



The

Valley Messenger

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

2024 Preview: Things to Look Forward to in the New Year

Dear SRVUMC Family,

Wow! Can't believe that it is January! First and foremost, I want to wish each and every one of you a happy, blessed, and fruitful New Year! I do have to say that I am so excited for these next twelve months to come. This will be my first full year at San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church! While the past six months have been an incredible blessing and joy for me, I know that what I have experienced so far in our community is just a glimpse of the greater things that are ahead. And of course, with the New Year comes new things—new ideas, new visions, new programs, and new ministries. Here is a little preview of what's coming in 2024:

- A year-long focus on prayer beginning with a new sermon series in January called “Praying the Jesus Way: Making the Lord’s Prayer Our Prayer”
- Revisiting and refining the vision of the church alongside of an intentional rebranding process
- New Faith Development opportunities in the way of new classes, studies, and groups
- Revitalizing our ministry with children and youth under the direction of (hopefully) our new director of next generation ministries
- The launch of a second (experimental) contemporary worship service for Sunday evenings (most likely) at 5 p.m. to connect with and enhance our Sunday youth programming
- More intentional intergenerational programming to continue in our stewardship theme of “Generation to Generation”
- Creating more and better connections to the greater community of the Tri-Valley area

Again, the above are just “previews” for now, and obviously, there are lots of details (intentionally) missing. Some of these things will be discussed and discerned by our Church

January 2024

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Next Issue: February 2024

Have something you'd like included in next month's *Messenger*? Please submit your articles to Sarah Stribling at media@srvumc.org by **January 15, 2024**.



Announcements

Council at our Leadership Retreat that is taking place on Saturday, January 20 at San Damiano Retreat Center. Keep your eyes and ears open for the weeks that follow to catch the additional and pertinent details on all the above and more!

Friends, 2024 is going to be an amazing year for us. And as I always say, the best is yet to come!

Coveting Your Prayers and Partnership,

P. Sam | syun@srvumc.org | Instagram: @revyunique

Reflections on the Charge Conference

By Brad Stribling, Lay Leader

I wish to offer a recollection of the Charge Conference we held in Wesley Center on December 6. At least one such meeting is required each year for the purpose of confirming pastors' compensation; nominating and approving new committee members and chairpersons; and discussing other matters vital to our ministry. Charge conferences are chaired by senior clergy outside our own church, and for matters such as these, it was hosted by District Superintendent Rev. Samuel Hong.

All members of our congregation were invited, and the occasion was well attended—I counted about fifty people. We even enjoyed pizza and other goodies! Our own Pastor Sam Yun welcomed all, and our D.S. Hong opened with Scripture reading and prayer.

Then, down to business. Pastor Sam recounted—with visible excitement—his first five months with our church. He spoke highly of working so well with leadership and our various committees and of witnessing our numerous small groups and classes. Personally, I was struck by his comment that this has been much more “work” than his last church, but much less “stress”! He attributed this to how well organized SRVUMC is and the broad talent helping to contribute to our mission. Sam is delighted to see the growth in our Sunday worship service, our digital outreach and online ministry, and our outreach to the community, summing it up: “We are a church that I believe is spiritually maturing as we attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ!”

“We are a church that I believe is spiritually maturing as we attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ!” —Pastor Sam Yun

The new compensation package for Pastor Sam was presented in detail by Staff Parish Relations Committee Chairman Bill Fulcher. Bill focused our attention on two factors: first, a cost-of-living increase which we had proposed as 3.5%, and second, a merit increase which we had proposed as 3%.

Continued Page 3



Announcements

From Page 2

We had ample discussion on these and they were deemed appropriate and fair. Bill also highlighted the other items in the compensation package which were largely unchanged. It was all put to a vote and was approved in unanimity. The minute details are numerous and cumbersome, but any congregant interested in the specifics is welcome to view it all. The minutes of the conference will become available in the office soon and—I recommend this!—please attend the next publicized Church Council meeting (on Zoom) where that, and all our finances, can be discussed.

