

The

Valley Messenger

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

Let's Focus on Blessings!

Dear SRVUMC Family,

This month, my oldest son, Philip, turns 28! It feels like only yesterday that he was just a little boy watching "Blue's Clues" and collecting Pokémon cards (if you don't get that reference, you can Google it!). Now, he's a full-fledged adult doing adult things in life. As I have watched him grow and mature over the years (as I have with my other two as well, Evan and Kevin), my greatest prayer for him has been that he would pursue a life with God and use his many talents to serve God's purposes in this world. I am happy to say that he is doing just that! He currently serves as the Chair of Worship and a member of the praise team at his church and is offering his best self to his church community. At almost 28, he is probably the youngest member of the church's leadership team, and needless to say, I am more than proud of him and all that he is doing.

Now, I could take credit for who he has become and who he is becoming. I could claim he is the product of my amazing parenting and powerful prayers, but the truth is that he is the result of generations of prayers and blessings that have been passed down over many, many years. Yes, I have prayed for him and raised him the best that I can, but I really believe that it was the prayers of his grandparents and his great-grandparents even before he was born that helped shape his heart and his faith.

I share this with you because I believe that we cannot underestimate the potential generational blessings and influence that we can pass down to the next generation and the generation after that. And that's what I want to invite you to think about and focus on as I launch a stewardship series this month called, "Generation to Generation." While part of what we talk about will be planning for our church budget for 2024, I will mostly challenge each and every one of us to focus on the blessings that we want to pass on to our children,

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Next Issue: November 2023

Have something you'd like included in next month's Messenger? Please submit your articles to Lisa Jancarik at media@srvumc.org by **October 15, 2023.**

Announcements

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grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. What we do in October will have lasting implications for the years to come.

It's going to be an awesome series and an amazing month where we will be inspired together!

Friends, the best is yet to come!

P. Sam | syun@srvumc.org

Instagram: @revyunique

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/revyunique>

P.S. We will be collecting some stories and testimonies to the blessings we have received through SRVUMC over the years. Please be on the lookout for ways to share yours!

2023 Donation Statements

Third quarter donation statements will be mailed in early October and will contain all donations received in 2023. Donations made between January 1 and March 31 were processed on the church's old software system, and these have been manually posted to Church Center. Verification of your first quarter donations and prepaid 2023 pledges are in process. Thank you for your patience.

Should you notice a discrepancy in your Church Center donation history or on your forthcoming 2023 donation statement, ***please notify Michelle Cooke, accounts receivable clerk, at extension 102 or at mcooke@srvumc.org.***

Branding Strategies and SRVUMC Media Outlets

Presented to the SRVUMC Church Council in September 2023—By Sarah Stribling

The communications team (Laura Roy, Lisa Jancarik, Sarah Stribling) has been focusing on refining the SRVUMC brand. Marketing a church is not unlike marketing a product or brand. Consistency in color schemes, font, wording, graphics and photos is essential. To this end, the SRVUMC website has been updated to reflect church members and highlight significant church events/opportunities. The website now more accurately represents the current church community and depicts events in which newcomers, especially our target audience, can envision themselves taking part.

Paramount to any discussion of branding is identifying the target audience. Pastor Sam and this writer have identified three major audiences: an older demographic, families with young children, and

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Announcements

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families with high schoolers. This discussion will refer to these target audiences as marketing “personas.” Personas are a composite sketch of someone in a particular target audience.

One persona in our target audience might be an older person who lives in the Tri-Valley area. They are looking to find meaning in their lives and to be part of something bigger than themselves. They are retired, so they have more time to devote to church activities. Perhaps they serve (or even lead) a committee or small group at this church. Church has become part of their life. Or, perhaps they clearly separate their church life from the rest of their life. Another subset of this persona is the person who is waiting to be asked to lead. Such people have much to give, yet have not stepped up to serve. Perhaps they are looking for someone to recognize their innate gifts. Then, there are the people who are not here yet. If they are assisted-living residents, then transportation to and from church may be an issue for them. How might we bring church to them?

