



Valley Messenger

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

JANUARY 2017

A Parsonal Point of View ~

The Power of God's Love

As we enter into a New Year together, many of us wonder what the next 365 days will bring. No doubt we will experience a great many changes in various aspects of our life, community and country in the year 2017. Some of these changes we can clearly see coming, while others will take us by total surprise.

This Christmas season was a unique time for my family. This was the first Christmas for us that my son Caleb was aware that something special was going on. He understood that when he took the wrapping paper off of the box that there was going to be a gift waiting for him underneath. While shopping for Caleb's gifts this year, I reflected back to the gifts I received as a child. One of these gifts was a toy that many of us have given or received...it is called a "Slinky."

But did you know that the Slinky didn't start out as a toy? A navel engineer named Richard James was working with springs during World War II in the hopes that it could be used in battleships. One day, as he worked, one of the springs fell off his workbench and instead of simply rolling, it did the funny "walking" thing that is so familiar to us today.

At that moment, Mr. James stopped thinking about wars and battleships and thought that this was something he could turn into a toy and make children happy. And that is how the Slinky was invented.

Now maybe that spring just accidently rolled off Mr. James' workbench all those years ago. It is certainly possible... accidents happen. But I choose to believe that God's love was at work that day. A love that could help this man see a spring not as equipment for a warship, but a toy that would bring joy to millions of children.

It is my hope as we journey together into 2017 that we choose to believe in the power of God's transforming love. That we put our faith in a God who can take obstacles and turn them into opportunities. A God who can take instruments of destruction and turn them into something constructive. May we share in that power and that love as we strive to be a Christ-like community together. I pray that you will join me in doing

Don't Miss What's Inside

- 1 PPV: The Power of God's Love
- 3-4 Upcoming Mission Opportunities
- 5 January Communion Offering
- 6 Between the Bookends
- 7 Kindness Matters
- 8 Senior Scoop
- 9 Youth, Children and Family Ministries
- 10 Among Ourselves
- 11 Birthdays & Anniversaries

Next Issue: February 2017

*Have something you'd like included in next month's Messenger? Please submit your articles to: Lisa Jancarik newsletter@srvumc.org by **January 15, 2017.***

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our best to hold one another accountable this year to the three simple rules of our Methodist Heritage: Do No Harm, Do Good, and Stay in Love with God.

Happy New Year!

Luke



"It's Slinky! It's Slinky! For fun it's a wonderful toy!.."



TENTH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. Monday, January 16, 2017, 4:00 p.m. Wesley Center

The Martin Luther King Peace and Justice Committee and Interfaith Council of The San Ramon Valley invite you to an Interfaith Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Dream of Nonviolence and Peace. Please join us for a time of reflection, prayer and song for Peace and Freedom.

Reverend Staci Current, our District Superintendent of the California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church will speak, and our very own **Lonnie Bristow** will read writings from his schoolmate, Martin Luther King, Jr.

The service will be followed by a Candlelight Peace Walk in Downtown Danville to celebrate the unity of our faiths (weather permitting). All are welcome!

A Few Big Moments in 2016

Left: Breaking ground for ARC in February; Middle: Farewell to Sunny in July; Congratulations to Luke in July.



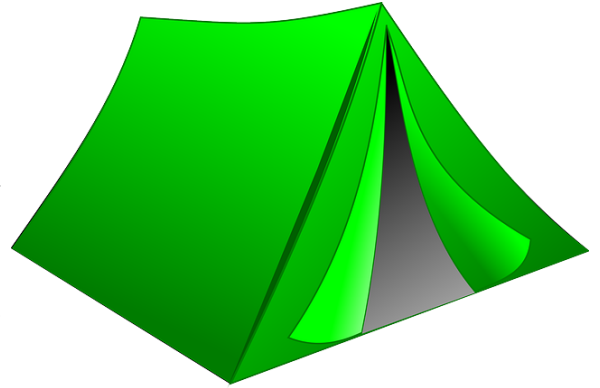
Upcoming Mission Opportunities

LOCAL



Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano: Saturday, January 21, 11:30 to 1:30 p.m. Meet at church to carpool or meet us there. To sign up, contact **Lee Rust**, chijocol@aol.com, 915-820-9047.