Much attention was given to cover new membership in and chairpersons of our numerous vital church committees. The Lay Leadership Nominations Committee had reached out to many gracious church members about helping to serve our church needs, and these were put before the conference for consideration. It's important to note that committee nominations can also be brought forth in the conference meeting. Bring it on! It's also important to note—very important!—that many existing committee members agreed to extend *beyond* their three-year commitment! Bless them all! Following are the rosters. Gratitude and blessings also to those longstanding participants who've "graduated"!

Check out the listing of our church committee members on Pages 4 and 5 to spot familiar names and new ones, too.

We'll welcome even more next year. The volunteers for this election were put to a vote, and all were approved. Congratulations, and thank you to all in advance...grace and blessings to you!

Numerous other items were discussed, and those interested may obtain the minutes. Worth mentioning here, though, was the question "are we considering an associate pastor?" The honest response was "we've not discussed it yet." Even so, D.S. Hong suggested that SRVUMC is evolving, and we should be alert to *future* needs. I've even heard Pastor Sam comment not now, maybe next year, or soon after...so, we'll see.

I'll leave it with: Stay connected! Get involved! Help with our mission to "Follow Jesus...Thrive in Community...Heal the world!"

Grace and Peace,

Brad Stribling

Lay Leader, SRVUMC

Announcements

Committee Membership for 2024

Lay Delegates to Annual Conference

Brad Stribling
Terry Sherman

Church Council

Rebecca Ten Elshof, Chair (2024)
Wendy Cooper, Secretary (2024)
Brad Stribling, Lay Leader (2024)
At-Large: Peggy Crawford (2025),
Terry Sherman (2025), Nancy Amini (2026)

Board of Trustees

Gary Swanson, Chair (2024)
Anita Weir (2024)
Joe Voelker (2024)
Nancy Benvenuto (2024)
Paul Kuelz (2024)
Brenda Domergue (2024)
Don Field (remote) (2024)

Staff Liaison

Sam Hawk, Facility and Purchasing Mgr.

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Bill Fulcher, Chair (2024)
Sherrie Fraser (2024)
Linda Ashcraft (2024)
Bill Foulds (2025)
Sylvia Hemmerich (2025)
Bill Nelson (2026)
Lindsay Hiratzka (2026)
Brad Stribling, Ex-officio Lay Leader

Finance Committee

Jeff Stroin (Chair) (2024)
Judy Baker (2024)
Steve Garnick (2024)
Yousuf Omar (remote) (2024)
Jane Lang (2026)
Irv Skeoch (2026)
Joanne Knapp (2026)

Brad Stribling, Ex-officio Lay Leader

Staff Liaison

Priya Gupta, Treasurer

Endowment Committee

Harry Knapp (2026)
Judy Baker (2024)
Gerry Carothers (2024)

Missions Committee

Kal Peters, Chair (2024)
Holly Ann Melton (2024)
Jerry Ricker (2024)
Steve Brown (2025)
Jane McGuire (2026)

Preschool Commission (*continued next page*)

Elizabeth McClelland, Co-chair (2024)
Cynthia Rudow, Co-chair (2025)
Steve Garnick, Finance (2024)
Norma Jean Bunker (2024)
Millie Sherman (2024)



Announcements

Preschool Commission (*continued from last*)

Lucinda Huffaker (2024)

Sandra Willman (2024)

Jenny Swanson (2024)

Nancy Benvenuto, for Trustees (2024)