A second persona is the family with young children. These families have less time to spend on church activities because they are probably working full time while raising children. To appeal to them, we must offer activities for children as well as their parents, e.g., family movie nights. We can also give the parents a reason to come together with other parents in a casual setting and have fun while providing activities for their children.



The third persona is the family of a local high school student. Perhaps the student attends either San Ramon Valley or Monte Vista high school. If we are to reach this target audience, the needs of the parents *and* the needs of the student will need to be addressed. The parents may be struggling with work-life-balance and raising a teenager. The student may be navigating their self-identity, academics, college preparation, peer pressure, and social gatherings.

This writer is attempting to reach these three personas by curating social media and church website content. Social media now works in tandem with the church website to reinforce opportunities that are relevant to the three personas described above. For example, recent highlights on the church website have included widgets encouraging people to enroll in the Methodist Preschool; to donate to UMCOR's Maui Wildfire Relief; and to register for the Rise Against Hunger event. These opportunities have been mentioned in recent social media posts and have included a link to the church website so people can find out more information about the event and discover who we are as a church.

Spiritual Growth

Save the Date!

2024 SRVUMC Women's Retreat

February 2 to 4

Villa Maria del Mar, Santa Cruz

Pastor Dan Sturdivant leads a retreat with the theme "JOY Through the Back Door."

Our friend and frequent guest pastor Dan says, "The most profound and enduring joy any of us are likely to find arrives through our failures, losses, disappointments; in short, through grief. We can't get there, however, without trusted companions to help us see our lives clearly." The retreat begins with dinner on Friday, February 2, and concludes with lunch on Sunday, February 4. We hope you'll join us in 2024. Single room \$330, double room \$420.

Registration begins after worship on November 5 or November 12. Learn more about how to register [here](#) at Church Center.



Contact Nancy Garnick, Linda Jimerson, Linda Albertoni Engman, or Priscilla Wolfram for more information.

UMeUs

Every Other Tuesday, Noon to 2 p.m.

Wesley Center

Potluck and Presentation

Tuesday, October 3—join us for a presentation by Gay Scott, who has witches in her ancestry! "A Year in Salem: The Witchcraft Crisis of 1692." Please bring a dish to share, or stop at Safeway! We always have plenty of food, it's your company we want!

Classic Fall Meal

Tuesday, October 17—Lunch With Friends! We'll start the cozy fall meal season with my mom's Swedish meatballs, luscious gravy, pickled cucumbers and Swedish almond paste cakes for dessert!



Spiritual Growth

The Harvest Festival Craft Fair 2023—We Need More Crafters!

November 4, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

It's time for all crafters to get their creative juices flowing! This eagerly anticipated event and church tradition showcases quality, handmade items—perfectly timed as a Christmas shopping destination!

Don't miss this fun social event, church fundraiser and good opportunity for outreach to the community! You, your friends and family can take part. Plus, shoppers and crafters alike will be able to fortify themselves with Harvest Festival food, too!



If you're thinking of participating, now is the time to contact Shannon Dever at shannon-dever62@gmail.com for more.

Coffee Hour: A Brief and Incomplete Walking Tour

Can you spot these three examples of how family and church history intertwine on your way to coffee hour? Even on this short walk, we can delight in our common history. If you are new to SRVUMC, ask around anytime some part of your surroundings intrigues you. You may get a peek at our roots.

Left: Plaque in the center of the courtyard commemorating the generous donations of the congregation. Find it under the Sabin family's gift of sun shades.

Middle: Linda Sada painted this vision of the completed courtyard during the fundraising campaign for it. When you find the painting, look for the black cat near the church office.

