



The Valley Messenger

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

DECEMBER 2015

A Parsonal Point of View ~

Tempest in a Coffee Cup

As you are quite aware, Starbucks has been in the news lately. The company's choice to serve their coffee in bright red, unadorned cups has provoked outrage in some circles and even the call for a boycott. It seems that some are offended that Starbucks has chosen to forgo any symbols of the Christmas season on their coffee cups. It is the feeling of those offended that the company is perpetuating the cultural shift away from the celebration of Christmas as a specifically Christian holiday. They are determined to "keep Christ in Christmas" as the age old mantra goes and they feel that the best way that they can do this is to publically challenge the Starbucks decision.

With all due respect, I would like to ask, "Is it really?" Is it really the best way to "keep Christ in Christmas" by insisting that the season be celebrated with vivid Christian symbols imprinted upon coffee cups? Or, is it possible that there might be another way of making sure that the "reason for the season" is lifted up and celebrated appropriately?

I have, you see, the strong hunch that if Jesus were to happen to meet his disciples for coffee at the local Starbucks in Nazareth, he would not likely be offended by the bright red cups in which the coffee was served. I doubt that he would take issue with fact that there were no symbols of wise men or mangers or angelic hosts. And I sincerely doubt that he would decry the growing "secularization" of the Christmas season. With the momentum already building for another huge Black Friday orgy of consumerism, I think it is readily apparent that secularization of the season is already an established fact. It is, after all, good for the economy!

My guess is that Jesus would be offended, but not over the creation of a plain red cup. I think, instead, that Jesus would be offended by the idea that protests and boycotts over coffee cups are the best way to ensure that the celebration of his birth is properly recognized. I tend to believe that he would ask if there isn't another way—a better way—that we might find to invest our time and effort in proclaiming our joy to the world.

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Next Issue: January 2016

Have something you'd like included in next month's Messenger? Please submit your articles to: [Lisa Jancarik newsletter@srvumc.org](mailto:Lisa.Jancarik@newsletter@srvumc.org) by December 10, 2015

Header image: Detail of Adoration of the Magi, designed by Edward Burne Jones, details by William Morris and John Henry Dearle. 1888.

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It's possible that I'm wrong, but I believe that Jesus would likely suggest that the best way to "keep Christ in Christmas" is to make the simple choice to be Christ to others—to listen to their struggles, to help heal their hurt, to strengthen them in their hope. I believe that the best way to truly celebrate the season and its intent is to choose to love and serve those who have been pushed to the margins, those who have been overlooked and forgotten, those who simply wonder if there is anyone who cares.

It was St. Francis who once admonished his fellow disciples to "preach the gospel at all times and when necessary, use words." St. Francis, I think, had it right. He understood that the gospel's true impact will be made not so much through words that are spoken, but through actions that are taken. When push comes to serve, we discover that we are aligning ourselves with a timeless message of the One who came into the world as a light in the darkness—a light that the darkness has not overcome.

As we move into this Advent season, I invite you to "keep Christ in Christmas" in the choice you make to be Christ to others. It is, I believe, as simple as that. As for this present controversy and the passion it has generated, I believe that it is really nothing more than a tempest in a coffee cup.

Grace & Peace.

Ron

Our Annual Angel Tree Program

Sunday, November 15 thru Sunday, December 6

Christmas trees will be decorated in the **Narthex and Wesley Center** with gift requests for you to choose from. Each card's request has been given to us by one of the six agencies our church will be helping this year. Although it may seem early to be undertaking this project, the shopping and distribution must be done by early December so gifts can be distributed in a timely manner.

This Christmas program has been a very successful outreach mission project for many years. The six agencies our church will be assisting this year are:

- STAND! For Families Free of Violence
- Bay Area Rescue Mission
- Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Family Services
- East Salinas Family Center and Life Program
- Mt Diablo Unified School District Outreach
- Fred Finch Youth Center



Members from the Mission and Angel Tree Committees visited each agency and witnessed the need for our continued support, assistance and involvement with them. Thank you for keeping the Angel Tree needs in mind as you plan for Christmas this year. **For questions contact: Marla Schleicher, Linda Green, or Beth McClelland**

The Signs of the Times: The Season of Advent 2015

Advent is a season of signs — signs of light and hope, signs of darkness and fear. Several of the lectionary readings for Advent are grounded in the frightful images and signs that accompany the ending of one age and the hopeful images and signs that will usher in the age to come — the age of God’s reign of love, justice and mercy.

