



the Valley Messenger

A publication of San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

JANUARY 2015

A Personal Point of View~

Time is Precious

"Nothing else distinguishes effective executives as much as their tender loving care of time."

~Peter Drucker



Time is precious. Ask the coach whose team is behind in the final seconds of the game. Ask the air traffic controller in charge of scheduling takeoffs and landings at a major airport. Ask the news reporter who has just received

a breaking story from the AP wire. Ask a cancer patient who has recently learned they have only two months left to live.

Time management is an oxymoron. Time is beyond our control, and the clock keeps ticking regardless of how we lead our lives. Priority management is the answer to maximizing the time we have. Our days are identical suitcases—all the same size—but some can pack more into them than others. No one has a magical

ability to make time, but if our lives have a direction, we can make the most of the moments we have.

Time is more valuable than money, because time is irreplaceable. "You don't really pay for things with money," says author Charles Spezzano in *What to Do between Birth and Death*. "You pay for them with time." We exchange our time for dollars when we go to work and then trade our dollars for everything we purchase and accumulate. In essence, all we possess can be traced back to an investment of time.

How do you want to invest your time in 2015? The year 2015 is the year of Sheep symbolizing peace, harmonious co-existence and tranquility—*Shalom!* I feel like the year 2015 is the year of SRVUMC. We will make it up with intelligent, laborious servant-leaders who are the PEACEMAKERS for Christ within the boundary of its mission—make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and its vision—be faithful followers of Jesus Christ by changing our lives, our community, and our world. Everyone counts here!

Each of us is like a piece in a giant jigsaw puzzle; every piece has its place in God's plan. No piece is optional. How frustrating it would be to put together a 1,000-piece puzzle, only to find one piece missing in the end! That's how God sees us, as a wonderful puzzle made up entirely of incredibly important pieces. Everyone is necessary to complete the divine puzzle. When all the pieces fit together, the world can see a beautiful, completed portrait of the heart of Jesus, beating for people everywhere.

I know how busy all of you are. However, I would like to ask: What priority do your God and church get? There is no such "leftover" time. As we all know, we cannot find more time or create time. Per day, we all have 24 hours. It's a finite and constantly diminishing resource. Let us think and invest the time God has given us in 2015 wisely and purposefully. Time stewardship is our greatest responsibility as God's people. Let us not lose our priority in spending/investing the precious time we've been gifted from God by Fully Rely On God. Ribbit!

~Pastor Sunny

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Next Issue: February 4 2015

Final day for submissions: January 23, 2015

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January Communion Offering Benefits UMCOR's World AIDS Day & Programs for Local Youth



Your January Communion Offering give people with leg disabilities the gift of mobility and the children supported by the Thomas Food Project in Haiti



Personal Energy Transportation



PET® MOBILITY PROJECT

Personal Energy Transportation (PET®) Mobility Project-

The PET organization began in 1994 by Zaire missionary, Rev. Larry Hills, who discovered a need for 3-wheeled, hand-cranked wheelchairs for those who suffered the loss of a leg due to a land-mine or a disability due to polio. The mission and vision of the PET organization, is a world where all people have mobility and accessibility and are accepted by others. This vision is accomplished by construction and distribution of PET carts (see photo), and PET-hosted cart building workshops by affiliates located in the U.S. and in Zambia. Your January Communion giving funds cart materials, cart building workshops and delivery of these vital transportation devices.



To learn more about the PET Mobility Project and their work around the world, visit their website: <http://petinternational.org>

Haiti Special Needs Fund

When the Thomas Food Project was formed in the months following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, founder Warren McGuffin never imagined the many ways this program would transform lives and reach the number of school children it does today.



"I just wanted to feed hungry kids," he says, explaining the genesis of the program. Because of your generous giving over the years and continued giving today, the Thomas Food Project now feeds more than 500 meals each day, in six school sites. Your January Communion Offering will continue to support this incredible program by funding ingredients for these school children's meals. For additional information, please see the article on page 3.



CHANGING LIVES IN HAITI

by Warren McGuffin

"We are most thankful and pray for the success of your mission in Haiti."—Pastor Sully, Foyerdivin School.

"The kids cannot get enough of the computers."—Roosevelt, Principal IMEC School.

"Clean water means everything."—Jean Claude, Principal Ecole de Lespoir.

As suggested by these reflections by some of the leaders of the schools we serve, our work in Haiti is making a huge difference in the lives of hundreds of children. We visited each of our existing program schools and found all very pleased with how things are going. Each school has solar power, computers and a water purification system provided by our Thomas Food Program.

The computers are positively impacting student learning—particularly in math and science. The challenge is how to get more hands on time for each student given the large size of the schools and the limited number of computers. The kids are so enthralled when they get to use a computer that a half hour per week is not enough. What an opportunity!

Access to clean, filtered water is helping greatly with improved hydration and a reduction in water-borne illness. We have encouraged each school to offer water to the surrounding communities as system capacity permits. We will continue to explore ways to deploy water filtration on a broader basis. In our homes in the U.S., we expect good water by just turning on the tap. Not so in Haiti. Water either comes from polluted groundwater or impure government water. Few Haitians can afford to pay for commercially available clean water.

The solar carts are providing power to schools that have never before had it. Government provided electricity is limited and is not available to much of the country. Our entry level cart provides modest daily electricity—enough for a few computers, periodic water filtration, and limited lighting. We are working additional upgrade options to offer two or three times as much power, for more computers and other school uses.

This was our most ambitious trips yet, and included:

- Installation of the sixth Thomas Project School,
- Health checkups for a thousand school children,
- Distribution of vitamins and medicines, such as deworming pills,
- Introduction of solar, clean water and computers at our sixth school,
- Training of teachers on the use of computers and classroom lesson planning,
- Electronics upgrades on all carts in service,
- Maintenance of all school water filtration systems in use,
- Built and installed Bio-Sand Water Filtration Unit,
- Introduction of additional educational software applications,
- Deployment of additional classroom teaching aids,
- Distribution of school materials, new clothing, and dental hygiene supplies
- Repairs of various school facilities,
- Visiting additional schools for future inclusion in the program.

