



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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HOLY LIVING IN A HURTING WORLD: A NEW & IMPORTANT SERMON SERIES FOR MAY.

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” ~ Matthew 5:14-16

There is something powerful about what happens when the church gathers on Sunday.

We sing. We pray. We hear the Word. We are reminded of who we are and whose we are. Week after week, God meets us here—in worship, in community, in sacred rhythm. And what we do together on Sundays truly matters.

But it was never meant to end there.

From the very beginning, the church has always been a people sent. In fact, the moment that defines the birth of the church—Pentecost Sunday—is not about people staying in one place, but about being filled with the Holy Spirit and sent out into the world with boldness, clarity, and purpose. The Spirit did not come simply to comfort

the gathered—it came to empower the scattered.

That is the heart behind our May sermon series: “Holy Living in a Hurting World: A Deep Dive Into the Social Principles.”

We are living in a time where the gap between belief and action is increasingly visible. The world is asking—sometimes skeptically, sometimes desperately—what difference faith actually makes. And as followers of Christ, we have to wrestle honestly with that question.

Because faith, at its core, is not meant to stay inside the walls of the church.

In the Wesleyan tradition, we have long held together what others have sometimes separated: personal holiness **and** social holiness. John Wesley spoke of “spreading scriptural holiness across the land”—a vision that was never limited to private spirituality, but always extended into public life. Feeding the hungry. Visiting the imprisoned. Advocating for the vulnerable. Challenging injustice. Building communities of compassion and dignity. **(continued on next page)**

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This is not a new idea for us. It is part of our DNA.

And yet, in every generation—including ours—we need to rediscover what it means to live what we believe.

That's where the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church come in. They are not a list of rigid rules or political talking points. Think of them more as a faithful guide—a kind of theological “toolbox”—helping us discern how to follow Jesus in a complex and often hurting world. They speak into real issues: how we care for creation, how we engage economic life, how we uphold human dignity, and how we participate in the public square with integrity and grace.

Simply put: they help us move from conviction to action.

Throughout this series, we won't just be talking about ideas—we'll be exploring a way of life. A way of living that is rooted in God's love and expressed through courage, compassion, and engagement with the world around us.

I'm especially grateful that Lyn Arscott will be partnering with us throughout the month by offering a discussion class following worship each Sunday. This will be a space to go deeper—asking questions, sharing perspectives, and discerning together what it looks like to embody these

principles in our daily lives. Worship forms us, but conversation helps us integrate that formation into action.

Because ultimately, the goal is not just to be a church that gathers well...

...but to be a church that lives well.

A church that carries its faith into workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, and civic life.

A church that refuses to separate what we believe from how we live.

A church that understands that love is not passive—it is active, courageous, and deeply engaged.

In a hurting world, holy living matters more than ever.

My hope and prayer is that this series will not only inspire us—but mobilize us. That we would become a people who don't just talk about justice, compassion, and peace, but who embody them in tangible ways. That the same Spirit who meets us in worship would send us out with purpose.

Because the world doesn't just need more churches.

It needs the Church—alive, Spirit-filled, and moving beyond its walls.

With Great Hope,
P. Sam | syun@srvumc.org

HOLY LIVING IN A HURTING WORLD

A DEEP DIVE INTO THE
UNITED METHODIST SOCIAL PRINCIPLES



www.srvumc.org

Week 1 – May 3, 2026

Title: Living Our Principles: A Faith That Acts

Scriptures: Micah 6:6–8; James 2:14–18

Week 2 – May 10, 2026

Title: The Community of All Creation

Scriptures: Genesis 1:26–31; Romans 8:18–23

Week 3 – May 17, 2026

Title: The Economic Community: Justice That Shares

Scriptures: Amos 5:21–24; Luke 16:19–31

Week 4 – May 24, 2026 (Pentecost Sunday)