While this is a season that leads us to the light that came into the world in the birth of a baby, the path that it takes is one that is sometimes enshrouded in the deep darkness of a world that is consumed by its fear. One look at the news headlines of recent weeks provides all the evidence that is needed to suggest that these forces of darkness are real and formidable.

It is against this backdrop of hope mixed with fear that we will consider the signs of the times that we presently experience. Using the familiar themes of the Advent candle lighting ritual, we will be considering the importance of hope, the possibility

Advent Scripture Readings for 2015					
<u>First Sunday of Advent</u>	11 / 29 / 15	Jeremiah 33:14-16	Psalms 25:1-10	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36
<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u>	12 / 6 / 15	Baruch 5:1-9	Luke 1:68-79	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
		Malachi 3:1-4			
<u>Third Sunday of Advent</u>	12 / 13 / 15	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Isaiah 12:2-6	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
<u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u>	12 / 20 / 15	Micah 5:2-5a	Luke 1:47-55	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

of peace, our need for joy and the power of love. Each of these four “signs of the times” will be supported by the texts of our lectionary Advent readings. They are as follows:

You are invited to make these readings a part of your Advent preparation. You will have the opportunity to discuss these texts and their meaning in various small group settings — include our Adult Education offerings on Sunday morning at both 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. If you have questions about these opportunities, please call either Pastor Sunny Ahn or Pastor Ron Dunn.



December 13, 2015 at 4 p.m.

Features music from:

- Chancel Choir
- Living Water Ensemble
- Cherub & Archangel Choirs
- Youth Choir
- Handbell Choirs
- Nadia Blank
- New Chamber Singers

There will also be cookie reception following the concert and donations are welcome.

December Communion Offering

World AIDS Day for UMCOR

Each year, the United Methodist Church observes World AIDS Day on December 1. This year, our December communion offering will support the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) in its “Just Save One” initiative, an effort spearheaded by United Methodist Global AIDS Fund (UMGAF) to eradicate HIV by 2020. In particular, this work seeks to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus.



According to website www.AIDS.gov, 35 million people presently live with AIDS or HIV as of WHO’s 2013 figures. The majority of these people live in poverty, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa – home to 71% of the world’s infected population, as of the 2013 data. In the world, 3.2 million children acquired the virus during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

According to the project literature on the UMCOR website, UMGAF has reached more than 35 nations with over 200 programs. UMGAF programs support prevention, advocacy, testing and counseling for people living with HIV and AIDS. Contributions from United Methodist congregations in the U.S. see 25% of those contributions remain in the Annual Conference.

Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Families (BAAYFS)

This worthy organization provides residential, educational and support services for children and teens removed from lives of abuse and neglect. While both boys and girls find foster families through this agency, adolescent girls have access to residential programs based in Pittsburg and Concord.

BAAYFS board president Patrick Davis founded this organization in 2002. Some of you will remember him when he taught Bible study classes at SRVUMC and when his wife, Dawn Boyd, worked at this church.

BAAYFS seeks to shepherd the children it serves into caring living situations, regular public school attendance, and the development of life skills for integration into their communities. BAAYFS also facilitates enrollment in sports teams, music and art programs for youth who want to join in those activities. On-site mental health and social work also facilitate these goals for kids who can benefit from them.

Our communion offering supports ongoing needs at BAAYFS include hygiene products, bed linens, paper goods for kitchen and bath, as well as video and board games or movie passes. If you are inspired to give of your time, BAAYFS welcomes volunteer mentors and tutors.

Youth Homes, Inc.

Based in Pleasanton, CA, Youth Homes, Inc. helped over 600 area foster children and families in 2014. Youth Homes houses and supports children removed by the court system from abuse and neglect. Most of these children are between 12 and 17 years old, although Youth Homes has placed children as young as six in their residential programs. The kids they serve may be housed in either of two Crisis Assessment homes, either of two Intensive Residential homes, or placed with private foster families.

