

# THE VALLEY MESSENGER.

A publication of San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church

Pursuing a life with God and a life with each other by following Jesus,  
thriving in community, and healing the world.

Our Values: Inclusion, Inspiration, Impact



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# FINDING THANKS IN THE MIDST OF THANK-LESS SITUATIONS.

Philippians 4:4–7

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God...”

I can’t believe Thanksgiving is almost here again! I’ll admit—this is hands down my favorite holiday of the year. And for many **obvious** reasons: the food, the food, and... did I mention the food? But beyond that glorious pumpkin-pie-induced coma, I love Thanksgiving because it remains one of the least commercialized holidays we have left. No presents to buy, no decorations to put up in the middle of October (I’m looking at you, Christmas aisle at Target). It’s simply about being with people you love and pausing long enough to say, “Thank You.”

This year, though, I’m especially looking forward to Thanksgiving because I feel like I need what I can only describe as a “**gratitude reboot**.”

The past few months—August,

September, and October—have been, well... a bit of a blur. Between navigating my parents’ health challenges back in Pennsylvania (and the constant feeling that I’m not doing enough from so far away), managing unexpected transitions and crises in church life, and confessing to our SPRC Chair, Bill Fulcher, that I have very little margin in my life right now... I’ve found it hard to take Paul’s words to heart: “Rejoice in the Lord always.”

Always? Really, Paul? Even when the to-do list is never-ending, the sleep is lacking, and the coffee is doing all the heavy lifting?

Then one night, during a particularly unholy session of social media scrolling—you know, that deep scroll that starts with a cute puppy video and ends somewhere near a life philosophy TED Talk—I stumbled across a short clip that stopped me in my tracks.

In the video, a man tells this story:

A monk asks his disciple, “If a man is holding a cup of coffee and someone bumps into him, spilling the coffee, why did he (**continued on next page**)

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spill it?”

The disciple answers, “Because someone bumped into him.”

The monk replies, “Wrong. He spilled coffee because coffee was what was in his cup.”

The monk went on to explain that when life shakes us—and it will—whatever is inside of us is what will spill out. If our cup is full of anger, stress, or bitterness, that’s what will pour out when life bumps us. But if our cup is filled with kindness, patience, love, and grace... then those things spill over instead.

That story hit me like a ton of bricks. I realized that in all the busyness and stress, I’d been letting my “cup” fill up with the wrong things. Worry. Fatigue. Frustration. And when life bumped into me (which it’s been doing about every 15 minutes lately), that’s what came spilling out. Paul’s words to the Philippians suddenly made fresh sense: “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely... think about such things.”

That’s what I’m trying to do this month—to intentionally refill my cup with not only good things, but more importantly, “God things.” Gratitude doesn’t mean ignoring our struggles. It means choosing what fills us in the midst of them.

So maybe this Thanksgiving, instead

of just counting our blessings, we also take a moment to check what’s in our cup. Because life will keep bumping us, no matter what month it is. The question is: what will spill out?

As for me, I’m going to fill my cup with deep, deep gratitude—for each of you. For our staff, our leaders, and this church family that keeps me encouraged and grounded, even in the toughest seasons.

I hope you can fill your cup with similar things, and if need be, give yourself some unapologetic self-care and take the time on Thanksgiving day to watch all the football you want, eat that extra slice of pie, and take that post-turkey nap with zero guilt. (Consider it “holy rest.”)

Happy Thanksgiving, my friends. May your cups overflow with peace, joy, and maybe just a little bit of gravy.

Grateful for you,  
P. Sam | [syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org)



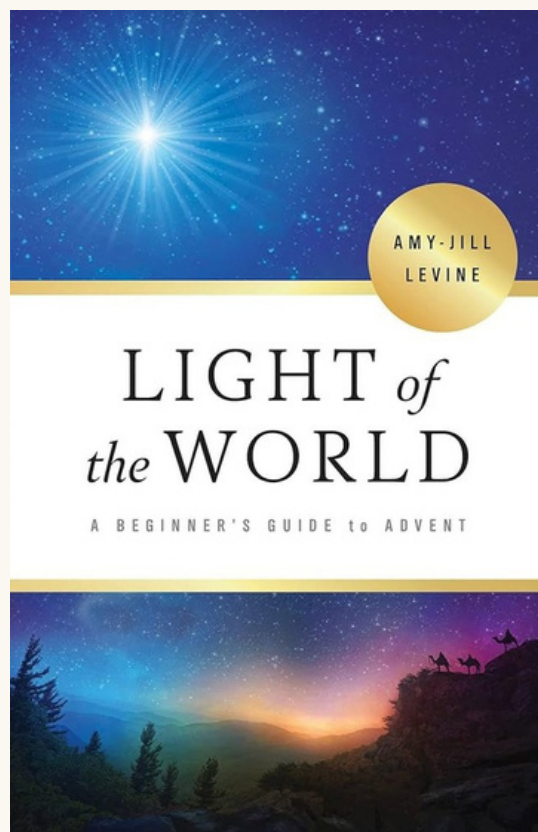
## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# ADVENT 2025: LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

It's hard to believe, but Advent is almost here! As the days grow shorter and the glow of Christmas lights begins to appear, we prepare our hearts once again for the coming of Christ—the Light of the World. This year, I'm especially excited to announce that our **Advent Sermon Series** will be based on and accompanied by a **church-wide Advent Study** using Amy-Jill Levine's beautiful and thought-provoking book, Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent.

