

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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HOW GOES IT WITH OUR CHURCH?

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR STATE OF THE CHURCH TOWN HALL.

On Saturday, June 13, many of us gathered for a meaningful and energizing State of the Church Town Hall. It was a morning filled with worship, reflection, honest conversation—and most importantly, hope.

One of the most powerful moments came during our small group breakout sessions, where we wrestled with a simple but deeply important question: What would you like the legacy of SRVUMC to be beyond your time?

Before anything else, I want to say a heartfelt **thank you** to all who participated. Your voices mattered. Your honesty was refreshing. And your love for this church was unmistakable.

What emerged from those conversations was both encouraging and clarifying.

There is a deep desire for SRVUMC to remain a church that is **relevant to the world around us while remaining rooted in Jesus Christ**. Many of you spoke about the importance of continuing to truly follow the teachings of Jesus—not just in word, but in

action. There is a longing for a church that lives out compassion, justice, and grace in tangible ways.

Again and again, we heard that SRVUMC is—and should continue to be—**a place of belonging**. Several groups described our church as a “big family,” and there is a strong hope that this spirit will not only continue, but grow. At the same time, there was a gentle but important challenge: we can do even better in how we welcome new people, how we notice those who may be drifting away, and how we ensure that no one feels invisible.

Another theme that rose to the surface was the importance of the **next generation**. There was widespread agreement that a strong and vibrant youth and children’s ministry is essential to our future. From reconnecting with college students to strengthening ties with our preschool families, there is a clear sense that investing in young people is not optional—it is central to who we are called to be.

We also heard a strong call to be more **visible and engaged in our community**. (continued on next page)

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This includes everything from improving our social media presence, to participating in local events, to simply sharing our story more boldly with friends and neighbors. One insight captured it well: visibility is not just about promotion—it's about invitation. It's about helping people discover a place where they can belong, grow, and encounter God.

At the same time, there was an honest recognition that the world has changed—and that we must be willing to adapt. One participant shared a powerful image: “We can build a better bridge, but sometimes the river has moved.” That insight speaks to the moment we are in. The question is not whether we change, but how we change faithfully—holding onto our core while being open to new ways of living out our mission.

Care and compassion also emerged as a key part of our hoped-for legacy. There is a desire for SRVUMC to be known as a place that walks alongside people in life's most difficult seasons—offering support for grief, loneliness, caregiving, and even serious medical challenges. In a world where many feel isolated, this kind of ministry is more important than ever.

Perhaps most encouraging of all was the spirit in which these ideas were shared. There was no sense of resignation—only a sense of possibility. Yes, there were honest

acknowledgments of challenges. But even more, there was a deep belief that God is still at work in and through this church.

So what comes next?

In the months ahead, we will begin to take some intentional steps forward—strengthening areas like hospitality, communication, youth ministry, and community engagement. We will also continue to listen, reflect, and discern together. This is not a one-time conversation, but the beginning of an ongoing journey.

We will plan to offer updates along the way, including hopefully a 3-month and 6-month check-in, and a one-year Town Hall next summer where we can celebrate what God has done and look ahead to what is next.

Friends, the question we asked—**What legacy do we hope to leave?**—is ultimately a question about faith.

Do we believe that God is still writing the story of this church?

Based on what I heard on June 13, the answer is a resounding yes.

And that is a beautiful place to begin.

In Joyful and Expectant Ministry With You,

P. Sam | syun@srvumc.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FAITHFUL GIVING, WISE STEWARDSHIP.

We are grateful for every gift our congregation gives to support the mission and ministry of our church. Here are some practical ways to maximize the impact of your giving. With the right approach, the same gift that blesses our church can also reduce your tax burden.

Please speak with an advisor or tax professional to find the approach that best fits your situation.

Ways to Give More Efficiently

1. Give Appreciated Stock or Securities

If you own stocks, mutual funds, or other investments that have grown in value, donating those assets directly to the church is highly tax efficient:

- If you itemize deductions, you receive a charitable deduction for the value of the shares on the date of the gift less a threshold of .05% of your adjusted gross income.
- You pay no capital gains tax on the appreciation — which you would owe if you sold the shares first.
- Our church receives the full value because it is a tax-exempt organization.

