



The Valley Messenger

A publication of San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church. Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

AUGUST 2016

A Parsonal Point of View ~

A Birthday Letter to America

On Sunday, July 3, I shared, as my message in worship, a birthday letter to America. As my column contribution for this month, I would like to share the text of this letter in this edition of *The Valley Messenger*. —Blessings, Ron

A Birthday Letter to America

Dear America,

I am writing this letter to wish you a very happy birthday! It's hard to believe, but it was 240 years ago tomorrow that your great and noble experiment as a nation was launched with the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Declaring your independence from the imperial power of Great Britain, your revolutionary leaders sent shock waves through the rest of the world with those immortal words...

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Have something you'd like included in next month's Messenger? Please submit your articles to: Lisa Jancarik

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men (people) are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

If ever the written word was able to capture the power and imagination of an idea, it was precisely here in this unforgettably bold statement—a statement that helped to give birth to a new nation and a timeless idea—the idea that every human being has a fundamental right to be free and equal.

In the 240 years that have come and gone since this declaration, this idea has been memorized by schoolchildren and taken to heart by immigrants. It has been engraved on the plaques of monuments and quoted by Presidents...All are created equal and all have unalienable rights—the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. What a beautiful vision! What a timeless hope!

Yet, it soon became apparent that it was a vision and a hope that, in some respects, was more aspirational than actual. For the truth, of course, is that a number of the Declaration's signers owned slaves and a passage that addressed the matter of slavery was deleted from the adopted declaration.

In actual practice, equality and liberty were reserved for those who had lighter skin and happened to be born as a male.

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Women, in this new nation of ours, were not permitted to vote and their role in government itself was nonexistent.

And that it is the way that it would remain for quite some time. There was a discrepancy between the noble ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the actual implementation of those ideals in the everyday life of our country. It was soon evident that some were considered to be "more equal" than others.

In the decades and the centuries that would follow, that discrepancy would be revealed in attitudes toward the Native Americans whose lands would be taken, the immigrants who were often ridiculed and ostracized, and those who simply lacked the proper pedigree of prosperity.

Today, this discrepancy and resulting disparity continues as the gap between those who **"have"** and those who **"have not"** widens in ways that are unprecedented. To be sure, we still think in terms of "liberty and justice for all," but that is not always the way that it plays out. In recent years, there have been tangible signs of growing unrest, anger and disappointment on the part of those who are feeling disenfranchised and marginalized. The Occupy Wall Street movement gave us a glimpse of this simmering frustration and our recent political primary process has revealed that many are no longer content with "more of the same."

In fact, it would not be inaccurate to suggest that there is, today, another revolution that is unfolding—a revolution unlike that which gave birth to our nation. This revolution is more global than national as it transcends the borders that once neatly defined our provincial perspectives and points of view.

It is no longer enough to think solely in terms of "my country, right or wrong." Instead, we are faced with the challenge of recognizing that we truly a part of a global village and have a responsibility to act accordingly—as citizens of our planet, not just our own nation. Like it or not, our technologies and our economies are bound together in ways that make it abundantly clear that we cannot live in isolation—even if we wanted to.

Given this growing global revolution, there is an inclination on the part of some to return to the way it used to be. They would "make America great again." But I can't help but wonder just what true greatness really looks like in our contemporary world with all of its geographical, environmental and cultural concerns.

Does being great mean the same thing as being number one? Does being great mean that our only concern should be for our own economic or political benefit? Does being great mean that our views and actions must be defined solely by the borders within which we live?

I'm not so sure that this understanding of greatness is helpful in the world as we now know it. In fact, I'm not so sure that our world can survive this understanding as it has now brought us to the precipice overlooking the prospect of international chaos and self-destruction.

True greatness, it seems to me, grows out of a more noble aspiration—indeed, the same aspiration shared by the signers of the Declaration of Independence and their vision of genuine equality, liberty and justice for all...not just for our own, but for all.

It was, of course, Jesus who suggested that true greatness is not to be found by "lording it over others," but, instead, by choosing to be the servant of all. This is, I recognize, a most radical thing to suggest, but it seems to me that any nation that would call itself a Christian nation ought to be willing, at least, to take the teaching of Jesus seriously. Is it possible that we might be willing to define our greatness through our willingness to be a servant of all, or, at least, to work together with other nations for the common good of all?

It was, of course, the Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, who toured the newly formed nation of America, trying to determine the essence of her soul. After much travel and extensive observation, he came up with this simple summary: **“America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”**

In this simple assessment, there is a gold mine of both wisdom and warning. The wisdom of this assessment reminds us that it was the goodness of America's desire to be a place liberty and justice for all that earned it the admiration and affirmation of people from around the world. It was the nobility of the thought that this could truly be a place that respected the rights and the dignity of all people that inspired countless millions to make their pilgrimage in order to share in this American experience. And it is this goodness that I, as an American citizen, am most proud of. It has been and remains a remarkable gift to the world and to each one of your citizens.

