



ALONG THE WAY

The Newsletter of Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church • May 2016

Buddy Up!

By Whitney Hillestad

On any given Sunday we see the fruits of SVPC's Special Needs Ministry in the faces of the children we serve when they are greeted by their buddy. Buddies are vital for our children with special needs to attend church school. Their buddies assist them to learn about Jesus, engage with their peers, and participate in activities. Building buddy relationships is truly as fun and rewarding for our buddies as it is for the children we serve.

We started our program with a buddy for one child, and now we have buddies serving four children with varying needs every Sunday. As we prepare for Vacation Bible School, we have nine children who will need buddies. Nine! God is growing our ministry rapidly, and our need for buddies has increased. We are looking for youth and adults who are willing to be trained to work with a specific child with special needs.

Buddies also make it possible for parents to fully participate in worship and praise the God who sustains them. Worshiping with a church community is a gift many of us take for granted. For a family of a child with special needs, church can be the place that they long to be but are not fully accepted. Thankfully SVPC is supporting these families and attracting families from the community through our inclusive church school classes and buddy program. It is a joy to see these parents grow as part of our church family. This would not be possible without our buddies.

Christ calls us to "accept one another, just as Christ

On The Move host (and SVPC church member) **Donna Yeager** talks with **Whitney Hillestad**, SVPC Special Needs Coordinator, and **Mary Aron**, mother of a child with special needs, about the SVPC's program for families with special needs.



www.YouTube.com/user/AbleCableDotOrg

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accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (Romans 15:7). I ask that you will prayerfully consider if God is calling you to be a buddy for church school or Vacation Bible School. Are you ready to buddy up? Contact us at specialneeds@svpc.us. 🌱



Ishita Wilson (12th grade), Michelle VanWiggeren, and Lydia Coolidge, buddies to Adam

I love being Adam’s buddy because it is such a wonderful blessing to get to know him and to see his smile as he enjoys learning Bible stories, doing activities with his friends in BLAST class, and especially singing in choir. —Michelle VanWiggeren, buddy to Adam

Jenna Burkhalter with Tony

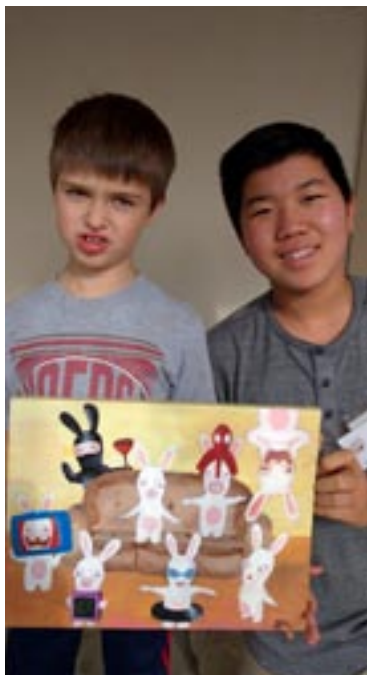
Meeting Tony and working as his buddy has changed me and my relationship with God in so many ways, and for the past year and a half it has been the true highlight of my week.

—Jenna Burkhalter (12th grade), buddy to Tony

After attending church school with Tony for four years or so, our church life was drastically changed. The newly appointed special needs coordinator, **Whitney**, and Tony’s buddy, Jenna, anticipated Tony’s needs and helped Tony to participate in church school and the Wednesday night LOGOS program. I can finally go to worship, take communion, and hear sermons. We now truly feel we are a part of the church family, getting a caring and helping hand extended to meet our needs, and experiencing Christ’s love through our church’s community.

