

The

Valley Messenger

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

Reflecting on My Two Years With You

I remember my first Sunday at San Ramon Valley UMC. It was a lot like every pastor's worst nightmare. The church was empty! We were in the thick of the pandemic, and we were shut down other than the services we broadcast through the internet. Some Sundays, it was just me, Pastor Kim, Nadia, Linda Green and Jeff Lang or another technical volunteer in those first days. I was told to preach to the exit sign. I remember my prayer was that somehow you all would still feel the grace of God and hear the message you needed to make it through the pandemic. I poured all the love I could muster into that exit sign. I'll never look at an exit the same again.



What astonished me most was the faithfulness of so many during one of the most challenging times in our lifetimes for faith communities. I think about Nancy Garnick and the number of times she patiently found liturgists, even in the pandemic. Ann Radick patiently kept us alive with her ushering team. I cannot tell you how many times I would come into a nearly empty church, and I would marvel at Wendy Cooper or Bob and Marla Schleicher, or Bob Tharalsen (and others!) faithfully ushering and welcoming even if we had just a few in-person worshippers. Sometimes, Skip George would squeeze my arm and offer encouragement that the church would come back to strength. What they did not know was how inspired I was just with their faithful presence. How, again and again, I would see people faithfully care for one another. I remember so many of you offered food and support (like Bob Baker) for Putnam House and for first-line workers. Again and again, you showed up and cared for more than yourselves.

On the small group front, leaders like Sandy Gsand, Bill Rust, Brad Stribling and Bill Van Bezey

May 2022

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Next Issue: June 2022

Have something you'd like included in next month's Messenger? Please submit your articles to: Lisa Jancarik at media@srvumc.org by **May 15, 2022.**

Announcements

From Page 1

grappled with how to take care of their groups while managing hybrid requirements and inconsistent mask mandates. I heard stories of these leaders reaching out to people in crises even at risk to themselves. I think of the Sunday after Sunday that people like Tom Roy showed up in case there was a family with youth ready to return to in-person Sunday School. How patiently he waited and prepared for the few or none to show up. Some families were just not ready to be more exposed to COVID or had lost their rhythm in going to church. But his spiritual maturity invited him to be ready, always, for these teens.

I wish I could mention you all, but that would require far too many pages. All of this volunteering, this faithful ministering, really blew me away because I knew I was getting to witness the heart of this congregation. That heart, which is never perfect, is always beating to circulate love, hope and sincere connection. It has been an honor to serve here.

What has surprised me most in these two years is how deeply I have fallen in love with the people of this congregation. I did not think that would happen, given that so many of us did not meet in person for a long time, and even so, rarely saw each other's faces for months at a time. Yet, like so many works of the spirit, unexpectedly this challenge is what helped me feel more bonded to you.

So, in May and June, I will say goodbye with gratitude and wish Rev. Andrew Davis my best as he follows me into the blessed community in July. How fortunate you will be to receive him, and how fortunate for him to experience you as well.

Love always,
Pastor Mantu

New Time for Worship and Sunday School!

10 a.m. on Sunday, May 1, 2022!

Livestream and Posted Worship Services To Continue



You've reached out to us, and we've been listening. Families with children would welcome a later start time on Sunday morning. Some members need a little extra time in the morning and look forward to being able to attend worship. The vast majority of you seem to welcome the 10 a.m. start, but we'd still like to hear from you (email [Pastor Kim](#)). As our in-person worship service grows, we will consider offering an earlier, contemplative service for those who need an earlier time.

Announcements

Send-Off for Pastor Mantu and Family **Sunday, May 22, After Worship**

Pastor Mantu begins his new appointment as pastor of Walnut Creek UMC on July 1. We will gather to send him off with our thanks and blessings.

At that time, we will present him with a check from all of us. If you would like to make a donation, please bring your financial gift in cash to the church office or make a check out to Pastor Kim, who will consolidate all the checks and present one.

Please put "For Pastor Mantu" in subject line and make checks out to Kim Risedorph, not to the church.

You can mail or deliver the check to: Kim Risedorph, SRVUMC, 902 Danville Blvd, Alamo CA 94507.