Founded in 1965, this organization is the oldest continually operating children’s residential program in Contra Costa County. Much of their funding comes from state and local government agencies, but 13% comes from private donations like our December communion offering. Of this money, 79% is spent directly on programs supporting the children they serve.

Upcoming Mission Opportunities

MISSION & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Habitat for Humanity Restore in Concord:** Contact Alice Impraim, 925-389-3185 or aliceimpraim@yahoo.com
- **Habitat For Humanity - El Salvador:** Work side by side with partner families and friends from Habitat East Bay/Silicon Valley and Habitat El Salvador. February 27 to March 6, 2016 (9 days). Trip cost is \$1,630 and approximately \$600 in airfare. Contact Tori at (510) 803-3375 or TBommarito@HabitatEBSV.org

Ongoing:

- **Food Bank** food barrels located in the narthex and Wesley Center
- **The Souper Center**, 3rd Thursdays, 10:20 to 1:30 p.m. Contact Lee Rust, 925-820-9047 or chijocol@aol.com

Food for Thought (Trinity Center), Friday mornings around 8:00 a.m. to prepare and deliver a meal for the homeless at Trinity Center in Walnut Creek and discuss biblical topics.

Winter Nights Shelter Coming to SRVUMC

Want to do something really amazing? Make a real difference in the lives of some great kids? Give your family an experience they will never forget? Join us in hosting homeless families in Wesley Center the first two weeks in February.

Several homeless families will live in Wesley Center. They will pitch tents in the multi-purpose room. We will prepare and have meals with them, and help the kids with their homework. Our kids will play with their kids. We will watch movies and eat popcorn on the weekends. We will learn about real life and they will learn about Christian love.

This might very well be the best thing you ever did. We have opportunities in meal preparation, tutoring, child activities, and overnights hosts.

Email Bob Baker at RBaker3600@aol.com if you are interested. This is a really great activity for families.



Christmas 2015 Communion Offering

In celebration of Christmas, we share our Communion offering with many of our most familiar organizations. Some, like Winter Nights Family Shelter are at work right here, within our own church. Others reach elsewhere within Contra Costa County, around the Bay Area, nationally, or even internationally.



Christmas Eve Communion

- **Winter Nights Family Shelter**, which SRVUMC will host the first two weeks of February this year – churches throughout Contra Costa County take turns hosting homeless families from October to May each year. Several homeless families will pitch tents in the multi-purpose room of the Wesley Center during our congregation's turn to host. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information about this program through the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County.
- **Food for Thought** at the Trinity Center, which provides meals, shower, laundry facilities and support services for the homeless and working poor of Contra Costa County. SRVUMC members gather each Friday morning in the Wesley Center to prepare and deliver a hot lunch for those served by Trinity Center.
- **Open Heart Kitchen** at Asbury UMC, which has offered nutritious meals free of charge to anyone who needs them in the Tri-Valley since 1995.
- **Bay Area Rescue Mission**, which recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary of assisting the homeless and hungry in the region. BARM ministers to men, women and children. Since their founding in 1965, they have served over 20,000,000 meals and offered 4,000,000 bed-nights of shelter. The broad scope of their mission includes adult education and mobile outreach.
- **Shelter, Inc.** owns or master leases 250 properties throughout Contra Costa County that provide affordable housing for families. This organization also provides intensive case management to help participating veteran families increase their ability to sustain permanent housing.
- **UMCOR National Relief** which responds to disaster within the United States with trained volunteers, financial assistance, disaster-response expertise, and networking with other relief organizations.
- **UMCOR International Relief** is the primary channel for United Methodist efforts to ease suffering abroad. A key part of this organization is its Disaster Risk Reduction program, which addresses issues including (but not limited to) community health, water and sanitation.
- **Global Ministries Missionary Support** work in places like Nepal, Zimbabwe and Macedonia by Katherine Parker, Larry and Jane Kies, as well as work begun by Carol Partridge.