Of special mention, are the health checkups that are so valuable. Our mission doctor addressed a number of significant issues. One of the most common was that many of the kids were suffering from worms due to bad drinking water and poor hygiene. She also diagnosed two heart conditions and referred them for additional care.

We are excited to be working with a dedicated, effective staff in Haiti. They are doing great work for which we are most proud. Their work is grounded in faith of giving, caring and sharing.

We are so grateful for the support of the churches and individual donors who have helped make our program possible. ***You are changing lives!***

Report from Administrative Board

Meeting of December 16, 2014,

by Terry Sherman

The Administrative Board met Tuesday, December 16 at 7:00 PM in Wesley Center. Dave Bain, Chair of the Finance Committee, opined that, although the 2014 budget projects a deficit of \$35,311, he expects we will end the year with a surplus, based on historical December giving.

Dave presented the 2015 budget for consideration and approval. The budget projects income of \$1,090,500, expenses of \$1,115,825, for a deficit of \$25,325. The motion to approve the budget was approved.

Brad Stribling, Chair of the Staff Parrish Relations Committee, reported that Staff Parish recently reviewed the pregnancy and maternity leave benefit provision of the SRVUMC Employee Handbook. The current provision provides for up to four months of unpaid pregnancy disability leave. Staff Parish looked at pregnancy and maternity benefits provided by leading companies as well as other churches in our Conference. Although a number of companies offer paid leave, no churches in our Conference do. In an effort to make this benefit more equitable, Staff Parish recommended that SRVUMC take the lead and provide paid pregnancy and maternity leave. Brad moved to amend the Pregnancy Disability Leave provision of the Employee Handbook such that, for an eligible employee, up to a maximum six weeks of qualifying Pregnancy Disability Leave may be paid leave. The motion carried.

Terry Sherman reported that an informal steering committee for the Thomas Food Project has been formed and has established detailed accounting procedures for the Thomas Food Project

and the SRVUMC office. The procedures have been approved by the Finance Committee. Warren McGuffin, Thomas Food Project, Director Sustainability, moved to authorize the creation of a Thomas Food Project Steering Committee, which will be a subcommittee of the Finance Committee, and will include Warren McGuffin, Terry Sherman, Steve Elliott, Doug Huey, Phil Brandy and Charles Stephenson. The motion was approved.

At the All Church Conference in November, Jim Burk, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, proposed a name for the new Multi-Purpose Activities Building – Athletic Recreational Center (ARC) - with accompanying logos designed by Linda Green.

It was moved and approved to name the new Multi-Purpose Activities Building the Athletic Recreational Center (ARC).

Dave Bain is stepping down as Chair of the Finance Committee. Many thanks to his recent two years of devoted service (Dave previously served as Finance Chair). He will be succeeded by Brad Tolstedt (also a second tour of duty).

Also, Brad Stribling will step down as Chair of Staff Parish, but will remain on SPRC for another year. Many thanks to Brad for his strong leadership. He will be succeeded by Don Field. Fortunately, Brad has agreed to serve as Ad Board Vice-Chair.

The minutes of the Administrative Board meeting are posted on the Church website.

The next Administrative Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2015 at 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room. Members of the congregation are welcome to attend.



Contra Costa Interfaith Housing presents the

Gala Ruby Slippers Auction

**Saturday, January 31, 2015 at
Round Hill Country Club**

3169 Round Hill Road, Alamo, 6:00pm

Buy Tickets Now!

<https://ccinterfaithhousing.ejoinme.org/?tabid=557863>

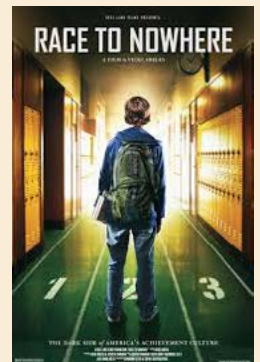
**All proceeds help end poverty and
homelessness in Contra Costa County.**

*For more information, please call (925) 944-2247 or
email elba@ccinterfaithhousing.org.*

Don't Miss the Race to Nowhere

TONIGHT, 7pm in Wesley Center

SRVUMC is pleased to host a showing of the Race to Nowhere documentary, at 7pm in Wesley Center. This documentary is being shown as the foundation for our Winter Learning in Community (LINC) series. You are invited to stay after the film for a short discussion and then select a small group to continue the discussion and explore new practices, over the next four consecutive Wednesday evenings.



It is our hope that by exploring the Race to Nowhere film and the companion BanBus: Time to Thrive initiative, will help you reframe the way we honor downtime, the Sabbath and create an environment that produces healthier children and families. Come with us on a journey you'll be glad you took, one that fills your days with purpose and leaves a true legacy for those you love.



Kindness Matters Corner

by John Green

Here are a few of the many recent acts of kindness others have done, observed, or received:

A very generous young woman in our church restored a surplus laptop she owned, installed new software, and gave it to a homeless woman at Trinity Center. This gift enabled the homeless woman to reconnect with family members. The gift also gave her the means to send out resumes as she continues searching for employment. This act of kindness was life-giving for this woman, and she is very grateful.