The warning of this message is that, in the midst of all the pressures and challenges that currently characterize life on this fragile planet, we can easily lose sight of the vision of this goodness if we give in to our fears and become self-centered in our policies. If that happens, the words that we dutifully recite from memory may become little more than a hollow reminder of a conviction that we once held but no longer truly believe.

This, of course, is a world far different from the one into which you were born 240 years ago. It was, necessary, at that time, for our founding fathers and mothers to declare their independence from England and the shackles of colonial rule. In our own time and place, it is necessary not only for the sake of our nation, but for the sake of our community of nations, to declare **our inter-dependence on one another**—our need to work in concert with other people of other nations for the greater good of all.

Not only is this a noble and inspiring vision, but it is absolutely necessary if we are to avoid economic, environmental and social destruction of an unparalleled nature. We must find ways to act inter-dependently because there is no going back to the independent world that once was.

My hope and my prayer is that as a people of faith, we can and will choose to live lives that seek the greatness that our ancestors sought, the greatness of pursuing a common vision of the common good, the greatness of respecting and honoring the equality and rights of every individual, the greatness of passionately pursuing liberty and justice for all—not just for some.

The nobility of the vision that brought about your birth 240 years ago, has lost none of its beauty, power or importance. It is still as critical as it ever was—perhaps even more so.

I pray that we will have the ability to do more than merely recite the words of that vision by memory.

I pray that we will have the conviction to translate these words into a courageous witness that reflects our choice to respect the equality of all people and their rights as human beings.

I pray that we will choose the greatness that comes with living inter-dependently, not only respecting, but insisting upon, the rights, the dignity and equality of all people—not only those within our borders, but also those who live within the boundaries of our global village. For they, too, are a part of our family—they, too, are a part of the family that God has created and loved. Red and yellow, black and white, they are all precious in God's sight.

Let us pray and work for the day when it will be so.

With Love and Respect,

Ron



Church Council Report

The Church Council met June 21 in the Fireside Room.

Rhonda Poole reported, on behalf of the Finance Committee, that January through May income and expenses were favorable to plan. A recommendation to allocate funds to the Church Council Reserve Fund for this year was tabled to the July Council meeting.

Liz Bayat, leader of the Circuit refugee resettlement task force, reported for Missions that the refugee family from Yemen, a mother with two sons initially relocated to Daly City would like to move to Los Angeles to pursue a career in cosmetology. **Her move to this new location would mean that future funding would be dependent on Catholic Charities in the Los Angeles area.**

The Council approved a motion to end financial support for the Yemeni family at the end of June and continue to seek out opportunities to sponsor new refugee families.

The Council approved the following **ARC Vision Statement**, as presented by Liz Bayat on behalf of a subcommittee consisting of **Jim Burk, Lea Hickman, Liz, Jim McKnight, Rhonda Poole, Ron Dunn and Terry Sherman**:

“To create and cultivate a community that provides a recreational connection for the people of our church and community. This connection, rooted in the experience of sports and exercise, invites each of us to explore a deeper commitment to our values and principles while enabling a healthy lifestyle and strong character.

The ARC building will be a place where all can participate in recreational and fitness opportunities that enrich mind, body, and spirit.”

Rev. Dr. Karen Oliveto Elected Bishop to Western Jurisdiction

Senior pastor to Glide Memorial Church/Glide Foundation Rev. Dr. Karen Oliveto has been elected to the episcopacy for the Western Jurisdiction. She has previously served as

pastor to Bethany UMC as well as roles of adjunct professor and associate dean at the Pacific School of Religion. She has authored multiple publications. She earned her Master of Divinity from Pacific School of Religion.



A draft of ***Guidelines for Nominations and Extensions*** was submitted for discussion by the Committee on Lay Leadership (COLL) (**now named the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee**). The Guidelines are a work in progress and are meant to address leadership succession in Committees and Practice Groups as well as terms of service of members. Suggested changes to the Guidelines will be considered by COLL resubmitted to the Council.

Vice Chair and Strategic Development Chair Jim

McKnight reported that Practice Group Chairs and Strategic Plan Committee Chairs recently met to begin the process of integrating the Practice Groups actualities and strategic plan propositions.

Staff Parish Relations Chair Don Field reported that interviews for the position of **Director of Youth Ministry** will begin within the week.

The minutes of the June 21 Church Council meeting and written committee reports are posted on the Church website (<http://srvumc.org/get-to-know-us/governance/administrative-board-meeting-minutes-2/>).