We honor the gift of Christ to the entire world by sharing our offering with organizations that reach worldwide and here at home.

Season's Greetings from the United Methodist Preschool Director,

Paulette Ove

This fall begins my third year as UMP Preschool Director. I could not be more pleased with the way the school has evolved. From staffing to technology, school programming (Christian Education and Enrichment classes) to student enrollment, we have experienced growth in all areas.

Last year we joined the 21st century by piloting *Procare*, a Child Care Management software to help manage Preschool Finances and Family and Student data. Like with anything new, there was a learning curve to integrate *Procare* into our "business as usual". We made it with the generous help and support of Jean Desmond and Rhonda Poole. Thank you both for the many hours of time you gave to help automate Preschool finances.

Please take a peek at the Preschool's website. It has gone from being a static and dull site to being a vibrant and ever-changing one; www.unitedmethodistpreschool.org. Parents can even log-in and browse classroom photos of their child at play.

The 2015-2016 school year started with a BANG! The Department of Social Services, *Community Care Licensing*, paid UMP a random visit and conducted a comprehensive site inspection. No stone was left unturned; staff and student files were reviewed, classrooms inspected, and playground scrutinized for violations. We passed with flying colors! During their visit, *Licensing* re-measured the main preschool classrooms and determined UMP was eligible for an Increase in License Capacity. We were thrilled to be granted additional preschool spaces and hope to be able to accommodate all families' requests for Preschool in the 2016-2017 school year.

The holiday season is well underway after the annual "Apple Pie Night" in October where upwards of 200 children and family members gathered to enjoy student-made apple pie and ice cream. The fun continued with the *Halloween Parade and Brown Bag Lunch*. We were thrilled to be joined by the church's **Adventuresome Seniors** group, led by Mary Jane Hodges. We send a warm thanks to the *Adventuresome Seniors* who decorated tables, made darling goodie bags, provided juice and cookies, and to those who read spooky stories to the preschoolers. Everyone had a "spooktacular" time and loved this intergenerational gathering. Mary Jane and I will create more opportunities for intergenerational connection when we roll out a "Grandparents Reading Program" in January. *Adventuresome Seniors* will be coming to the preschool to read to our little ones.

The talented teaching staff is looking forward to helping our preschoolers learn about Thanksgiving, being thankful and sharing in a Pumpkin Pie Feast. We will start rehearsals this week for the Preschool's first *Christmas Pageant* as a way to help our children understand the "true" meaning of Christmas. Our performance will be Thursday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m.

The teachers and staff at UMP would like to wish you and your family a Happy and Safe Holiday Season and a New Year full of Fun and Learning! — **Paulette Ove, 925-837-2788**

Can You Donate Food on Christmas Eve?

Our dedicated staff and musicians would very much appreciate your food donations on Christmas Eve to help keep them going until midnight!



Fruit, cheese, light finger foods and juice may be brought to the Conference Room by 9:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

Volunteer at Trinity Center's Winter Shelter for Singles on Sundays

Required training session on **December 2, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** (or alternative date and time TBD) at **St. Paul's Episcopal Church's Parish Hall, 1924 Trinity Avenue, Walnut Creek**. The Shelter will be in the Walnut Creek Armory, behind Civic park on Carmel Street with check-in at Trinity Center. Sign up at the table outside the Sanctuary or email Laura Sanchez at Laura3627@gmail.com.

SRVUMC United Methodist Men's Annual Christmas Breakfast-Brunch

All church, Ladies and Friends Invited

December 19, 2015 at 9 a.m., Wesley Center



Featuring:

- Great breakfast
- Pictures with Santa Claus
- Flowers for the ladies

...And come to listen to "The New Group" Christmas Musical and Annual Christmas Carol Sing-a-long

Reservations required! Tickets go on sale in the Wesley Center beginning November 29, 2015.

Adults \$15.00, Children under 12 \$5.00

Proceeds go to the SRVUMC programs and ministries.

Contact **Dean Williams** with questions at OSI310@AOL.COM or call 925-837-0971.



FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS 2015

Please designate:

_____ In honor of _____ In memory of (check one)

Name of person/s designated

I/We attach a donation of \$10.00 for the purchase of a plant. _____

(Checks payable to SRVUMC are due by Monday, Dec. 7, in the Church office)

Donor's Name _____

Phone _____

Flowers purchased this year will go to shut-ins. **If you would like to take your poinsettia home you must wait until after the 11:00 Christmas Eve service so that everyone can enjoy the full beauty of all the flowers.** Any funds not specifically needed for Christmas will be placed in the Flower Fund.

I can help deliver plants to shut-ins Dec. 26 _____



HOMES FOR ALL: WHAT CAN WE DO?

Can you help? Here's how: Become a Landlord Become a Rent Subsidizer

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Subway Lunch

FIRESIDE ROOM

In several gatherings of SRVUMC members in the past several months, we have come up with a number of possible ways our Congregation might do something about the need for more homes ALL can afford in our county. Now, through the focus of the Multi-Faith ACTION Coalition and our county, two of those ways that **we thought of** have become specific actions which some members of our church, along with members of other congregations in our area, may be able to help with. We need to find enough homes for ALL of the Winter Nights families, homeless veterans, singles and members of our own church who cannot afford market-rate rent.

Learn more!

Please contact **Laura Sanchez** to **RSVP** in person or Laura3627@gmail.com, (925) 946-1620 or the Church Office (925) 837-5243.



Christmas Tea Invitation

All Women of the Church

Are Invited

ALL-CHURCH WOMENS' TEA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2015

WESLEY CENTER

1:00 TO 3:00 p.m.



Carole Smith, solo hand bell ringer, will perform.

Please bring a plate of finger food to share.

The Trinity Center

Needs Big Ticket Donations

for Its 2nd Annual

Gala Dinner and Auction on May 18, 2016

Items you might consider donating:

- Rentals in Hawaii, Tahoe, or other fun places
- High-end wine or jewelry
- Dinner parties for 10-12 guests
- Trips with air mileage included

Contact **Shirley Stephenson**, 925-820-0513, shirley-annsteph@comcast.net, or **Marla Schleicher**, 925-648-0517, marla.k.sch@gmail.com to donate.

Trinity Center located in Walnut Creek cares for the homeless and working poor with compassion. Open five days a week, Trinity Center offers breakfast and a hot lunch, laundry and shower facilities, mail service, access to telephone and computers, referral services, and employment and housing assistance.



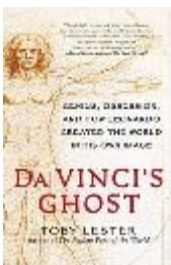
Between the Bookends



By Sally Christopherson, Librarian

Have you ever heard the expression “escape reading”? I think it means light or frivolous reading, and I’ve never cared for that expression. People escape from the police or escape from prison or escape a bad or terrifying experience! I read to meet someone funny or wise or memorable or even unbearable. I read to travel to a place I’ve never been — or maybe a place I have been or even a place that doesn’t exist...but what if it did? Some of my most memorable books have been those that forced me to stifle out-loud laughter in a doctor’s waiting room, or hide my tears on an airplane. So the next time you’re traipsing across Australia with Bill Bryson or swallowing hard as you meet the devil in the White City or feeling what Louisa Clark felt as she sat by Will Traynor’s bedside, realize you are NOT escaping. You have the privilege of standing for a short time in someone else’s shoes and sharing feelings with some unforgettable fellow travelers in this life of ours.

Here’s what’s new on our book cart:



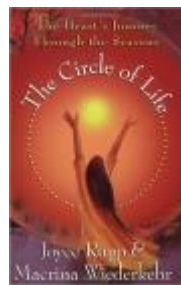
Lester, Toby. *Da Vinci's Ghost; Genius, Obsession, and How Leonardo Created the World in His Own Image.*

Leonardo created probably the most famous and recognized drawing in the world — that of the Vitruvian Man. It’s that man standing in a circle and a square with his arms outstretched and touching all the sides. Did you realize he has four arms and four legs? Only Leonardo could make that work and that’s only a small fraction of his genius as he painted, sculpted, invented, and created the science of anatomy. Thank you to Lisa Jancarik for an eye-opening account of a master.