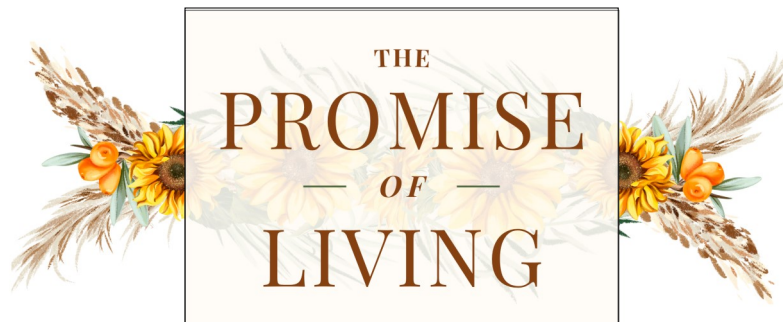
Alternatively, you can use Venmo: @Kim-Risedorph.

We will be planning additional ways to thank Pastor Mantu and his family. Contact the church office if you want to help. (925-837-5243).



Heidi Joshi (left), Pastor Mantu (center) and John Green (right) participating in November's youth walk.

San Ramon Valley Chorale **Sunday, May 1 and Sunday, May 4, 4 p.m.** **San Ramon Valley UMC**



Directed by Bruce Kohila and accompanied by Nadia Blank-Kohila. Purchase tickets at www.srvchorale.com. Adults, \$25, Students and kids, \$10. ***Advance ticket purchase is strongly recommended. Limited seating available.***

Announcements

Pastor Andrew Davis Begins July 1

Dear San Ramon Valley UMC Community,

The Bishop has appointed Reverend Andrew Davis to serve at San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church, beginning July 1, 2022. Bill Fulcher, chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee, read District Superintendent Samuel Hong's announcement letter in worship on Sunday, April 3.

Pastor Andrew brings vital gifts to ministry. He will serve as our Youth Director, restart children and youth choirs, help lead worship, support our small group ministry, and assist with other pastoral duties.

Andrew is a lifelong Methodist from a family that loves music and pickle ball. Andrew's own musical experiences include playing organ and piano and singing with the Sacramento City College Choir.

He has been active in local Rotary Clubs since 2017 and plans to join a local club. He has also served on the CASA advisory board for Plumas County for several years.

Andrew's family includes his partner, Trevor Neeley, who is senior coordinator of first-year programs in the academic advising program at Sacramento State.

Andrew is a fan of the local sports teams, SF Giants and 49ers. Trevor is a fan of the Oakland A's. And they both cheer on the Golden State Warriors.

They are looking for housing in our area, so please keep them in mind if you hear of any options. Andrew also loves dining out, so start a list of your recommendations for him. These are all great ways to welcome him to our community!



Welcome to Pastor Andrew Davis.

An Excerpt From District Superintendent Samuel Hong's Announcement Letter

"Pastor Andrew is a compassionate and relational leader who makes everyone feel welcome. He likes to be involved in neighborhood gatherings and community organizations to help get the church out in the community. He is musically talented. His experience includes working as a church pianist, directing choirs, and creating music programs for children. He has strong leadership in worship and preaching that helps people go deeper in spirituality."

—Bill Fulcher read this letter during worship, Sunday, March 3.

Announcement

~~Re-LAUNCH~~...Re-LUNCH

Lunch With Friends

Tuesday, May 3, Noon

Wesley Center

Simply a lunch fellowship with any and all who would like to join us for a fabulous, sit-down lunch with friends. Chef John Sanders will be guest cheffing with us and will be making a jumbo shrimp cocktail, a bacon, lettuce and tomato salad, warm rolls and red velvet cake with vanilla ice cream. We'd love to see you!

We need a **firm** RSVP as we have **no idea** how many to cook for! Please use any of the following to say:

- "Yes, I'll come back, but can't do May 3."
- "Yes, I'll come back and will be there May 3."
- "No, I can longer attend."

RSVP now for your share of the jumbo shrimp cocktail and more! Contact

Nancy Benvenuto at nancy@nancybenvenuto.com or call/text to her at (925) 784-5243. You can also call the office or email Patsy at pkyles@srvumc.org.