Please contact the church office for instructions on how to transfer securities directly to our brokerage account.

2. Give Through a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)

A Donor-Advised Fund is a charitable giving account offered by financial institutions like Fidelity Charitable, Schwab Charitable, or Vanguard Charitable.

- It's best to contribute appreciated assets to your DAF. If you itemize deductions, you receive a charitable deduction for the value of the shares on the date of the gift less a threshold of .05% of your adjusted gross income.
- The funds grow tax-free inside the account.
- You recommend grants to our church (or any qualified charity) on your own schedule.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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A DAF is especially useful if you want to make a larger gift in a high-income year for the tax benefit and prefer to direct the funds to our church over time. You can use a DAF as part of your legacy and estate planning.

3. "Bunch" Your Giving to Maximize Deductions

The federal standard deduction is now \$16,100 for single filers and \$32,200 for married couples filing jointly. Many generous givers no longer itemize deductions — which means their charitable contributions provide no additional tax benefit year to year. A practical solution is "bunching" — concentrating two or three years of giving into a single tax year, so you clear the itemization threshold that year and take the standard deduction in the years in between. If you itemize deductions, you receive a charitable deduction for the value of the shares on the date of the gift less a threshold of .05% of your adjusted gross income.

4. Qualified Charitable Distributions from Your IRA

If you are age 70½ or older and have a Traditional or Inherited IRA, a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is one of the most tax-efficient gifts available to you.

Key benefits:

- You can give up to \$111,000 in 2026 directly from your IRA to our church and other charities.
- The distribution counts toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for the year.
- The amount transferred is excluded from your taxable income entirely, which is more tax efficient than an itemized deduction for most people.
- This benefit is available even if you do not itemize deductions.

Because IRA withdrawals are normally taxed as ordinary income, a QCD effectively allows you to give pre-tax retirement dollars directly to our church. Ask your IRA custodian to transfer funds directly to the church to qualify.

5. Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)

Good for larger gifts of highly appreciated assets:

- Transfer appreciated assets into the trust.
- Trust sells assets with no immediate capital gains tax.
- You (or another beneficiary) receive an income stream for life or a specified number of years.
- Remainder goes to charity at the end of the term or your life. **(continued on next page)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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- You get a partial charitable deduction upfront based on the present value of the remainder.

6. Include our Church in Your Estate Plan

One of the most meaningful gifts a member can make is a planned gift that continues supporting our church's mission for generations. Options include:

- Naming our church as a beneficiary of your IRA or retirement account. These accounts are taxable to individual heirs but pass tax-free to a charity.
- Including our church in your will or living trust
- Naming our church as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy

Our church is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. We provide giving statements in January each year for your tax records.

We are grateful for your partnership in this ministry. Every gift by cash or by stock, through an IRA or a bequest — is an act of worship and an investment in what God is doing through our community.

With gratitude,
Jill Shibuya, Finance Chair | jes3134@gmail.com



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SRVUMC TO MARCH IN LOCAL 4TH OF JULY PARADE.

Several Sunday Night Learning, Living, Loving Together In Faith (LIFT) members, along with Lara Mays, are organizing a presence for SRVUMC in the Danville 4th of July Parade. Our theme is: "We are more than just church on Sundays!"

We plan to have a flatbed truck for members to ride on, along with the possibility of a small band or amplified music. We're also hoping to have two to three representatives from different church groups walking alongside the float. This is a great opportunity to highlight the wide range of programs and ministries our church offers — from ukulele, to pickleball, Stephen Ministers, ARC basketball, Vacation Bible School, Grill & Chill and more!

Fun, themed attire is welcome. Pickleball players in their gear with paddles, Grill & Chill volunteers with a chef hat and spatula, ukulele players playing their ukuleles, VBS and preschool kids walking with adults — anything that brings our ministries to life.