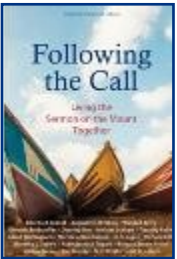
Right: Jim Warnock with one of two windows he refurbished and reinstalled as sidelights to the main entrance of Wesley Center. This project, dedicated to the memory of his parents, was completed in January 2023.



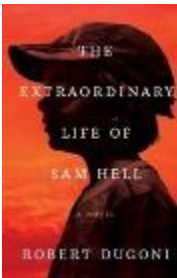
Spiritual Growth



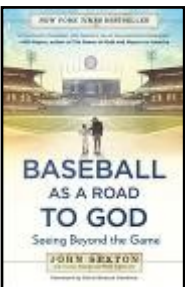
October brings us shorter days and longer nights. It's time to settle in with a good book! Here are some new ones.



***Following the Call: Living the Sermon on the Mount.* Moore, Charles C.** This book studies teachings found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Editor Moore compiles an impressive array of commentary drawing from the work of over 100 religious thinkers, teachers and writers from the third century to modern times. Pick up the quest to discover what Jesus is really asking of us in our daily lives individually and in community with others. We find encouragement to use this book for group sessions, and a study guide is provided to advance this purpose. However, the format also lends itself to individual study. The chapters are well-defined and the commentaries fairly brief, so it is easy for an individual to choose a path which suits his or her own inclination and need.



***The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell.* Robert Dugoni.** In the year 1957, Madeline and Max are expecting their first child. Astonishingly, their healthy baby boy is born with red eyes! This condition is called ocular albinism. The baby's father exclaims, "What the Sam Hill!?" Since his last name is Hill, mother Madeline says the baby's name will be Samuel Hill. As Sam's life progresses, he is bullied, ostracized, or ignored. One day, Ernie, a black boy from Detroit, shows up at their Catholic school, and the outsiders become friends. By middle school, an outspoken, fearless girl, Mickie, becomes their friend, and all three misfits are bonded for life. This cleverly written saga describes growing up with a disability; having a fierce, devoted mother; dealing with prejudice; and knowing true friends accept you as you are.



***Baseball as a Road to God.* John Sexton.** Written for baseball enthusiasts who believe that the hand of God works in many ways, the author brings many quotes of the great players to mind. When Dodgers' manager Tony Lasorda put his faith in his batter who hit off Eckersley, announcer Vin Scully shouted, "the impossible has happened!" Lasorda believed in his batter, and Gibson had faith in himself. Faith is often the handmaiden of hard work, often intellectual. A leap of faith is an embrace of feeling over logic. Bob Lemon once said, "You'll never see it all!" Baseball is a game of infinite variations and possibilities. To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. "Ya gotta believe," said Tug McGraw.

Please look for these overdue books: *The Sins of Our Fathers*, *The Other Einstein*, *Ordinary Grace*, *The Paris Architect*, *Summer Rental*.

Spiritual Growth

Jeff Howe on an Exciting and Inclusive Music Ministry

"The only experience you need is that you enjoy music." —Jeff Howe

New music director Jeffrey Howe introduced himself with a letter first, and then he brought his rich tenor voice to worship. Since then, we've also heard him jamming on the guitar in the Living Water band. Since his start date in August, he has delighted in the breadth and depth of musical talent at San Ramon Valley UMC. After spending much of his career with quiet listeners, Jeff is rejoicing in the sound of SRVUMC's congregation singing along to familiar music from the pews.

As much talent as we already celebrate, however, Jeff encourages shower singers and people still feeling new to their instruments to try the adult music ministry. There are no auditions, and it isn't necessary to read sheet music to find a place in the choir or band. He points out that musicians often pick up their parts by ear, too.

Although he'd eventually like to find a bass player for Living Water, Jeff isn't looking for any particular talent to round out the band or accompany the choir. Currently, Dewey Reikofski plays his keytar to cover both the bass guitar and synthesizer elements of a given arrangement. Instead, Jeff invites all comers, from cello to xylophone and anything else. However, he emphasizes that it's more about attracting people into the music ministry and then figuring out what the resources are.