Council meetings are currently scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month in the Fireside Room. The Council met on July 19, **and will meet on August 16. All are welcome to attend.**

Shalom,

Terry Sherman

Chair, SRVUMC Church Council

Bishop Minera Carcaño Assigned to the CA-NV Conference

Bishop Minerva Carcaño will serve as resident bishop for the CA-NV Conference beginning September 1. Most recently she has filled the role of bishop to the CA-Pacific Conference (Los Angeles area) for the past four years. She is a graduate of University of Texas at Pan American and Perkins School of Theology of Southern Methodist University.



Upcoming Mission Opportunities

LOCAL

Fall Mission Trip to Calaveras County—Register by August 28! We will be traveling to Calaveras County, California to help rebuild from the Fall 2015 wildfire. The so called "Butte Fire" burned nearly 71,000 acres in Calaveras and Amador counties. It destroyed 475 homes and hundreds of other buildings. The California Nevada Conference helping with a long term recovery coordinated by **Calaveras Recovers**. We will carpool to the area on the afternoon of **Sunday, September 25**, with work starting Monday morning and **return on Friday, September 30** in the afternoon. We will be staying at Camp Lodestar. The Camp has sleeping rooms, a kitchen, gathering areas and showers. **The cost of the trip will be \$175**. Scholarships are available. This will be a joint mission with Asbury UMC. For more information, contact **Paul Kuelz** at paulkuelz@sbcglobal.net or call 925-831-3128.



UMCOR Depot Mission Trip—Register by October 2! Registration is now available for a mission trip to the **UMCOR Depot in Salt Lake City, Utah**. This depot is one of two warehouses in the United States where UMCOR (the United Methodist Committee on Relief) stores relief supplies for emergency response. We will work at the depot processing donations, assembling relief kits and organizing disaster response supplies. We also plan to spend a day in mission at a local food bank, community coop or shelter. This mission week will be **November 7 to 11, 2016**. This trip is ideal for those new to mission work or those participants seeking an alternative to the typical mission construction work. **We will travel on Sunday evening, November 6 and return on Friday afternoon, November 11**. We will be staying at the Episcopal Church Center of Utah. This facility offers twin bed sleeping rooms, shared bath facilities and a kitchen for meal preparation. We are limited to a group size of 10 to 12 participants. **The cost estimate is \$450 per person for airfare, housing, ground transportation and meals**. For more information, contact **Paul Kuelz** at paulkuelz@sbcglobal.net or call 925-831-3128.



WORLD

Guatemala City and Antigua Mission to Distribute Wheelchairs—January 18 through 25, 2017. We have sent the Wheelchair Foundation payment for 110 wheelchairs, or one small container load. SRVUMC, Asbury UMC and the Foundation made the decision that Guatemala would greatly benefit from these wheelchairs. Contact **Paul Kuelz** for more information at paulkuelz@sbcglobal.net or call 925-831-3128.



Mission Volunteers & Communion Giving

Special Offerings

- > Wheelchair \$2,397
- > Refugee Resettlement 5,035

June Volunteers

- > 4 SRVUMC and 2 Asbury church members to Weed Fire Rebuild.
- > 16 Coffee Hour volunteers.
- > 20 Sodbuster volunteers helped mow, blow, trim and cleanup the grounds and landscaping of the church campus
- > 25 volunteers helped prepare and serve Friday "Food for Thought" lunch at the Trinity Center in Walnut Creek

| Month | Entity | Amt |
|--------|--|----------------------------------|
| Jan | Haiti | \$2,415 |
| Feb | P.E. Transportation Limb Restoration | 470 470 |
| Mar | One Great Hour of Sharing | 1,342 |
| Easter | Stop Hunger Now Habitat for Humanity Interfaith Council Richmond Interfaith | 3,309 3,309 3,000 1,000 |
| April | Trinity Center | 1,668 |
| May | Local Youth Mission | 1,847 |
| Jun | Weed Ca Fire Recovery | 1,779 |
| Jul | Monument Crisis Center STAND | |
| Aug | Fred Finch Capernum | |
| Sep | Mission Saturday | |
| Oct | | |
| Nov | | |
| Dec | | |
| Totals | | \$20,609 |



Affirming Life in the Face of Occupation

With Guest Speaker Ata Manassra from the West Bank Palestinian Village of Wadi Foquin

When: Sunday, August 7, 2016, 10:30 a.m.

Where: San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, Fireside Room
902 Danville Blvd., Alamo, CA 94507

Wadi Foquin is a small agricultural village in the West Bank of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The future of the village is under threat. In June 2014, land confiscation orders were issued in the West Bank claiming 1000 acres as state land for Israel. A significant portion of that land belongs to Wadi Foquin. In June 2015, 1300 fruit trees were demolished in the village by bulldozers accompanied by military personnel. Later in the year, orders were issued to stop construction of a soccer field being built for the children and youth of the village.