If you, your family, or friends would like to participate, please email Jane VanderWerf at janeyjv1@gmail.com. Let's show up for our country and our church.

SPECIAL MISSIONS OFFERING: RISE AGAINST HUNGER.

Your Special Mission Offering this quarter will go towards supporting Rise Against Hunger. This international humanitarian organization is growing a global movement to end hunger by empowering communities, nourishing lives and responding to emergencies. With locations across the U.S. and five international offices, the organization provides immediate nourishment for those facing hunger today and implements sustainable solutions that will lift entire communities for years to come. Rise Against Hunger has facilitated volunteer meal packaging of more than 540 million meals to be distributed to countries around the world.

You can support Rise Against Hunger's important work by donating to SRVUMC's Special Mission Offering fund here (<https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/giving/to/special-missions-offering>) Learn more about Rise Against Hunger here or visit <https://riseagainsthunger.org>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GRILL AND CHILL RETURNS JULY 16.

Grill and Chill will return this July! We have long enjoyed the tradition of Grill and Chill. It's the perfect chance to 'chill out' and socialize, get well nourished, and of course be entertained.

We'll gather every other Thursday for four events (July 16, July 30, August 13, August 27). The first Grill and Chill of the year will be **July 16 - Cowboy BBQ!**

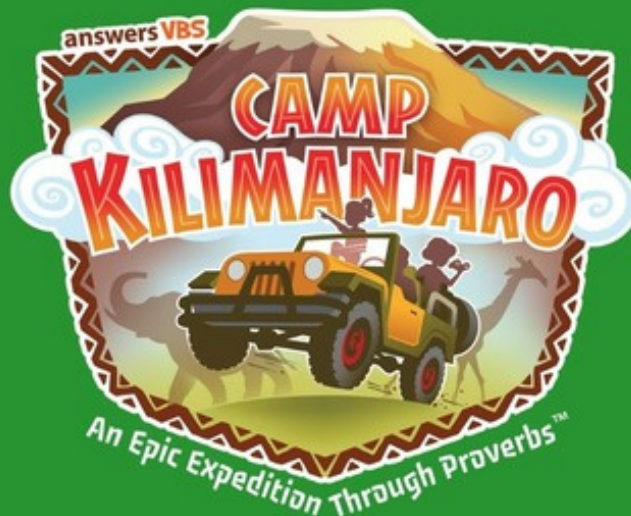
Keep a watch for detailed info, including signups. For more information, please contact [Rob Rees](mailto:robrees145@gmail.com) at robrees145@gmail.com) or [Chris Roesgen](mailto:clroesgen@gmail.com) at clroesgen@gmail.com.



MISSIONARY KATHERINE PARKER TO VISIT SRVUMC IN JULY.

We will be hosting a special gathering for Missionary Katherine Parker on **July 26 at 2 PM in the Fireside Room**. She will be giving us an update on her mission work in Nepal. SRVUMC has supported Katherine in her work. She is a missionary deployed by the General Board of Global Missions. For more info, contact [HollyAnn Melton](mailto:hollyannmelton22@yahoo.com), Chair of Missions Committee at hollyannmelton22@yahoo.com.

Music
Games
Crafts
Lessons
Snacks



For
Children
Ages
Three to
Eleven

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REGISTER FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 20-24.

DATE: July 20-24, 2026

TIME: 9 AM-11:30 AM

Ages: 3 (potty trained) through 11)

Welcome to Camp Kilimanjaro, where you'll have an epic expedition through the book of Proverbs!

Every day, our kids are faced with choices—will they choose wisely or foolishly? As they safari up Mount Kilimanjaro, your trekkers learn that true wisdom comes only from the one true all-wise God, who wants us to be wise! And He's filled the book of Proverbs with wise sayings for us! As they study Proverbs, your hikers will learn to have

- ears that hear and do the Word of God;

- hearts that trust in the Lord;
- tongues that are tame;
- hands that get to work;
- feet that walk with the wise!

