was seeing Connor, when he was in high school, come to accept Christ as his Lord and Savior. It encouraged our faith for both my husband, Gary, and me who now have been married 35 years.

Through the years at Trinity, I have had the opportunity to be involved and serve in various church activities such as Alpha, VBS, Ushering, Fall Festival, Laurel House mentoring program along with participating in various bible study groups. As I enter a new season in my life where God has blessed me with the gift of time and availability as recently ending a 30-year career in real estate finance and accounting, I look forward to seeing how God will use my gifts and talents to serve Trinity, our church community, so that it will bring glory to His kingdom.



## **Tim Flannery**

### **Communion Deacon**

My Christian Ed Director witnessed to me as a seventh grader at winter camp. I gave my life to Jesus on my bed after camp. I was a lonely child from an alcoholic family. Jesus, through the spirit, pointed out that I would never be alone again. The first clue about my journey was a Christian sister challenging me that I don't walk my talk as a freshman in college. Having done poorly in college and thinking that my aspirations for medicine were gone I enrolled in Fuller seminary thinking I would be a pastor. The required presbytery psych evaluation and vocational counseling revealed that I should pursue medicine, so I dropped out and went to take my premed classes over again. I was a member of the Local Church after a split in the Soledad Presbyterian Church. It was a very intense word church movement. I ended up being admitted to a Pentecostal medical school and began to be exposed to miracles and healing. I met Lise in August 1986 after feeling led to attend her Sunday school hour. We hammered out our relationship over \$3000 dollars in phone calls between San Diego and Tulsa. I proposed on Thanksgiving break. She joined me in January to finish her masters where I was in medical school.

In the severe fatigue of long hours in pediatric residency, the wounds of my unhealthy childhood began to surface, and I fell away from the Lord. I became an angry, controlling person who could not cope with the challenges of marriage and parenthood of four kids, leaving Lise to do it all. Lise would encourage me to pray and read the word, but I wouldn't. This went on for 20 years. I became addicted to the computer. I had a hypercritical Director for 13 years who made me furious and destroyed my self-esteem.

Lise began to pray for him or take him. So, in 2011 I had a heart attack. I realized I needed and wanted my relationships and my Savior. I went through 10-11 sessions of inner healing forgiving everyone before Jesus who had hurt me including that Director who died the same hour I forgave her.

I gave up self-ambition and control; I wanted to be like the woman who washed Jesus feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. My marriage and relationships with my children were restored. I have been at Trinity for 21 years and want to bring my heart of service to church leadership.

I bring my joy and peace and unabashed witness of Jesus to work as a pediatric endocrinologist. I am a mentor to HS and college summer interns in the hospital in medical innovation.

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## **Pilan Foo**

### **Disabilities Ministry Deacon**

#### **Seed Planted**

I grew up in Taiwan a non-religious home, values were established on Chinese traditional values fostered at home by my father and Confucious's teaching from school. Most people around were culturally Buddhist, Christianity was minority. My only contacts with Christianity were a childhood best friend who invited me to her Christmas play at a small church where she attended with her grandma, and a high school art teacher who invited me to her church's Thanksgiving potluck.

#### **Seed Awakened**

At 33, my life was at breaking point even though I had achieved academically, married, blessed with two sons, and very supportive parents, but parents' distant water can no longer put off near fire. A Taiwanese colleague invited me to her congregation's new branch church in Irvine. One Sunday afternoon I brought my two young sons to attend this church located at a warehouse of a company. That was my first sermon in Taiwanese, it was sweeter than anything I have ever heard up to that point of my life. Since then, I have never left the church of Jesus Christ.

#### **Transformation Miraculously Started**

Unfamiliar with Christianity at the time, after the first taste of sweetness of spiritual messages, I only knew to religiously attend the church, follow the service flow, read the Bible, but it was dry and un-interesting. Only after the pastor visited me to share who God is, my colleague invited me to her living room for a 6-week one-on-one bible study, I was marveling on how God's view is so different than the world's view. It gave me hope and strength. At my brokenness God's words started penetrating my thoughts and transforming me. Later at Dr. Robert Schuller's church, his possibility and positive thinking messages were inspirations to me. In my alone time, I started to hear God's whispers and experience Him.