"There are so many songs that can be easily adapted to having nontraditional instruments," he says. He goes on to say that if someone wants to bring their sound, then he can write a part for them. "We can incorporate any tone color into a song."

Living Water rehearses from 6 to 7 p.m. on Thursdays, with the Chancel Choir rehearsing from 7:30 to 9 p.m. that same evening. When Living Water rehearses, they follow their hellos by listening to the studio recording of the piece they will focus on while reading sheet music. However, neither tool is the gold standard for how the song should sound. For example, Jesus Culture's "Make Us One" didn't have a drum part, so they worked one out. During choir practice, vocal warm-ups precede practicing two or three songs for about twenty minutes each. Before the Sunday worship service, musicians arrive about an hour early for sound checks and warm-ups.



The choir prepares for Sunday worship with vocal warm-ups, sound checks and some final rehearsal in the choir loft. On Thursday nights, practice occurs in Wesley Center. Photo: Sarah Stribling.

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Spiritual Growth

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If you haven't been attached to the music ministry, you might be surprised to know that sharing joys and concerns and a closing prayer are key elements to any rehearsal. Jeff emphasizes that, ultimately, these are music *ministries*, so building community is a vital component of participation.

"It's really important for us to remember why we do this, and it's to come together as a community of faith to sing our faith and to help the congregation connect with their faith, too," he says.

When it comes to congregational singing, Jeff plans to worship with plenty of familiar favorites from the United Methodist Hymnal, but be ready to find some new favorites in there, too. Contemporary gospel is another happy musical playground. His example, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness", could cross over from the traditional hymn we already know to a piece adapted for Living Water. He'd even like to hear some chant or invite in some world music sounds.

"Mainly I'm focused on making sure people know the door is open," Jeff encourages. "I once heard a pastor say that some news is so good it has to be sung, and I couldn't agree more."



The Living Water share "Live To Tell." Left to right, vocalists Bill Fulcher, Shannon Dever, Sandy Greenwood, Jeff Howe and Amy Parnes. Out of frame are Dewey on keytar and Scott Smallwood on drums. Photo by Sarah Stribling.

Book Club October and November Selections

Monthly, 1 p.m.

Church Library

October 16—*Horse* by Geraldine Brooks. This story takes a historical look at the 1880s with a narrative about a young, enslaved Black boy who trains a horse. Compare and contrast this period with modern times with us. *Discussion leader TBD.*

November 20—*The Feather Thief* by Kirk Wallace Johnson. This non-fiction work about an obsession with feathers for fly-tying reads like a novel. *Discussion leader Nancy Garnick.*



Out Into the World

Interfaith American Red Cross Blood Drive

October 13, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Wesley Center

Join in this shared local effort and community tradition. According to its website, the American Red Cross supplies about 40% of the nation's blood, and recent disasters have strained an already limited supply. You can [read more](#) about the American Red Cross in our region's September announcement of critical blood shortages. Click [here](#) to register to give. You'll schedule a time to donate on the website. *For more information or to volunteer at the upcoming blood drive, contact [Jerry Ricker](#).*



Trunk or Treat!

Saturday, October 28, from 5 to 7 p.m.

ARC Parking Lot

Join us for some fun! Decorate a car "trunk" in a theme of your choice and hand out some candy to our visitors and families. The theme decorations can be simple or elaborate. Buddy up with a friend or team! Let's connect with our preschool families and the community!

Fun themes for decorating could be island décor, a favorite sports team, a hobby, pirates, pumpkins or fall, a Bible story, or a favorite children's book. There are so many fun ways to go!

Will you come and party with us? Contact Laura Roy at lroy@srvumc.org to participate.

Donations are needed too! We need individually wrapped candy and small toys to hand out!



Spooky or silly, bring your imagination and some candy or toys!