WINTER NIGHTS 2017: We will host Winter Nights 2017 from January 30 through February 13, 2017, splitting our time with St. Isidore's Parish. We will need overnight hosts, and folks to manage laundry, handle shopping, pick up food donations, coordinate fun activities for kids and adults, tutor school children, manage site and kitchen activities, and provide meals for the group. *If you would like to volunteer to help or to donate to this effort, please contact Susan Dowling at sue_dowling@comcast.net or 925-648-5184.* Donations needed are: diapers of all sizes, Gas cards, Wal-Mart or Target Gift cards, deodorant, Lysol or Clorox wipes, socks of all sizes, baby wipes, flashlights, and extra batteries of all sizes.



Baton Rouge Flood Recovery Mission Trip

In August, 2016, Baton Rouge and the surrounding communities suffered catastrophic flooding, the worst US natural disaster since Hurricane Sandy. The week of **April 1 through 8, 2017**, we will be going to assist with the rebuilding. Consider joining us.

We will be flying into New Orleans and driving to Baton Rouge. We will be staying at a United Methodist Church. The Church has sleeping rooms, a kitchen, gathering areas and showers. The cost of the trip will be \$200, plus airfare.

Contact **Paul Kuelz** at paulkuelz@sbcglobal.net or 831-3128 for more information or to register. Registrations are due by **Sunday, March 5, 2017**.



Source: Revealnews.org

WORLD

Guatemala City & Antigua Mission to distribute wheelchairs: January 23 to 29, 2017 (new dates!). 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 about the trip: paulkuelz@sbcglobal.net, or 925-831-3128.

Mission Memories...

My name is Ashley Powers and my son, Callen, and daughter, Elsie, received the beautiful Under the Sea playhouse last weekend [Editor's Note: this letter was received some time ago]. I cannot begin to express our gratitude and appreciation for this wonderful gift. A little about our family, my husband and I are originally from Iowa and our twins were born here in California 16 months ago. Within those 16 months, my husband has been deployed twice and I am busy working my full time job as the Program Director of an all special needs school. With my husband gone, it means my hands are utterly full chasing these two lovelies around constantly on the weekends. The playhouse your team built for my kiddos has given them an outlet for their energy and myself a slight break after an often chaotic week. Again, I cannot thank you enough nor adequately expression our appreciation. So from the bottom of my heart, thank you thank you thank you.



Very respectfully,
Ashley, Callen and Elsie Powers

Mission Volunteers & Communion Giving

Special Offerings

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

November Volunteers

- 14 Coffee Hour Volunteers.
- 20 Sodbusters
- 25 Volunteers for "Food For Thought"
- 4 Volunteers at The Souper Center
- 24 Sunshine Singers at the Sunrise Retirement Center
- 1 UMCOR Depot Trip to Salt Lake City

Month	Entity	Amt
Jan	Haiti	\$2,415
Feb	P.E. Transportation	470
	Limb Restoration	470
Mar	One Great Hour of Sharing	1,342
Easter	Stop Hunger Now	3,309
	Habitat for Humanity	3,309
	Interfaith Council	3,200
	Richmond Interfaith	1,000
April	Trinity Center	1,668
May	Local Youth Mission	1,847
Jun	Weed Ca Fire Recovery	1,779
Jul	Monument Crisis Center	879.50
	STAND	879.50
Aug	Fred Finch	825.50
	Capernaum	825.50
Sep	Stop Hunger Now	1,750.00
	Habitat Playhouses	4,350.00
Oct	World Communion Sunday	200.00
	UMCOR - Lower Lake Fire	1,049.00
	& - Louisiana Flooding	1,049.00
Nov	Trinity Winter Shelter	2,735.00
Totals		\$35,352

January Communion Offering

Thomas Food Project

This month, our Communion offering supports the familiar Thomas Food Project in Haiti, directed by our own **Warren McGuffin**. *In particular, this month's offering supports an exciting opportunity to triple the number of hot lunches prepared through the Project!*

Presently, this organization serves 10,000 meals per month at two of its partner schools. To reach a goal of 30,000 meals served monthly, the Thomas Food Project seeks to purchase a solar oven, like the ones shown in the photos. Each oven costs \$15,000 for the equipment and its installation. To help with the ambitious goal of tripling hot lunches served, Thomas Food Project has secured a matching grant, effectively doubling the purchasing power of our donations.