Title: The Social Community: Upholding Human Dignity

Scriptures: Galatians 3:26–29; Luke 10:25–37

Week 5 – May 31, 2026

Title: The Political Community: Faithful Citizenship in a Fractured World

Scriptures: Jeremiah 29:4–7; Matthew 5:9–16

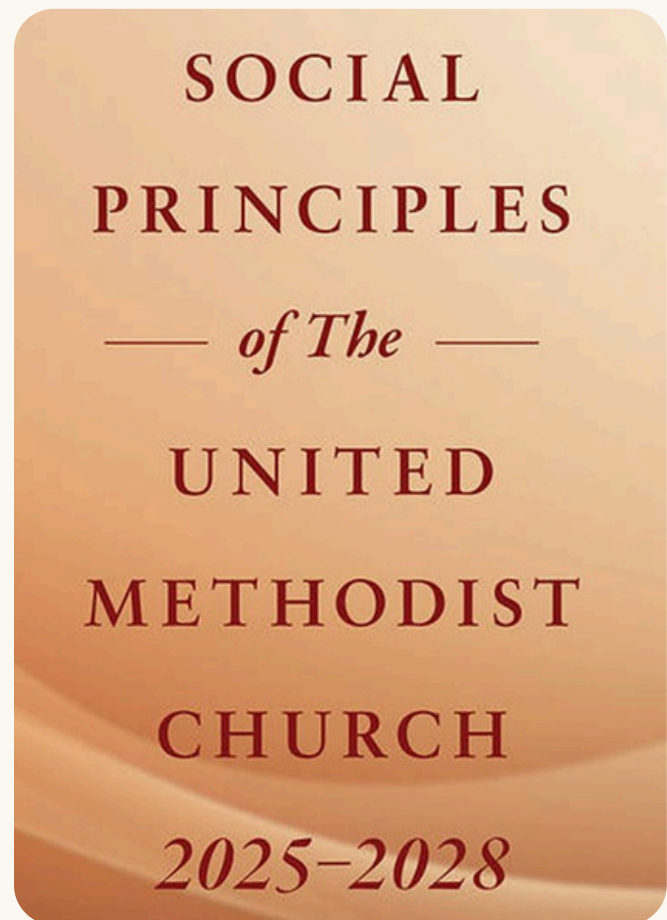
ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF THE METHODIST CHURCH.

By Lyn Arscott

Starting on Sunday, May 3, and continuing for five weeks, Pastor Sam will deliver his message from the pulpit on the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church. In the Fireside Room following the morning service, Lyn Arscott will facilitate a series of discussions to be coordinated with the sermons. All are invited to attend. A summary of the background and general content of the Social Principles can be found in the April edition of the Messenger [here](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/678152ba1c30f0c9b46c9725/69cc81fdd3aa999284d344fe_April%202026%20Newsletter.pdf), (or visit https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/678152ba1c30f0c9b46c9725/69cc81fdd3aa999284d344fe_April%202026%20Newsletter.pdf) and the entire contents can be found [here](https://www.umcjustice.org/documents/124) or at <https://www.umcjustice.org/documents/124>.

There are more than 50 specific topics in the brochure which are too many to cover in a few sessions, so a few key questions have been suggested below to stimulate the discussion. As you read the principles, you may nod in agreement or disagree. The objective is to help us examine our own feelings and to provide us with a means to live out our faith, seek justice, and pursue peace.



The schedule of topics is as follows:

May 3. Introduction to the United Methodist Church Social Principles:

1. Why does the Church need social principles?
2. What has changed in the last 13 years and why?

May 10. Community of All Creation

1. What is **(continued on next page)**

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the current state of damage to the global ecosystem?

2. What should we do to be better stewards of our environment?

May 17. The Economic Community

1. Is globalization good for the US economy?

2. Should we distribute income more equitably?

3. Does the US have a responsibility to help underdeveloped countries?

May 24. The Social Community

1. Why is homosexuality such a divisive issue?

2. To what extent are women still discriminated against in our country?

3. Should the United Methodist Church allow alcohol at church functions?

May 31. The Political Community (Basic Rights and Government responsibilities)

1. What basic human rights are being threatened today? (e.g. free speech, health care.)

2. Should the rules for euthanasia be more lenient?

SAN RAMON VALLEY CHORALE CONCERT ON MAY 2 & 3.