The United Methodist Church has been in relationship with the village since 2009 through a partnership initiated by the **Friends of Wadi Foquin**. Ata Manassra is the coordinator of the **Wadi Foquin (Narjes) Community Development Project (CDP Project)** established through this partnership. The project is also supported through the church's General Board of Global Ministries (www.umcmiissions.org; gifts to "Advance #3021565"). Hear the latest updates from Ata along with ways you can be in support of the village and the CDP project.

Mission Memories...

Weed, CA Mission Trip, June 26 to 30, 2016

A group of six including **Diana and Howard Mendenhall** from Asbury UMC and **Paul Kuelz, Larry Pasquale, Burt Rogers and Brad Stribling** from SRVUMC traveled to the Mt. Shasta/Weed, CA area to work on homes destroyed by the wildfire in Weed CA in September, 2014. In approximately six hours, this wildfire destroyed 150 homes, two churches and several commercial buildings.

The evening we arrived at Mt. Shasta United Methodist Church, where we would be lodging for five days, the local congregation treated us to a welcoming barbecue. There, we met the leaders of the Weed Long Term Recovery Group (WLTRG), local Habitat for Humanity Group, and a four-person group from Antioch, CA Rotary, who were also going to be working on area homes. The Mt. Shasta UMC has about 40 total members, and at least 20 were at this celebration.

On Monday, we met in Weed, where WLTRG leaders Brenda Duchi and Pat Olson showed us the devastated area and the two homes we would be working on. Two members of our group, **Paul Kuelz and Brad Stribling**, took on the assignment to install ceramic tiles on walls surrounding a bathtub. The homeowner lost her original home from the fire and purchased a fixer-upper in another part of town. The walls needed to be prepped and water pipes needed tightening before the walls could be tiled and grouted. The rest of our team, **Diana and Howard Mendenhall, Burt Rogers and Larry Pasquale** worked on a Habitat for Humanity build. That home was sited where the previous home had burned, leaving a family of five homeless.

We were led by an 82-years-young former minister and missionary named Bob who now spends most of his time working on Habitat for Humanity builds. When we started, only the foundation was done. In four days, we filled the cement blocks and got as far as placing floor joists. Construction halted there for inspections.



The team poses in front of the tool truck with imposing Mt. Shasta in the background. Rewarding trip for all!

Glide Service in May 2016

San Ramon United Methodist Church was well-represented with fifteen of us volunteering to serve lunch to those in need at Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco on Sunday, May 22. We served approximately 600 meals to those in need from noon until 2:30 p.m. Everyone enjoyed working together for our Church's mission and as part of our Christian faith to serve those in need. Several of us also attended the church service before lunch and were able to hear and meet the well-known pastor, Cecil Williams.

A personal thank you to:

Sanjiv More and his daughter Madison
Dan O'Connor
Sherrie and Don Weiss
Joyce Kaiser
Liz Field
Pam Christian
Donna Bain
Bob and Marla Schleicher
Randy and Teresa Christensen
Debbie and Greg Koos



Holy Land Travel Report:

ATA MANASSRA Palestinian West Bank Resident and Travel Guide Speaks SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 10:30 a.m. San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church Fireside Room



We have a special guest coming to the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, so mark your calendars and join us. Ata Manassra, our SRVUMC Holy Land travel group's beloved and highly regarded travel guide in Israel and the West Bank, will be at SRVUMC that morning for worship and to talk with us in the Fireside Room. You will want to sit at Ata's feet and hear what he has to say (an opportunity not to be missed)!

Ata received his university degree from Bethlehem University (West Bank), and has additional education in biblical studies. He has a strong relationship with The United Methodist Church and its General Board of Global Ministry. He has guided many Methodist groups in the Holy Land, including groups led by Bishop Brown, our local Bishop. In his capacity as Chair of Friends of Wadi Foquin, United Methodist pastor Michael Yoshii is coordinating Ata's visits to Methodist churches in the Bay Area.

Ata lives in the long-existing West Bank Palestinian village of Wadi Foquin. Ata will tell you, as we travelers cannot, what it takes to get by day by day in the West Bank, and particularly in the small, narrow agricultural valley of Wadi Foquin with unwelcome, suffocating Israeli urban encroachment squeezing the valley from both hillsides, watched over by the ever-present Israeli military capable of controlling access to Wadi Foquin at will.

SRVUMC's recent Holy Land travelers have told you, in pictures and words, what we saw and did in the Holy Land last March. We had a powerful, faith-driven experience! We spent much of our time in the Palestinian West Bank because important Christian holy sites and mission-related stops were there.

We got a brief taste of what it might be like to be a Palestinian family living in the West Bank. Palestinian Christian families hosted us in small groups in their homes for home-cooked dinners and to tell us what life is like for them. We visited a United Nations refugee camp for Palestinians displaced when Israel was created. Ata was raised in a West Bank refugee camp. Twice, at our request, we visited Wadi Foquin to see it for ourselves.