Amy-Jill Levine, a renowned Jewish author, New Testament professor, and biblical scholar, brings fresh insight into the familiar story of Jesus' birth. In Light of the World, she explores the biblical texts surrounding the nativity, helping us rediscover the wonder and depth of these stories. Along the way, she takes us through the lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit from the Magi.

Through her engaging teaching, we'll open conversations about the connections between the Gospel



stories and the Old Testament, the role of women in first-century Jewish culture, the importance of Mary's visitation and the revolutionary power of her Magnificat, as well as the deeper meaning of the census, the stable, the star, and the flight to Egypt.

Whether you've celebrated Advent all your life or you're exploring it for the first time, this study promises to

deepen your understanding and enrich your spiritual journey through the season.

### **Get Your Copy!**

You can purchase **Light of the World** now through [www.cokesbury.com](http://www.cokesbury.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), or wherever you usually buy your books.

### **Join (or Lead) a Group!**

Several of our existing small groups will be participating in the study, and we'll also be forming a few new ones for anyone who wants to join in! If you're interested in **leading a group**, please contact **Pastor Sam** at [syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org) or **Bill Rust**, our Faith Development Chair, at [wrusjrarb@aol.com](mailto:wrusjrarb@aol.com).

Advent begins **Sunday, November 30**, and we'll have many more opportunities for worship, service, and celebration throughout the Christmas season—so stay tuned for more details in the weeks to come!

Let's prepare our hearts together to receive once again the Light that shines in the darkness.

~ P. Sam | [syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org)





# Dia de los Muertos All Saints Day

Sunday

Nov 2, 2025

And the dust returns to the earth as it was,  
and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Ecclesiastes 12:7

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# WELCOME TANIA MOORE-BOLSTAD.

My name is Tania Moore- Bolstad, and I am so excited to be a part of the San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church community as a Youth Ministry Coordinator. I have several years of experience working with children and youth in ministry, and I'm passionate about helping young people grow in their faith, discover their gifts, and build meaningful connections with one another. I'm looking forward to walking alongside our youth on their spiritual journeys and creating a welcoming, faith-filled space where they can thrive and feel loved.

To contact Tania, email:  
[tmoore@srvumc.org](mailto:tmoore@srvumc.org).



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# SPECIAL THANKS TO JUDY BAKER!

By Jill Shibuya

Thank you, Judy Baker, for taking the initiative and spending three weeks to prepare an application for the Employee Retention Credit, a federal Covid relief program that provides refundable tax credits for eligible businesses. Judy's hard work and thoroughness resulted in \$240k of cash receipts from the IRS!!

Judy has also spent much time assisting in the transition of our accounting system from Quickbooks to a much more robust program. She's an invaluable resource to our Accounting staff, and we so appreciate her expertise and dedication.

Thank you, Judy!



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION TAX LAW CHANGES.

By Jill Shibuya

With the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Congress made some changes to the deductibility of charitable contributions.

Starting in 2026, itemized charitable deductions will only apply if your total donations exceed 0.5% of your AGI. Smaller donations may no longer reduce your tax bill unless they clear this new threshold. For example, if your AGI is \$200,000, only gifts above \$1,000 would be deductible. You may want to consider combining two or more years' worth of donations into one tax year to clear the deduction floor. Donating appreciated stock may help exceed the floor while unlocking additional tax advantages.

Beginning in 2026, taxpayers who take the standard deduction can also deduct up to \$1,000 (single filers) or \$2,000 (married couples filing jointly) for cash gifts made directly to qualified operating charities. The deduction excludes donor-advised fund (DAF) contributions, and the cap will adjust with inflation over time.

Starting in 2026, taxpayers in the 37%

federal income tax bracket will see the value of their charitable deduction benefits capped at 35%. Your donations will still count in full, but your tax break will be smaller. For example, a \$10,000 gift that currently generates a \$3,700 tax savings would be limited to \$3,500 under the new cap. You may consider front-loading large future gifts to year-end 2025 to lock in the full 37% deduction value before the cap takes effect.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES.

At SRVUMC, our Communications Department and Staff are dedicated to supporting the life and mission of our church. We want every ministry, program, and special event to receive the visibility it deserves so that people are informed, engaged, and inspired to participate. To achieve this, we depend on the partnership of ministry leaders to follow these guidelines. Doing so ensures consistency, excellence, and strong brand recognition across all church communications.

### 1. Promotion of Church Events

Our primary communication platforms (Friday Memo, monthly newsletter, social media, website, and campus signage) are designed to promote SRVUMC events and programs. Outside organizations, including nonprofits, will not be promoted unless explicitly approved by the Pastor and the Director of Communications.

### 2. Event Scheduling

To avoid conflicts and double-bookings, all events must first be approved by the Facilities Manager before they can be added to the church calendar. Only SRVUMC-specific events that are officially scheduled will be promoted by the Communications Department. Because campus scheduling is complex, please ensure you begin this process early.