The San Ramon Valley Chorale is delighted to announce its upcoming spring concerts titled "Songs of Love and Loss" on May 2nd and 3rd at 4 PM! The Chorale hopes you will join them for a musical journey sure to invoke cheers and joyful tears. This special concert will feature a world premiere choral work by Allan Pollack. Musical themes include tragedy, triumph, and hope. Musical selections include works by Orff, Rossini, Mechem and more!

Grab your tickets before they sell out [here](#) or visit <https://www.srvchorale.com/>.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE MEN'S BREAKFAST RETURNS MAY 16.

All church members (and their guests) are welcome to attend the Methodist Men's Breakfast in Wesley Center.

Click [here](https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3577478) to register or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3577478>.

The date will be **Saturday, May 16, 9-11 AM**. Enjoy a great breakfast prepared by members of the group. The menu includes 'Truffle White Cheddar Mac', 'Peas and Pearls', 'Turkey sausage', 'King rolls', and a special fruit dessert.

Guest speaker Eric McNamara will speak on the topic of the future of nuclear energy. Love it or hate it, nuclear energy will be vital to our future. Eric McNamara brings deep knowledge and experience to the subject, with seven years experience working with nuclear submarines and 25 years working at Los Alamos National Laboratory managing complex and hazardous operations. His non-political presentation brings insight to the prospects and problems of nuclear energy.

There will be a suggested donation of \$10 a person which will be collected at the event.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOLUNTEER AT WHITE PONY EXPRESS ON MAY 19.

Volunteer to sort food (mostly fruit and vegetables) on **May 19th from 9-11AM** at White Pony Express in Concord.

Meet in the church parking lot at 8:30AM. Please be sure to wear your SRVUMC volunteer shirt if you have one. Learn more about White Pony Express [here](#) or visit <https://whiteponyexpress.org>.

Click [here](#) to sign up on Church Center or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3351298>.



SPECIAL MISSIONS OFFERING: WHITE PONY EXPRESS.

Your Special Mission Offering this quarter will go towards supporting White Pony Express based in Concord, CA. The nonprofit group was founded by Dr. Carol Weyland Conner in 2013 to address the issue of food waste and hunger. White Pony Express' "Food Rescue" program delivers surplus high-quality food to local organizations serving those in need. Annually, the food rescue program rescues an average of 15,000 pounds of high-quality and largely perishable food from grocers, retailers, restaurants and wholesalers. Volunteers sort and deliver nutritious foodstuffs to receiving organizations in refrigerated vehicles the same day. SRVUMC members volunteers at White Pony Express about four times a year.

You can support White Pony Express' important work by donating to SRVUMC's Special Mission Offering fund [here](https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/special-missions-offering) (Learn more about White Pony Express [here](#) or visit <https://whiteponyexpress.org/>.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BALANCE AND MOBILITY CLASS MEETS WEEKLY.

Balance and Mobility class for adults over 55 meets Thursdays from 12-12:45 PM in the Fireside Room.

Move with strength. Age with confidence.

Falls are one of the top reasons older adults land in the emergency department. As a former ER nurse, instructor Teri DeLaMontanya has seen firsthand how often loss of muscle, mobility, and balance are to blame—and how much of it is preventable.

After age 30, we lose up to 5% of muscle mass each decade. That decline affects strength, reaction time, and stability. But it doesn't have to. With focused movement and strength training, you can rebuild muscle, improve coordination, and protect your independence at any age.

This class is designed for adults 55+ and led by Teri—a Registered Nurse, Ironman triathlete, and lifestyle coach with deep medical knowledge and personal experience. Whether you're recovering, maintaining, or building

strength for the future, Teri will meet you where you are.

Join us at San Ramon Valley Methodist Church—a welcoming space where you'll train your body to stay upright, energized, and in motion.

It's never too late to start.

This is a donation based class and is open to the public. Suggested donation is \$15 payable to PEACE (Providing Easier Access to Care Everywhere).

[Click here to sign up or visit https://www.behavioralfitnesstoday.com/schedule/be-fit-classes-and-groups/.](https://www.behavioralfitnesstoday.com/schedule/be-fit-classes-and-groups/)

Contact [Rob Rudow](mailto:robert_d_rudow@yahoo.com), at robert_d_rudow@yahoo.com for more information.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOLUNTEER AT THE FOOD BANK ON JUNE 6.