Moyes, Jojo. *One Plus One.* This British author has been adopted by Americans — and much of the world — for her way of writing stories that stay with us. Her

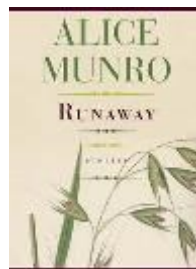


memorable *Me Before You* is now followed by something very different. This story of a broke single mom, her goth stepson, math whiz daughter and the geeky technology genius up on charges of insider trading who comes to their aid is warm, funny and hard to put down.



Rupp, Joyce. *The Circle of Life; the Heart's Journey through the Seasons.*

Joyce Rupp’s books are among the most heavily checked-out in our Library. In this gem, she connects the seasons of earth with the seasons in our lives, again using poems, prayers and meditations. As we pass from autumn to the coming winter, it’s especially apt. Many thanks to Nancy Garnick.



Munro, Alice. *Runaway; Stories.*

Think you don’t have time to get engrossed in a whole novel? What about short stories? They are short and punchy and give a big return on little time spent. Alice Munro frequently writes for the New Yorker and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2013. This collection contains eight stories, mostly feature women and mostly take place in Canada. Every one is a treat. Many thanks to Floy Blair for this gift.

The dearest ones of time, the strongest friends of the soul — books.

--Emily Dickinson, 1830-1886

Kindness Matters Corner



Mr. Fred Rogers Said: “When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.” To this day, especially in times of “disaster,” I remember my mother’s words, and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers—so many caring people in this world.”

Different Cultures, Different Nationalities, One Neighborhood. A wonderful transformation has occurred in the neighborhood of a couple of church members. Over the past few years “Myron” and “Maddie” welcomed families from China, Russia, Wales, Samoa, and Vietnam. As each family moved in the veterans on the short street welcomed them and helped them get settled. All of the new residents are parents of young children, and now the veterans hear the sounds of children playing, sounds absent from the neighborhood for years.

Myron and Maddie are learning about different cultures as they are sure the new residents are experiencing the same. September 27 of this year was the “Chinese Moon Festival,” the second most important day for the Chinese. The new neighbors gave Myron and Maddie a special gift, consisting of a written sentiment and Moon Cookies in recognition of this important date, when the Chinese celebrate and embrace family and friends. The special gift to them caused Maddie to conduct a little research of the Moon Festival, and now she and Myron have a better understanding and appreciation of their new neighbors and their culture.

A couple of weeks ago, Myron stopped to talk with one of the new neighbors and her 4-year-old daughter. The little girl was riding her tricycle, one with many buttons that when pressed are supposed to make various sounds. Well, they didn’t. The little girl said, “It’s broken.” In the early evening, Myron went to the home of the little girl, stealthily picked-up the trike, took it home, and replaced the batteries, tested the horns, and put back the trike. The next day, the little girl was riding it again, and she told Myron how everything worked now, as she happily said, “It’s not broken anymore!” The mother’s smile let Myron know she knew who fixed it.

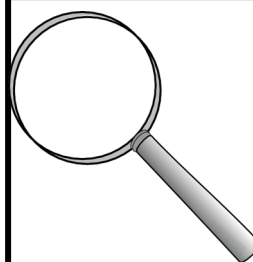
Each of the five children is adorable, and they now understand that either Myron or Maddie will almost always have some little gift for them. If nearby, one can often hear Maddie and Myron smiling, and expressing how happy they are, how joy is all around them, and how they pray the whole world was like their short street and neighborhood.

You may directly share your stories of kindness to the website in this way: Send your story to kindness@srvumc.org. Your story will be posted to the church website within a few days.

Stewardship Reminder

The Stewardship Committee wants to ensure that every member or friend of San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church has a complete understanding of the 2016 budget.

Please submit your unanswered questions to communications@srvumc.org.



Have you seen our wall hangings?

We’re missing our Wesley center wall hangings following their removal for flame retardant testing. Please call the Church Office if you have seen them or know where they are now.