Church Office Open House

May 5, 1 to 3 P.M.

The church office is right where you left it, but it has had some remodeling. Come and check it out. This event is a great chance to meet some of the newer staff that you haven't had a chance to greet face-to-face before.



Did You Know?

Sure, you knew that our own music director, Rosalind Neisinger, also directs the Monte Vista High School choir. But did you know that was them singing the national anthem at the Oakland A's game on April 19?

Spiritual Growth

Great Decisions

Sundays in May, 11:30 a.m.

Fireside Room (Zoom Available)



What are the great global policy decisions facing the U.S. and how should Christians respond? On April 24, our church started a series of eight weekly discussions on critical global issues using a guide prepared by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA). This program is part of an annual, nationwide program, whereby groups of concerned citizens throughout the U.S. will discuss why the issues are important and why we should be concerned.

The series will be facilitated by Lyn Arscott. A 20-minute video prepared by the FPA, will be shown on each topic followed by a facilitated discussion. The discussion series guidebooks are available from the [FPA website](#) for \$32 plus postage.

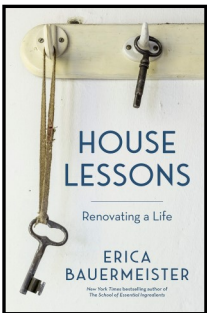
- **May 1, Climate Change**—The ideological divide in the United States on the subject of climate change has impeded progress in curbing greenhouse emissions. But extreme weather events at both ends of the thermometer have focused attention on the consequences of inaction. What role will the United States play in future negotiations on climate?
- **May 8, Russia and the US**—Russia and the United States have many areas of conflict and some possible areas of mutual interest. Arms control, Russian interference in U.S. elections and support of cyberattacks, the status of Ukraine, the fate of opposition politicians in Russia, all continue to be concerning. How will the administration in Washington approach these issues?
- **May 15, Myanmar and ASEAN**—The situation in Myanmar, including the coup by the military in February 2021 and the ongoing human rights crises, coupled with civil resistance by those opposed to the regime, has led to the chaos in the Southeast Asian country. How are neighboring countries reacting, and what role will ASEAN play?
- **May 23, Quad Alliance**—As part of the U.S. pivot to Asia, the United States has been in dialogue with Japan, Australia, and India in an effort to contain China. Recently, the Quad countries held joint naval exercises in the South Pacific. How effective will the actions of this alliance be?
- **May 29, Drug Policy in Latin America**—The issue of migration to the United States from Latin America has overshadowed the war on drugs, which has been underway for decades with few signs of progress. What are the roots and the bureaucratic logic behind today's dominant drug policies in Latin America? Is it time to reconsider punitive drug policies that disrupt supply chains and punish drug possession?

Spiritual Growth

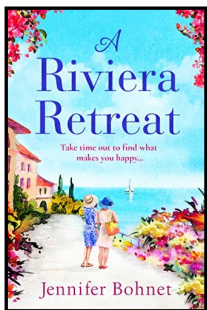
It's Back!

Between the Bookends

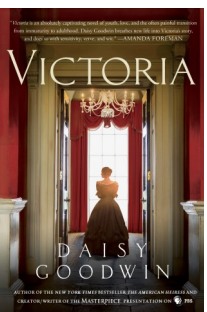
Here are some books that were ready to be placed on the cart during the first three months of the pandemic. We hope you will enjoy them.



Bauermeister, Erica. *House Lessons: Renovating a Life*. Bauermeister and her husband buy a rundown Victorian house in Port Townsend, Washington because they feel magically drawn to it. Although the book has a lot of construction details, it also has gems about architecture and family life. The vivid writing gives one a feeling of being in the town of Port Townsend and experiencing the views and the charm as well as the muscle-wrenching work that the family does together. This biographical book is an interesting read dealing with the human feelings and transitions we all face as we grapple with the practicalities that life imposes upon us.