Staff Liaison

Christine Pezza, Preschool Director

Athletic Recreation Center Commission

Lyn Arscott, Chair

Lucinda Huffaker, Secretary

Anita Weir, for Trustees

At Large: Debbie Koos, Terry Sherman, Greg

Koos, Doug Domergue, Dave Coombs, Rick

McGuire

Staff Liaison

Sam Hawk, Facility and Purchasing Manager

Faith Development Committee

Bill Rust, Chair

Dave Coombs

Terry Sherman

Lucinda Huffaker

Laura Sanchez

Brad Stribling, Ex-officio Lay Leader

Staff Liaison

Pastor Sam Yun

Children and Family Ministries Committee

Sara Rossini, Chair

Andrea McWilliams

Jenny Swanson

Liz George

Staff Liaison TBD

Youth Council

Kathy Kennedy, Chair

Adam Kennedy

Andrea McWilliams

Kim Maddux Perry

Carrie Doyle

Mike Gross

Justin Byers, Youth Members and Youth Ministry

Intern

Sunday Worship Support Team

Ann Raddick, Welcome Coordinator

Anita Ball Weir, Kitchen Coordinator

Terry Bailey, Coffee Fellowship Coordinator

Altar Guild: Ginny Ferreira, Karolyn Stopper, Jan

Foulds

Peggy Crawford, Communion Coordinator

Nancy Garnick, Liturgist Coordinator

Worship Planning Team

Pastor Sam Yun

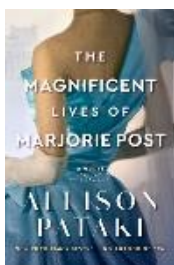
Jeffrey Howe, Director of Music Ministry

Sam Hawk, Director of AV Ministry

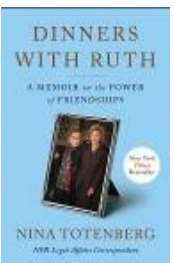
Spiritual Growth



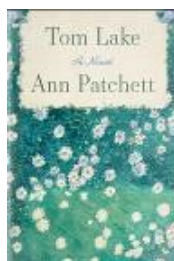
Happy New Year to all! The library committee is hoping that one of your resolutions will be to look for a book to read, enjoy and suggest to a friend. Here are three new additions to our library.



Pataki, Allison. *The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post*. Choose this novel to learn about how some sections of our country developed and why, or how certain words became a part of everyone's vocabulary. The author takes the reader on a fascinating journey through the life of Marjorie Post. This wealthy woman left her mark everywhere she went by either building magnificent estates (Mar-a-Lago among them); by constructing hospitals; or by donating money to charitable organizations. When she and her husband were asked by President Roosevelt to go to Russia as goodwill ambassadors, she did so with the same enthusiasm as with her enumerable beneficial undertakings. This book is in large print.



Totenberg, Nina. *Dinners With Ruth: A Memoir on the Power of Friendships*. This memoir covers highlights of Totenberg's upbringing, education and personal life as well as her many years as legal correspondent for NPR. However, the crux of her message is the importance of friendships she made over the years which sustained her through her difficult times and invigorated her through less fraught times. Her way of cultivating friendships was to hold dinner parties—times for socializing and debating—thereby deepening connections with others. A journalist who was part of the Washington scene, her contacts and the friends she made were often well-known figures, adding interest to the reading. Enjoy and remember to cultivate your own friendships!



Pratchett, Ann. *Tom Lake*. 2020 finds Lara, her husband and three young adult daughters all at home on their cherry orchard in Michigan. The pandemic prevents hiring the usual help with the necessary cherry picking. During this time, Lara acquiesces to requests from her daughters to share with them more about her long-ago romance with a young actor who went on to become a major Hollywood star. Lara's interesting and youthful dance with the theater crowd—as well as her reasons for leaving it behind—are clearly drawn. The daughters exhibit very different personalities, enhancing the scope of the story. We are drawn into this family and are happy to see a close-knit unit which accepts the differences and enjoys the family life holding them together.

Spiritual Growth

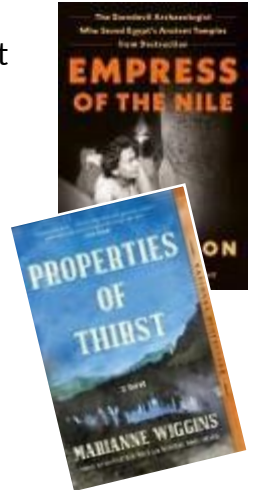
Book Club Church Library

Please note that the January meeting is scheduled for the second Monday rather than the third Monday to avoid conflicting with the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

January 8: Lynne Olson. *Empress of the Nile*. The story of a determined Egyptologist who helped preserve many ancient structures when the Aswan Dam was being constructed. *Discussion leader Linda Jimerson.*

February 19: Marianne Wiggins. *Properties of Thirst*. A California tale about the time before WWII. Japanese internment camps are being built, and water use is also being debated by Northern and Southern California. This historical fiction book gives us a new lens on history.

Contact Jenny Swanson with your questions.



UMeUs January Schedule

Lunch With Friends. Tuesday, January 16, Noon, Wesley Center. Third Tuesday of the month, as usual.