Communion

World Communion Sunday!

Holy Communion joins us in Christian unity. This sacrament invites us to focus on the holiness of communion with God and one another. On World Communion Sunday, United Methodists, in conjunction with other denominations and believers worldwide, participate in communion to recognize our unity in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. This universal and inclusive connection is the foundation of the special offering for World Communion Sunday.

Your donations support racial and ethnic students in achieving their educational goals and transforming communities. In 2021, World Communion Sunday offerings awarded 242 scholarships and grants. Your generosity continues to provide scholarships, grants, mentoring and training for leadership development. The needs exceed what we can fund, and your gifts can further growth and success. Learn more about the racial and ethnic scholarships and grants [here](#).

- Fifty percent of the offering provides scholarships for graduate students from the U.S. and other countries.
- Thirty-five percent supports racial and ethnic scholarships for students pursuing ordained ministry (deacon or elder) and includes a mentoring program.
- Fifteen percent funds Ethnic-In-Service Training Grant for leadership development, recruitment, training, and retention of ethnic United Methodist persons in leadership positions in every level of the church and its ministry.

The United Methodist Church, the world and our communities are in a time of transition. Now, perhaps more than ever, we are called to extend healing and hope which will guide us to becoming a new creation in Christ. Through our gifts and support, we can invest in talented, qualified students from around the globe to transform the world as witnesses for Christ!

Reprinted from <https://www.umc.org/en/content/world-communion-sunday-ministry-article>.

Did You Know?

In 2022, [The United Methodist Church] gave over \$457,000 to provide racial and ethnic students with scholarships, grants, mentoring and training for leadership development. Your donation provided scholarships for undergraduate or graduate level studies for both international and U.S. students. Your generosity allows those unable to afford an education to become leaders who embody the mission of The United Methodist Church. [Source: The United Methodist Church website.](#)

Youthful Energy

The 2023-2024 Preschool Year Is Off and Running!

We are thrilled to have our amazing teachers, wonderful families and fantastic students back on campus. Everyone is settling into routines and enjoying connections with old friends while making new friends.

Our “All About Me” unit is underway, and we are learning so much about one another. The activities our students are working on help everyone get to know each other. What’s more, they also help the children gain confidence, create a classroom community, and develop positive relationships with each other...friendships are forming that just might last a lifetime!



Learning to treasure our friends.

Sunday Night Youth Meetings in Wesley Youth Center

- **Dinner Connection! September 3, 5 to 6:30 p.m.** Middle and high school youth make dinner together. Watch for food and fellowship together on the first Sunday of every month.
- **Second Through Fifth Sundays, 5 to 6:30 p.m.** Combined middle and high school fellowship time.

Save the Date! Fall Retreat

10 a.m. Saturday, October 14 to 2 p.m. Sunday, October 15

A spiritual retreat at San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville followed by a fun activity, dinner, and a sleepover at the church. Sunday morning, the students will be a part of the worship service. **Contact Justin Byers at jbyer@srvumc.org with questions.**



Youth fellowship and fun in Santa Cruz before the end of Summer 2023.

Family Ministry

Calendar

Acolytes Are Back! If your child would like to serve for the first part of Sunday services once a month, **Contact Laura Roy at lroy@srvumc.org.**

Music Makers, Grades 2 to 5. Tuesdays From 3 to 4 p.m., Wesley Center, Rm. 103. Together they will learn to play hand chimes, enjoy a snack and then gather for singing, musical games, and rhythm/Orff instruments. **Reach out to Winnie Stribling at Winnie_Stribling@msn.com with your questions.**

Trunk or Treat! Saturday, October 28, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the ARC parking lot. Join us for some fun. See decorated car “trunks” in a festive theme. Plenty of candy for visitors and families! We will have snacks and a jump house too!



Nursery Through Grade 5 Sunday School

Classes begin at 10 a.m.

