# 2027 Elder Faith Statements



## Gayle Bradford

Hello, my name is Gayle Bradford (Reed). My parents, Roy and Jean Reed, started attending Trinity in their early 20's. When I was six weeks old, they started bringing me to church. Growing up at Trinity, I have a rich history of everything that Trinity holds dear. At home, my parents taught me by their example of God's love and that faith must be accompanied by action. At Forest Home as a 3rd grader, I stood up and declared that Jesus Christ was my Lord and Savior. Since then, I've tried to live my life in a way that is pleasing to Him. My husband and I were married at Trinity. Our daughter, Lauren, was raised here. I praise God for His grace and mercy every day. I have been a part of Trinity in many ways throughout my life. As a Sunday School teacher, I learned that God can make me brave. In choir, I felt God's presence in the music. As a Deacon and through the Health Ministry team, I can be living proof of a loving God. Being an Elder and part of the PNC, I learned to bring everything to God in prayer. I have served as an Elder twice before, and I am looking forward to the new model of governance. It will include more churchwide thinking, rather than individualized departments. I look forward to learning new ways of doing things.



## Chris Bramel

I've had the good fortune and am incredibly grateful, to have known Jesus and been part of the Church for as long as I can remember. My faith began to flourish in high school when I went to Mexico on a mission trip and saw God at work in a very tangible way, my faith was put into action. That experience had a significant impact on me and helped shape and strengthen my faith as I moved through college and my 20's.

I've always made it a priority in my walk with Jesus and in life to work at and stay grounded in community – through church, friendships, and people to who challenge and hold me accountable. I've been fortunate to have a group of 8 men of God who have met every Friday morning for more than 20 years. Together we've challenged and supported one another through life's challenges, struggles, and victories, in a spiritual community grounded in Christ.

I'm beyond blessed do life with my bride, Lindsay, of 28 years – she's amazing and inspires me on a regular basis. We've attended Trinity for the past 15+ years where our three kids have grown up, all of which are actively serving in ministries across the country as well as here at Trinity.



## Steve Canto

My journey as a Christian began at home. Raised Catholic, my family began attending Calvary Chapel under Pastor Chuck Smith when I was a young teenager. There I learned what it meant to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. In 1980, at age 15, I gave my life to the Lord and accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.

My relationship with Jesus is the center of my life. Through trials and tribulations, seasons of blessing, times in the desert, and times when I needed restoration, He has remained faithful. The Lord is so, so good.

I believe we are called not simply to believe in Jesus, but to rely on Him and be His hands and feet in this world. We are called to serve, contend for the faith, make disciples, love one another, and advance God's Kingdom.

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I don't serve to earn God's favor. Salvation is a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. I serve in response to that grace—with gratitude, obedience, and a desire to reflect His love.
The Lord has blessed me with many opportunities to serve, including as a Deacon and Deacon Moderator, Nominating Committee member, Chancel Choir member, High School Ministry Counselor, Inner Healing and Jail Ministries, Lay Men's Ministry Leader, Men's Bible Study Leader, missions to Sri Lanka and India, Trinity Service Action Team, Orange County Rescue Mission, Double R Ranch, and Charity on Wheels.
These experiences have taught me that ministry isn't about a title—it is about being available when God calls.

I am excited about Trinity's future and our movement toward biblically based Eldership. I desire to pray for our congregation, help discern God's vision for Trinity, encourage our pastors and leaders, strengthen the body of Christ, reach those who don't know Jesus, and develop disciples who make disciples.
I have been blessed with my wife, Kerry, of more than 24 years, and our daughters, Reagan and Danica, who are faithful believers in Christ.

I am still a work in progress, but my desire remains simple: Jesus Christ is Lord. He has been faithful to me, and I want to be faithful to Him. As the Lord calls, I will answer.



**Becky Carter**

I grew up in a Christian home but made my own decision to live my life for Christ when I was at middle school summer camp. My faith stayed strong and I was active in my church community over the years but it was when we fostered and then adopted our two kids that my faith was pushed, tested, stretched, and deepened to a new level. I found a rich beauty in spending time in God’s Word, digging deep to better understand His character and Truth, and this has (and continues to) strengthened my faith more than I could have ever imagined. In this current season, God is challenging me to breathe in and breathe out His joy, Truth, beauty, and faithfulness in my everyday interactions, work, community, and relationships. I'm excited how God will use all of this in my new role as an elder.