Senior Scoop

GET IN THE MOOD FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON on TUES., DEC. 8 @ 11:45 a.m.*

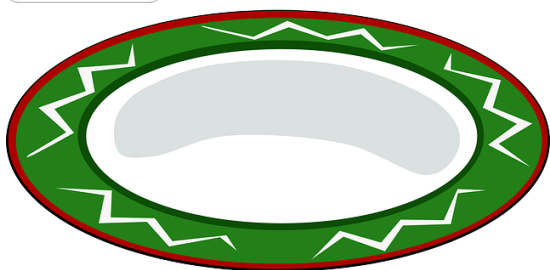
A seasonal menu extravaganza with all the trimmings

By Chef John Sanders



Holiday musical program featuring Monte Vista High School's
Double "Beauty Shop" Quartet

Reservations are requested for this special occasion.



If you haven't already reserved a spot for yourself and a friend at one of the Senior luncheons, **please call the Church Office at 837-5243** and ask to be added to the Seniors Holiday Luncheon reservation list – it is a easy as that!

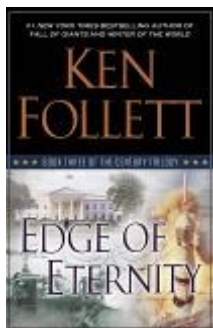
A \$7 donation per person is suggested.

***Please note new time:** The Double "Beauty Shop" Quartet will begin their program 15 minutes earlier this year. Make sure you arrive on time to be in your seat when the signing begins – you won't want to miss a moment of Holiday Cheer!

THE CHRIST CARE BOOK GROUP

The Christ Care Book Group will not meet in December.

We will meet January 27, 2016 in the church library at 10 a.m. after reading *Edge of Eternity* by Ken Follett.



AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Monday 1:00 p.m.
Rm. 202, Wesley Center

Monday, January 20 — *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah
(Sharon leading)



SRVUMC
CHILDREN & FAMILY
MINISTRY

It might seem a little early to talk about Christmas, but let's get real here — there are stores that have had their Christmas decorations out before the Halloween candy was marked on clearance. And since it's such a big time in the church, we want to make sure you have plenty of time to get ready for the event — both personally and in your children's ministry. So to get you in the Christmas holiday mood, we're going to ease you into it. You don't have to go into the attic, basement, or storage unit and drag out all your Christmas decorations. Let's just talk about Christmas movies.

There's just something about some of those movies that no matter how you're feeling after you watch them you can't help but get into the Christmas spirit. Maybe one of these lines from some Christmas movies resonates with you:

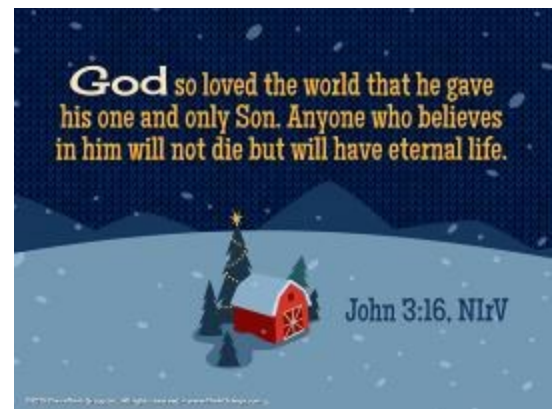
"The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear." (*Elf*)

"Seeing is believing, but sometimes the most real things in the world are the things we can't see." (*The Polar Express*)

Or even the classic, "I Triple-Dog-Dare you!" (*A Christmas Story*)

Christmas movies have a way of changing the way you look not only about Christmas but also about life as we see characters on the screen transform from unbelief to belief, from stingy to generous, or from cold-hearted to compassionate. For the month of December, we're taking a quote from one of those famous movie lines and "Triple-Dog-Daring" kids to show compassion to the people around them and even across the world. We define compassion like this: caring enough to do something about someone else's need. But when it comes to compassion, no movie even comes close to the Christmas story.