### 3. Information Required for Promotion

For accurate and effective promotion, please email the following details to [media@srvumc.org](mailto:media@srvumc.org):

- Event title
- Day, time, and location
- Contact person (name & email/phone)
- Cost (if applicable)

Incomplete submissions will be referred back to the event contact for clarification.

### 4. Editorial Oversight

Event contacts are expected to draft blurbs or articles for their respective events. However, the Communications Staff has final editorial authority over all church communications. This includes text, titles, logos, images, photos, and multimedia. Edits may be made to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment with church branding. **(continued on next page)**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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### **5. Authorized Design & Promotion**

The Communications Staff is authorized to determine what, when, where, and through which platforms events are promoted. To maintain consistent branding, members and ministry leaders should not produce their own logos, flyers, postcards, or social media posts for official church communication. Digital and physical promotional materials will be created by the Communications Department as appropriate.

### **6. Image Use & Copyright**

All images used in church communications must either be:

- Original photos taken at church events and submitted to [media@srvumc.org](mailto:media@srvumc.org), or
- Public domain/copyright-free images.

This ensures SRVUMC remains in compliance with copyright laws.

### **7. Balanced Promotion**

Event promotion will be scheduled in the broader context of all upcoming church activities. The Communications Department will work to balance visibility among multiple events happening within the same time frame.

### **8. Flyers & Campus Placement**

The Communications Staff is authorized to decide whether a flyer will be created for an event, and where (if at all) it will be placed on the church campus.

### **9. Communication Contact Person**

When a group (such as a small group, class, or committee) wishes to promote an event, one designated person should serve as the contact with the Communications Department. This helps streamline communication and ensures accuracy.

### **10. Submission Deadlines**

- Friday Memo: Submissions due each Wednesday by 4:00 PM.
- Monthly Newsletter: Submissions due on the 15th of each month.

Late submissions may not be included unless approved by the Senior Pastor.

By following these guidelines, we work together to ensure that SRVUMC events and ministries are communicated with clarity, professionalism, and consistency—so that the life of our church continues to shine brightly in our community.

For any questions or concerns, please reach out to [Sarah Stribling](mailto:sstribling@srvumc.org), Director of Communications ([sstribling@srvumc.org](mailto:sstribling@srvumc.org)) or to [Pastor Sam](mailto:syun@srvumc.org), the Senior Pastor ([syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org)).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# BALANCE AND MOBILITY CLASS MOVES FORWARD.

We are excited to be starting our Balance and Mobility Class on **Thursday November 6th 12-12:45pm in the Fireside Room.**

There are 2 ways to register - through the direct booking link provided below or through the Behavioral Fitness App (recommended for mobile devices).

**Note-** the first time you register for the class you will be prompted to set up an account, set a password and sign a waiver. After this one-time account set-up, you will be able to register for each class with ease using the Behavioral Fitness app.

Here is the direct booking link (if not using the app): <https://shorturl.at/DznaP>

Here are links to the Behavioral Fitness app:

For I-phone: <https://apps.apple.com/app/id6504396657>

For Android: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.behavioral.fitness&pcampaignid=web\\_share](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.behavioral.fitness&pcampaignid=web_share)

**Important tip:** Once the app is

downloaded you will need to change the location to find the class at SRVUMC.

Click “change location” then select “other location” in top right (screen shot below). You will see the class scheduled each week.

You will see 2 options to pay:  
You can pay for each class individually (\$15 drop-in) or buy a 10-class pack (\$150). If you buy a 10 class pack the system will automatically deduct from your sessions with each class you book.

**\*\*Each class must be registered for individually. To sign up for one class doesn't reserve your spot in the others unless you register\*\***





# **EARTH CARE, MEDITATION AND MOVEMENT.**

**THIRD FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH (11/21, 12/19)**

**9:30AM**

**MEET IN THE NARTHEX**

**SAN RAMON VALLEY UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH**

- Mind, body & soul contemplative practices
- Deepen our connection with the earth & our spiritual journey
- We will use sacred space in the narthex, meditation garden, & sanctuary
- No experience necessary
- All are welcome
- Interested? Add your name to Ginny's email list, [ginfereira@gmail.com](mailto:ginfereira@gmail.com)

## **ADD YOUR NAME TO THE EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# VOLUNTEER AT WHITE PONY EXPRESS.

Volunteer to sort food (mostly fruit and vegetables) on **November 6th from 9-11AM** at White Pony Express' in Concord.

Meet in the church parking lot at 8:30AM or at the White Pony Express facility, 2470 Bates Ave, Concord.

Please be sure to wear your new SRVUMC volunteer shirt.

Click [here](https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3137170) to sign up on Church Center or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3137170>.

White Pony Express was started by Dr. Carol Weyland Connor in 2013 to address the terrible disconnect between food waste in the United States and hunger and poor nutrition.

She began a “food rescue” program, delivering surplus high-quality food to local organizations serving those in need. White Pony Express grew as volunteers offered time and equipment and other organizations and individuals raised money for equipment like refrigerated trucks. As of 2024, the food rescue program has

saved over four million pounds of high-quality and largely perishable food from grocers, retailers, restaurants and wholesalers and served 130,000 people in Contra Costa County. Volunteers and staff sort and deliver nutritious foodstuffs to receiving organizations in refrigerated vehicles the same day. Recipients of the deliveries are never charged a fee for these deliveries.