#### **Planted by The Rivers of Water**

I no longer live like driftwood in a river, but am planted by the rivers of water, anchored in Christian life. At Irvine Presbyterian Church I regularly attended church, Sunday adult school, and women's Bible study to realign my daily life and be transformed; weekly met with small book group for discussions, prayers, and support; taught Saturday night school, VBS, sang in choir, and served as deacon.

#### **Response to God's Grace**

Looking back, God found this lost sheep, rescued my family as we were falling down the cliff, caught us halfway and pulled us up. By clinging to Him, He guided, protected, loved, looked after, and blessed us. I had demanding jobs in computer software and IT management leaving little family time. My sons' friends' parents, teachers, counselors, pastors offered and gave their kindness, care, time, guidance, and friendship to them. The older son pursued his passion as a car designer, is now married with two daughters, and the younger son is a physician. I didn't rear them alone, God graciously helped.

In response and appreciation to God's grace, I will serve under His leadership and guidance.

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## **Mark Giglio**

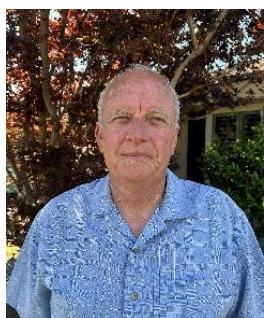
### **Deacons Assistance Fund Deacon**

I didn't grow up in a Christian household, but I did have a sense of spiritual emptiness growing up. God guided people into my life, helping me understand why I needed Him. I became a Christian as a college student through the witness of my future wife Julie and the mentorship of her dad, Ken Holoien, who was a Lutheran pastor. He met with me weekly, helping me through a bible study series for new believers. My faith grew through attending Menlo Park Presbyterian Church and participated in Menlo Park's University Fellowship. The pastor Walt Gerber deeply impressed me and challenged me to apply my faith to my everyday life. Julie and I attended medical school together at the University of Virginia, where we were fortunate to be part of the Christian Medical Fellowship. Faculty members who were part of the fellowship served as amazing sources of support and examples of how to be believers as physicians.

We returned to Southern California to complete our medical residencies in 1988, becoming members of Irvine Presbyterian Church shortly after our arrival. We were members there for over 30 years. I served two terms as a deacon, including one as deacon treasurer (in charge of the deacon assistance fund like the one at Trinity). Unfortunately, our church dissolved after a failed attempt to leave the PC USA and join ECO. God continued to open new doors, initially guiding us to Salt, a small church led by Mike Kenyon and eventually to Trinity in 2020 during the pandemic. Not only was Trinity a strong church with a great reputation, but it was also just a few blocks away from our home. We became covenant partners in 2021.

As a member of Trinity, it's humbling to see how many people work so hard to glorify God. When approached to serve as a deacon, I felt compelled to step up and do my part. I'll be serving with other deacons coordinating the Deacons Assistance Fund.

On a personal note, I practice as a family physician at Providence St Jude Heritage Medical Group in Brea. Julie just retired as a psychiatrist in private practice in Tustin. We are empty nesters, with three adult children who grew up in North Tustin and graduated from Foothill High School –Kevin, Josh and Emily. Kevin and Josh are both married and living in the San Francisco Bay area. Emily is living in Venice Beach.



## **Ray Keith**

### **Community Pantry Deacon**

I was not raised in a churchgoing family. My introduction to God was by going to church with neighborhood friends once or twice a year. I came to Jesus after our children were born and my wife and I decided we needed to bring them up under God's protection. We joined Orange Covenant Presbyterian Church in 1987. We both joined the choir, and I began my walk with Jesus. We came to Trinity because of the children's programs in 1992 and I joined the Chancel choir soon after. I accepted Jesus as my lord and savior in the early 1990's. I continued to grow in my faith over the next few years and was baptized and joined the church in 1997. I started driving for the bell choir tours in 1998 and joined the bus

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ministries for Sunday morning pickups in 2002. I have been with the Facilities team since the early 2010's. We are the proud parents of Garrett and Jillian and grandparents to Ethan, Emily and MacKenzie.



## **Babette Longobardi**

### **Community Pantry Deacon (2024)**

I grew up in a Christian home where I faithfully attended a catholic church with my family. I attended Sunday school with my six siblings. But I cannot remember being involved other than special events and holidays.

My grandmother Belle was my greatest influence. She talked to “Our Jesus” throughout the day by sharing our dreams, our worries through our prayers and singing of hymns.