Our next scheduled shift is June 6th, from 11 AM-1 PM, and we can take eighteen people on this shift. In March we packed thousands of individual packages of fruits and vegetables for needy families, and those who went had a wonderful experience. It's such a meaningful way to contribute to a significant need right now.

Learn more about the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano [here](https://www.foodbankccs.org) or visit <https://www.foodbankccs.org>.

Click [here](https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3466580) to register or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3466580>.



FREE PARKINSONS NETWORK PICKLEBALL CLASS.

Announcing a **FREE pickleball class Thursdays from 1-2:30PM in the Activity Recreation Center (ARC) for people with Parkinson's and early dementia** to exercise and socialize in a healthy, safe, and fun environment. Whether new or experienced, all players are welcome (including accompanying caregivers)!

Instructors and equipment will be provided on site. Come on in and have fun, learn a new sport, and socialize.

For more information, contact [Brad Falk](mailto:bradralfalk@gmail.com) at bradralfalk@gmail.com.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

IN THE PEW: VALERIE WALTJEN.

By Sarah Stribling

Longtime Walnut Creek resident and SRVUMC member Valerie Waltjen enjoys being semi-retired from the financial services industry and works part-time at a local hardware store. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, needlework, sewing, crocheting, gardening, and traveling.

Growing up, Valerie's only exposure to religion was when she spent summers with her Catholic grandparents who rarely attended Mass. Searching for community, Valerie first attended worship at SRVUMC several years ago. The church made a positive first impression on her. She attended worship services for about six months before deciding to join the church in November, 2024.

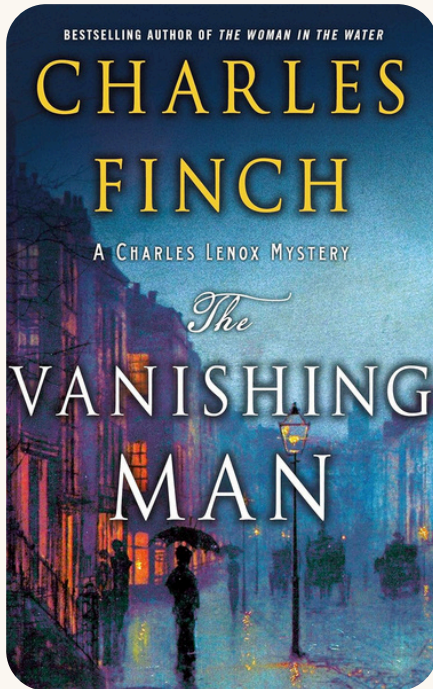
One of SRVUMC's core values in inclusion, a value particularly important to Valerie. Before deciding to join, Valerie researched SRVUMC and discovered that this faith community belongs to the liberal branch of the UMC, perfectly aligning with her own values. She also enjoys Pastor Sam's inspiring messages and the robust music ministry.

Valerie enjoys actively participating in the life of the church. She ushers twice a month on Sunday morning, is a member of the Finance Committee, and has joined Living, Learning, Loving In Faith Together (LIFT), a women's Bible study group. "I have met many great people and I really enjoy the community of the congregation," Valerie states.

Valerie also appreciates SRVUMC's commitment to help heal the world by making an impact on the community at large. "I like all the charity drives we do..." Valerie declares. She looks forward to becoming more involved with the church in the near future.



BETWEEN THE BOOKENDS.



May flowers are blooming everywhere: In household yards, parks and hillsides. Colors of yellow, pink and reddish purple can be seen beside orange poppies scattered here and there. This time of year is beautiful! Also, at this time there are outdoor activities and books on that theme that are found on the book cart. Peruse the baseball books and golfing. Relax and read in the warmth of the day.

Charles Finch is the bestselling author of the Charles Lenox mysteries of which he has written fifteen. His other writings have also received recognition for excellence from the National Book Critics Circle. In [The Vanishing Man](#) the reader will soon agree with his accolades.

