



First Word

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<https://palmumc.org>

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS—INVISIBLE REALITY

The first Sunday in March we will celebrate the Transfiguration of our Lord, reading from Luke 9:28-43. In this story a lot happens, a lot that is hard to wrap our minds around, but one understanding of this story is that the hidden divine nature of Jesus becomes very apparent for one night, if only to three of his disciples. A cloud overshadows them and a voice from a cloud speaks, asserting that Jesus is the Son (of God) -the Chosen One.

Our faith based on Scripture and the Creeds, tells us that Jesus was/is divine in a way different from all of us other humans: the "Only Son" of God. But our faith also tells us that we all have a divine image stamped upon us, from Genesis 1:27-"in the divine image God created them." (CEB) So while we aren't all divine like Jesus was/is, we too have something of God within us, even before or without having faith in Jesus. So every single human on this planet has that divine stamp, everyone is worthy of respect and should have that divine image honored, from the Christian perspective. Yet that is not very often what we see happen. We see instead one country go to war against another claiming to be superior or deserving to take over. We hear entire populations dismissed as criminals, or stupid, or – you fill in the blank. Bullying and harassment increase, mental health suffers, that divine image is less and less perceivable.

In my sermon this last Sunday I said, that evil comes in many forms but it always diminishes the dignity that God gave to human beings. That's what we do when we sin, in all the many ways we participate with evil. But when we cooperate with God, when we do things that are good and right and holy, we help bring out the divine image in ourselves, and others, letting it be seen. Right after Transfiguration comes Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent- a time of repenting of our sin. It is sometimes made into a time to feel bad about ourselves, but I think that is a sinful/human twist on it. Because with repentance comes freedom. We can find again that divine image in ourselves. And when we have those moments of knowing, yes God made me, I belong to God- we find that we can see that divine image in others better, too.

My challenge to you, siblings, is to let the message of Transfiguration resonate within you- you are made in God's image. Then aim to find ways to let that divine image show through to others- and see if that might help you see the divine image in them just a little bit more.

Your fellow servant of Christ--Pastor Michelle

--We are going to try something new this year- ecumenical cooperation with Christ Lutheran Church in Reedley for some special Lent services. Join us at Christ Lutheran on March 5 at 7pm for Ash Wednesday worship; the following Wednesday (12th) we will host a simple supper with Bible conversation together with siblings in faith from Christ Lutheran at 6pm. Maundy Thursday service at Christ Lutheran on April 17 at 7pm and Good Friday April 18 at 12pm at Palm. Easter Sunday at Palm will be at the normal time of 10:30!

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), 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, Joan (Lozano) Pritchett, 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, Romeo Lozano, Miyeko Cabello, Dianne Young's sisters Denise and Connie; Wilson School Principal Maria Lichtenwaladt; Dianne's mother-in-law MaryJane Young; Melissa Prado, Bill Yebisu, 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.

Deepest sympathy is offered to family and friends of Jim Bulls, who passed away February 24 in Reedley. Memorial arrangements to be announced.

Congratulations to Melanie Mizuno and Kathy Glover-Bell, who were baptized during Worship on February 23 !! (Photo on Page Four)

Average Sunday attendance in February was 36.

PALM CHURCH NEWS BITS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 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 4:00 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, March 20, at 5:00 PM on ZOOM.

Tina Mizuno will serve as Worship Leader on March 2 & 16; Philip Martzen will serve on March 9 & 30; Norma or Romeo Lozano will serve on March 23.

Spare Change Benevolence Fund Offering will be taken on Communion Sunday, March 2, for Wilson School.

March Tobans are Marian Clifton, Susan Yoshimura, Ruth Fujinaga, Janice Serios, Diana Bulls, and Tina Mizuno. Birthdays will be celebrated on March 16.

Huge thanks to everyone who helped with the annual Soup, Sandwich, and Dessert Lunch in support of Open Gate Ministries, held February 5, at Palm Church— over \$ 1400 was raised !!

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

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

Next Messy Church will be on Saturday, March 29, at 4:30 PM with the theme of "Make a Joyful Noise." Join us for games crafts, celebration, and meal !!

Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 9—turn your clocks forward one hour !!

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

LENTEN ACTIVITIES:

Ash Wednesday, March 5, 7:00 PM, at Christ Lutheran Church, 1254 North Frankwood, Reedley

Simple Supper & Bible Conversation, Wednesday, March 12, 6:00 PM, at Palm Methodist Church
(together with Reedley Christ Lutheran Church)

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 7:00 PM, at Christ Lutheran Church, Reedley

Good Friday, April 18, 12:00 Noon, at Palm Methodist Church

Easter Sunday, April 20, 10:30 AM, at Palm Methodist Church



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1—Pattie Kurihara 2—Mary Esmay, Lettie Lamb
3—Hankus Nagata, Victoria Din 4—Jureli Canchola
8—Steven Bulosan 12—Jason Kurihara
14—Esther Kirkpatrick 20—Peter Mesias
21—Aiko Takeda, Walter Martzen
31—Maggie Fern, Craig Yoshihara



Open Gate Soup, Sandwich, and Dessert Lunch February 5, 2025



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 ways 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



MESSY CHURCH PHOTOS

KATHY GLOVER-BELL
PASTOR MICHELLE MAGEE
MELANIE HIRAHARA
BAPTISM FEBRUARY 2025





Troop 282 cordially invites you to the Eagle Scout



Court of Honor
Quincy & Rudy

July | 13 | 2024

12:00-3:00PM

First United Methodist Church
1461 11th St, Reedley, CA. 93654
RSVP to Ofelia at (559)737-2601