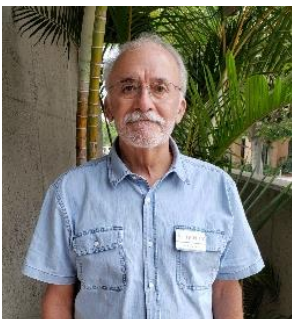
Christ became my personal savior 34 years ago at a Harvest Crusade in Costa Mesa. The Holy Spirit clearly spoke to me that night and within a short time my husband Gene and I became members of Trinity.

Christ is the center of my life. As a caregiver to our six grandchildren, feel it is so important that they see me modeling a Christ-centered life. Without my faith my life would be without purpose. Serving others is my spiritual gift.

I served on the first capital campaign to build our Fellowship Hall. What a blessing that was. I also served as a Sunday School Teacher for ten years. I served on the facilities committee for 15+ years where I enjoyed transforming a tired landscape and have so enjoyed all the new growth on our campus. I helped in Trinity's special needs classroom for several years.

Being from a large family I've always felt I needed to serve others. After completing my term as a Deacon, I felt called to continue on the Community Pantry Team.

I'm married to my husband Gene for 42 wonderful years. We have two daughters. Eryn and her husband Kraig have blessed us with three grandchildren, McKinley, Kaiya and Kellan. And our daughter LeeAnne and her husband Patrick have also blessed us with three grandchildren, Hunter, Emma and our youngest Juliet. I'm a retired Landscape Designer and presently a full-time grandmother.



## **Jack Murrieta**

### **PrimeTimers Deacon**

I was brought up Catholic. We attended mass infrequently, mostly on major religious holidays. My parents made sure my sisters and I received the Catholic sacraments of baptism, confirmation and first communion. I also attended catechism on Sundays until I was in High School. My wife's family were Methodists, but we were married in the Catholic Church. I began to attend the Methodist Church with her in the early 1970's. I eventually became a member and served in various lay



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leadership positions. As I think about these years, I realize that my spiritual growth consisted of participating in rituals.

During the pandemic shutdown I began to evaluate the importance of bible study to satisfy my spiritual hunger. I participate in two weekly Bible study groups. One group meets on Thursday and has done so for the past 7 years. I participate in another group that meets on ZOOM. It is facilitated by a pastor friend from Show Low, Arizona. I have participated in this group for over 2 years. These two groups have deepened my faith tremendously and enabled me to develop an in-depth understanding of the Bible and learn the power of prayer.

On June of 2022 Nancy and I prayed for God's help in deciding what to do about our membership in the Methodist church. We had become uncomfortable with the shift of the Methodist church away from Christian Doctrine and towards a more popular secular narrative of the moment. During the "Pandemic Shutdown" we had begun a search for more spiritual growth. We were seeking purpose, a place to connect, grow and serve. We resigned our membership in June 2022. Realizing the seriousness of our decision, we prayed for God's guidance. The next morning our prayers were answered. We heard the sound of Christian music coming through our windows. Upon further investigation, we found it was from Trinity's Street Church. We attended for a couple of weeks and are now regular on campus attenders.

Nancy and I have become Covenant Members of Trinity Presbyterian. I enjoy serving others. I worked for over 30 years in Human Resources in Insurance, Mining, Education and Manufacturing industries. I retired from Honeywell in 2004. I have attended and served on a weekly basis in Prime Timers for the last 7 months. Nancy and I have two married children, Peter Murrieta (married to Aliza) and Danielle (married to Mike Fergin). We have three grandchildren, Joaquin (26), Daniel (20) and Stella (18).



## **Larry Pribble**

### **Communion Deacon**

My parents took me to church (Disciples of Christ) from a young age. It was in Sunday School that, at the age of 12, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior. I was active in youth and college/career groups and went on summer mission trips. After college I spent eight years travelling with a Christian drama ministry. Afterwards I moved to Orange County and through a neighbor was invited to join a group of believers at a home Bible study. All of them worshipped at Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, which became my home church for over 30 years. That fellowship with people who became life-long friends became a sustaining anchor for me for decades. The group dwindled over time, but those of us who remained continued to fellowship and study the Word weekly until earlier this year. It was also through one of those friends that I met my wife, Michele.