Ovens of this kind are a proven technology in Haiti. This cost-effective and ecologically responsible means to feed large numbers of people has been in use by other NGOs ("non-government organizations") at work in Haiti for some years. According to www.sunoven.com, less than 3% of Haiti remains forested, making wood and charcoal impractical as well as environmentally unsound energy options.

In 2016, the Thomas Food Project celebrated its five-year milestone. During those years, the project has equipped six local schools with water purification and solar power, as well as ten computers at each school. Students have also benefited from thousands of home-made clothes, school supplies and personal hygiene products. If you missed the Haiti video about during church services, you can check it out [here](#).

How Do Solar Ovens Work?

Solar ovens require hours of sunshine, although they can function with some cloud cover or haze. The shiny surfaces reflect sunlight onto the food being prepared. While solar box cookers of the sort you may have heard of for science projects can prepare small amounts of food, the solar oven shown can cook large quantities of food at a time. Food can reach temperatures of 500°C, allowing boiling, baking or steaming of meals. The oven itself requires relatively little maintenance and pivots to follow the sun.



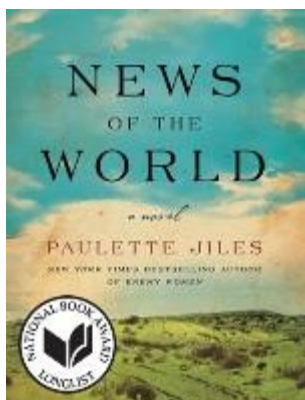


Between the Bookends



By Sally Christopherson, Librarian

It's a new year and there's a reason so many of us resolve to do things differently, try something new, correct something that needs correcting...in short, take ourselves in hand. You know what I'm going to say: how's that determination to make some time for yourself going? Life moves so fast, there's so much to do, and we are so busy. How about this—pledge to yourself a new book every month? That's only twelve for the whole year of 2017. You'll be a better person and have something new to think about and talk about every month! We're here to help. Here are four books, and one is guaranteed to fill the bill for you. One only has 211 pages, and it's one you'll never forget.



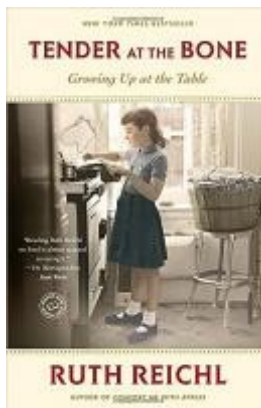
Jiles, Paulette. *News of the World*. The Civil War is over, and Jefferson Kyle Kidd fought for the Confederacy, and it cost him almost everything. Now he travels around north Texas hiring halls, and reading news in the small towns where many are illiterate, and all are isolated and desperate for what's going on in the world. An acquaintance prevails upon him to accept a \$50 gold piece to take a ten-year-old girl, recently ran-

somed from the Kiowa Indians, to what's left of her family in south Texas. The child is wild, thinks of herself as Kiowa, and has forgotten English. South Texas is 400 miles away and full of bandits, wild tribes, and predators of all kinds. But Kidd needs the money badly, so he reluctantly starts out on a trail that will change his life.



Morton, Kate. *The Lake House*. This is Morton's latest, and it's a feast for lovers of layered mysteries, Victorian ways, and time slips between then and now. Generations of the Edevane family live with secrets and regrets as they deal with the...kidnapping? Death?...of a two-year-old boy who goes missing without a trace or explanation. The story moves between the beauty of rustic Cornwall and city life in London as a disgraced woman police officer awakens old wounds in her

search for what really happened so long ago.



