



PALM LEAF

February 2025

First Word

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<https://palmumc.org>

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS—LOVE : THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY

1 Corinthians 13 NRSV

“¹³ If I speak in the tongues of humans and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all my possessions and if I hand over my body so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. ⁴ Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; ⁶ it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. ⁷ It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹ For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part, ¹⁰ but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹² For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³ And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.”

This well-known chapter is the Apostle Paul’s “ode to love.” I recommend you read it through again, maybe a few times. It speaks of *agape* love, the love like God’s love that is not out of any sense of personal gain, but love, just because, simple, pure and unconditional. This is the kind of love our God has for all of us; loving in this way is how we reflect who God is to one another. We may do it imperfectly most of the time, as a dim reflection, but still it is our purpose and our calling to grow in loving this way as we discover more and more the depth and beauty, the perfection of God’s love for us.

This kind of love is counter-cultural in many ways. Even in many faith circles some of the things Paul lifts up are given highest priority- how great is your faith? How eloquently can you speak, can you win all the arguments? Have you sacrificed everything and held nothing back? But none of this compares with love. The kind of love that is patient and kind- the kind of love where there is no room for jealousy, score-keeping, or deceit. The kind of love Jesus lived out every day of his ministry, the kind of love that led him to the cross, the love that overcame even death, because it is the greatest force in the universe.

Love is talked about a whole lot in our society- but this kind of love is rare. Yet it is needed today as much as -or more than- ever before. How do you remain rooted and grounded in the love of God? Because none of us can love this way on our own. And as messages of winning at all costs, or messages devaluing the lives of different groups of our human siblings, messages full of rudeness, arrogance, or messages of all kinds of childishness swirl around these days, it is necessary that we as followers of Jesus Christ hold on to what is true, what is great- that *agape* love.

If you need help with an answer to that question, how to remain rooted and grounded in God’s love, here are some suggestions: worship with us, join a small group, attend to your times of personal prayer, Bible study, and meditation. Take time in nature and time for play, time for rest. Read 1 Corinthians 13 often. Let us hold on to this message and encourage one another in it: Love is the most excellent way.

Yours in Christ’s Love---Pastor Michelle

Pastor Michelle Magee

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<https://www.facebook.com/PalmUMCDinuba>

JOYS AND CONCERNS AMONG PALM CHURCH FAMILY

Please continue to pray for cancer warriors Linda Gourley (friend of Mary Esmay), Jim Bulls, Robert's co-worker Isaac, Brent Sadahiro's friend Alicia, Liz's cousin Grace Arifuku and mother Joyce Sasaki, Jennifer Washington, Judy Yoshimoto, Joe Takeda, Irene Pasillas, and Tammy Campbell.

Please keep the Ishida family; Julian Din, Sr; Phyllis Martzen, Carol Rossi-Christianson, Jamie Campbell, Rosalinda Vasquez; Liz's cousin Wayne Morimoto; Marcia Williams, Miyeko Cabello, Dianne Young's sisters Denise and Connie; Wilson School Principal Maria Lichtenwaldt; Dianne's mother-in-law MaryJane Young; Melissa Prado, Ruth Kurihara, Aiko Takeda, Kim Maham, Lupe Gonzales; firefighters; health care workers; teachers, refugees, Ukraine, Sudan, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, Israel and Palestine, our country, and Open Gate Ministries in your prayers.

Congratulations to Patrick and Rebeka Martzen on the birth December 29 of baby Finn Alexander Martzen !!

Sincere sympathy is extended to family and friends of Richard Ethridge who passed away August 17, 2024, in Dinuba.

Average Sunday attendance for January was 30.

PALM CHURCH NEWS BITS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2025

All Palm Church Sunday 10:30 AM worship services are live-streamed via Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/PalmUMCDinuba/videos/>

As we worship in-person at Palm Church, masks will be encouraged out of consideration for the safety of all; if you are feeling ill, please stay home. Facebook Livestream will be available; see Page Four. Following indoor, in-person services, lunch will be served in the Social Hall, donations gladly accepted. (Palm Church location—corner Tulare & "P" Streets, Dinuba)

Grace Groups meet on Thursday at 3:30 PM every other week via ZOOM, young adults on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:00 PM, and Spanish Grace Group (*Grupo de Gracia*) on alternate Tuesdays at 10:30 AM in-person and via conference call; in-person Grace Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 10:00 AM at 780 Harvard in Dinuba. Old Testament Bible Study convenes on Wednesdays at 11:00 via conference call. Ad Council will meet Thursday, February 27, at 5:00 PM on ZOOM.

Tina Mizuno will serve as Worship Leader on February 2, Groundhog Day; Liz Sasaki will serve on February 9 and 16; and Philip Martzen will serve on February 23. Alan Langstraat will be our guest speaker on February 16 while Pastor Michelle is doing continuing education.

Spare change Benevolence Fund Offering will be taken on Communion Sunday, February 2, for victims of the Haden Apartments fire in downtown Dinuba.

February Tobans are Liz Sasaki, Melanie Mizuno, Rosalinda Vasquez, Diane Domingo, Dianne Young, Stan Davis, and Sean & Amanda. Birthdays will be celebrated on February 16.