Please note that there will be no potluck on January 2.



Youth Meetings Now Feature a Meal Each Week!

Middle and High School, 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Youth Room

Middle school and high school youth will meet together from now on, with food and fellowship to share. Contact Justin Byers with questions.



Spiritual Growth

Jesus in America Adult Sunday School Series **Sundays, January 2 Through March 31 at 9 to 9:50 a.m.** **In-person or Online**

He's back! Dave Coombs brings us another adult Sunday school series with plenty of food for thought and discussion. The class will trace the evolution of Christianity in North America, focusing on the colonies and then the United States.

The classes are as follows:

- Early Proselytizing (16th and 17th Centuries)
- Reformation in the New World (17th and 18th Centuries)
- Revolutionary War and Its Aftermath (18th Century)
- The Fire Within (Early 19th Century)
- Slavery and Its Impacts (mid-19th Century)
- Post Civil War and the Rise of Spiritualism (Late 19th Century)
- Rise of Fundamentalism (Late 19th and Early 20th Century)
- Evangelical Movement (20th Century)
- Renewal of the Search for the Historical Jesus (20th Century)
- Roe v Wade and the Increase of Conflict in the Christian Community (Current)



The schedule has two weeks without a class. **Contact Dave Coombs at dfcassoc@comcast.net with questions.**

Nursery Through Grade 5 Sunday School

Classes begin at 10 a.m.

- Tot Spot for infants through age four is temporarily meeting in Wesley Center Room 102, across from the preschool building.
- TK through grade five upstairs in Wesley Center Room 203.

Special thanks to our Sunday School volunteers for all their work.

Out Into the World

Church Activity and Recreation Center: Learn More or Volunteer!

By Lyn Arscott

There is a high demand for recreational space in our community, so the ARC provides an excellent opportunity to reach out to the community and provide a safe, hospitable place for personal contact and fellowship for adults and youth. After school hours, the ARC is alive every day with dozens of excited boys and girls playing basketball, volleyball and indoor soccer. Adults from the community play pickleball and badminton during school hours. We make an impact in our community by our presence and our deeds.

Activity at the ARC

Church Members and Church Youth. Church members and church youth have time slots for ARC activities on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons. The church pickleball group is probably the most “active” of the church’s small groups.

Area Guests. Pickleball for the local community is available Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Badminton is available on Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon. These sessions are open to the public and are monitored by church volunteers. There are three courts, so twelve players can play at a time. Pickleball is a growing sport with many outdoor courts in our area, but there are very few indoor courts, making the ARC very popular in inclement weather.

Programs for Young People. There is a high demand for gym time for youth organizations, and the ARC has a waiting list of groups who wish to use it. Between the hours of 4 and 9 p.m. on weekdays, the ARC is completely reserved by youth league organizations for boys and girls to play basketball and volleyball. Weekends during winter months include soccer coaching for youth. These organizations provide their own coaches and must have insurance, sign a waiver of liability, and be a certified 501(c) 3 not for profit organization.

In June and July, summer camps for youth were held for basketball, with shorter basketball camps held during the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas.



Local youth play basketball in a training session.

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Out Into the World

From Page 9

Leadership

Currently, the ARC Commission includes Lyn Arscott, serving as chair, with David Pierce as secretary and Lucinda Huffaker as treasurer. Anita Weir represents the trustees. Rick McGuire, Debbie Koos, Greg Koos, Dave Coombs, Terry Sherman and Doug Domergue serve as commission members.

Last year, the church eliminated the position of part-time director of recreation ministries. In place of that position, the duties of managing the ARC are shared among Facility and Purchasing Manager Sam Hawk, ARC Commission Chair Lyn Arscott, and ARC Commission Treasurer Lucinda Huffaker. The ARC Commission provides oversight of all activities in the ARC. This change brings the management of the ARC in more close alignment with other rental activities in the church campus.

The facility and purchasing manager has responsibilities for scheduling of ARC customers, management of contracts for users of the ARC, and maintenance of the facility (with oversight from the trustees and the ARC Commission).