We went to Bethlehem University, a Christian university where 70% of the students are Muslim and 30% Christian. There, we heard five bright, articulate, engaging Muslim university students tell us about their lives in the West Bank, their career aspirations, and about their hopes for a brighter, more peaceful future. They patiently, and without reservation, answered all our questions. And, we visited Hope School, a Methodist-supported school educating pre-school through eighth grade Muslim and Christian students.

We saw life in the West Bank. But, we were just short-time visitors (there for only a handful of days). There is so much more to the West Bank experience than we could possibly absorb. On our return home, we could only share with you what we had seen and experienced, a necessarily limited perspective of a visiting "outsider."

But, Ata is not a visitor, but an "insider." The West Bank is Ata's world. Wadi Foquin is his community. He, his wife and children, live in Wadi Foquin; his parents and extended family also live there. He lives the West Bank experience every day.

The **United Methodist Church** and **Friends of Wadi Foquin** partner in a community development program for the village. This year, the focus is on youth projects. **Adel Hroub, Youth Coordinator**, will be with Ata and can tell you more. Ata will also tell you how you can support the program. ***A free-will offering will be received.***

Senior Scoop

ADVENTURESOME POTLUCK

A fun potluck get-together the 1st Tuesday of the month followed by a program in Wesley Center. Bring your favorite dish or dessert to share—or just stop by the deli on your way over. We all have days like that, and there is always plenty of food! Please join us!

FELLOWSHIP LUNCH WITH FRIENDS

A fun fellowship, home-cooked, served restaurant-style lunch for any church member in that 55+ age group who no longer has work obligations during the day. No program, just a good home-cooked meal. We've been told it's the best \$5 lunch in the Valley—and the company is pretty good too!

AUGUST 9 END OF SUMMER COMBINED BBQ – NO POTLUCK

In August we combine both Lunch with Friends and the Potluck for one meal together. Chef John Sanders will cook a traditional BBQ meal with all your summertime favorites! We will determine that day if we will be inside or in the courtyard (depending on weather). Lemonade, iced tea and summer fun!

FAITH SHARING BOOK CLUB

Book discussion is on hiatus for the summer. We will continue in the fall. If you have a book idea you'd like to share, please contact Mary Jane Brusher at 925-968-9102 or maryjanehodges@comcast.net

SRVUMC MEN'S FALL RETREAT ...Is looking for a few more good men!

If you like great fellowship with opportunities for fishing, hiking, camping out under the glorious stars of northeastern California, then please request details from **Horace Crawford, 925-324-8040, or hrcrawpcraw@aol.com.**

Dates for the retreat are **Thursday, September 29 (early bird arrivals)** with the **official retreat beginning at 4 p.m.** **Friday, September 30 and concluding by 1 p.m.** on **Sunday, October 2.** The fee is **Early Birds - \$65.00; Friday Arrivals - \$60.00.** This retreat has been held annually for over 20 years and typically involves around 20 to 25 outdoor- and nature-loving men. It is held at Horace and Peggy Crawford's Quail



Christ Care Book Group

Wednesday, August 24, 10 a.m.

Church Library

The book group will meet to review and discuss

Clementine: The Life of Mrs. Winston Churchill by Sonia Purnell.

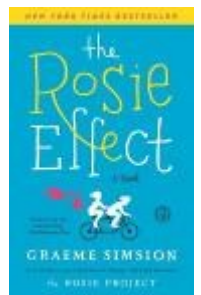


Afternoon Book Group

Monday 1:00 p.m.

Rm. 202 Wesley Center

August 15: *The Rosie Effect* by Graeme Simsion (Caroline leading)



August Communion Offering

Fred Finch Youth Center

In 1891, Duncan and Eunice Finch began an orphanage named for the son who had died in his twenties of tuberculosis. Over the next sixty years, their mission began to focus on adolescents considered “incorrigible” by much of society. By the 1950s, the Fred Finch home had shifted from orphanage to foster care and social work. However, the agency still offers some residential programs, including transitional housing for young adults who have outgrown the foster care system.

The organization expanded its role to include mental health services for these youth. Young people assisted by this group may receive behavioral interventions, begin to heal from childhood trauma, or cope with mental or developmental disorders. By the 1970s, the Fred Finch Youth Center was serving children whose needs could not be met elsewhere. Today, Fred Finch implements modern, evidence-based best practices for positive outcomes.

Fred Finch operates six sites in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Diego and San Mateo Counties and celebrates 125 years of service this year. Read more about this agency in an [East Bay Times article](#) from June 2016 or visit their website at www.fredfinch.org.



Young Life Capernaum San Jose

Young Life is an outreach program for teens and young adults of all kinds, worldwide. The project seeks to share the love of God with middle-schoolers, high-schoolers, college students, teen moms and even teens in the military. The principle behind this organization is to reach teens and young adults where they live: soccer fields, shopping malls and more.