And The Little Children Shall Lead Us

From an SRVUMC member: The cool and dry weather allowed for a short bicycle ride the day before Thanksgiving. The kindness I observed by three young pre-teen girls had me smiling the rest of the day, and this is how it happened:



I was plugged into my iPod as I neared a young girl, standing on the side of the Iron Horse Trail. She was speaking to me, but Glen Campbell drowned out her words, so I stopped, removed

the ear-buds, and asked if she needed help. "No, I'm OK," she replied, "I just want you to know there is a bake sale just up the trail." "OK," I answered. I try to stop and catch a cookie or sip of lemonade anytime I'm on the trail when children are the independent small business owners. A hundred yards brought me to the sale, operated by two more young girls, looking to be the same age as the hawker. The girls knew how to run a business as they greeted me with, "Good morning, sir. We have several types of cookies, cupcakes, and other baked goodies for sale. Will you buy some?" I said, "I'll take four chocolate chippers." As they were bagging the cookies, I had a chance to step back and read the sign taped to the tables. After reading the sign, I told the girls, "Add eight more to my purchase!" And they each gave me a huge orthodontic smile! Their sign read: "All baked goods baked by Jenny, Alison, and Annette. Half of all sales will be given to a homeless shelter. The other half will be given to the SPCA. Thank you for shopping. Happy Thanksgiving." I asked

them. "Why don't you give yourselves some of your sales?" One spoke for the others, "We are thankful for many things, and we want to do something for others who could use help." I asked which homeless shelter would receive their gift. The other girl offered, "We are not quite sure. Sometimes we see a homeless person in front of our grocery store. The next time, one or more is there we want to speak with them to find out how they are and what we can do." How about that?!

A Generous and Warm Heart Can Produce Warm Feet.

A church member overheard this exchange between two other members: First Person: "That's above and beyond kindness; why did you do it?" Second Person: "Well, I have seen this man around town. It was obvious that he was homeless; he did not bother others, and he just kept to himself. I saw him on the park bench last week, and I noticed his clothes were very tattered. When I got home, I didn't think any more about it. But as I sat down to read the newspaper, the first thing I saw was an ad for boots. I flashed back to the homeless man, and I decided to purchase the boots and give them to him. When I received the boots, I began looking for the man around Walnut Creek as I ran other errands. On the third day, there he was on the park bench near the library. I parked my car and took the boots to him. They were not the greatest boots, but by the look on his face, they were the most precious gift in the world."



These stories and examples are all around us. Please tell of those that especially move you—it matters. Be a cub reporter and tell others of the kindnesses you observe, offer, and accept. Share your stories of kindness by emailing your story to kindness@srvumc.org. We won't use names, just the example of kindness for others. Your story will be posted to the church website within a few days. You can read these and other Kindness Matters stories on our website at <http://srvumc.org/category/kindness>



Pick-up magnets and Kindness Matters brochures in the church office, Narthex and Wesley foyer brochure racks.



Show you care, Think Carpool & Share a ride to Church!



Between the Bookends

By Sally Christopherson, Librarian



The holidays are over—but the cold and rainy days will be with us for a while! We're grateful for the rain but there's nothing like having a few good books lined up to warm our hearts and spirits and keep us thinking!

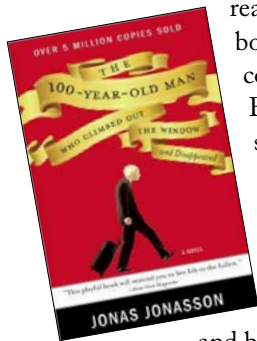
Here are a few new ones on the Book Cart to check out:



Lady's Maid, by Margaret Forster. Are you familiar with the story of Elizabeth Barrett? She was the frail, almost bedridden poet who was kept cosseted at home by her loving but overbearing father. Robert Browning admired her poetry and asked permission to meet the young writer. To everyone's astonishment, they fell in love and eloped in the dark of night to marry and run away to Italy, where Elizabeth Barrett Browning

wrote some of the most memorable love poetry still read widely today. And who went with the couple? Only Elizabeth's loyal maid, Wilson, who made sure Elizabeth's beloved cocker spaniel, Flush, went with them, and then cared for Elizabeth until her death in Italy. Wonderful historical fiction, told from the viewpoint of Wilson herself, and a real eye-opener into the relationship that existed between lady and maid.

The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared, by Jonas Jonasson. Are you



ready for something a little different? This book from Sweden has sold over 8 million copies world-wide and is a bestseller in Europe. It features Allan Karlsson who skipped out the window of his care facility on his 100th birthday to avoid the party he knew was inevitable. Quirky, sly, frequently laugh-out-loud, Allan steals a suitcase full of cash on an impulse, collects some very questionable pals,

and becomes an explosives expert. That unusual profession leads eventually to meeting a host of world leaders who have all kinds of uses for such a talent. Truman? Stalin? Madame Chiang Kai-shek? Read only with a well-developed sense of humor!

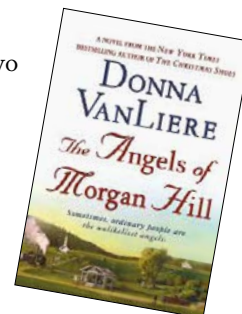
Thousand Pieces of Gold; a biographical novel,

by Ruthanne Lum McCunn. Have you heard of Lalu, aka Polly Bemis? She was born in China, sold into slavery at age 13, and taken to Idaho in 1872. For 60 years she made her way, through brothels, saloons, and eventually marriage and freedom and the respect of the rough miners she lived among. Her simple cabin on the Salmon River in Idaho is now on the National Registry of Historic Places. There is almost no good account of Polly's truly heroic spirit other than this somewhat simple novel.



The Angels of Morgan Hill, by Donna

VanLiere. The Gables and the Turners—two families, one white, one black, in Morgan Hill, TN, both scrambling to make a living. Racial prejudice is still openly and firmly in place. When the Turners' house is destroyed by arson, only Milo survives and Fran Gable sees only a little boy who is now alone, not a black boy. Fran's daughter, Jane, is nine years old and we also get a child's-eye view of this newly expanded family. The Gables' faith and friends provide a bulwark for them in this warm and gentle story that will have you thinking long after you put it down. Many thanks to Paula Boswell for this addition to our Library.



Books had instant replay long before televised sports.

—Bernard Williams, 1929-2003

The subject is...wait for it...

Bagels!

by John Green

Break out a ream of paper if you intend to list all of the activities going on in our San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church. If we could make a list and prioritize based on importance, cost, necessary support, benefit, etc., the subject of this article would probably be near the bottom, relatively unimportant. However, when this subject is closely looked at, it mirrors how we live the Christian way.