Seven or so years ago, I had a spiritual crisis and was struggling with my faith, as well as with issues of guilt and shame, and I stopped attending church. Thankfully, about five years ago, after expressing to a co-worker that I was searching for a new home church, I was invited to Trinity. Clearly, the Holy Spirit was at work. Michele and I immediately felt welcomed and accepted. I soon began to rediscover God's love and

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forgiveness, as well as my identity in Christ. As I started to regain and mature in my faith, I recognized that I needed to surrender my life to Jesus as the Lord of my life and not simply as my Savior, something that I somehow failed to understand or acknowledge in my life prior to coming to Trinity.

Feeling very much at home, Michele and I were glad to have found a church where we could be part of a thriving community of believers and where we could be nurtured and grow in our faith. We sought out a variety of classes and other opportunities that have nourished us spiritually and helped us to make connections and friends. The past few years I've felt a desire to find ways that I can be of service and to be more intimately involved in the life and ministry of Trinity, especially since I retired a couple of years ago. Since late 2021, I've been blessed to be part of a men's small group that meets weekly where I've developed bonds and made new friends. I attend and am involved in Trinity's chapter of Celebrate Recovery, which has been a blessing and a comfort. Earlier this year, I became a member of the Pew Pals. I recently became an usher in the sanctuary during first service. And since the Holy Spirit has put it upon my heart to find ways to serve, being asked to serve as a deacon seems like a perfect opportunity, to which I'm looking forward.



## **Ellen Reibling**

### **Disability Ministry Deacon**

I'm proud to be a fifth generation Californian, but I was not raised going to church. I was introduced to Christ through Younglife in high school and made a personal commitment at Lake Avenue Church in Pasadena. Within a few months our family moved to Ohio, and I was blessed to find a tiny Baptist church near my home that offered a multigenerational fellowship to help me grow in Christ and learn how to navigate Ohio winters. I guess it worked because even though the parents went back to

California after 4 years, I stayed in the Midwest for another 9 years for college, work, and graduate school. After college, I was a campus minister/hall director for Coalition for Christian Outreach (CCO), an evangelical organization based in Pittsburgh working on more than 150 campuses. I am so grateful for lessons learned working with CCO, including the importance of church community and that Christians have a unique responsibility to build God's kingdom on earth through service and stewardship (God's grace enables us to serve, we don't serve to earn His grace). CCO also sparked my career in Student Affairs and eventually I returned to California to work at UC Irvine for 25 years. I joined Trinity with my husband Lyle in 2008. I recently retired from a faculty position at Loma Linda University and was praying for a place to serve when the deacon opportunity came up. I am currently a Celebrate Recovery leader and recently joined the OC Rescue Mission mentoring program. I have been married to Lyle for 25 years and stepmother to 4 who live in Michigan. We recently moved my 91-year-old Mom from Arizona to a local memory care and I am grateful she is close by. I am active in the Flying Geese Quilters Guild and a perfect day off is jazz music loud, a big iced tea and the sewing machine flying! I look forward to learning about the diversity of ministries available at Trinity, especially those that serve people with disabilities.

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## **Bonnie Stewart**

### **Samaritan Care Center Deacon (2024)**

My growing up family started at Wesley Methodist Church in Iowa. My parents met at a Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF) dance in the church basement. Our family moved twice during my childhood, to Kansas and New Mexico. Each time we found ourselves in either a Methodist or Presbyterian Church, going to Sunday School and church picnics. Singing hymns was a big part of those years because we loved our player piano, and so did our friends and neighbors.

If Sunday School was missed, we could memorize substantial verses from our Approved List: Psalm 23, Books of the Bible, Beatitudes, etc., and our Attendance Record was kept intact. Therefore, much of what I memorized was the result of my absence. I learned “something”, but I did not learn “The Thing”. I did not yet know that Jesus Christ was my own personal LORD and Savior.

When I was thirty-three with a husband and young family, I read a book by Catherine Marshall. In it was a poem that I sang to the tune of What a Friend we have in Jesus. The stanzas gradually went from, “All of self and None of Thee,” to “LORD, Thy love at last has conquered: None of self and all of Thee.”