Reichl, Ruth. *Tender at the Bone; Growing Up at the Table*. Here she is again, the *New York Times* restaurant critic and *Gourmet* magazine editor whose life was shaped by her uncanny palate and ability to taste every ingredient in a dish, and then create and cook it. Her upbringing was unorthodox, from "wealthy poverty" in New York and New England to bohemian living in Berkeley. And she could write as well as she could cook.

If you love food and restaurants and appreciate a writer who can bring them both to your door, you should know Ruth Reichl.



Robson, Jennifer. *After the War is Over*. Charlotte Brown has come home to Liverpool after four years as a military nurse in World War I. After what she has seen, she's determined to dedicate her life to helping others, specifically some of the returning soldiers, damaged in both mind and body. One of those soldiers is her dear friend's brother, but he's now the Earl of Cumberland, and the class system is still strong in England...but maybe not as strong as it was. Should

Charlotte help, or should she keep her distance? Old feelings perhaps should not be reawakened. A wonderful revisiting of that time and place.

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."

—Sir Richard Steele, 1672-1729

Kindness Matters Corner



To all readers: Where do you think all of these kindness stories come from? The Internet? Nope! YouTube, newspapers, magazines? Nope! Try again. You are thinking way too big. Every story is homegrown! Every one is the story from our SRVUMC family. Each is a kindness given, a kindness received, or a kindness observed in our Tri-Valley area!

You may directly share your stories of kindness to the website in this way: Send your story to kindness@srvumc.org. Your story will be posted to the church website within a few days.

Tip of the Iceberg. The stories you read within this monthly *Messenger* column may be unusual and may be selected for their uniqueness. However, kindnesses are being given and received every day within our friends, congregation, and families.

As your eyes move along these words, someone you know is

- driving someone unable to drive to church or a doctor's appointment
- giving a hug, shoulder, or card to someone grieving a loss or celebrating one of life's happy moments
- working in their kitchen, preparing a nourishing and tasty meal for one sick or disabled
- addressing a card or letter containing sentiments of encouragement and love
- making a phone call just to listen
- ringing a door bell to visit

...and on and on...

"Love" is every kindness. I hear the same remark as I listen to the stories of kindnesses. It goes something like this: "While I am (cooking, driving, writing, etc.), I am thinking of the person who will receive. I think of our times together, the times we've shared a laugh, the times when we have cared for one another, our common interests."

It's so easy to be kind! Isn't that what we are, what we are meant to be, as we use our God-given gifts?"

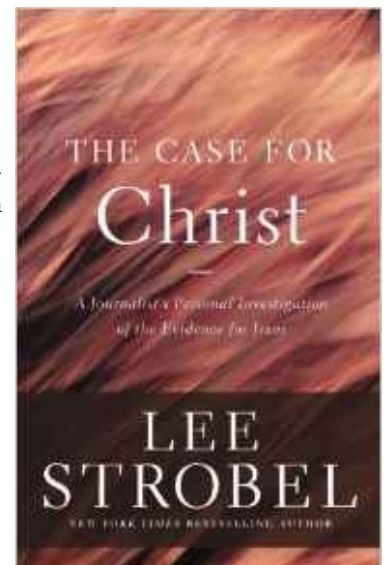
Women of the Night Starts New Selection on January 30

The Women of the Night study group will begin our new selection, *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel, on January 30, 2017. We invite anyone who is interested to join us in the Fireside Room at 7 p.m.

This book is written by a seasoned journalist and attorney who interviews a variety of biblical scholars to find out if evidence exists to verify that Jesus of Nazareth is really the Son of God. In these interviews Strobel looks for historical, scientific, and psychiatric evidence to defend Jesus' divinity and to help readers to draw their own conclusions.

We will meet **January 30, February 6 and 20, and March 6 and 20**. This schedule breaks the book into five sections of approximately 40-50 pages for each session. Books may be ordered through Amazon in paperbacks for \$5.50.