The ARC chair coordinates with the facility manager on maintenance and relations with ARC clients. The chair is also responsible for taking cash and checks to the bank and coordination of volunteers for pickleball and badminton. The ARC treasurer is responsible for financial oversight and prepares the monthly financial statements for the ARC Commission.

Finances and Facility

The gym floor was refinished this year at a cost of \$6,800. This is the second floor refinish job in the past six years of operation. The ARC does not burden the church financially. The ARC transfers \$3,000 per month to the church accounts for administrative services rendered. In addition, last year, the ARC transferred \$30,000 to church accounts to promote programs for youth and another \$30,000 for other church programs at the discretion of the Church Council.

Plans for 2024

We will encourage more church youth and other church members to use the ARC during the time slots allotted for church members.

We are seeking ways whereby the church can sponsor young players who need some help with the coaching fees.

We will recruit more volunteers to act as attendants during public open play for Tuesday badminton sessions. The attendants are the face of the church to visitors, and we have received many compliments about the friendly welcome visitors receive. Attendants open the ARC and receive the fees from players. The time commitment is one day a week from 8:45 to 10:30 a.m. **Contact**

Lynarscott@comcast.net if you would like to volunteer.

Out Into the World

Going Out Into the World in 2023: Some Great Moments

Whew, what a year! 2023 has been filled with changes and challenges, yes, but also with the wonderful energy! Jesus called us as Christians to be as a lamp, bringing his light to the world (Matthew 5:14-16). We're at our best when we work together. How many of these contact points with the larger world do you recognize? The answer key appears on Page 12, but the real key is to participate in a group event or activity yourself to share the energy!



Out Into the World

Key to the Great Moments Photo Quiz (on Page 11)

SRVUMC has worked in mission to bring God's love out into the world in many more ways than the ones pictured! A few include cooperative efforts with Monument Crisis Center, like the backpack drive; the Angel Tree; the LIFT men's clothing drive; and UMCOR missions throughout California to rebuild after disaster. The real key to the great moments in 2024 will be your participation!

1 and 2: When UMCOR ran low on **disaster cleanup buckets** last winter, SRVUMC was there to help! Volunteers lined up to assemble bucket after necessary bucket in an event that took up most of Wesley Center.

3. Members participate in the sorting and packing of food at the **Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano**. Parents, note that this activity is a great way to introduce the kids to the joy in volunteering.

4. Members deliver meals to **Trinity Center** multiple times throughout the year. Watch for opportunities to participate in delivering and serving meals in 2024, too.

5. Volunteer Peggy Hiratzka shows a complete meal for **Rise Against Hunger! (RAH)** assembled by her table's team. RAH is another great way to involve the kids, who bring the energy everyone needs to keep the meals moving in this brief, one-day event.

6. **Youth Car Wash** back in June. In 2023, the youth also interfaced with the community with mission at White Pony Express packing food.

7. **Rebuilding Mission in Parajo, CA**, following catastrophic flooding there. If your hammer is itching, look for building opportunities with Habitat for Humanity as well as more UMCOR opportunities like the one shown here.

8. October's **Red Cross Blood Drive**, which we hosted in Wesley Center. Suzanne Ricker is seated at the table with a partner from Danville LDS Church.

9. **Trunk or Treat!** Connecting with the community involves candy and fun each October. In 2023, Trunk or Treat also included Barbie (Debra Carter).

Getting Out Into the World in 2024

Volunteers signed up for many of these events through [Church Center](#), a simple way to check out available events, sign up for them (if an RSVP is needed) and organize a personal schedule of church activities. Watch for many, many more wonderful opportunities to bring your own skills and interests to SRVUMC's missions and events throughout 2024.



Out Into the World

Thank You, Angels of SRVUMC, Thank You!

This year our Angel Trees were filled with tags. We were able to fulfill all the requests and provided 184 gifts, making a brighter and happier Christmas for so many. Thank you, one and all! A special thanks to Shannon Dever and all the Harvest Festival participants for your generous monetary donation.

The following agencies send their deepest gratitude to all the Angels of SRVUMC.

- Fred Finch
- Trinity Center
- Hope Solutions
- STAND!
- Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Family Service

Your Angel Tree Team is most grateful to you all for participating and supporting this mission project.

We wish you a healthy and happy 2024!