Set your compasses for Africa and prepare for an epic expedition at Camp Kilimanjaro VBS!

Cost: \$75 (\$45 for each additional child) Financial Assistance Available.

Register your child now!

Click [here](https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3683791) to register your child or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/3683791>.

For more information, please reach out to Pastor Sam at syun@srvumc.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](https://www.behavioralfitnesstoday.com/schedule/be-fit-classes-and-groups/) to sign up or visit <https://www.behavioralfitnesstoday.com/schedule/be-fit-classes-and-groups/>.

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



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

IN THE PEW: CLAUDIA ARTIGA.

By Sarah Stribling

Dedicated church member Claudia Artiga knows the value of thriving in community. The eldest of five children, she learned how to lead and care for others at an early age. Faith and family have always been important to Claudia. She still maintains close ties with family and friends down south.

When she met her husband Warren twenty years ago, she relocated to the Bay Area. Claudia and Warren discovered SRVUMC online during the Covid lockdowns. The engaging online worship and dedicated support from Stephen Ministry became her lifeline. Returning to church life, Claudia has been blessed with meaningful relationships, unconditional support, and a faith community that aligns with her personal values. SRVUMC played a key role in helping her navigate tough seasons in her life. “I can’t imagine doing life without my church family,” Claudia affirms.

Since joining SRVUMC, Claudia has become very involved in church life. She’s currently part of Stephen Ministry, a lay-led ministry offering

free confidential one-on-one support for people who are hurting and a women’s Bible study group called Learning, Living, Loving In Faith Together (LIFT). More recently, Claudia has been a greeter and helped cook food for Elevated Connection, a regular concert series featuring Christian bands in the Wesley Center. In the future, Claudia looks forward to deepening relationship with the congregation. Having been the recipient of care and spiritual support, she now wants “to be a source of that same comfort and unconditional support for others,” Claudia declares.

**Claudia and her adorable
Fox Red Labrador, Sophie.**



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

BETWEEN THE BOOKENDS.



Happy 4th of July and **Happy 250th Birthday** of our country. Be patriotic! Wear red white and blue. Fly our flag with pride. May we all think about the words in “It’s a Wonderful World” as sung by Louis Armstrong. We have a wonderful country.

On the library cart you will find several books of our country. Our new one The Ride along with Founding Brothers, 1776, One Summer, At Home and Women of the White House. There are several books by Bill Bryson who wrote extensively about our country. One Summer and At Home are two of them.

Please look for these missing books:

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek

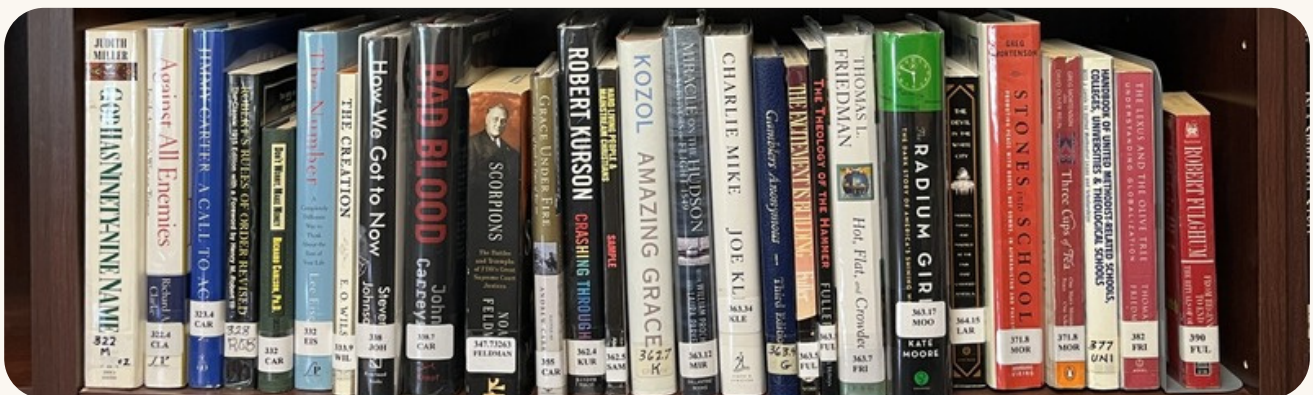
Small Great Things

Ordinary Grace

There are also many books that are late in being returned!! Please do!