**In August, White Pony Express volunteers made care packages for people in hospitals.**  
**Photo credit: Jerry Ricker.**



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# AN INVITATION FOR YOU!

**Who:** For All SRVUMC Angels.

**What:** Our Annual Angel Tree Mission Project.

**Where:** Gift request tags will on trees in the narthex or donations accepted and Angel helpers will shop for you.

**When:** Every Sunday November 16-December 7.

**WHY:** Support for local agencies that provide services for individuals and families who need our help this Christmas:

- **Fred Finch Youth Center** (children in long term care with developmental or mental health challenges ages 3-18)
- **Trinity Center** (serving unhoused adults)
- **Hope Solutions** (gifts for formerly unhoused families/individuals who have been very recently placed into a home)
- **STAND!** (gifts for families and the shelter that supports survivors of family violence and helps them stay safe and seek a happier, peaceful life)

**How:** Choose a tag off the tree in the narthex.

**Deliver your unwrapped gift with the tag attached to the church** either by putting it under the Angel Tree during Sunday worship (11/23,11/30 or 12/7) OR by delivering them to the church office **no later than December 8th.** Monetary donations for the Angel Tree are always welcome if you would like us to do the shopping.

There are three ways to donate:

- Angel helpers will be in the narthex before worship
- Donate to the Angel Tree online through Church Center
- Mail a check payable to SRVUMC with Angel Tree donation on the memo line to the church office:  
SRVUMC  
Attn: Angel Tree  
902 Danville Boulevard  
Alamo, Ca. 94507

Thank you in advance for being part of the Angel Team and helping to make this Christmas brighter for many.

Beth McClelland, Linda Green, Nancy Garnick and R.I.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# REGISTER FOR THE WOMEN'S RETREAT.

**2026 SRVUMC Women's Retreat**  
**January 30 – February 1, 2026**  
**Villa Maria del Mar – Santa Cruz, CA**

**“Touching Hope: Healing,  
Wholeness, and Thriving in Troubled  
Times”**

Retreat Leader: Rev. Debra Brady

In a world that often feels broken and unjust, how do we hold onto hope? As followers of Jesus, how do we find our center, tend our wounds, and reclaim joy—personally and communally?

Through the intertwined healing stories of two daughters in Mark 5:21-43, we'll explore the courage to reach out, the power of being seen and known, and the sacred possibility of being restored. Together we'll name our anger and grief, ground ourselves in sacred wisdom, and awaken to hope—not as wishful thinking, but as resilient, Spirit-led living.

**All registration is online this year and begins Sunday, November 2, 2025.**

Our 2026 rates: Single is \$485 and Double is \$395. Members of the

Women's Retreat Committee will be in Wesley Center after worship at 10AM November 2 to help anyone who needs aid registering on Church Center or to answer questions. They will also be happy to meet with you at another time by appointment.

**The Women's Retreat will be facilitated by Rev. Debra Brady, pictured here.**



# VETERANS

★ ★ ★ DAY ★ ★ ★

11.11.2025

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS.  
JOSHUA 1:9

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

# IN THE PEW: JERRY RICKER.

By Sarah Stribling

Born in Oakland, Jerry Ricker has been involved with SRVUMC for over three decades.

Being part of SRVUMC is a Ricker family tradition. Jerry's parents were active SRVUMC members in the 1960s. Although he was raised in this church, he took a break from church life after attending college. On a whim in 1995, he decided to return to SRVUMC and has been an active member ever since. He attributes this decision to his parents who were dedicated members of the church.

Jerry has been and continues to play an important role in the life of SRVUMC. Over the decades, Jerry has been part of the Chancel Choir, the Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees, the Missions Committee, the Men's Faith Sharing group, the semiannual interfaith blood drive with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and organizing mission trips to pack food at the White Pony Express. He also sends birthday cards out every month to church members!

One of the things that keeps Jerry motivated to continue his extensive

volunteer work with SRVUMC is the important impact it has on the surrounding community. "I like to get together with people of like mind to help others; it makes me feel good," Jerry remarks.

Jerry met his wife Suzanne in choir several years ago. They were married in the SRVUMC courtyard in 2018.

A fun fact about Jerry is that he loves to travel. His frequent road trips allow him to participate in one of his favorite hobbies, photography.

**Jerry Suzanne pose in front of a troll exhibit at Filoli Gardens.**



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

# WHY DID I BECOME A STEPHEN MINISTER?

By Lindsay Hiratzka

Friends at SRVUMC, this is not about me as much as it is about you, or us... all of us who have suffered loss, grief, pain, and other seasons of darkness...all of us. The human condition, no matter who or where we are, consists of times of joy, sometimes immense joy, AND we humans also experience times that are sadly void of joy.

The loss of loved ones, the loss of a job, a difficult transition, a medical/health issue...these events often come unannounced and take us by surprise. And when they do, the once sunny days can seem dark and gray by comparison and they can linger and even grip us.

When a certified Stephen Minister enters the picture to offer care, their purpose is to walk alongside the care-receiver and to listen and be present. Confidential meetings are generally one hour each week. Caring-relationships last as short or as long as is mutually agreed by the Stephen Minister and the care-receiver.