The Young Life Capernaum Project is a nonprofit organization begun in 1986 by Nick Palermo in San Jose. Although Young Life had already existed to serve teens, Palermo had noticed that students with disabilities were isolated from their peers. When he asked his local Young Life director how the group could include these kids, he was given permission to start an after-school program designed for teens and young adults with disabilities. His efforts forged the beginning of Young Life Capernaum.

Today, the **Young Life Club**, a part of the Young Life Capernaum Project, meets weekly for games and other fun activities. Acceptance, humor and the love of Christ always drive the agenda here. Teens and Young adults can be with peers and learn about Jesus Christ in a message they can relate to. Parents can feel comfortable letting their youth with physical or developmental disabilities attend Club meetings without them—a significant relief for young people and their families.

Young adults can partake of a peer group Bible study called **Club Beyond**. Young Life leaders organize these meetings, during which participants can seek a deeper relationship with Christ.

Finally, Young Life operates an annual week-long camp at which teens experience the sort of adventure and experience that builds self-confidence.



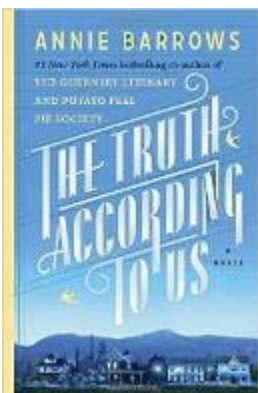


Between the Bookends



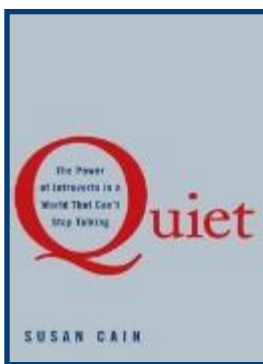
By Sally Christopherson, Librarian

It's that time of year again—warm days, easy living, salad suppers, and maybe a trip penciled in on your calendar. No matter where you're headed—it's your vacation! Don't go unprepared; have a book or two tucked in your car door well or carry-on bag. Send your mind on vacation as well as your body! It'll pay you back many times over. We're here to help—check out what's new on the Book Cart:



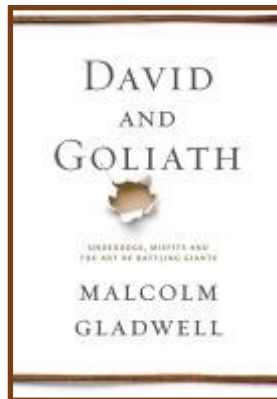
Barrows, Annie. *The Truth According to Us*. Layla Beck's wealthy father decides to put some structure and responsibility into his daughter's aimless life, so he uses his influence to get her a job in FDR's Federal Writers' Project writing a town history. Layla is appalled. She shows up because she really has no choice: the money spigot has been turned off. She boards with an unusual family in tiny Macedonia,

West Virginia, where she is as much a curiosity to them as they are to her. But what she learns! Layla actually grabs hold and learns to respect, and then admire these small town folks who have an interesting story to tell—much more than she bargained for!



Cain, Susan. *Quiet; the Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. Are you the "quiet type"? Does the thought of walking into a buzzing cocktail party full of strangers excite you not at all? Take heart; you are not alone. You are probably an introvert, and you have more soulmates than you think. Introverts are "thinkers," and they have

gifted the world with the theory of gravity (Isaac Newton), *Peter Pan* (J. L. Barrie), Google (Larry Page), and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Steven Spielberg). Susan Cain makes the point that the world needs Frederic Chopin every bit as much as General George Patton!



Gladwell, Malcolm. *David and Goliath; Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*. Here's Gladwell again, our favorite debunker of myths, and this time he's positing that the giant doesn't always have the advantage. For centuries, we awarded Goliath the advantage—mostly size—against the little shepherd boy, David. In actuality, Goliath was a giant who had

to move slowly because of his size, and was hampered with heavy armor. David was small and quick, and the master of the sling, a weapon so deadly that the Roman Army had squads of "slingers" that were used in battle when deadly accuracy was needed. In actuality, David had the entire advantage. Gladwell is a born storyteller and this book is full of readable and fascinating cases where the race was not always to the swift—or strongest—or smartest. A wonderful read!



Kelly, Martha Hall. *Lilac Girls*. Have you become a reader of WWII historical novels? So many excellent ones have come out lately and here's a wonderful new addition. *Lilac Girls* is the gripping story of three women in WWII: Caroline, a New York socialite Francophile, Kasia, a Polish girl taken to Ravensbrück Concentration Camp, and Herta, a German woman doctor at that camp.

Each woman's story is hard to put down, and eventually they all meet. This whole story is based on real people and events, now told as historical fiction. It's one you won't soon forget.

Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.