Many of us routinely top off the Sunday service with a cup of coffee, tea, or juice to wash down that treat picked up at our first stop in Wesley Center—the bagel table. The bagels can be of many variations, plain, raisin, cheese, sesame seed, poppy seed (with a performance enhancing ingredient removed, for you athletes!), and on and on. Slap on a little, or a lot, plain cream cheese, and enjoy, hmmm! It's not difficult to see who has enjoyed one of these treats—they are the ones sporting a cream cheese mustache!

We are just one stop for these treats, and the full trail is what impresses me. Many of us may know the full cycle of our bagels, but I didn't know it, and maybe you also are curious. It's the story of

- A donation to us,
- A funds-generating process for us as we consume the bagels, and finally,
- A donation from us to a charitable organization that supports the needy in our region.

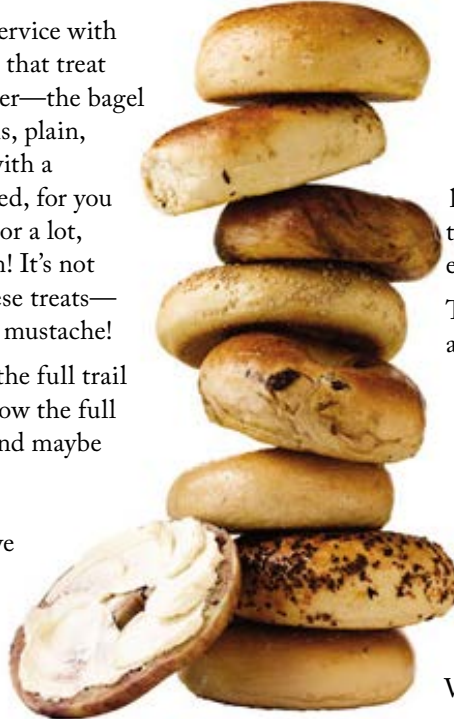
The story: During the past year, the Bagel Street Café, located in the Livery shopping area of Danville, has donated the unsold bagels when they close the business at 3:00 pm each Saturday. One of our Bagel Brigade members picks-up the donation minutes before closing. They keep them overnight (successfully fighting off the temptation to break them out and share them with the family), and the next morning, they bring them to church prior to the 9am service.

Then the Sunday Fellowship Team takes over and prepares the bagel table for us following the first service. We consumers are invited to drop a coin or two, or paper, into the basket as our gift. The funds generated are donated to the Contra Costa and Solano County Food Bank in Concord, and in turn purchase food for those in need. Our monthly donation to the Food Bank runs about \$40.

Pretty neat, eh? Helping others less fortunate while we enjoy ourselves? It's what the community of faith known as the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church does, time and again, in many, many ways. Yes, on the priority list, the bagels are relatively unimportant, but then again, the process is an example of the many endeavors we accomplish with God's help.

Thank you, Bagel Street Café for your generosity, and to our previous supplier, Noah's in Walnut Creek! A special thank you goes to newly retired Fellowship/Bagel Coordinators, Carol and John Sayers, and Jacque and Steve Foster for their years of service with a smile. Welcome and thank you, Kim Maier, who brings her own smile as our new Coordinator in 2015. Thank you, Bagel Brigade members; thank you Fellowship Team members; thank you congregation.

Want to be more a part of this than just a consumer? New Bagel Brigade members and Fellowship Team members are always welcome. Please contact Kim Maier (925-487-3367) if interested. Take it from me, participating once a month is just plain fun! OK, now, where's a sesame seed job, and please pass the cream cheese. Ahhh!



Final Nativity Count

Saturday: 107 cars

Sunday: 162 cars and 1 Firetruck

We estimate an average of 3.5 visitors per car, so the estimated grand total we reached is 945 people... many of whom were first time visitors to the Nativity!

*Thanks to all who participated
and made the event so special!*



GOT BAGELS?

The Coffee Fellowship is looking for more good people to join the bagel brigade, the delivery service for the bagels getting to the Church for Sunday service. What is involved? A willingness to schedule a Saturday convenient for you to pick up the bagels at the Bagel St Cafe' in the Livery, Danville. You need to be there by 2:55 pm to pick up the bagels which you deliver to Wesley Hall at Church before the Sunday 9am service. Please email Kim Maier at kim.maier@lmco.com with questions, or to volunteer.

Get Involved

What's going on at the Church



New LINC Small Groups Starting

*Wednesday evenings, Jan. 14 - Feb. 4,
7pm in Wesley Center*

SRVUMC kicks off the Winter Learning IN Community (LINC) series with a showing of the *Race to Nowhere* documentary, on January 7th at 7pm in Wesley Center. This documentary is being shown as the foundation for our Winter LINC series small groups. It is our hope that by exploring the *Race to Nowhere* film and the companion *BanBusy: Time to Thrive* initiative, will help you identify new strategies to reframe the way we honor downtime, the Sabbath and create an environment that produces healthier children and families. Come with us on a journey you'll be glad you took, one that fills your days with purpose and leaves a true legacy for those you love.

You are invited to stay after the film for a short discussion and then select a small group to continue the discussion and explore new practices, over the next four consecutive Wednesday evenings. LINC Small Groups meet, Wednesday evenings, Jan. 14 – Feb. 4, 7pm in Wesley Center

Thriving Families LINC Small Group

Group for adults with children and youth of all ages. Dig deeper into the themes from the *Race to Nowhere* film and the affiliated *BanBusy: Time to Thrive* campaign. This group will explore the ways we can influence and initiate new thinking and change in our local classrooms and schools, plus create an action plan identifying ways your family can create better school-life balance, free up your schedule, and start your new year off in a healthier direction. Led by Jeanne van der Zee. Meets Wednesdays, Jan 14 – Feb 4, 7-8 pm, in the Fireside Room.

Simplified Living LINC Small Group

Can We Really Simplify Things? Exhausted. Overwhelmed. Over scheduled. Sound familiar? Is our breakneck pace beginning to feel normal and expected? What gets sacrificed when we spend our lives doing things that keep us busy but don't really matter?