When I learned SRVUMC was joining with other churches to train new

Stephen Ministers, I asked a former SRVUMC pastor if she thought I might be a good candidate. After an interview, she sent my application in along with her recommendation.

In my training, which consisted of fifty hours of classroom sessions, I met some incredibly loving and caring men and women. The Stephen Ministry program is designed to help human beings like you and me, during hard times. One person walking with another person "just because," offers healing **(continued on next page)**



## SPIRITUAL GROWTH

**(continued from previous page)** from the inside out, heart to heart.

This is a gift of love for which we were trained and commissioned to offer freely, with nothing expected in return. At SRVUMC and in God's greater kingdom here on earth, this is how we care for each other.

If you or someone you know might benefit from such care, please let P. Sam ([syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org)) or Stephen Leader Al Banisch ([albanisch@comcast.net](mailto:albanisch@comcast.net)) know, and they will contact you.

Hope, Love, Joy and Peace to us all,

Lindsay Hiratzka – Stephen Minister at SRVUMC

### God's Love in Action:

Stephen Ministers provide  
one-to-one, confidential  
Christian care to people facing  
a variety of life's challenges



**STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

Contact Pastor Sam [syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org)  
or Al Banisch [abanisch@comcast.net](mailto:abanisch@comcast.net) to learn more

*Christian caring*  
*help - hope - healing*

# BETWEEN THE BOOKENDS.



## GRATITUDE FOR GOOD BOOKS!

**November** is a month in which many wish to express their grateful feelings. It is time to give thanks not only for our families and friends but also for those who protect us in various ways. This year the **U.S. Marine Corps** and the **U.S. Navy** will celebrate 250 years of protecting our great nation. Let us give thanks to our armed forces.

Fly your flag on **Veteran's Day**.

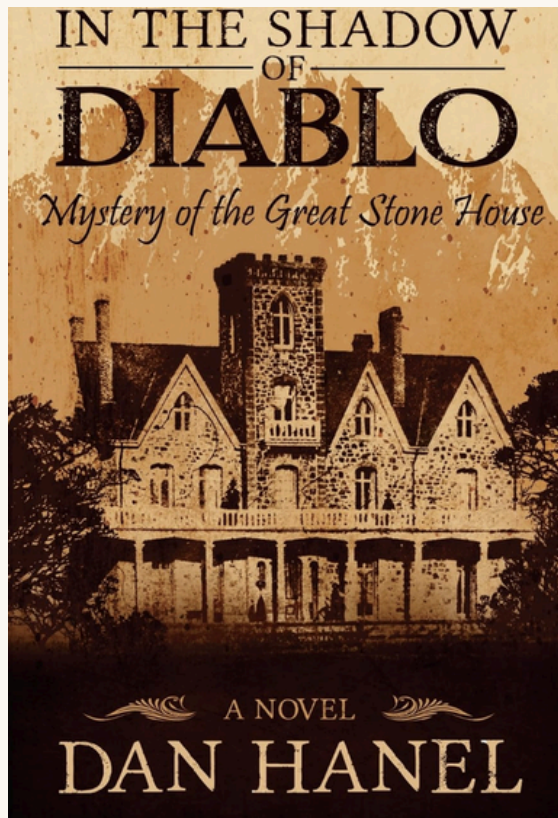
On the cart you will find a book so creatively written in poetic form and illustrated with artists' outstanding works entitled God's Masterpiece by Elizabeth Hasselbeck. This was generously given to our library by Bob and Marla Schleicher. It is a book for our youngsters that needs to be read to them by parents and/or grandparents. This masterpiece will be found on the cart for it to be checked out. PLEASE return it promptly for circulation. It will always then be placed on the cart by the library committee. Be sure to sign and leave the card in the box found on the cart.

For you sleuths, there are many from which to choose. The Woman in the Library is one. There are four young people in the library either writing or reading when they hear a shot from a nearby room. Upon learning that it is a woman who was killed, they decide to solve this mystery.

Happy Reading!

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## SPIRITUAL GROWTH



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### **Hanel, Dan. In the Shadow of Diablo.**

This story is based on the legend of hidden Spanish gold treasure.

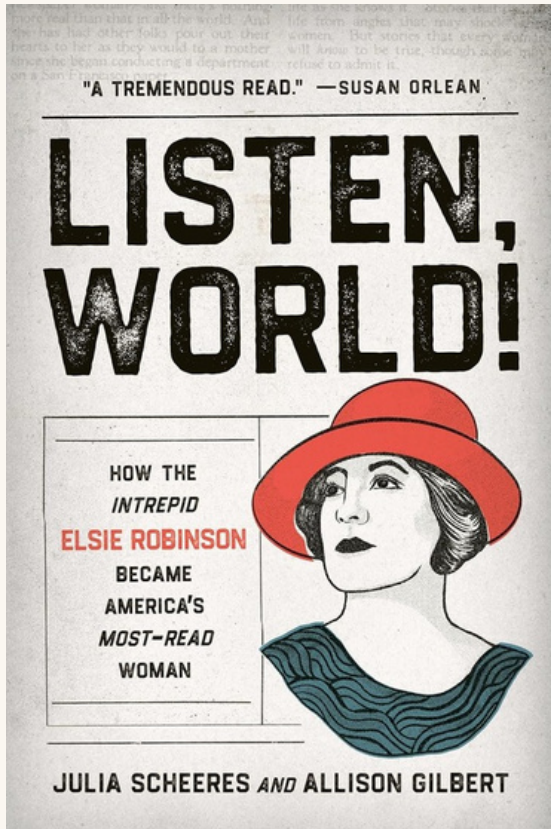
John Marsh, a doctor by trade, made his way from the East to California. The doctor bought cattle and began ranching near Brentwood, or Marsh Creek as it was called. Mr. Marsh and his wife were gifted in multiple languages, particularly Sioux or Dakota. They ministered to and healed the natives on their ranch and were loved by the locals. After Mrs. Marsh's death and Mr. Marsh's murder, the Native Americans left the ranch due to harsh treatment by the vaqueros. Rustlers and bandits have free rein of the area. The sheriff searches for the murderer, but eventually must give up because of his many other duties. However, John Marsh's son continues the search for ten more years, traveling to Mexico to bring the murderer to justice.