Bohnet, Jennifer. *A Riviera Retreat*. This engaging book has a plot inspired by the movie *Enchanted April*. In an effort to give back for her good fortune, the owner of an auberge near Cannes runs a contest to pick three women to enjoy a free ten-day vacation. The women chosen are of varied ages and backgrounds, but all are at crossroads in their lives. Their time at this auberge helps them come to terms with what they want to do in the years ahead. The lovely setting and the warm personalities of the various characters make this bit of comfort reading a good escape.

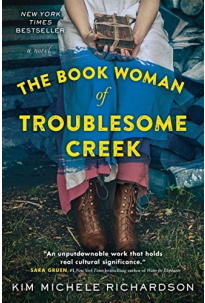


Goodwin, Daisy. *Victoria*. The author, Ms. Goodwin, a scholar from Cambridge with a degree in history also attended Columbia University's film school. With these credentials, she was the perfect person to create PBS's series, "Victoria." This book covers Queen Victoria's early years as a teenager and young queen. While the author was pursuing her history degree, she read Queen Victoria's youthful diaries! This enabled Ms. Goodwin to realistically reveal the young monarch's true feelings, rebelliousness, and strong will. Victoria's German mother and uncle, along with Prime Minister Melbourne serve as mentors and molders of her character. This book carries you into Victoria's thoughts and decisions. The dialogue and events keep you turning the pages. An excellent book and realistic portrayal of the Queen.

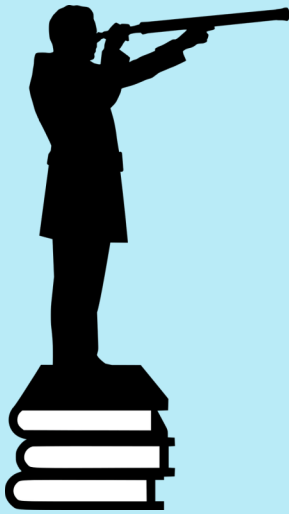
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Spiritual Growth

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Richardson, Kim Michele, *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*. Young Cussy Mary is a librarian for the Pack Horse Library Project in Kentucky where she and her cantankerous mule deliver books to remote areas. Cussy, or Bluet as she is sometimes called, is descended from a French family with a gene that causes the skin to be blue because of a lack of oxygen in the blood. Much of the population that Cussy serves is poor, unhealthy, and uneducated. Cussy's life is difficult because her family is poor, and as a Blue, she is the target of prejudice. However, her ability to face obstacles and rise above them is laudable. This interesting novel informs the reader about a library service that did exist in the 1930s and 40s and a genetic anomaly found in a real Kentucky family.



Did Any Books From the Book Cart Shelter in Place With You?

Any chance you might have misplaced a shining example of literary genius from our book cart back in 2020? Please consider taking a look around. If you have, then please drop it off with no judgment from us!

Looking To Donate a Book to the Church Library?

Please leave a note with it. The Committee often finds a book without a note, leaving them unsure if the work is a donation or simply left behind from a meeting.

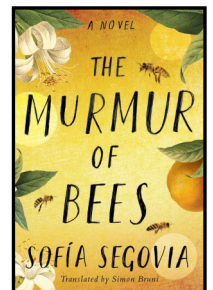
Afternoon Book Group May 16, 1 p.m. Conference Room or Zoom

The Murmur of Bees by Sofia Segovia. Sharon Ross leads our discussion of this story. Segovia's work covers the Mexican Revolution and the influenza epidemic, translated from Spanish. You can find the Zoom link on the [church website](#).

Coming attractions for this summer:

June 20—*Maisie Dobbs* by Jacqueline Winspeare

July 18—*Fresh Water for Flowers* by Valerie Perrine



Out Into the World

Mission Trip to Assist in Camp Fire Recovery

June 26 to July 1, 2022



From Camp Fire in 2018.

The Camp Fire, November, 2018 was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history. Tragically, 85 people died. The fire burned over 150,000 acres and more than 18,000 structures. The towns of Paradise, Concow, Magalia and Butte Creek were largely destroyed.

Signup is now available for a mission trip to help rebuild. We will be working in Paradise teamed with Hope Crisis Response Network (HCRN). We will drive up on Sunday, June 26, work that week, and return Friday afternoon, July 1.