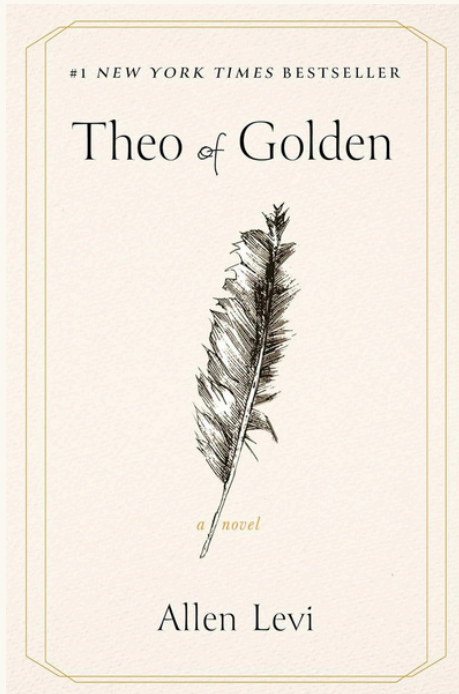
In this novel, Lenox, describes himself as a practicing detective only because he is very interested in this work. He has only investigated a few serious crimes by assisting Scotland Yard. There is no pay. He makes no requests for money. When the Duke of Dorset requests a visit from Charles, he wonders what such a powerful man in England would ask of him. When being escorted to the Duke's study by ward, the duke's prestigious assistant, he learns that a painting has been stolen from this room. It is of his great-grandfather. But there is a painting of Shakespeare there also. Has the wrong painting been taken? The duke thinks yes! When the Duke offers money for Lenox's services to late the portrait, he declines explaining that his services are professional. The Duke then explains that he knew Lenox's father in Parliament, and he had heard that Charles had given assistance to others. The Duke does not want Scotland Yard involved for publicity reasons. The reader will be astonished with these reasons.

As always, Lenox confides in his butler, Graham, who has assisted Lenox in all cases. He often has Graham sit with him at a mealtime where they privately discuss cases. The reader will become aware of their strong bond. Some interesting facts of life in England during the 1850's will be learned. A few are that [Uncle Tom's Cabin](#) was being read, traveling to America was more prevalent, and the reader will find a chuckle or two learning the origin of the "cock-n-bull" story.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP.

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



NEXT BOOK SELECTION: THEO OF GOLDEN.

The **May 18th** (note the new date!) book is Theo of Golden by Allen Levi. Theo shows up in a small town in Georgia. He visits the local coffee shop and begins buying the pencil portraits on the walls. An unusual story of friendship.

Click [here](#) to buy the book or go to <https://www.amazon.com/Theo-Golden-Novel-Allen-Levi/dp/1668236516>.

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



**Listen to your father's
instruction and do not
forsake your mother's
teaching.**

~ Proverbs 1:8



SPIRITUAL GROWTH



Join us for a festive fiesta this May as we celebrate Cinco de Mayo! Bring your favorite Mexican dish!

**POTLUCK & PRESENTATION
TUESDAY, MAY 5TH, 11:45 AM,
FIRESIDE ROOM (NEW LOCATION)**

We're kicking off May with a Cinco de Mayo-themed potluck, so bring your favorite Mexican dish and a big appetite.

We're also thrilled to have Wendy Cooper joining us to share her adventures in Australia and her fascinating insights into the Aboriginal peoples. It's going to be a wonderful mix of great food and great storytelling.



It's nearly the end of the school year and we want to acknowledge Moms, Dads & Grads for all their hard work! Remember to bring a friend!

**LUNCH WITH FRIENDS
TUESDAY, MAY 19TH, NOON,
WESLEY CENTER**

Let's celebrate Moms, Dads & Grads with a cheerful Brunch-for-Lunch spread and refreshing virgin mimosas.

Bring the special people in your life — Moms, Dads, Grads, or anyone who deserves a little extra love this month. The more, the merrier.

OUT INTO THE WORLD

CELEBRATING EASTER.

SRVUMC celebrated Christ's resurrection with three Easter services complete with joy-filled music and an inspiring message of hope by Pastor Sam Yun.