This tale switches from the late 1800's to modern times. There was a map in existence that showed where the gold was hidden. A young student was murdered for this map, and the two teachers who knew this first-year high school student wanted to find the map and the gold. It is a wonderful story but five years ago (after this book was published) the legend was exposed as a hoax. Disappointing!

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

# AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP.

FOURTH MONDAY OF THE MONTH AT 1 PM IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY.



## NEXT BOOK SELECTION: LISTEN, WORLD!

In our (combined November/December) meeting on **December 8th**, the book is **Listen World** by Julia Scheeres and Alison Gilbert. This is a biography about a local woman who pushed through limits and expectations and became a syndicated columnist in the 20s and 30s.

Click [here](https://www.amazon.com/Listen-World-Intrepid-Robinson-Most-Read/dp/1541674359) to buy the book or go to <https://www.amazon.com/Listen-World-Intrepid-Robinson-Most-Read/dp/1541674359>.

Contact [Jenny Swanson](mailto:jenny.swanson646@gmail.com) ([jenny.swanson646@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.swanson646@gmail.com)) for more information.

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH



**Don't miss the casual Christmas-themed sit-down lunch with local bookshop, Rakestraw Books!**

### **POTLUCK & PRESENTATION TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 11:45AM, FIRESIDE ROOM**

Due to the special election, we'll be gathering in the Fireside Room this time. As always, we'd love for you to bring a dish to share and join us for a cozy sit-down featuring Rakestraw Books' Christmas Storytelling Through Books. Everyone is welcome—there's always plenty of food, and it's your company we cherish most!



**The annual Thanksgiving/Christmas feast will feature turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and pie!**

### **LUNCH WITH FRIENDS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, NOON, WESLEY CENTER**

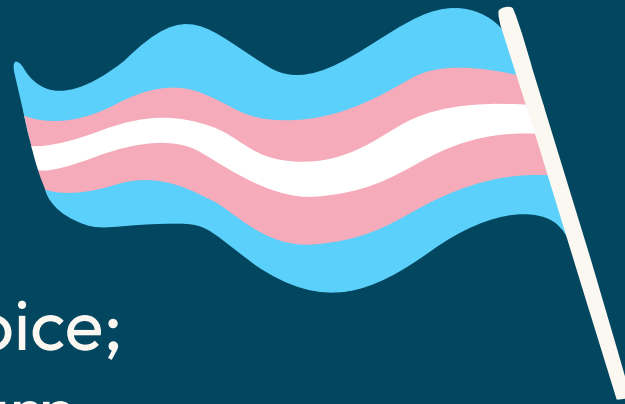
Please join us for our combined Thanksgiving/Christmas Lunch with Friends! All the traditional holiday treats, all homemade. Roasted turkey, bread stuffing, glazed carrots, creamy mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pie for dessert!! All are welcome.

## **DECEMBER SCHEDULE**

Save the date for Saturday, **December 6th, field trip** to see the holiday lights at Filoli and the annual **Women's Christmas Tea** on Saturday, **December 13th**. All other UMEUS events will resume in January 2026.

# TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

November 20



Rejoice with those who rejoice;  
mourn with those who mourn.

Romans 12:15

SRVUMC is a Reconciling Congregation.



OUT INTO THE WORLD

# LOCAL CRISIS CENTER BREAKS NEW GROUND.

By HollyAnn Melton

San Ramon Valley UMC has been supporting Monument Crisis Center for several years. Last year we raised over \$17,000 during our Christmas giving campaign which was matched by an anonymous donor to double the impact!

Thursday October 9<sup>th</sup> was their groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the beginning of their expansion project for their food pantry! Monument Crisis Center continues to serve those in need through a variety of support programs. And they do such a great job of building collaboration and partnerships with organizations across the various sectors.

**HollyAnn Melton and Sylvia Hemmerich pose at the groundbreaking ceremony with staff from Monument Crisis Center.**



OUT INTO THE WORLD

# MINISTRY FAIR.

Last month there was a special Ministry Fair complete with signup sheets and information tables on various committees and ministries. It was the perfect opportunity to get more involved in the church.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who hosted a table and to the volunteers who signed up to be part of the many inspiring ministries that allow SRVUMC to thrive in community.