We hope you will join us for this interesting journey. For more information contact Jan Geahry at jhgeahry@yahoo.com or 949-8282.



Senior Scoop

Thank you for a wonderful Senior Christmas Luncheon—those of you who missed, you missed the best \$5 full Turkey lunch ever!!

Coming in January...

ADVENTURESOME SENIORS Pot luck— Tuesday, January 10, noon

Speaker Rob Rigolfi shares music & thoughts from his 3rd trip to Haiti

Please bring a dish to share, or stop at the deli or bakery. Or if you're really pinched, just show up—we always have plenty of food, and your company is more important!

LUNCH WITH FRIENDS Restaurant Style Meal/No Program— Tuesday, January 17, noon

Chef John Sanders returns from his world cruise and will prepare a Waldorf salad, homemade ham loaf with glaze, scalloped potatoes and braised root vegetables. Homemade spice cake with cream cheese frosting—YUM!!



Thank you Angels!

Angels have no philosophy, but Love.- Terri Guillemets

You all took the angel tags, bought the gifts, and got them back to SRVUMC so that the children would get them on time. Thank you so much for going out of your way to make someone else's Christmas a bit brighter!

Through your loving generosity, SRVUMC was able to serve six agencies during the 2015 Angel Tree Christmas season, providing both gifts and gift cards. The agencies served were: Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Family Services, Bay Area Rescue Mission, Stand!, East Salinas Life Program, Fred Finch Youth Center, and the Mount Diablo Unified School District.

A big thank you to the SRVUMC preschool, the SRVUMC youth group, all who helped with the decorating, tag creation, purchasing of items, overseeing the collection boxes and monetary donations, wrapping, delivering to the agencies, etc.

Your loving sharing made this outreach happen!

Angels are around us: you are one!

Thank you SRVUMC Angels!

— The 2015 Angel Tree Committee



Calendar

January 9

Registration opens for Disneyland

January 17

No Youth Group

January 28

Youth Fundraiser Dinner/Dance

February 5

Third Grade Bible Dedications will take place on **Sunday, February 5** for all third graders. We will hold two sessions of "Get to know your Bible" on **1/22 and 1/29 from 3-4:30 p.m.** Parents are strongly encouraged to join in the first session. Snacks and fun provided.

February 17 through 20

Youth Disneyland Trip

Stay Tuned

March 4: All-church mini-golf FUNdraiser in Wesley Hall. 5:30 p.m.

April 9: Egg Hunt and Brunch at noon.

Sundays

Sunday School Topics

Kindergarten to Grade 5:

Cooperation

WEEK 1: Discovering what God says helps you know Jesus.
WEEK 2: What God says is the most important thing to know.
WEEK 3: Discovering what God says helps you follow Jesus.
WEEK 4: Discovering what God says helps you make the wise choice.
WEEK 5: When you don't know what God says, ask.

Grades 6 to 12:

I'm In

"Are you in?" It's a question we all answer over and over again. When there's a party, when our coach says it's time for tryouts, when we're offered a summer job, when our friends go to the movies, or when someone invites us to church, we all have the chance to decide if we're "in" or "out" for that particular activity. Sometimes the answer is an easy, "Count me in!" Other times it's tougher. There are good reasons on both sides. Some of Jesus' friends were faced with the same decision of whether they were "in" or "out." They had good reasons to join the Jesus movement, but they also had some pretty compelling reasons to step out—things like doubt, guilt, pride, and the fear of what they might miss. As we get to know these sometimes famous and devoted followers, we'll talk about the decision they faced, why they could have walked away, and what led them to say, "I'm in."

Every Sunday

9 a.m. Traditional Worship

Sunday school meets

K to Grade 5: Lamm Hall

Grades 6 to 12: Room 202

10:30 a.m. Nontraditional Worship

Confirmation meets in room 201 until 11:45 a.m.

Childcare for all ages in children's building, downstairs, either service.

Contact Us!

Stephanie Ham

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

Tawfick Fayed
Youth Director
tfayed@srvumc.org
(925)837-5243 ext.109

Music

These choirs are free and open to everyone to participate.