Palm Methodist Church Annual Soup, Sandwich, and Dessert Lunch to benefit Open Gate Ministries will be held Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 11:00 AM—1:00 PM. Let Marian or Dianne Y. know if you can help. Set-up will be Tuesday, February 4, at 9:00 AM. See poster on Page Five !!

Food Distribution will be held on February 22 at 9:00 AM.

Ikebana Class will meet on Saturday, February 22, at 1:30.

Next Messy Church will be on Saturday, February 8, at 3:30 PM with the theme of "Love Your Neighbor." Join us for games crafts, celebration, and meal !!

Please bring your donations of dried beans, fruit, rice, cereal, and pasta; and canned goods for the Little Free Pantry to Palm Church any Sunday. Thank you !!

WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH PASTOR MICHELLE

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My cell phone continues to be the best way to reach me, and please know that you can call me; I would love to hear from you !! Let me know how I can pray for you and if you would like a visit !! Mondays continue to be my Sabbath; I do not respond to non-emergency calls or messages on that day. Just a reminder, pastors are not mind-readers so if you would like to get together and chat about something please let me know !! My preferred way to be addressed is as "Pastor Michelle" and I appreciate you calling me that !!

I have received reports of text messages and emails going out in my name asking people to purchase gift cards on my behalf for others. This is a scam. Please check the cell number or email of anything suspicious to see if it lines up with my contact information.

Please check out our Website, giving portal, and Facebook page !!

--Pastor Michelle



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1—Tom Magee, Elisenda Espitia 3—Donna Sadahiro
- 4—Michael Kurihara, Ted Aivazian 5—Andy Fern
- 6—Andy Clifton, Tracy Kiritani 8—Iris Yamagata
- 9—Winnie Cadiente 11—Diane Domingo 12—Ricky Pipkin
- 15—Esperanza Burks 17—Joe Takeda
- 18—Judy Hernandez 25—Colleen Gray
- 27—Jessica Serios, Karen Tucker-Sullivan



**Palm Church Ad Board
 installation January 19, 2025.
 L-R: Pastor Michelle Magee,
 Kathy Glover-Bell, Marian
 Clifton, Dianne Young,
 Patti Remick,
 Susan Yoshimura,
 Diana Bulls
 Not pictured: Phil Martzen,
 Amanda Bulls-Stephens**



P.4.

LISTEN AND VIEW PALM CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICES
AT 10:30 am ON FACEBOOK LIVESTREAM
or you can watch a previously recorded Sunday service.

<https://www.facebook.com/PalmUMCDinuba/videos/>

- ▶ If you get the Log-in Window, Click on "Not Now."
When the Live Video appears, click on the red **LIVE** button.

Please leave a Facebook comment or an "Emoji," or a "Like," for attendance purposes.
marianclifton@verizon.net 834-5135 **THIS IS IMPORTANT !!**

GOD AT WORK IN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Our church is supplying scholarship funds for books for students at Wilson School for a fourth school year !! Your generous giving has made it possible; the students, staff and teachers greatly appreciate it. Every grade level receives \$250 for books for students to have (Fifth and Sixth Grades receive \$300), at the teacher's discretion. If you would like to give for the next school year to be able to continue, donations should be designated as Wilson School support.

We would like to re-start the Wilson Reading Partners program this semester, offering extra reading support to selected first graders one hour a week. We would love to have more volunteers join !! We want to bless our neighborhood by partnering with the school, and we ask that you continue to pray for Wilson's staff, students and families.

We will be blessing teaching staff at Wilson with some extra treats this semester. Contact Marian and Dianne Y. for suggestions on how to contribute to this encouragement for teachers !!

2025 DINUBA PALM CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL**

- **Susan Yoshimura---Education Chair, Ad Board Chair, Lay Leader
- **Dianne Young—Missions co-Chair, Messy Church co-Leader
- **Kathy Glover Bell— Treasurer
- **Marian Clifton—Missions co-Chair; Recording & Membership Secretary; History & Archives
- **Philip Martzen—Trustees Chair, Annual Conference Lay Representative
- **Pastor Michelle Magee—Nominations Chair
- **Diana Bulls—Worship Committee Chair, Finance Chair / Financial Secretary
- **Patti Remick—SPRC Chair
- ** Amanda Bulls-Stephens—Annual Conference Lay Representative,
Certified Lay Speaker

Melanie Mizuno—Messy Church co-Leader
Sean Stephens—Webmaster
Rod Clifton—Audio / Visual Tech



PALM METHODIST CHURCH annual
SOUP, SANDWICH, & DESSERT LUNCH
to benefit OPEN GATE MINISTRIES

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

11:00 am—1:00 pm

\$ 10.00

TAKE-OUT, DINE-IN, or DELIVERY

Soups Available:

Meatball (Albondigas) Chicken Noodle

Southern Clam Chowder

Hearty Vegetable

FRUIT COBBLER, MUFFINS, COOKIES

438 West Tulare Street at "P", Dinuba

643-6008 (delivery)

834-5135 (info)

591-0746 (ch.)



MESSY CHURCH PHOTOS