My husband and I started attending Trinity in 2019. I have served the last 3 years as a deacon in the New Covenant Partners ministry. In 2023, I started volunteering with Trinity's Middle School Ministries and have had the privilege of being a small group leader for middle school girls. I served as an Alpha leader with the high school students, started a Bible study with college and young adults, and love "doing life" with the young adult women in our church community. In our local community, I'm proud to be a Hope Harbor Auntie, spending time and sharing the love of Christ with the girls at Orange County Rescue Mission's home for teenagers.

Our 2 children are grown and both live out of state so when we aren’t working in my husband's IT business, James and I can be found exploring God's creation from the backs of our motorcycles and planning our next cross-country motorcycle trip.

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**Barbara Duncan**

I was first introduced to Church when my parents started going to Garden Grove Community Church – Robert Schuller's drive in Church (later Chrystal Cathedral)- when I was in elementary school. Once they decided that this was our church, we moved to worship in the Sanctuary, and I went to Sunday School and joined youth group. In middle school I went to Forest Home winter camp and accepted Christ.

Our family then helped start the sister church in Laguna Hills – Lake Hills Community Church with the associate pastor, Harold Leestma. While my children were little, I partnered with the music team to direct children's theatre to share the experience of ministry with my children. Our children grew up in the church and were active in Sunday School and youth group. Unfortunately, that church faced some difficult times and eventually the property was sold to another church. At that time, Dennis & I shopped around for a new church to attend.

My sister, Tricia Fuller, and our parents found Trinity and invited us to join them. We heard Doug preach and knew this was the church for us – welcoming and Biblically based. My husband Dennis joined the choir with my sister and later formed the Security Team for the church.

I worked for 45 years for Disney, with 42 years leading HR teams across the company. For the last 20 years I was based in Burbank - which made it difficult to get involved with a lot of the offerings at Trinity. But since retiring three years ago, I have been involved with:

- Joining the usher team
- Helping with choir recognition events
- Volunteering for Fall Festival
- Participating in Tuesday night Bible Study groups
- Planning the 150th anniversary events with the Church staff and 150th team
- Compiling the Church history, drafting the campus tour and partnering with Maria Mancini and Communications team to collect the videos of over 70 current and past members for our celebration
- Providing training to the Church staff as recommended by ECO

I believe Jesus is the Son of God, that He gave His life for me, and that His grace continues to transform me. I love being part of the Trinity family and worshipping and serving. I am thankful that I have been a Christian since childhood and continue to strive in strengthening my faith. My desire is to walk faithfully with Him, to grow in spiritual maturity, and to contribute to the work of His church.



**Megan Flannery**

I welcomed Jesus into my heart when I was six, but I didn't begin to grasp the depth of my sin and the depth of God's grace until I was eleven. Since then, I have been learning to live in the joy and freedom of King Jesus, living and breathing the Gospel so that others may come to know His love through me and through us, the Church. Bible Studies, sermons, friends, and mentors have encouraged me to daily lay my pride at the feet of Jesus and listen to the Holy Spirit, whose voice brings life and peace in a world of static and noise.

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My husband Randal and I grew up at Trinity and have been blessed to serve in the High School Ministry for the past eight years. We have an 18-month-old daughter Bridget, and Trinity is one of her favorite places to be. Thank you for caring for four generations of our families so well, and thank you for this opportunity to lead. Following Jesus is truly life's greatest adventure!



**Lynne Kodzis**

Jesus Christ is the source of all that is wonderful in my life. I did not grow up in a Christian home, but looking back, I can see how He laid the path and pursued me from early childhood through people and experiences. In middle school, a close friend invited me to her church, Trinity. Through youth group and camps, I began to encounter Jesus' love and presence, and I put my faith and trust in Him.

Throughout high school, college, and my young adult years, my faith continued to strengthen as I learned to stand firm in the midst of the strong secular influences of my family, friends, school, and work. During those years, I was sustained by three strong pillars: the church, God's Word, and mentors who discipled me. Those experiences shaped my deep love for the church and my passion for every aspect of its work and ministry.

As an Elder of Evangelism, I helped lead Alpha for more than 15 years and walked alongside and discipled new believers through Bible study. In Family Ministry, I served for many years in VBS and counseled for eight years in High School Ministry. Missions has also been a tremendous blessing to my family and me through Homes of Hope and short-term mission trips to Ecuador. Through Missions, I also led the SUSA (Basque Summer in the USA) team at Trinity.

One area I am particularly passionate about is connecting the church with the broader local community—both faith-based and secular—through service, Bible study, and prayer groups. I believe the church has a unique opportunity to build relationships, serve others, and share the love of Christ beyond its walls.