Cherub Choir

Aimee Knese

Preschool through Grade 1
Practice Wed from 3 to 3:45 p.m.

Archangel Choir

Teri Hawk

Grades 2 to 5
Practice Wed at 3 p.m.

Youth Choir

Terri Hawk

Grades 6 to 12
Practice Sunday at 3 p.m.

Bros and Belles Choir

Winnie Stribling

Grades 6 to 12
Practice Wed from 5:15 to 6 p.m.

Weekly Programming

Middle School Youth Group (Grades 6 to 8) On Wednesday from 6 to 8 p.m.

High School Youth Group (Grades 9 to 12) On Sundays from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

High School Dinner Night Out (1st and 3rd Sundays) from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

See our weekly email newsletters for locations

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns...

Lea Patteson	Lyn Bristow
Jada Koonce	Edith Liggett
Bruce Benzler	Mary Ellen Brown
Gene Brown	
Quentin Alexander	
Bill Sabin	
Elizabeth De Chene	
Byron Nygreen	

Our Christian Sympathy To...

Nancy Garnick and family on the death of her mother, Marilyn, on December 6.

Congratulations To...

Steve and Nancy Garnick on the birth of their grandson, Oliver, born to daughter Sarah on December 8.

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; Daphne Kimbell; Jada Koonce; Alleen Landstrom; Edith Liggett; Margaret Matteson; Alex Maddux; Mary Ogden; Mike Robinett; Lillian Scherer; Ann Schroeder; Pat Shoner; Jean Spencer; Carol Webb Sam-	ford; Joan Webb; Jeannine Woolery.
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Name Tags

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

January Celebrations

Birthdays



1 Marilyn Clarke	10 Michael Arata	Jeff Kuemmeler	
Jim Kretsch	Linda Dew-Hiersoux	Stephen Lee	
2 Paula Boswell (92)	Chris Hoff	Evan Schroeder	Nick Toma
Steve Marohn	Isabelle McPherson	19 Anna Pasquale	Emily Wood
Adena Verdi	11 Ann Schroeder	20 Nancy Garnick	27 Tami Mitchell
3 Val Miller	12 Scott Davis	Dave Johnson	28 Bill Dever
Jennifer Norrid	Belle Peters (90)	21 Dave Holleman	Nancy Harrison
Brian Roberts	Berry Scott	Kim Risedorph	Karen Stepper
4 Jennifer Shin	13 Bill Nelson	22 Bob Leyman	30 Susan Schultz
Rebecca Ten Elshof	14 Nancy Tiedemann	Joe Samford	Deirdree Walsh-Krumrei
6 Nancy Amini	15 Liz George	23 Jan Foulds	31 Lisa Chapman
Kinsley Poole	Shadaab Kanwal	24 Laura Dommes	
James Wakefield	Dayna MacDannald	Barb McWilliams	
Colleen Woolery	Dory Schramm	Grant Norrid	
7 Carrie Millinich Daughters	Jenna Turley	25 Teri Armanini	
8 Jill Barry	16 Sam Sidhom	Dorothy Brose	
Matthew Huff	17 Teresa Brown	Roger Ehlers	
Tom Philbert	Gerry Carothers	Betty Pia	
9 Terry Bailey	Jean Desmond	Taylor Smallwood	
Andrew Kocins	Larry Sherman	26 Amanda Lee	
Betty Skeoch	18 Elaine Halliday	Katie Presnell	
	Mike Kelly	Jack Presnell	

Wedding Anniversaries

2 Melissa & Robert Ward	22 Kathy & Scott MacLean
5 Judy & Bob Baker	25 Pat & Tim Elam
7 Jo Ann & Vin Hirsch (56th)	27 Shirley & Charles Stephenson
9 Linda & Alex Farhang	29 Danni & Dan Sherman
10 Layne & Mike Alfrey	
11 Suzanne & Bob Korinke	
12 Charlotte & Bob Garner	
20 Susan & Doug Hinzle	
21 Wendi & Michael Cerda	