We will be staying at housing provided by HCRN. Two people per bedroom with a shared bath between rooms, plus gathering room and dining area. The limit on this trip is twelve people. We will receive our work assignment about a week beforehand. HCRN is providing the tools.

The cost will be \$175. This includes the cost of carpooling, food and accommodations. **For questions or to register, contact Steve Elliott at sae612@msn.com or 925-362-8697.**

Joy of Service

May 15, Immediately After Worship

Courtyard

There are plenty of opportunities to serve, including ones that are right here at our church home and don't require going "out into the world." Learn more about

- **Sodbusters**—perform landscaping and groundskeeping tasks for the church campus.
- **Ushers and greeters**—be the first impression!
- **Helping Hands**—help set up or break down tables and chairs, change a lightbulb, dust pews and more.



Communion

Habitat for Humanity at Esperanza Place

This month's communion offering supports the ongoing volunteer efforts this church makes with Habitat for Humanity. San Ramon Valley UMC has a longstanding relationship with Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley, and June 25 will mark another day of faith and work on site at Habitat's Esperanza Place neighborhood.

The Neighborhood

The Esperanza Place development plans for eight buildings of townhomes surrounding a central community green space for common use by children and neighbors. The Las Juntas Way location situates the neighborhood along Iron Horse Trail and close to BART and local bus routes to make public transportation a convenient option.

Each building consists of townhomes with one to four bedrooms. Overall, the planned capacity will house forty-two homeowners and their families. Qualifying families can apply for the Habitat home ownership program if they earn up to 120% of Contra Costa County's median income.

Zero Net Energy

Esperanza Place will be Habitat for Humanity's first Zero Net Energy development, finding ways to make green energy affordable. Solar panels and water-efficient landscaping not only makes these homes sustainable, but these features also produce more energy than the neighborhood consumes. However, best energy efficiency isn't just plopping some solar panels on a rooftop and calling it a day: If you're curious, check out what [Habitat for Humanity in Sacramento](#) lists as materials that go into an energy-efficient home design. Ultimately, Habitat plans to make energy more affordable for its residents.

Building new homes like these can be wonderfully satisfying for the volunteers who participate. Efforts here result in meaningful changes in standards of living for people who make their homes there. This month's offering will support the June 25 full day of work for twenty volunteers from SRVUMC. Participants must be age eighteen or older (Habitat will allow age sixteen with a waiver), but no experience is necessary.

If you're curious about Esperanza Place, then you can watch a short video produced by Habitat for Humanity ESRV about a year ago. Click [here](#) to take a look.



Preschool

New Mud Kitchen Delights Preschoolers

By James Bunker

There is nothing more fun than mixing sand, dirt and water to create a masterpiece! Children in the preschool are able to use their creativity and imagination as they “cook” in our new mud kitchen. This addition to our preschool was the result of an Eagle Scout project completed by Ben Dowler from Troop #803. Students like Katie, granddaughter of Jenny and Gary Swanson, make cakes to share with friends. Another use of this area has been to create a band. Children can bang on pots and pans with spoons to create music. Our preschool is always looking for new ways to enrich the curriculum.

Parenting WORKSHOP

Saturday, May 14, 9 to 11:30 a.m.

Wesley Center

The Discovery Center of San Ramon will gather a panel of their staff that are working in our local school to help parents help their kids. *Contact Laura Roy at lroy@srvumc.org for more information.*

Food Truck Party: On a Roll With God!

Join us for Vacation Bible School! Invite your neighbors, friends and family!

July 25 to 29, 9 to 11:30 a.m.

SRVUMC Campus

Ready to cook up some fun? Food Truck Party VBS invites children of all ages to get “on a roll with God” as a parade of food trucks rolls into their neighborhood for the summer's biggest party!

Register here: <https://www.myvbs.org/srvumc!>

\$50 per child, or \$45 per child for families with three or more children attending. Student take-home music download Card is \$5.

Contact Laura Roy, Director of Family Ministries, at lroy@srvumc.org with your questions.