—Martin Luther, 1483-1586

Athletic & Recreation Center (ARC) News

The **Athletic & Recreation Center (ARC) Operations and Marketing Committee** continues to work on the myriad of details that present themselves as we ready ourselves for the eventual “opening of business” in 2017 (it is being rumored there is an “office pool” that has developed regarding when we will actually open in 2017)! I attended the Contractor’s Meeting including **Bob Baker** and **Mark Miller** this past Monday (July 11), and the contractor, **John Clawson**, reported that he is still expecting to finish in February, 2017. I know a variety of thoughts do exist with respect to this date, and I will keep you posted.

It appears at this time we will provide opportunities for five (5) sports: basketball, volleyball, pickle ball, badminton, and futsal (an indoor soccer game played with teams of five players including the goalie). We have also been reaching out to (1) prospective basketball coaches to determine their interest in renting our facility to conduct their camps; (2) a YMCA basketball organization, a volleyball association, and a futsal association as to their interest in our facility for additional gymnasium capacity; and (3) fitness instructors to conduct classes. We are also examining the level of interest in establishing either our own United Methodist league, or a multi-denominational “Church League” for basketball play.

Here are a couple of additional areas where we could use your assistance and mention it to you for your early consideration.

Office Furniture and Storage Room Shelving

If any of you know of corporations or businesses planning to purchase new furniture for their offices, we would be interested in considering donations of their used furniture. For example, we will need a modest desk and chair, as well as a reception desk and chair. We will also need a four-drawer file

cabinet. Finally, we will have a small storeroom where we will keep our nets, poles, rackets/paddles, and various types of balls to be used with the sports referenced above. We will need shelving for organizing the storeroom.

Personnel to Staff the ARC

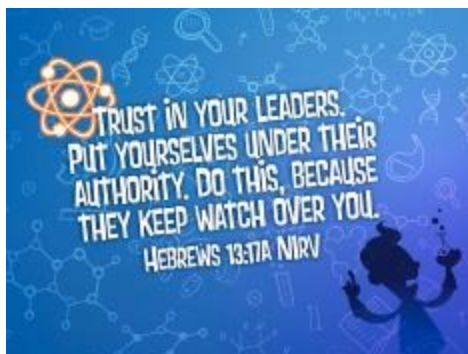
We have tentatively determined that we will be open from **9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday; and 12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m. on Sundays.** That means we will need part-time employees on duty for most likely one or more four-hour shifts each week. This is in addition to the volunteer Director and Assistant Directors. Of course, we will certainly have events that will take place at the church that will cause us to close the ARC so that parking does not become an issue during those events (for example, weddings and memorial services). We would like to see these prospective employees come from among the congregation and senior high youth. If those prospects do not identify themselves, then we would look outside the congregation to fill necessary positions. Please give your personal consideration to whether these positions would be of interest to you. They would be limited to four hours per day, and up to 20 hours per week. They would either volunteer or be paid at the (then) prevailing minimum wage and would not receive benefits. Anyone interested should contact **Jim Burk** at jimanneburk@sbcglobal.net or home telephone (925) 946-1192.

Jim Burk, Volunteer ARC Director





San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church Family Ministries



Contact Us!

Luke Ham
Youth Pastor (Grades 6 to 12)
lham@srvumc.org
(925)837-5243 ext 108

Stephanie Ham
Children and Family Ministries
(Children through Grade 5)
sham@srvumc.org
(925)837-5243 ext 106

Obedience

WEEK 1

Bottom Line: I should trust and obey even when I think my way is better.

WEEK 2

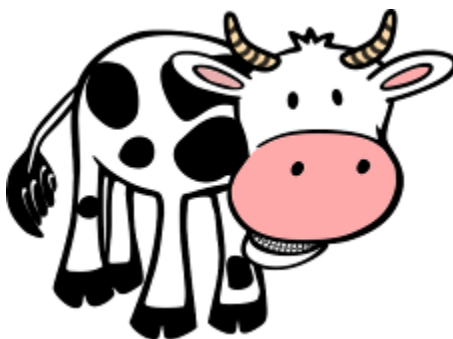
Bottom Line: I should trust and obey even when others don't.

WEEK 3

Bottom Line: I should trust and obey even if I don't know how it will all work out.

WEEK 4

Bottom Line: I should trust and obey because there's a bigger plan.



Congratulations to this year's Vacation Bible School gang for their outstanding efforts in collecting for the Heifer Project. Together, they collected enough to donate a cow!

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns...

Vilva Robinett Gene Brown
John Hammond Sharleen Keen
Gail Soldavini
Cary Johnson

Our Christian Sympathy To...

Linda Stone and family on the death of her brother, John Michael Hart, who died July 14. A service will be held in Fairhope, AL.

The family of Don Lower, a former member living in Fresno, on his death on July 24.

Welcome...

Kylie Michelle, born July 3 to Suzanne and Chris Almeida. Donna and Chuck Lindquist are the proud grandparents.