What if your life could be different? If you crave a simpler life anchored by the priorities that matter most, roll up your sleeves: Simplified living requires more than just cleaning out your closets or reorganizing your desk. It requires uncluttering your soul. This small group will explore and examine ways to reframe and simplify our lives by using Bill Hybel's, *Simplify* book as our guide. Led by Phyllis Meyer. Meets Wednesdays, Jan 14 – Feb 4, 7-8 pm, in Wesley Room 202.

MINISTRY OF PRAYER



By Rev. Dr. Sunny Ahn

The theological foundation of Prayer Ministry is closely connected to a theology of grace which John Wesley, the founding father of Methodism, called the means

of grace, and defined as “the ordinary channels of conveying God’s grace into the souls of men.” Wesley divided the means of grace into two categories—works of piety as the instituted means and works of mercy as the prudential means. Taken together, the instituted and prudential means of grace form the basic structure for spiritual formation in the Wesleyan tradition. The works of piety in particular are those means of grace that contribute to the development of Christian-like character—the shaping and strengthening of the inner life of the believer. Works of mercy are expressions of our love for God and for neighbors as well as a way of practicing and even feeding our love. As a means of grace, works of mercy are a channel of God’s grace to us as we offer ourselves in caring for others. Within this framework, San Ramon Valley UMC is offering several ministry opportunities for you as below:

Communion Prayer: It is offered monthly, on the first Sunday of the month in conjunction with Communion in worship. People are invited to write their name on a provided post-it note, and drop the note in the prayer basket, and then draw a name from the prayer basket. During the month, please pray for the person whose name is written on the post-it note you selected from the prayer basket. All that’s required is a simple and general prayer, following the lead of the Holy Spirit.

Worship Sunday Morning Prayer: Starting Sunday, January 11, the prayer chapel, located in the Bride’s room off of the Narthex, will be open during the 9am worship for those who are in need of extra prayers. You are invited to go to the prayer chapel during worship to pray with a member of our prayer team.

Tuesday Morning Prayer: The people of prayer get together every Tuesday at 9:30am in the prayer chapel and offer prayers for those concerns shared in church on Sunday and the received ongoing prayer concerns in church.

Open Sanctuary Hours: Each Monday from 10am-2pm (except January 19), you are invited to drop in and linger in the Sanctuary for as long as you desire during for a personal reflection and meditation. One of the pastors is present in the Sanctuary just for in case of anyone needs the pastoral prayer or counseling. Otherwise, this is alone time with the Lord!



*Save those treasures and bring them to donate
ONLY ON WEDNESDAY, March 4, 2015 be-
tween 9 am and 8 pm!!!*

Sale begins on Friday, March 6th, 9 am to 2 pm and continues Saturday, March 7th, 9 am to 12 noon.

We are happy to accept usable, salable items in good condition. Please test small appliances to make sure they are in good working order. When you are considering something to donate, ask the question, "Would I give this item to a friend or relative?" Donations must be clean, not soiled. Please – no missing pieces or parts, no rips, tears, or discoloration.

We are unable to accept sofas/overstuffed furniture, office furniture, mattresses, box springs, waterbeds, hide-a-beds, bed pillows, cribs, infant seats, curtains, Venetian blinds/shutters, all automotive products, all building materials, pianos, organs, bicycle parts, gas powered tools, food items, magazines, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, non-working electrical equipment, chemicals, oils, toxic materials, pesticides.

What's more important is that we need your physical help. This is a church-wide rummage sale that the UMW organizes. We can no longer do all the work that putting on a rummage sale requires without many helping hands from church members. That means helping Wednesday, Friday or Saturday for whatever time you can spare. One half of all the moneys earned goes directly to SRVUMC for youth programs and missions.

A recap of how the rummage sale works:

On Wednesday, the workers accept the rummage from people as they drop their items off. Men are especially needed to take the rummage from people at their cars if possible and move the items in to the hall. Others are needed to sort the rummage and put it on the designated tables.

We break for lunch and workers usually bring food to share like a potluck. For the evening meal, Peg Jackson prepares food for the workers staying.

Thursday is pricing day. If you have a "gift" for pricing items, we need you that day. We start at 9:00 and stop when we are done.

Friday and Saturday until noon are our sale days. People are needed to ring up the sales, help shoppers find items, refolding of clothes, etc.

Our youth will be there Saturday at noon to help pack up the unsold rummage which will be donated to another organization.

If you have any questions, please call Bonnie Roberts at (925)846-2035.

Thank You!

Dear Fellow SRVUMC Members,

We can't thank you enough for the support you gave to the 2014 Angel Tree Mission this year! Thanks to your gifts and monetary donations, we were able to deliver over 275 gifts and close to 50 gift cards. The agencies receiving your love were as follows: Bay Area Crisis Nursery, Bay Area Rescue Mission, Fred Finch Youth Center, STAND!, Juvenile Hall Auxiliary, East Salinas Family Center, Mt. Diablo Unified School District Outreach, and the Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Family Services. This mission work was awesome as it involved our youth as well as our adults in the various aspects of "Go Do It". You have put a smile on many faces this Christmas and hope in many hearts. You are an awesome congregation of Angels! Thank you so much!



The 2014 Angel Tree Mission Committee

Help Warm The Winter Nights



The Winter Nights homeless shelter is coming to SRVUMC on February 9. We will house, feed, and care for some 20-30 homeless people, mainly women and children, who would be on the street without our shelter. Winter Nights is very successful at getting clients into permanent shelters by the end of the season.

Winter Nights one of the most rewarding charitable activities you will ever do. It is a great activity for families with kids. It gives your kids an opportunity to serve and shows them what the "real" world looks like to people less privileged than us.

We need volunteers to help with meal preparation, tutoring, child activities, overnight host, laundry, clean up, and set up /take down. The shelter runs from February 9 until Feb 23. Please contact the following people if you would like to join us.