Family Ministry

Calendar

Vacation Bible School. Food Truck Party: On a Roll With God! July 25 through 29, 9 to 11:30 a.m. Three years (potty-trained) through grade 5. Invite your neighbors, friends and family to the church campus for this five-day event! *See page 11 of this issue for details.*

Sunday School

Starting May 1: Join us for in-person Sunday school! Now, 10 a.m. to coincide with the new worship time. We will meet upstairs, above the preschool in Otterbein.

Tot Spot Is Open! We would like to welcome Elisa and her daughter Ana Luisa as our new staff. Stop by and say hello on Sunday mornings!

Weekly Cues

Resilience is getting back up when something gets you down.

Week One

Great Commission and Spread of the Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1 and 2

God is always with you.

Week Two

Peter and John Are Taken to the Sanhedrin: Acts 3:1-4:21

Keep going even when it gets tough.

Week Three

Paul and Silas in Prison: Acts 16:16-40

You can choose joy when life gets hard.

Week Four

Heroes of the Faith: Hebrews 11

Trusting God can help you get back up.

Week Five

Keep Looking to Jesus: Hebrews 12:1-3

Keep going because of what Jesus did for you.

"But those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak." —Isaiah 40:31, NIrV

Celebrations

Birthdays

1 Catharine Baker Barbara Nicco Bethany Pavel	Winnie Stribling	Brian Dandridge
2 Will Davis Cheryl Morones	10 Barbara Carlson Jim Kretsche	Robert (Robby) Kelly
3 Bruce Templeton	11 Kathleen Wood	22 Ruth Pavlik
4 Sylvia Benzler Floy Blair Mike Prenger Jim Warnock	13 Al Banisch Carole Johnson Jim McKnight	23 Gary Krumrei
5 Hannah Sidhom Scott Smallwood	14 Saba Kanwal	26 Norma Jean Bunker Skip George
6 Mary Jane Brusher Susan Doran	15 Greg Longstreet Scott Ryan	27 Justin Farhang Hannah Stephenson Thomas Valdriz
8 Jason Doyle Kari Mullican Abby Ten Elshof	16 Lorry Dahl	28 Kay Jones (96) Tom Schramm Anna Templeton
9 Burt Rodgers	17 Rick Doran	29 Jan Geahry
	18 Sanjiv More'	31 JT Kennedy
	19 Alice Impraim Marla Nakaso	
	21 Gerry Aude Bob Baker Rich Braden	

Anniversaries

4 Linda Albertoni Engman & Dave Engman	22 Lisa & John Jancarik
5 Floy & Jerry Blair (59)	24 Susan Pickering-Gest & Steve Gest Connie & Ray Winter
6 Kathleen & Briggs Wood	26 Anita Weir & Jim Ball
8 Marty & Jerry Osborn	28 Barbara & Mike Nicco
10 Nancy & Steve Garnick	30 Christy & Bruce Campbell Anne & Paul Kuelz Marilyn & Thomas Mathis
14 Angela & Tom Norton (56)	
18 Donna & Dave Bain	
21 Debra & Richard Carter	

So Much Information!

Please email media@srvumc.org to make sure your birthday or anniversary is listed. If you have joined our number in the past few years, you may not be seeing your name on the Celebrations page, and that would be a shame!

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns

Sharon (*Susan Dowling's mother*)
Ginger (*Sandy Greenwood Davidson's sister*)
Bob Bailey

Bob Brown
John Evans
Bill Fulcher
Victor Hymes

Melinda Love
Shirley Stephenson
Dan Sturdivant

Continued Prayers For

All those who live with long-term illness, unemployment, life decisions, and sickness in their families, Bob De Chene, Connie Erickson, Kay Jones, Joan Lee, Ann Schroeder.

In Celebration of the Life

Felicia Hillard, a charter member of our church, passed on peacefully Thursday April 7. Felicia loved teaching Sunday School and being a part of women's groups. May God hold her and her family in peace.

Thank You

We really appreciated everyone who attended Charles' memorial service and for the many cards and flowers we received. Your thoughts and prayers meant so much to us.—Shirley Stephenson & Family

SRVUMC

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