The Christmas story can really be summed up in one verse of Scripture. It's the essence not only of the Christmas story, but the essence of the story of Jesus. It's found in **John 3:16**: "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life." If you look at the Christmas story, it's easy to see that one aspect of God's character is compassion. God saw our greatest need, and He met it in the most remarkable way. To get kids thinking more about this we're taking the entire Christmas season to talk about compassion and ask a different question each week to get kids and families thinking about how they can show compassion this Christmas.



If you're not getting messages from *SRVUMC Family Ministries* in your Facebook feed, then you're missing regular posts about all sorts of great stuff, like the Advent Festival!

Among Ourselves

Health Concerns...

Jada Koonce Dave Hollemen
Betty Dorsey
Sally Andrew
Lucy Carrico

Our Christian Sympathy To...

The family of Jean White on her death on October 24. A memorial service will be held in our sanctuary sometime in January, TBD.

Susan & Jeff Rideout and family on the death of Susan's father.

Steve Garnick, Anne Kuelz, and families on the death of their father, Howard, on November 16.

Al Dudas and family on the death of Karen on November 16. There will be a memorial service in Cleveland.

Continued Prayers For...

All those who continue to live with long-term illness, unemployment, life decisions, and sickness in their families: Bill Andrew; Lyn Bristow; Lenore Cooper; Jeni Evans; John Evans; Brigitte Greene; Dick Greeno; Ann Hatfield; Dave & Lillian Holleman; Cary Johnson; Johnny Johnston; Del Kennedy; Daphne Kimbell; Alleen Landstrom; Margaret Matteson; Alex Maddux; Mary Ogden; Alice Reynolds; Ethel Ricker; Mike Robinett; Phyllis Roth; Ann Schroeder; Dick & Pat Shoner; Carol Webb Samford; Joan Webb.

Name Tags

Please contact Shannon Dever in the church office if you need a new name tag (\$6/ea.)

January Celebrations



Birthdays

1	Marilyn Clarke	Betty Skeoch	Jean Desmond	
	Jim Kretsch		Larry Sherman	
2	Paula Boswell (91)	10 Michael Arata	18 Elaine Halliday	Roger Ehlers
	Steve Marohn	Linda Dew-Hiersoux	Mike Kelly	Betty Pia
	Adena Verdi	Chris Hoff	Jeff Kuemmeler	Taylor Smallwood
3	Val Miller	11 Ann Schroeder	Stephen Lee	26 Amanda Lee
	Jennifer Norrid	12 Scott Davis	Evan Schroeder	Katie Presnell
	Brian Roberts	Belle Peters	19 Anna Pasquale	Jack Presnell
4	Jennifer Shin	Berry Scott	20 Nancy Garnick	Nick Toma
	Rebecca Ten Elshof	13 Bill Nelson	Dave Johnson	Emily Wood
6	Nancy Amini	Ruth Nelson	21 Dave Holleman	27 Tami Mitchell
	James Wakefield	14 Nancy Tiedemann	Kim Risedorph	28 Bill Dever
	Colleen Woolery	15 Liz George	22 Bob Leyman	Nancy Harrison
7	Carrie Millinich Daughters	Shadaab Kanwal	Joe Samford	Karen Stepper
		Dayna MacDannald	23 Jan Foulds	30 Susan Schultz
8	Jill Barry	Dory Schramm	24 Laura Dommes	Deirdree Walsh-Krumrei
	Matthew Huff	Jenna Turley	Barb McWilliams	31 Lisa Chapman
	Tom Philbert	16 Sam Sidhom	Grant Norrid	
9	Terry Bailey	17 Teresa Brown	25 Teri Armanini	
	Andrew Kocins	Gerry Carothers	Dorothy Brose	

Wedding Anniversaries

2	Melissa & Robert Ward	27	Shirley & Charles Stephenson
5	Judy & Bob Baker	28	Alene & Bill Miskovetz
7	Jo Ann & Vin Hirsch (55 th)	29	Danni & Dan Sherman
9	Linda & Alex Farhang		
10	Layne & Mike Alfrey		
11	Suzanne & Bob Korinke		
12	Charlotte & Bob Garner		
20	Susan & Doug Hinzie		
21	Wendi & Michael Cerda		
22	Kathy & Scott MacLean		