Special thanks to all the volunteers and staff who made Easter Sunday so memorable! From the greeters, ushers, musicians (including the String Alongs, Chancel Choir, and Living Water Band), NextGen team, and A/V volunteers, you helped show that SRVUMC continues to be a welcoming, forward-thinking faith community.



OUT INTO THE WORLD

SRVUMC HOSTS UNHOUSED FAMILIES DURING WINTER NIGHTS!

By Nancy Garnick and Kal Peters

We are now in full swing hosting our unhoused families for Winter Nights. They will be staying in tents in Wesley Center April 27 - May 11. Please do not disturb them unless you are signed up to volunteer with Winter Nights. Of course, a friendly nod or hello is always welcome!

Speaking of volunteers, we are incredibly grateful to those of you who have volunteered with the myriad of tasks we are responsible for - loading and unloading the supply trucks, preparing and serving meals, helping with tutoring and entertaining the kids, grocery shopping, doing laundry, supervising in the kitchen, etc. We couldn't run this program without all your help! And your financial donations are also very much appreciated (click [here](#) to donate or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/winter-nights-shelter>); we supply weekday breakfast and sack lunches out of those funds, along with other supplies we need.

We are so pleased that our church supports this important outreach project that makes a huge difference in the lives of families. Please contact [Nancy Garnick](mailto:nancyogarnick@gmail.com) (nancyogarnick@gmail.com) or [Kal Peters](mailto:kalteters@gmail.com) (kalteters@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping next year (dates TBD)!



CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Catharine Baker
Gary Hansen
Bethany Pavel
- 2 Cheryl Morones
- 3 Bruce Templeton
- 4 Sylvia Benzler
Floy Blair
Mike Prenger
Jim Warnock
- 5 Scott Smallwood
- 8 Jason Doyle
Abby Ten Elshof
Peter Basmajian
- 9 Winnie Stribling
- 10 Barbara Carlson
- 11 Josie Riedel
Kathleen Wood
- 13 Sylvia Hemmerich
Carole Johnson
Jim McKnight
- 14 Saba Kanwal
- 19 Alice Impraim
Marla Nakaso
Ginny Fereira
- 21 Bob Baker
Robert Kelly
- 22 Tamra Keen
- 23 Gary Krumrei
- 26 Norma Jean Bunker
Skip George
- 27 Thomas Valdriz
- 28 Kay Jones (**100**)
Tom Schramm
- 29 Jan Geahry
- 31 Margaret Hansen
Audrey Kennedy

ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 Linda Albertoni Engman & Dave Engman
Bill & Sue Fulcher
- 5 Floy & Jerry Blair (**63**)
- 8 Bob and Marian Marquardt (**61**)
Marty & Jerry Osborn
- 10 Nancy & Steve Garnick
- 14 Angela & Tom Norton (**60**)
- 17 Kim & Dave Bridges
- 21 Debra & Richard Carter
- 22 Lisa & John Jancarik
- 24 Susan Pickering Gest & Steve Gest
Connie & Ray Winter
- 26 Anita Weir & Jim Ball
- 30 Anne & Paul Kuelz
Marilyn & Thomas Mathis



AMONG OURSELVES.



HEALTH CONCERNS

Kay Jones, Jeff Lang, Melanie and Boyd Hasik, Lonnie Bristow, Carol Fhlug, Isabel D'Elia, Julie Klug's nephew Taylor, Gerry Carothers' son Brent, Chris Hoff, ClaudeC Johannesen, Bart Jacobi, Pastor Sam's parents, Bill Sabin, Jim Bunker, Mike Henderson, Leigh Meyering, Steve Garnick, and Margie Durham.



CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR

All those who live with long-term illness, Wendy Chu and her family, those recovering from unemployment, life decisions, homelessness, and sickness in their families, peace in the world, and peace in our country.



OUR SYMPATHY

To Barbara Valdriz and her family on the passing of her father, Douglas.

To Dale Stevenson and his family on the passing of his wife, Susan.

To Lee Rust and her family on the passing of her brother, Joseph.

To Holly Pence, her family and loved ones on the passing of her brother, Jim Ferguson.

To the families, students, and teachers of the students who passed at Ranch Cotate High School in Novato.

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.



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SAN RAMON VALLEY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