I have experienced God's heavy and loving hand over Trinity for more than 40 years, and I am grateful for the many ways He has used this church to shape my faith and my life. I look forward with excitement and hope to Trinity's next chapter and to the opportunity to continue serving wherever God leads.



**John Marder**

I can't remember a time in my life where God was not influencing my journey. I grew up Catholic and thank my mother for guiding me through the various stages of getting to know God including regular attendance, Sunday school and the Catholic sacraments. This permanently set the stage for the Lord to be in my life. In my late teens and 20's, I fell away from many of the disciplines, but God was always calling me back (although I may not have been aware of it for some of that time). Having children brought me back to church, ultimately finding my way to Trinity in the early 1990's.

While the desire for my children to have God in their lives was first in my thought process when finding a new church home, the Lord had greater plans for me too. I joined a men's bible study (which I am still with 30 years later), and about that same time, I met some people from Trinity that introduced me to Laurel House (now Hope Harbor). The men's bible study has shown me the richness of God's word, the promises and blessings, the purpose for my life and the way to live it out. The engagement with Laurel House showed

me how Christian's live out their lives in service to those less fortunate in our community. It also exposed me to the elements of Christian leadership such as seeking guidance through prayer and the concept of servant leadership. Ultimately, my journey led further to serving the church twice as a Trinity Deacon, and then as an Elder. When I retired from my career in banking in 2019, the Lord used these experiences together with my background in business, to guide me toward helping plant new churches with ECO, and to Presbytery's Southern California Council, both of which I continue to serve now.

While God has been guiding me throughout my entire life, it is my time at Trinity that has brought my heart to express that Jesus is my personal Lord and Savior. With Jesus at the center, I seek to live a life worthy and to serve His church with my gifts when called. As far as it is up to me, I seek to make the world a little brighter each day and exhibit the "fruit of the spirit" (Galatians 5). I have become aware of God's blessings daily in my life through his promises in the bible, for which I am eternally grateful. I feel that God is starting some new work in my life in retirement, and I am looking forward to serving again as Finance Elder with this fantastic leadership team we have at Trinity.



**Lindsay Whiddon**

I believe in one triune God- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who created the world in love and redeems it through Jesus Christ. His resurrection makes our own reconciliation with God and with others possible. Faith is both a gift of grace and a calling to lifelong discipleship. I grew up attending Trinity, participating in children's, youth, missions and music programs. I asked Jesus into my life at Forest Home during middle school camp.

Into adulthood, my own journey of faith has been deeply shaped by serving in different capacities, in and outside of the church. After college, I led an organization that focused on the needs of underserved rural communities in East Africa, addressing issues like access to healthcare, clean water, maternal health and HIV prevention and treatment. Currently, I work with Rotary International, an organization that values volunteerism in the community and meaningful projects around the world.

My family has been transformed by so many ministries and relationships at Trinity. My husband Jonathan and I served for many years in high school ministries and then I spent several years after that leading and serving alongside other young mothers at MOPS. Our 3 children are now involved in the kids and middle school ministries, and we have all been able to witness firsthand how God meets us in every stage of life with compassion and community.

The Holy Spirit is active in the life of our church and in our world, drawing us into deeper relationship with God and one another! We are called to be a community of worship, mission, and justice, equipping people of all ages and backgrounds to live into God's story. I'm humbled to be called to serve as an elder, stepping out in the bold faith that God will guide and is able to use all of us when we hear and respond to his prompting.

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**Ben Williams**

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. By Faith I believe in the Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Prayer is the means to communicate with my Lord. I believe God is the Creator of all things, is manifest in every part of our existence and strengthens us through our prayer and supplication.

The Bible is the inspired Word of God, not allegory, but direct revelation of the nature of God. I believe God created the world in six days as described in Genesis. I believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. I believe the Holy Spirit guides us and lives in us.

Among all these beliefs, I have no doubt that the truth and revelation of God is right in front of us, every day, every sunrise and every moment. Only through the blood of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is my redemption and path to Eternity with my Lord assured.

Involvement in Trinity ministries: Served as Trinity Elder 2017-2020; Member and/or Chair of Global Missions Stewardship Committee 2018-present; Produced 14 "Tools for Prayer" videos for the Care Ministries Team 2019-2021; Long time member and/or leader of a small group Bible study 2017-present

Outlook in serving the new Trinity governance model: I look forward to serving with my fellow elders at Trinity as we embrace our new model of governance in supporting our pastors and helping strengthen Trinity as we continue to thrive in our mission. I am grateful for the opportunity to use the experience and gifts God has given me in service to our church. My desire is to listen well, seek God's guidance, and humbly serve Trinity as we move forward together.