Meals, overnight host, laundry, set up, clean up: Bob Baker
RBaker3600@aol.com

Tutoring, child and adult activities: Jane Lang Janelang1@yahoo.com

Exact quote from one of our kids after working at the shelter.
"Dad, that was really fun!"

Don't miss this terrific service opportunity

Youth Ministry Calendar for January

Wednesday, Jan. 7: *No Middle School Youth Group or Tutor Time.*

Sunday, Jan. 11: Normal Programming Resumes! *Youth Sunday School and Confirmation* at 9am; *High School UMYF* from 4-5:30pm.

Wednesday, Jan. 15: *Tutor Time*, Wesley Library from 3:30-5:30pm; *Middle School UMYF* from 6-8pm.

Sunday, Jan. 18: *Confirmation Class Trip to Glide Memorial. Serving breakfast to those in need followed by worship.*

Wednesday, Jan. 21: *Tutor Time*, Wesley Library from 3:30-5:30pm; *Middle School UMYF* from 6-8pm.

Upcoming

February 13-16: Youth Disneyland Trip. *Forms due Jan. 15. Chaperones needed.*

Groundbreaking February 8th

Hap Magee Ranch Park Labyrinth Underway



The ground at Hap Magee Ranch Park has been prepared. After over a year of preparation, fundraising, searching for and contracting trades people and our wonderful labyrinth artist, it's time for the labyrinth

installation to begin!

Labyrinth artist, Marty Kermee of Labyrinths in Stone, has been working in his Yorkville IL studio, cutting and preparing the paver stones for our labyrinth. Here is a peek at one of the beautiful center rosettes that will soon adorn the center of the labyrinth (see photo above).

After Marty completes his studio work, he and Debi and their dog will pack up and make the journey out west. They will be onsite installing the labyrinth for 6-8 weeks. Groundbreaking, grading, preparing the base and installing a concrete ring around the labyrinth space are scheduled for this month. Save the date for a special Groundbreaking Ceremony scheduled for the afternoon of Feb. 8. Details coming soon!

Follow our progress by "Liking" our Hap Magee Labyrinth Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/hapmageelabyrinth> or visit the Labyrinth page on our website: <http://srvumc.org/grow-your-faith/labyrinth-at-hap-magee-ranch-park>

What began as a memorial, has transformed into a beautiful gift to our community thanks to your generous donations and support.

Looking for Volunteers

Help Sort Food for the Hungry

Saturday, January 17,

11:30am-1:30pm



Join a group of volunteers as they go to the Food Bank of Contra Costa County in Concord to help sort food for the hungry in our local community. For more information contact Lee Rust at chijocol@aol.com or (925) 820-9047.

METHODIST MEN'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY



CRAB FEED

Saturday, February 7, 2015

6pm Wesley Center

Roll up your sleeves and join the United Methodist Men's Group on Saturday, February 7th for their Annual Community and Friends Crab Feed. Dinner includes all the crab you can eat with all the trimmings, salads, french bread, dessert, and beverages. There are great doorprizes to local restaurants and clubs.

Early Bird Ticket Price (Until January 31)

Adults: \$40 **Youth:** \$25 (12-18 years)

Children: \$5 (6-11)

After January 31

Adults: \$45 **Youth:** \$30 (12-18 years)

Don't like Crab?

Land Lubbers Chicken Dinner

Adults: \$45 **Youth:** \$30 (12-18 years)

For information and tickets, call Dean McWilliams at 925-837-0971 or email: OSI310@AOL.COM

All proceeds benefit Youth and Church Community Programs.

January 19, 2015



Ron Charles—Washington Post

Please join us:

January 27, 2015 @ 7:00 P.M.

San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church

902 Danville Blvd.

Alamo, Ca 94507

Faith in Fiction: Does the Contemporary Novel Have a Prayer?

On Jan. 27, Ron Charles, the editor of The Washington Post's book section, will talk about the portrayal of God and religion in literary fiction. Ron has worked as a book critic for many years. He has won the National Book Critic Circle award for best criticism, and he recently served as a juror for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction.

Tickets: \$5 at the door

Rakestraw Books will be selling books at this event.

Tickets are available on our website at:

<http://srvumc.org/washington-posts-ron-charles-to-speak-at-srvumc/>

A Musical Celebration of Martin Luther King's Birthday



Once again, on January 19, 2015, from 4-5PM in Wesley Center, the Martin Luther King Peacemakers are inviting you to a musical celebration of Dr. King's life and legacy with songs and readings.

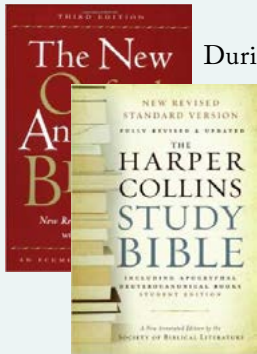
Bruce Koliha will be leading us with songs such as "I've Got a Hammer," "This Land is Your Land," "Let There be Peace on Earth," and others.

Our children's choirs will be singing led by Aimee Knese and Teri Hawk.

The Living Waters Band will playing, and we will listen to Evelyn Evans and Jada Koones do readings from King's speeches. Our voices will ring out joyously.

***Be sure you are a part of this
special celebration.***

Getting to Know Your Bible



During 2015, the Adult Education Ministry Team encourages the people of SRVUMC to read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. There will be a moment of recognition for those who read the whole Bible at the end of the year. Also, we will organize an optional 2016 Holy Land Trip for those who have joined in this activity.

If you wonder how the stories in the Bible have relevance to your life today during your reading, please join one of two on-going sessions that will be offered (although more may be added!!): (1) Mondays, beginning January 12th (12:00–1:15 pm) in Fireside Room; and (2) Sundays, beginning January 18th (10:30am–11:30 am), location TBA. These will be drop-in sessions. You can come as often or as infrequently as you choose.