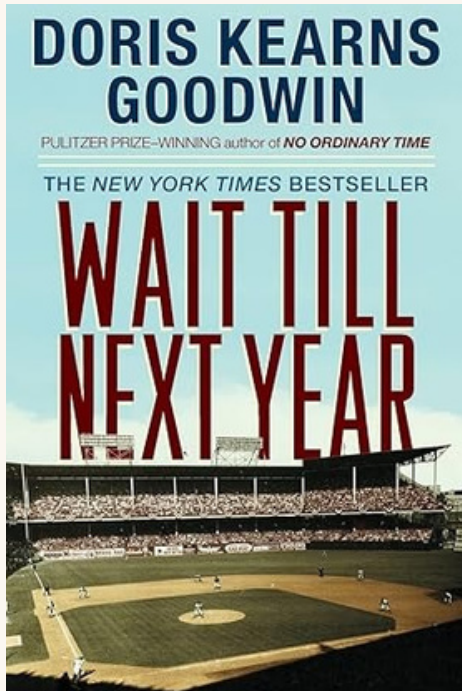
Readers, when you want to return your book, PLEASE put it in the box next to the book cart marked “Return library books here.”

THANK YOU!



AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP.

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



NEXT BOOK SELECTION: WAIT TILL NEXT YEAR.

July 27 we will meet to discuss Wait Till Next Year by Doris Kearns Goodwin. It is a memoir about growing up in New York City during the 50's, being Catholic, ball games, and the Cold War.

Click [here](#) to buy the book or go to <https://www.amazon.com/Wait-Till-Next-Year-Memoir/dp/0684847957>.

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



SPIRITUAL GROWTH



Our Celebrate Americana luncheon was the perfect way to ease into the Fourth of July season. We had a full house, and the room buzzed with conversation and laughter.



Guest chef Paul Kuelz's menu did not disappoint. His famous baby back ribs were the star of the table. It was classic comfort food, and everyone enjoyed every bite.

AUGUST SCHEDULE

Mark your calendar for Potluck and Presentation August 4th and Lunch with Friends end of summer BBQ on August 18th!

POTLUCK & PRESENTATION TUESDAY, JULY 7TH, 11:45AM, WESLEY CENTER

Join us for a meaningful Potluck & Presentation featuring our very own Jane VanderWerf, who works in therapeutic equine (horse) programs that have touched lives across our community. Jane has supported veterans, cancer patients, and youth campers from Monument Crisis Center—an effort that began after she volunteered there with SRVUMC. Her heart for service and healing shines through the stories she'll share.

GIANTS FIELD TRIP WEDNESDAY, JULY 8TH GAME TIME: 12:45PM

We'll meet at the church at 10:00 AM for ticket distribution and to organize the caravan for anyone who would like to take the ferry. Pre-purchase your tickets [here](https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/signups/3626103) (or visit <https://srvumc.churchcenter.com/registrations/signups/3626103>) - while supplies last.

Our third Tuesday of the month Lunch with Friends, is cancelled due to Vacation Bible School.



UMeUs
YOU/ME/US

BASEBALL

Field Trip

Cost
\$52*

Wednesday,
8
July

SF *Giants*

VS

Blue Jays

ORACLE STADIUM

24 Willie Mays Plaza, San Francisco

GAME TIME 12:45 PM

Register and Pay on Church Center



***Transportation Cost Not Included with Price of Ticket**

OUT INTO THE WORLD

MISSIONS COMMITTEE DELIVERS FOOD WEEKLY.

Dear Church Family,

Every Thursday your Missions Committee picks up over 200 pounds of donated food from San Ramon and Danville McDonald's and delivers it to White Pony Express for redistribution to many locations in Contra Costa County. This is all part of their Ambassador Program which you heard about at a recent Sunday worship service.