Recognizing what was missing in my heart and life, I asked Jesus to come into my heart. Since that day, He has been my friend for sure! The Holy Spirit helped me to apply to my own life the stories that I had learned. Trinity has been such a support in praying for our family. My involvement here has definitely been on the receiving end of the Samaritan Care Ministry Team. I do feel called to Trinity. Knowing this congregation was holding us up in prayer through some consecutive grieving periods has proven the actual contact is invaluable.

In former churches I have served with Vacation Bible School, cooking for Sunday School dinners, preparing the sanctuary for Easter, Women’s Ministries and retreats, Bible Studies, and Prison Ministries.

At Trinity I have attended Alzheimer’s Support Group and Grief Share. Our Tuesday night small group is dedicated, close and a wonderful part of learning and worship. Our family, including eight grandchildren, is close by. Being with each of them is wonderful. My neighborhood is filled with lots of friends, children, food and fun. We are learning how to listen to the LORD as He tells us the next thing He wants to accomplish through us....me.

## **Luis Tobon**

### **Community Pantry Deacon**

I was born into and raised as a Catholic, attending Catholic mass with family every Sunday. As a preteen and teen, I served as an altar boy for our home church, St. Cecelia’s in Tustin. I enjoyed participating in this. As I grew older, I found that I didn’t connect spiritually with my traditional church. Soon after I found my way to Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa and was drawn to the connection, inclusion, and enthusiasm of Calvary. In 1996, I accepted the Lord as my Savior, but without a network of like-minded people to encourage my spiritual growth, I did not pursue Bible studies or attendance at a church. In 2014, at the invitation of my future wife,

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Naomi and I connected with a small Methodist church in Huntington Beach. We connected with the congregation and its Pastor right away and I saw how important having a community of Christians by my side was for me. Naomi and I were married at this church almost six years ago. When we moved to Orange, we were introduced to Trinity. Naomi sings in the choir and I enjoy serving as an usher. It allows me to meet people and to build relationships in our new church. As I'm growing in my faith, I have gained the confidence to publicly discuss my spirituality with others, to passionately appreciate God's gifts and influence in my life.

Naomi and I met when we were children growing up next door to each other in Tustin. I have two daughters, Amanda (married with one daughter) and Mary, single. They are beautiful, successful, loving women whom I am so proud of, and I have great relationships with them. Naomi is a 4th grade teacher in Long Beach. I've owned a small engine repair shop in Huntington Beach, and I've been in the industry since 1985.

By adhering to and abiding by the essential tenets, my life in and out of the church will be in alignment with God's plan for me. While I serve the church, I will remain faithful to its' tenets and remain open to growth and the church's best interests.



**Chris Troutt**

**Congregational Life Deacon**

I was born in Knoxville Tennessee. I grew up there in the Baptist church. That is where I first heard the good news of Jesus Christ and where I put my faith in him for my salvation. Over time, I strayed from what I knew to be true and right. I rarely attended services, did not read and study and most of my friends were not believers.

Just over two years ago, I was led to examine the state of my spiritual self. I realized that I had been leading a fruitless existence spiritually. I asked for forgiveness and guidance. God began to work in my heart, mind and spirit as never before. I was led to Trinity and a renewed life as a Christ Follower. I am living proof that if you draw near to God, he will draw near to you. I have a long way to go, but I know who my faith is in and I know what I believe. Specifically: I believe in the God of the Bible. He is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit.

I believe that Jesus Christ is both 100% God and 100% man He was born to a virgin, lived a sinless life, performed miracles, died on the cross for mankind and thus, took the punishment for our sins through the shedding of His blood. He rose from the dead on the third day. He ascended to heaven and will return again one day.

I believe that the Bible is the true Word of God. It alone is the final authority in determining all truth. I believe that God speaks and teaches through his living word.



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## **Dave Ujifusa**

### **Communications Deacon**

I was raised in a Christian home and have been attending church my whole life. I remember praying to receive Christ during Sunday School at Trinity probably during 2nd grade. College is where I began to own my faith. It was sink or swim at UC San Diego and I read the Bible during college more than at any time the rest of my life. Living a Christian Life for me is being part of a community. Some of the communities that stick out to me over the years are Inter Varsity in college, Genesis Fellowship

Singles Group, Trinity High School Ministry, GBU Student Group in Madrid, Spain, MICC Church in Munich, Germany and, of course, Trinity United Presbyterian Church. I met my wife Anne while we both were working in Spain. Our three kids were born in Europe. Emma just finished grad school, Daniel just graduated college and got married and Sarah is in college.