We are presenting several approaches to help you succeed in acquainting yourself with the Bible, Christianity's foundational document. Here are a few things to get you started:

- 1). If you are new to reading scripture, use a New Revised Standard Version Bible. Here are a few good ones available from Amazon:
 - HarperCollins Study Bible, Student Edition: Fully Revised & Updated Hardcover.

- The New Oxford Annotated Bible, College Edition: New Revised Standard Version Hardcover.

2). As you are reading, make notes of your questions. The Bible consists of many books written over many centuries. It has lots of voices, points of view, and presents a wealth of literary styles. Reading it for the first time—by yourself—has proven, for many people, to be a lonely, confusing, and ultimately frustrating experience. We don't want you to give up!

3). During the drop-in sessions, Pastor Sunny and Phyllis Meyer will be available to provide historical background, context setting, and an arena to ask questions and exchange ideas. If you wonder how these old stories have relevance to your life today, we are here to help.

If you are more familiar with scripture, daily Bible reading presents an ideal form of spiritual discipline and practice. It may give you an opportunity to explore a different Scripture translation, give a fresh emphasis to your prayer life, or see new aspects of your relationship with God.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Sunny or Phyllis Meyer (pcmeyer@pacbell.net) through their email addresses or the Church Office.

Session 2: Art Enrichment Sign-Ups



Where
love grows

Cityscapes & Superheroes

UM Preschool Enrichment Program

January 7, 14, 21, 28, February 4

Children ages 4-6 will love the opportunity to explore the cityscapes and superheroes during the UM Preschool's January session of the enrichment program. Taught by artist and mom, Fiona Adcock and UMP Director, Paulette Ove, students will experience different materials creatively and develop a range of skills such as drawing, painting and sculpture while deepening their understanding of color, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space. Lessons will consist of small projects and larger ongoing ones. Cost: \$150 per session and several different sessions will be available throughout the year.

Enrollment paperwork and the registration forms are available on the preschool's website: www.unitedmethodistpreschool.org.

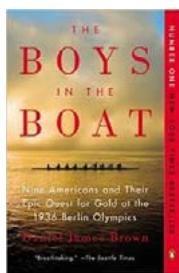
Any further questions, please contact the Preschool Office preschool-office@srvumc.org or 925-837-2788

Book Groups

Afternoon Book Group

Monday, January 26th, 1 pm,

Rm. 202, Wesley Center

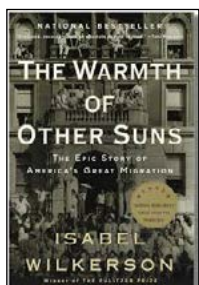


Our January meeting is on Monday, January 26th, and we will discuss our next book, "The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics" by Daniel Brown

For more information, please contact Marilyn Scott at merebruin.scott@gmail.com

Christ Care Book Group

Wednesday, January 28, 2015, 10am, Library



The Christ Care Book Group does not meet in November and December.

We will meet 28 January 2015 after reading "The Warmth of Other Suns" by Isabel Wilkerson. We welcome you to join us. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Gloria Fenton at gloriafromsanramon@sbcglobal.net

Senior Scoop

All Seniors and their family, friends & caregivers are invited!

Lunch with Friends

1st & 3rd Tuesday, Noon

Lunch with Friends is a home-cooked, sit-down meal, served in Wesley Center at Noon on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. Tables are set with fresh flowers and surrounded by interesting people. These lunches are the friendliest place in town. Plan ahead and invite a friend!

- Tues., Jan 20. Chef John Sanders will be warming us up with Meatloaf & Scalloped Potatoes.

ADVENTURESOME SENIORS

Adventuresome Seniors get together on the last Tuesday of the month for a potluck and program in Wesley Center. (You don't have to cook unless you want to – a pickup from the deli is just fine!)

(Only special events may require reservations.)

This month, on Tues., January 27, we are having a Potluck! Program—Judy Benedict & Gail Soldavini invite you to experience their stay in a lighthouse.

Available NOW!

Enjoy the photos and music from the

SRVUMC 2014 European Summer Concert Tour

lead by Bruce Koliha

Disc is available for a \$10 donation in Wesley Center during Fellowship on Sundays, or contact Judy Baker, Brad Stribling or Dean McWilliams.

Proceeds benefit the Church Music & Youth programs.



January's Focus: Commitment



Have you never had to endure a child learning to play the clarinet? It doesn't start out sounding pretty and polished. I started playing the clarinet in the 3rd grade and the "music" I made wasn't beautiful or inspired. But that

goes with any musical instrument, doesn't it? To become great at playing an instrument, you need to practice ... to rehearse. You need to commit to sticking with it even when you don't feel like it. Maybe you're not really a "music person." Maybe your interest involves the soccer field or basketball court. Or maybe you find yourself at home on the stage acting or dancing. Whatever your "thing," you know firsthand that in order to get better—to master your sport or hone your craft—you have to put in the work and practice, practice, practice.

The same is also true for faith. It takes practice to grow and mature in your relationship with God. It takes commitment. That's why we're spending the whole month of January to discover how commitment can show up in our lives as we practice our faith. Commitment is making a plan and putting it into practice. If we want to know God better, we need to practice our faith. But practicing isn't something that comes naturally to any of us. That's why we need a plan. And the best place to start is with spiritual disciplines; or what we call in the Orange world, "faith skills."

Our Bottom Lines for the Month of January

Week One: Practice hearing what God says. We can't do what God says until we know what God says, and that begins with listening to God.

Week Two: Practice praying to God. We hope kids will come to believe that they can share anything with God. There's nothing too big or too small for Him to handle.

Week Three: Practice talking about God. We can all share our story of faith with confidence knowing that Jesus is who He said He is.

Week Four: Practice living for God. We hope kids realize they can worship God every day with whatever they're doing, no matter what they have.

We have four faith skills that we think kids need to practice to know God better. We're taking this month of commitment to dig deeper into these faith skills to help kids get a handle on what it means to practice their faith. We use four simple words to help us remember these skills:

HEAR. PRAY. TALK. LIVE.