Nancy Garnick, Linda Green and Beth McClelland



Angel Tree in action for 2023! Left: Nancy Garnick finishes off a festive Angel Tree back in November. Right: Special delivery! Presents from us, organized and wrapped, arrive at last!

Celebrations

Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Marilyn Clarke | 19 Cosima Sepull |
| 2 Steve Marohn | 20 Nancy Garnick |
| 3 Ethan Helms | 23 Jan Foulds |
| Brian Roberts | 24 Barb McWilliams |
| 4 Rebecca Ten Elshof | 25 Grace Benzler |
| 6 Nancy Amini | Roger Ehlers |
| 9 Terry Bailey | 26 Nick Toma |
| 9 Conner Merchant | 27 Doug Barton |
| 10 Chris Hoff | Katherine Sharp |
| 13 Bill Nelson | 28 Bill Dever |
| 14 Nancy Tiedemann | Nancy Harrison |
| 15 Julian Bybel | Karen Stepper |
| Liz George | 29 Dave Bridges |
| Shadaab Kanwal | 30 Alicia Rossini |
| Dory Schramm | Deirdree Walsh-Krumrei |
| 16 Peggy Pierce | 31 Lisa Chapman |
| 17 Gerry Carothers | |
| 18 Mike Kelly | |
| Gail Smith | |

Anniversaries

- 5 Judy & Bob Baker
7 Jo Ann & Vin Hirsch (63)
11 Nadia & Bruce Koliha
29 Danni & Dan Sherman

Right: We couldn't resist fitting in one more "Celebration"! The canned food drive for Monument Crisis Center (MCC) was a great success, thanks to all of you! Pastor Sam Yun (left) and Warren Cancel (right) show off a barrel of canned goods for MCC. Thanks to organizers and donors alike for this worthy mission.



Among Ourselves

The Valley Messenger: A Group Project

This January 2024 edition of the newsletter is my last as its editor. Next month, Director of Communications Sarah Stribling takes on the newsletter tasks in addition to her existing responsibilities. Together, we've been working for a seamless transition. Sam Hawk will continue to create Sunday worship presentations, as I am stepping out of that role, too. Our media team has the best seat in the house to view SRVUMC in action, but I'll continue to worship as a member and friend.

I started as newsletter editor in 2015 with a staff of one (me), but as with nearly everything that happens at SRVUMC, the newsletter is really a team effort. Special shoutouts to **Michelle Cooke, Sam Hawk, Patsy Kyles, Jeff Lang, Laura Roy, and Sarah Stribling** for each of the times one or more of them have pulled my fat out of the fire with key knowledge or a technical fix.

Although not on the staff officially, three people have always helped me, month after month, for easily more than eighty editions now. **Jerry Ricker, Carole Johnson and John Green** have generously volunteered time and knowledge each month to give me a "sanity check" on the birthday and anniversary lists. If you have a moment, then please thank them. My own heartfelt gratitude seems inadequate. That said, the any mistakes on the Celebrations page are entirely mine.



Photos: Unsung heroes of the Celebrations page. Top: Carole Johnson poses with friend Sylvia Hemmerlich at the Women's Christmas Tea. Not sure if Carole sat down the entire time. Middle: Jerry Ricker at the October blood drive he helped coordinate. Bottom: John Green with Linda, his wife and chaperone in 2021.



June 2015 edition. How much we've all changed!

Everyone who contributes to the newsletter from month to month gives the document its voice, not any one person. Please send your announcements and articles to media@srvumc.org to be part of the voice.

Thanks for a good run,
Lisa Jancarik

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns

Bill Dastic
Liz Field
Kay Jones

Dana Sketchley
Barb McWilliams

Continued Prayers For

All those who live with long-term illness, unemployment, life decisions, and sickness in their families, Shana Carroll, Joan Lee, Andy (Susan Madden's husband).

Our Christian Sympathy

To the family of Barbara Schneider for her passing at the end of November.

To Amy Parnes and her family on the sudden passing of Amy's husband, Wade Bickel.

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

Preschool Director

Christine Pezza (ext. 113)

Office/HR Manager

Laura Roy (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

Thanks for a good run!

Director of Media and Communications

Sarah Stribling