I would describe Christianity in this way. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. He lived a life on earth teaching, healing and loving people. But he loved in a truthful way by challenging the proud and blessing the humble. The ultimate purpose of his life was to die on the cross to conquer death and provide forgiveness of sins to those that would believe and follow him. Scripture is the Bible. But the Bible is not just a book with stories and commands. It is the inspired Word of God. That means that God speaks to people through it. The Bible provides the foundation for everything we believe as Christians. It has lessons for life such as stories of individuals and peoples that follow God steadfastly but can then fail miserably.

Some of the other ministries that I am or have been involved in are: Nominating Committee, Pastor Nominating Committee, Delivering Cookies to visitors with the Doorstep Ministry; Meeting and talking with new people; Leading College Search Seminars; Teaching the Bible for Beginners class; Small Group Leader; Developing friendships with refugees through the Home for Refugees ministry.



## **Ruth Woesner**

### **New Covenant Partners Deacon**

I grew up in a Christian home, attending and serving in a small church in Cerritos. I was about ten years old at a conference, where the youth leader asked a question I never in all my years in Sunday School heard with such impact. She simply asked, "Why did Jesus die on the cross?" I knew that Jesus died for my sins and rose again. But to understand that He suffered willingly because of His love for me, I was moved to tears. When the invitation was given, my heart readily accepted His amazing love and gift of

salvation. Jesus is my Lord and Savior. God's Word reminds me of His unfailing love. It is the living Word to live by.

I've been a classroom teacher for preschool through grade 4, and Adult School as well. I've also enjoyed substitute teaching in all grade levels, special needs class, and of course Sunday school. Currently, I'm with a charter school working with homeschooling families. What a fresh new challenge and joy it is!

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Steve and I have been married for 27 years with two adult children, Matthew, and Sarah. Making Trinity our home church has been a great blessing. It was about 20 years ago when the musical program, The Cotton Patch Gospel, convinced me to pick Trinity among the others in the area. I loved seeing the youths involved in a fun meaningful way! We've been ministering here ever since. Serving, I believe, is part of being in the life of a loving church family. My family and I have partnered in various ministries at church and in the community. One of many favorites is serving breakfast at Southwest Community Center with different families over the years. Whether it's delivering cookies to new visitors or celebrating with youngsters at the Happy Birthday Jesus parties, I'm delighted to serve at Trinity in welcoming new covenant partners.



## **Doug Wynn**

### **PrimeTimers Deacon**

I was raised Roman Catholic, and I attended parochial school from kindergarten through 12th grade. I was an altar boy in grade school, and an usher during my high school years. At the age of 21, I realized that we had not really studied the bible at all, and I stopped attending the Catholic Church.

I began looking for a church with 2 criteria in mind: that they believed in the Blessed Trinity, and that they believed that the bible was the definitive word of God.

I was married at 23. Eventually, a friend told us about Trinity, and my family and I went to our 1st service in 1998.

We knew that we had found a home, and we became members in 2007. When my 1st wife passed away in 2011, I began to get more involved in the church. I became an usher, joined a small group bible study, and I became a deacon in 2014, where I met my future wife--Tina.

I was blessed to become a Deacon Moderator in my 3rd year. I have also become involved in Stephen Ministry and Inner Healing. God has given me a heart to serve. He has blessed my life greatly, and I am grateful for all he has done--and is doing-- every day.



## **Tina Wynn**

### **Samaritan Care Center Deacon**

I grew up in a Christian home and attended a Methodist church in Illinois. It wasn't until I was in college that I made the decision on my own to accept Jesus as my personal savior. After college I moved to California to work, and I eventually found my way to Trinity. My main focus at Trinity was to become a Stephen Minister, I had been through a divorce and God had been with me every step of the way and assured me that He would

meet all my needs. I felt like a "wounded healer" (Henri Nouwen) and was ready to give back some of the love that God had poured into me. I became a Stephen Minister, and a Stephen Minister Leader and God has shown me how valuable one on one care of people is. This beginning at Trinity lead to many more opportunities to grow and serve through classes and serving in ministry. Besides serving as a Deacon one

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other time, I have served in Alpha, Evangelism, Greeting, Home Communion, Novo, Nursery, and cookie ministry. I am currently serving in Stephen Ministry, in ushering, on the prayer team, and in Inner Healing ministry. I feel the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our church and its pastors. I look forward to where God will lead me and use me in the next 3 years.