OUT INTO THE WORLD

# TRUNK OR TREAT.

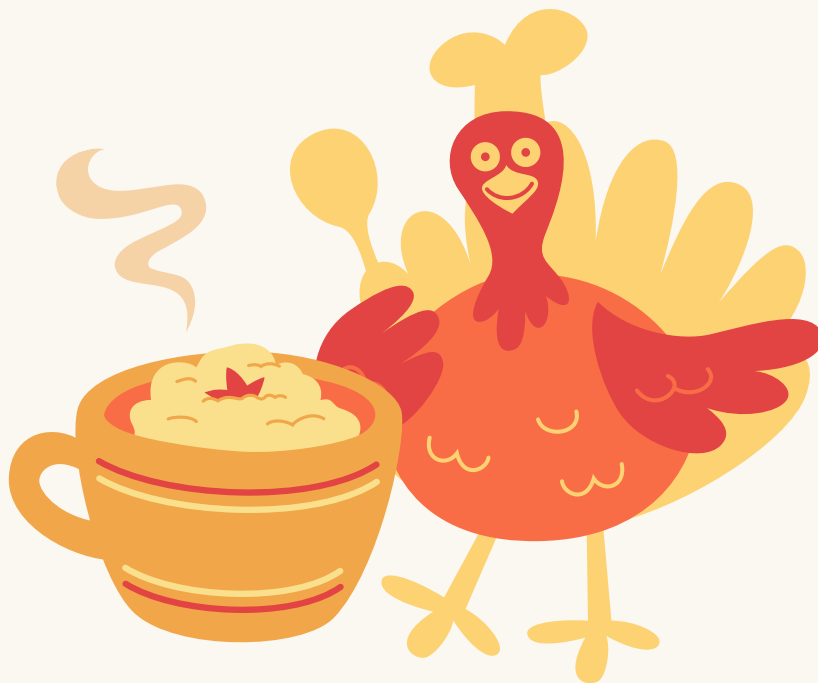
Last month, SRVUMC hosted its annual Trunk or Treat. This fun Halloween outreach event was the perfect opportunity to connect with families in the local community.

Church members decorated their car “trunk” and handed out candy to our visitors and families. As if that weren’t enough, there was also a bouncy house and games for children. Thank you to everyone who brought a trunk. You showed that SRVUMC is a faith community where families thrive.



CELEBRATE

# THANKS GIVING



**NOVEMBER 27**

**GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD,  
FOR HE IS GOOD.  
1 CHRONICLES 16:34**

## PRESCHOOL

# KIDS LOVE PRESCHOOL'S A-PEELING EDUCATION.

Our Preschool recently hosted **Apple Pie Night** for all the children and their families. This is an annual tradition for our preschool that started almost twenty years ago. We've adapted the program as the years have gone by. It begins weeks before as the children explore all sorts of apple activities. There is apple printing, washing, measuring, counting, graphing, sensory exploration and seeing how many "apples tall" the children are. In preparation for Apple Pie Night we had amazing parent volunteers who came to help the children wash, peel and chop apples. It was such fun for the children to use the spiral apple peelers and practice safely chopping the apples! The children worked with our incredible teachers to measure the ingredients for the pie filling as well as the streusel topping.

Apple Pie Night offers our families the opportunity to visit with each other and strengthen the connection between families and teachers. We had such a wonderful evening enjoying apple pie and connecting with one another. We look forward to many more activities that help us create and strengthen the bond with the children

and families in our beloved preschool. We are so fortunate to have such wonderful and engaged families!



# DONATE TO THE COAT DRIVE.

By Karen Hernandez

**Now through December 7**, the youth group is coordinating a coat drive for women and children who are served at Love a Child Missions in Bay Point. Serving the Bay Area since 1984, Love A Child Missions helps unhoused women and children of Contra Costa County by providing emergency shelter, food, clothing, and offering hope through substance recovery programs, job training, educational support, and many other programs.

The coat drive is also a county wide effort through the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County - where youth from several faith traditions, including the San Ramon Valley Islamic Center (of which the confirmation class visited in March), will also collect coats. On December 7, after worship, youth from the Islamic Center will join our youth group for lunch. After, we will all drive to Love a Child in Bay Point and drop off the coats.

**New or gently used women's coats in all sizes, as well as children's coats in all sizes (for boys and girls), are needed and welcomed. Collection boxes are located in the narthex and the entry way in Wesley.**

Please reach out to [Karen Hernandez](mailto:khernandez@srvumc.org) ([khernandez@srvumc.org](mailto:khernandez@srvumc.org)) with any questions and thank you for not only supporting the SRVUMC Youth Group's efforts, but for offering much needed warmth to those who need it, across Contra Costa County.



# SAN RAMON VALLEY CHORALE



## CHRISTMAS WITH THE CHORALE

We invite you to join us!