Each week this month, we'll focus on one of the faith skills as we talk about making a plan and putting it into practice. Remember, as we unpack these four faith skills, not only this month but every week in Small Group and at home, we're giving kids an opportunity to develop these skills over time so when they grow older, they will understand what it means to be the church, and understand how to work, live, and move in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

storytime

CONTACT STEPHANIE HAM
SHAM@SRVUMC.ORG

WE ARE IN NEED OF PEOPLE TO
BE STORY TELLERS TO THE
NURSERY AND PRESCHOOL
CHILDREN ONCE A MONTH.



Childcare & Nursery

we're hiring!

We are currently seeking to fill two part-time positions, both in childcare. We are looking for experienced childcare givers to provide loving care to our nursery kids on Sunday Mornings. The Childcare Manager will work cohesively with the Childcare Assistant to provide excellent care for our nursery. Both positions require consistent Sunday morning commitment and experience working with children. All hired persons must submit to a background check. If interested, please contact Stephanie Ham at sham@srvumc.org or Brad Stribling at brad_stribling@msn.com

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns...

Donna Johnston	Charlie Roth
Clyde Bazell	John Neary
Wade Bickel (Amy Parnes' husband)	Annette Warwick
	Helen Sinclair

Our Christian Sympathy to:

Karen Scalzi on the death of her niece, Janice
Annemarie Warwick on the death of her father, Jan, in the Netherlands
Mary Monroe, on the death of her mother
Gerry Carothers, on the death of her brother

Thank You

Donna Johnston wants to thank her church family for the prayers and cards that she has received, and wish everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Name Tags

Please contact Shannon Dever in the church office if you need a new name tag (\$6/ea.)

Envelope Booklets

If you requested numbered envelope booklets, they are available for pick-up in the narthex starting Sunday, Jan. 11th.

Continued Prayers For...

All those who continue to live with long-term illness, unemployment, life decisions, and sickness in their families:

Bill Andrew; Judy Branden; Lyn Bristow; Steve Colman; Lenore Cooper; John Evans; Brigitte Greene; Dick Greeno; Ann Hatfield; Dave & Lillian Holleman; Cary Johnson; Johnny & Donna Johnston; Del Kennedy; Dale & Daphne Kimbell; Jada Koonce; Alleen Landstrom; Larry Liggett; Jen Lotz-Kush; Margaret Matteson; Alex Maddux; Ruth Meier; John Neary; Mary Ogden; Alice Reynolds; Ethel Ricker; Mike Robinett; Charlie & Phyllis Roth; Barbara Schneider; Ann Schroeder; Dick & Pat Shoner; Carol Webb; Joan Webb.

Altar Flowers

We have experienced a considerable reduction in requests for altar flowers since the flower calendar was relocated to Wesley Center. If you'd like to place flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one, for their birthday, wedding anniversary, or other special occasion, please sign up on the flower calendar in Wesley Center lobby or call Marilyn in the Church Office. The cost is \$35 for flowers on the altar or under the cross. Please note, on communion Sunday we are only able to place flowers under the cross.

February Celebrations

Birthdays

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 Renée Beck
Harry Knapp
Amy Sidhom | 7 Justin Hill
Debbie Kelly
Katy Mannell | Eleanor Toney
Katie Ward | Suzanne Stephens
Trevor Willis |
| 2 Sandy Bennion
Edith Liggett
Ted Nguyen
Dawn Smallwood
Cindy Stephenson
Catterton | 8 Ryan Christian
Marilyn Hansen
Connie Lowe
Laura Macomber Weeks
Mandy Whiting | 15 Kelly Benjamson
Debbie Hammond
Teri Hawk | 27 Elaine Borge (97) |
| 3 Le Anne Jacobi
Linda Jimerson
Dick Shoner
George Swallow (90)
Kim Wolfram | 9 Jarrett Krumrei
Laurie Stocking | 16 Anne Burk
Matthew Byrom
Linnea Winter | 28 John Corson
Elaine Hagebush
Laura Sanchez |
| 4 Joanne Durrenberger
Sue Hardy
Dan Hawkey
Pat Shoner | 10 John Johnston (95)
Emily Malin
Dean McWilliams | 17 Phil Bandy
Kimberly Miskovetz | 29 Mike Alfrey
Patti Ongman |
| 5 Kendall Andres
Doug Beck
Melanie Hasik
Stephanie Leontini | 11 Beverly McAdams
Doug Merritt | 18 Nick Item | |
| 6 Jackie Ceragioli
Steve Foster | 12 Rebecca Byrom
Joanne Knapp
Millie Loper | 19 John Pavel | |
| | 13 Al Robinson
Maggie Stienstra
Nick Weeks | 20 Laura Altamirano | |
| | 14 Kari Dimler
Chuck Lindquist
Charles Stephenson | 21 Heather Clay
Bill Hubert | |
| | | 22 Lindsay Koos
David Shin
Harriot Siegrist (93) | |
| | | 23 Kal Peters | |
| | | 24 Elisa Ericson
Maddy Preece
Dorothy Ruby (93) | |
| | | 25 Andrea Bourgeois
McWilliams | |
| | | 26 Bob Garner (94) | |



Wedding Anniversaries

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 3 Anne & Jim Burk (52nd) | 16 Ruth & Wolf Meier (58th) |
| 4 Nancy & Cliff Campbell | Kal & Kevin Peters |
| Candice & Steve Newburn | 20 Ann & Jim Johnson |
| Gay & David Scott | 27 Phyllis & Charles Roth (55th) |
| Betty & Irv Skeoch | |
| 6 Donna & Chuck Lindquist | |
| 8 Jacque & Steve Foster | |





JANUARY 2015

Worship Schedule

Traditional Worship, 9:00 am in the Sanctuary

Non-Traditional Worship, 10:30 am, in the Sanctuary

Centerpoint Worship Service, first Wednesday of each month, 6:30pm, in the Sanctuary

Child Care for birth-kindergarten is available during the morning services in the Children's Building

Time-valued material — Deliver promptly
1/8/2015

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