Do you have a car and two hours per month to volunteer? You can join this program too. For more information contact Jerry Ricker (jerryricker19@gmail.com) or Mandy Nakaya (925) 818-6361 (or email Info@WhitePonyExpress.org) at White Pony Express for more information about how you can join in and fight hunger right here at home.

Jerry Ricker



OUT INTO THE WORLD

ELEVATED CONNECTION CONCERT.

June's Elevated Connection featured the energetic sounds of the Here and Now Band! Featuring the talents of Director of Music and Worship Jeff Howe and Dewey Reikofski, the concert explored the evolution of praise music. Jeremiah, our Director of A/V, deejayed the event. The goal of the series is to bring new people into the church while showcasing SRVUMC's community.

Special thanks to all the volunteers who cooked, cleaned, set up equipment, and turned out for this inspiring concert!



OUT INTO THE WORLD

STATE OF THE CHURCH TOWN HALL.

The State of the Church Town Hall this past June provided an opportunity to celebrate SRVUMC's many years of ministry and discern where God may be leading the church in the future. It was inspiring to hear what drew longtime church members as well as newer members to SRVUMC. As we continue to live into God's bold vision for the church, we remember that the best is yet to come!

Thank you to everyone who shared and told their story. Special thanks to the lay leaders and committee chairs for their presentations.



CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Don Field
- 6 Xan Alexander
- 7 Brenda Domergue
Fred Toney
- 9 Caroline Gross
- 10 Shannon Dever
Kate Baker
Alex Baker
Vin Hirsch **(98)**
Kathy Kennedy
- 11 Marti Starnes
- 12 Linda Ashcraft
- 15 Briggs Wood
- 16 Melissa Stroin
- 17 Steve McAdams
Caroline Walsh
Amy Riedel
- 19 Judy Baker
Steve Osborn
- 20 John Hemmerich
- 21 Carol Fhlug
Harry Hanover **(99)**
Ginger McGuffin
Bill Rust
- 25 Rich Lowther
- 26 Bill Sabin **(99)**
Brian Thiessen
- 27 Langley Choy
Jerry Ricker
- 30 Randy Slinger
- 31 Gail Soldavini

ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Bonnie & Brian Roberts **(60)**
- 5 Carol & John Sayers **(63)**
- 6 Kathleen & Kevin Isbell
- 7 Teresa Fimby-Christensen & Randy Christensen
Suzanne & Jerry Ricker
- 8 Pam & Alan Christian
Jane & John VanderWerf
- 9 Linda & Curtis Jimerson
- 12 Helen & Bob Sinclair **(67)**
- 16 Rebecca & Roger Ten Elshof
- 17 Trudy & Larry Pasquale
- 19 Kim Maddux-Perry & Eric Perry
- 20 Katy & Gregg Mannell
- 21 Tim & Megan Buckley
Nancy & John Harrison
- 23 Marianne & Bruce Templeton
- 28 Beverly & Steve McAdams
- 31 Marci & Kelly Milligan



AMONG OURSELVES.



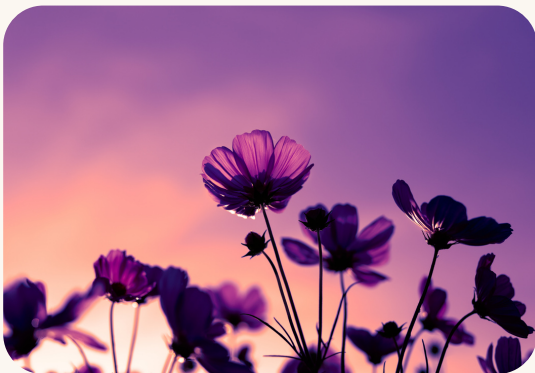
HEALTH CONCERNS

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



CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR

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



OUR SYMPATHY

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

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

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Sarah Stribling, Director of Communications: sstribling@srvumc.org



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