Top: We said goodbye for now to Sunny Ahn on June 26, as she headed for her new adventures in Kona, HI. **Right:** Luke received his ordination as an elder pastor June 24. Congratulations!

Continued Prayers For...

All those who continue to live with long-term illness, unemployment, life decisions, and sickness in their families: Bill Andrew; Lyn Bristow; Gene Brown; Lenore Cooper; Jeni Evans; John Evans; Brigitte Greene; Dick Greeno; Ann Hatfield; Dave & Lillian Holleman; Cary Johnson; Johnny Johnston; Del Kennedy; Daphne Kimbell; Jada Koonce; Alleen Landstrom; Margaret Matteson; Alex Maddux; Mary Ogden; Alice Reynolds; Ethel Ricker; Mike Robinett; Lillian Scherer; Ann Schroeder; Pat Shoner; Jean Spencer; Carol Webb Samford; Joan Webb; Jeannine Woolery.

Name Tags

Please contact Shannon Dever in the church office if you need a new name tag (\$7/ea.)



August Celebrations

Birthdays



| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Don Carlson | Jerry Osborn | Matt Donatelli | |
| Michael Cerda | Dan Woolery | Thomas Mathis | |
| Wai Chang | 9 Allyson Cerda | 19 Dick Greeno | Ron White |
| Chuck Clark | 10 Jim Bunker | Merilyn Milam | 25 Peg Jackson |
| Chris Hagebush | Cadi Stephenson | Jeanie Rheault (92nd) | Shirley Wible |
| Geoff Portman | Carol Warnock | Marla Schleicher | 26 Charlie Adam (92nd) |
| Marti Sketchley | 11 Sung Ahn | Talia Stivender | Chris Knese |
| 2 Susie McKnight | Brian Beck | 20 Robin Hammond | Duncan Miller |
| 3 Kim Maddux | Jason Skeoch | Carol Koepp | Anna TenElshof |
| Amy McWilliams Hess | Gary Swanson | 21 Pam Dominici | Jeannine Woolery |
| Brett McKnight | Sarah Warnock | Kelly Kerr | 27 Carole Lynne Keller |
| Courtney Randall | 12 Scott Birkby | Ford Higgins | Marilyn Mathis |
| Tammy Webb | Julie Klug | 22 Deanna Clark | 28 Sharon Brockman |
| 4 Scott Armanini | Heather Weis | Liz Cooper | Rikki Robinson |
| Teresa Merchant | 14 David Bain | Alleen Landstrom (95th) | 29 Gene Brown |
| Julie Shipp | Bette Smith | Olivia White | Nell Marie Forsey |
| 5 Mary Mitchell | 15 Steve Beagles | 23 Jeremy Brown | Bob Korinke |
| Sarah Schroeder | Dolores Mullican | John Fenoglio | 30 Victoria da Roza |
| 6 Tom Andrew | 16 Brenda Finney | Helen Grabel (96th) | Joanie Deis |
| 7 Meghan Bennion | Joyce Kayser | Nick Rossi | Jeff Presnell |
| Lindsey Garnick | Andy Mathis | Mike Sherrill | 31 Sean Greenwood |
| Scott Garnick | Jenny Swanson | 24 Mandy Bain | Sheila McClelland |
| 8 Kelli George | 17 Dominic Albertoni | Megan Bain | |

Wedding Anniversaries

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1 Sandy & Chuck Clark (52nd) | 8 Stephanie & Luke Ham | Marilyn & Todd Christian (55 th) | Sylvia & John Corson (59 th) |
| 3 Gloria Holleman & Gary Osterhout | Gemma & Tom Sepull | 20 Barbara & Don Carlson | 27 Sylvia & Bruce Benzler |
| Dolores & Thomas Mullican | 11 Laura Macomber Weeks & Dave Shaw | Julie & Al Shipp | Julie & Bill Dastic (56 th) |
| Mary & Bill Nelson (59 th) | 17 Stephanie & John Fenoglio | Shirley & Jerry Slater (61 st) | Margaret & Gary Hansen (55 th) |
| 5 Sue & Jim Hardy | Sharon & Dennis Greene | 21 Maggie & John Stienstra | 28 Louise & Brad Farrow |
| Lea & Tim Hickman | Heather & John Morgan | Sandy & Paul Yarmolich | 29 Rose & John Larkins |
| Sandy & Barry Pihowich | Nancy & Al Tiedemann | 24 Carol & Jim Warnock | Millie & Terry Sherman (52 nd) |
| 7 Alexis & Niles Bybel | 28 Mary & Paul Nygreen (66 th) | Karen & Larry Watson (53 rd) | 30 Carole & Don Johnson (58 th) |
| Caroline & Steve Marsh | 19 Susie & Doug Barton | 25 Nancy & Quentin Alexander (59 th) | Maria & Stuart Kirby |