- TK—Grade 2: Otterbein Bldg., upstairs. Laura Roy leads.
- Grades 3-5: Join Tom Roy in Wesley, Rm. 203.

Integrity is choosing to be truthful in whatever you say and do.

Week One

A Tree and Its Fruit: Luke 6:43-45 (Supporting: John 15:1-17)

How do you want people to describe you?

Week Two

Naaman and Elisha's Servant: 2 Kings 5

Why is it important for people to trust you?

Week Three

Daniel's Integrity with Food: Daniel 1

When is it hard to do what's right?

Week Four

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: Daniel 3

When has someone helped you see God?

Week Five

Think About These Things: Philippians 4:8

What do you spend the most time thinking about?

**"Anyone who lives without blame walks safely. But anyone who takes a crooked path will get caught."
—Proverbs 10:9, NIV**

Celebrations

Birthdays

1 Jeff Doyle
2 Sam Hawk
 Kim Maier
3 Sarah Stroin
 Heather Morgan
 Philip Yun
4 Lance Schlichter
6 Doug DeWalt
 Sandy Gsand
 Gavin Isbell
 Millie Sherman
 Jack Schramm
 Wendy Cooper
8 Doug Domergue
 Dennis Greene
 Thomas Valdriz
9 Ann Radick
10 Bob Sada
 Jim Rossini
 Pam Uitti

11 Debbie Byers
14 Danni Sherman
17 Bill Lettis
18 Priscilla Wolfram
19 Walter Torgersen
20 Lauren Nakaso
21 Sharleen Keen
23 Nancy Campbell
 Kelly Milligan
24 Laura Roy
25 Bob Schleicher
 Robert Tharalsen
26 Rochelle Hoff
28 Bill Foulds
29 Bob Millinich
 Dale Stevenson

The Celebrations page draws its information from the online directory. If you spot a mistake in your birthday or anniversary, then please check that we have it right in our system. You can edit your own profile online.

Anniversaries

6 Kathy & Victor Hymes
9 Liz & Skip George **(52)**
13 Devon & Buck Drake
14 Marti & Sketch Sketchley **(56)**
17 Margo & Ron Cefalo
 Nancy & Epi Vazquez
19 Marla & Stanley Nakaso
21 Beth McClelland & Joseph Voelker

22 HollyAnn Melton & Ted Nguyen
23 Joan & Lyn Arscott **(58)**
24 Kathleen & Nader Saghafi
 Susan & Jeff Rideout
30 Amy Parnes & Wade Bickel

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns

Bob Brown

Liz Field

Kay Jones

Andy (Susan Madden's husband)

Barb McWilliams

Marti Sketchley

Continued Prayers For

All those who live with long-term illness, unemployment, life decisions, and sickness in their families, Shana Carroll, Joan Lee, Ann Schroeder.

We continue to pray for those in our community impacted by COVID-19 and recall that testing ourselves is caring for everyone. Please test if you are not feeling 100%.

Our Christian Sympathy

To the McAllister family on the passing of Justin McAllister. Justin was the grandson of the late John Corson.

SRVUMC

902 Danville Blvd • Alamo, CA 94507

Office Hours: 9 a.m.-12, 1-4:30 p.m.

Phone (925) 837-5243 • Fax (925) 837-7263 • www.srvumc.org

Ministers EVERYONE • Lead Pastor Sam Yun (ext. 107)

Director of Family Ministry

Laura Roy

Preschool Director

Christine Pezza (ext. 113)

Office/HR Manager

Soledad Cuenco (ext 104)

Director of Facilities and A/V

Sam Hawk

Accountant

Priya Gupta

Accounts Payable/Payroll

Susan Madden

Accounts Receivable

Michelle Cooke

Music Director

Jeffrey Howe

Office Administrator

Patsy Kyles

Organist

Nadia Koliha

Messenger Editor

Lisa Jancarik

Director of Social Media and Online Ministries

Sarah Stribling