**December 6 & 7 at 4PM**

SAN RAMON VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
902 DANVILLE BLVD, ALAMO

BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY:  
[SRVCHORALE.COM/CONCERTINFO](http://SRVCHORALE.COM/CONCERTINFO)

# CELEBRATIONS

## BIRTHDAYS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Rob Rudow<br>Connie Winter                                 | 16 Lael Takiguchi   |
| 2 Kathy Hymes  | 17 Jack Robertson   |
| 3 Myla Clark<br>Jo Ann Hirsch<br>John Jancarik               | 18 John Coombs  |
| 4 Jet McWilliams   | 21 Alex Gross<br>Steve Hawk   |
| 5 Gemma Heddle Sepull  | 22 Carolyn Stopper  |
| 7 Joan Morris  | 23 George Clarke<br>Adam Kennedy<br>John Sayers                                 |
| 8 John Byers<br>Jung Park                                    | 25 Jackie Riedel  |
| 9 Lara Mays  | 26 Monica Albertoni<br>Jessica Merchant<br>Rachell Newburn<br>Annemarie Warwick |
| 10 Gay Scott   | 27 Margo Cefalo<br>Michelle Cooke<br>Krystelle Frederick                        |
| 11 Kelton Lowther<br>Mary Nelson <b>(92)</b><br>Bob Sinclair | 29 Paul Kuelz<br>Spencer Lang   |
| 12 Julie Dastic  | 30 Elke Torgersen   |
| 13 Sandy Greenwood-Davidson<br>Dick Lam                      |   |
| 14 Suzan Rowland   |   |
| 15 Barbara Valdriz   |   |

## ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Le Anne & Bart Jacobi **(65)**  
8 Deirdree Walsh-Krumrei & Gary Krumrei  
11 Catharine & Dan Baker  
13 Saba & Shadaab Kanwal  
Tamra & Kevin Keen  
17 Shannon & Bill Dever  
21 Rochelle & Chris Hoff  
Dory & Tom Schramm  
27 Lynne & Larry Henderson **(60)**  
Priscilla & Ted Wolfram



# AMONG OURSELVES.



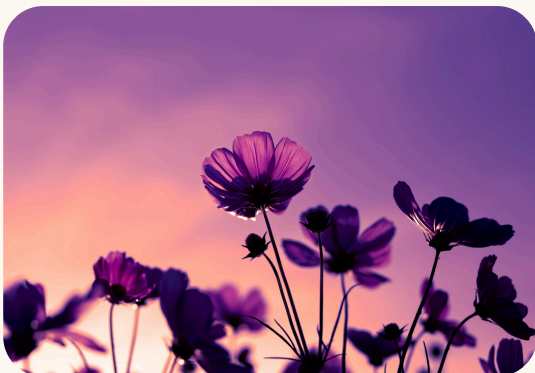
## HEALTH CONCERNS

Kay Jones, Jeff Lang, Mary Nelson, Jo Ann Hirsch, Melanie and Boyd Hasik, Adam Kennedy, Lonnie Bristow, Carol Fhlug, Isabel D'Elia, Andrea Bourgeois, Teri Hawk, Julie Klug's nephew Taylor, Chris Hoff, ClaudeC Johannesen, Shana Carroll, Pastor Sam's parents, Jan Anderson and Bill Sabin.



## CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR

All those who live with long-term illness, those recovering from COVID-19, unemployment, life decisions, homelessness, and sickness in their families.



## OUR SYMPATHY

To the family of Randy Slinger on the passing of his wife, Judy.

To the family of LaVena White on the passing for her husband, Ron.

## NEVER MISS AN ISSUE!

The Valley Messenger is delivered right to your inbox. Stay connected with all things SRVUMC, and read interviews, book reviews, and more.

Check out our website to keep up with church happenings, sign up for upcoming events and groups, and read our newsletter anytime, anywhere.



## OUR TEAM

Pastor Sam Yun: [syun@srvumc.org](mailto:syun@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x108

Patsy Kyles, Executive Assistant to the Pastor: [pkyles@srvumc.org](mailto:pkyles@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x100

Laura Roy, HR / Office Manager: [lroy@srvumc.org](mailto:lroy@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x106

Karen Hernandez, Director of NextGen Ministry: [khernandez@srvumc.org](mailto:khernandez@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x109

Tania Moore-Bolstad, Youth Ministry Coordinator: [tmooore@srvumc.org](mailto:tmooore@srvumc.org)

Priya Gupta, Lead Accountant: [pgupta@srvumc.org](mailto:pgupta@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x105

Michelle Cooke, Accounts Receivable Specialist: [mcooke@srvumc.org](mailto:mcooke@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x102

Susan Madden, Accounts Payable & Payroll Specialist & Facilities Specialist: [smadden@srvumc.org](mailto:smadden@srvumc.org)  
(925) 837-5243 x114

Christine Pezza, Preschool Director: [cpezza@srvumc.org](mailto:cpezza@srvumc.org) (925) 837-5243 x113

Jeffrey Howe, Director of Music Ministry: [jhowe@srvumc.org](mailto:jhowe@srvumc.org)

Katie Hawk, Music Ministry Intern: [khawk@srvumc.org](mailto:khawk@srvumc.org)

Alex Maddux, Communications Intern: [amaddux@srvumc.org](mailto:amaddux@srvumc.org)

Sarah Stribling, Director of Communications: [sstribling@srvumc.org](mailto:sstribling@srvumc.org)



**SAN RAMON VALLEY**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

902 Danville Blvd. Alamo, CA 94507  
Office Hours: Weekdays 9:30AM-3:30PM  
Phone: (925) 837-5243

[srvumc.org](http://srvumc.org)  
[@sanramonvalleyumc](https://www.instagram.com/sanramonvalleyumc)