Before retirement in 2018 I worked 23 years as a Clinical Lab Scientist (CLS) in a special antibody program. I have been married to Doug Wynn for 6 years. We met at Deacons here at Trinity. We are blessed to have between us 6 children, 14 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren.



## **Muriel Morse**

### **Nominating Committee**

I grew up in a loving, church-going family and accepted Jesus as my own personal Savior at summer camp as I entered the fourth grade.

David and I were married in 1976 and moved to Tustin 5 years later. Co-workers of my husband invited us to visit Trinity which we found to be a lively, Spirit-filled congregation like our home church in Pasadena. It soon became our new church family.

Our Sunday School class was a great support during our child reading years. I was able to return to school and begin a career in nursing at St. Joseph Hospital during this time. The opportunity to serve our community was a gift and a challenge each day. The Lord proved himself utterly faithful to his promises to grant wisdom and strength to those who ask.

While working, two Trinity friends urged me to begin attending Community Bible Study. This became a life-changing experience as I started to understand the relentless love of God for his children and his church. Now as part of Trinity's Precepts Bible Study that fellowship and learning continue to be bedrock in my apprenticeship to Jesus.

It is a privilege to be called to the Nominating Committee. Having served previously as Care Elder and Deacon assigned to PrimeTimers I have been exposed to many of Trinity's ministries and worked with many covenant partners. Currently I am an active Stephen Minister, a part of the Health Care Team under Kim Oshita and an attendee of Prime Timers. I have also been blessed to be a part of this summer's VBS and summer sanctuary choir. Thank you for this opportunity to serve our congregation.

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## **Patrick Munoz**

### **Nominating Committee**

I believe God is almighty and the creator of all things, including heaven and earth. I believe Jesus Christ is my Savior, sent by God to save us from our sins. I also believe that the Holy Spirit, gifted to us by God and Jesus Christ, dwells within me, empowers me, and constantly transforms me. All three form the Holy Trinity, which, to me, explains God's perfect plan for my life.

My faith journey began early in my life when my parents baptized me as a Catholic Christian at a young age. From my earliest memories, my family has been part of and attended church. Faith has been the cornerstone of my life. However, looking back, there were stretches of time or seasons when I lost my way or wandered. I was not in denial of the Trinity and salvation, but rather questioning the genuineness of my faith when I examined my actions. Nevertheless, during these times, there was always a voice calling me to get back on the right path, to return to His embrace. My mother and brother were integral parts of my faith journey, constantly encouraging my walk.

My mother, a prayer warrior, prayed for me and all her children all the time. She spoke to us about the power of the Holy Spirit and desired nothing else for us but to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. My brother, a Catholic priest, continuously encouraged me not to live in shame of my sins but to drink more from the cup of Jesus Christ, which is filled with His blood shed for my sins. As I received more prayer and experienced more of the Holy Spirit's power, my relationship with Jesus Christ grew. I continue to look forward to receiving more of Him and deepening my relationship with Him. I thank my mother, who has gone on to heaven, for her intercessory prayers for me and for her wonderful example of what it means to believe.

Today, my wife Katrina serves as one of my greatest encouragers as it relates to my faith, to my parenting as a father of 5 kids, and in my career. She humbly provides wise counsel and has been an inspiration for me whenever I have failed in these areas. I don't know the "yes Lord I will serve mentality" would be as strong for me if it were not for her encouragement. I have grown exponentially because of her prayers for me, and I believe those prayers were for me to lead more. I pray my kids know her faith and remember her in the same way I remember my mother- a faithful warrior.

Many have described me as a natural-born leader, and more recently, as a spiritual leader. It's a description I've never been entirely comfortable with because, in many cases, there's an expectation that I would have some formal leadership title or would accept one. Ironically, in my experience, it has been the absence of a title that has helped me connect with people, earn their trust, and ultimately lead when needed. Despite this, after much discernment, I often find myself accepting leadership positions anyway. In most cases, it's because I believe the Lord has placed this request before me, and so I obediently say, 'Yes, Lord, I will serve.' And then... I'm consistently amazed by the blessings I receive from Him.

With much humility I accept leadership roles, always with the intention to serve and ultimately to glorify God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.