—**Wangchen Long**, parent to Tony and his twin brother Adam





Brendan Koo with Chance

Working with Chance has enlightened me in so many ways. I just love connecting with him through forms of communication I have always known. Making a painting is something quite little. Making a connection is much greater. —Brenden Koo (8th grade), buddy to Chance

I am so grateful for the way Brenden used Chance's interests to first get him engaged and excited about coming to church, as well as being a great and understanding buddy. —**Carolyn Pasquarella**, parent to Chance

Ben Peterson (10th grade), buddy to Sam



Juliana Hartley (9th grade), Vacation Bible School buddy to Emily



May Calendar

A quick look at what's happening at SVPC this month...

April

April 30–May 1 30 Hour Famine, Youth Room; RSVP to youth@svpc.us

May

- 1 Annual Church Library Book Faire, 9 AM–NOON, Trinity Court
Food drive for those in our community served by Sunnyvale Community Services
- 3 Parent Support Group, 9 AM, Coleman Room
CARAVAN Advisor Meeting, 7 PM, Youth Room (Room 752)
- 4 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Gym
CLUE, 7–8:45 PM, Youth Room
- 8 Mother's Day—Family Worship 10 AM & 5 PM
FLASH AM, 10 AM, Gym
- 9 Newsletter articles due for the June edition
- 11 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Phoenix Center Gym
CLUE, 7–8:45 PM, Youth Room
- 12 Presbyterian Women Reflections on the Israel/Palestine Pilgrimage, 10 AM,
Fellowship Hall
- 13 Palestinian Cultural Day, 3:45–5 PM, Santa Clara County Government Center at
70 W. Hedding Street, San Jose
FLASH Capture the Flag, 7-9 PM, Trinity Court
- 15 FLASH AM, 10 AM, Gym
Adult Lunch, 11:20 AM, Fellowship Hall
Choir of Bells Spring Concert, 3 PM, Sanctuary
CARAVAN Meeting #2, 6:15 PM, Youth Room
- 17 Session meets, 7:30 PM, Soulé Hall
- 18 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Gym
CLUE, 7–8:45 PM, Youth Room
- 20 PELC Blood Drive, 9 AM–1 PM, Gym
- 21 Habitat for Humanity workday, 8:30 AM–4 PM, San Jose, DVarney@HabitatEBSV.org
- 22 Children's Choir Performance—ALL Choirs sing at 11 AM in the Sanctuary
FLASH AM, 10 AM, Gym



Newsletter Deadlines

The newsletter deadline is Monday, May 9 for the June edition. Articles may be up to 120 words in length. Send your article to newsletter@svpc.us, and, if possible, include a photo with your article.

Go green!



Go Green! Consider joining the nearly 430 individuals and families that now receive their newsletter electronically. The online edition arrives sooner, contains the same articles plus vivid full-color photos and live links, and can be easily shared with family and friends, all while helping reduce our carbon footprint! *Opt-in* by sending an e-mail to newsletter@svpc.us with your request.

- 24 Senior High Graduation Dinner, 7 PM, Phoenix Center; RSVP to youth@svpc.us
- 25 Junior High Graduation Dinner, 7 PM, Coleman Room; RSVP to youth@svpc.us

June

- 12 All-Church Picnic, 11 AM–2 PM, Las Palmas Park
- 13–17 Vacation Bible School, 9 AM–NOON, church campus
- 19–26 CARAVAN Mexico (youth mission & service trip)
- 25 Habitat for Humanity workday, 8:30 AM–4 PM, San Jose, DVarney@HabitatEBSV.org

Looking Ahead

September 2–5 All-Church Camp



Where is that?

Coleman Room (Room 702, Bldg 700)
Fellowship Hall (Bldg 300)
Fireside Room (Room 203, Bldg 200)
Gym (Phoenix Center)
Phoenix Center (Bldg 700)
Sanctuary (Bldg 100)
Soulé Hall (Room 501, Bldg 500)
Youth Room (Room 752, Phoenix Center)

The View From Here

by Rev. Debbie Whaley

Having been gone for nearly a month gallivanting around the Holy Land and other places in the Middle East, it is good to be home. Little things stand out like enjoying play time with my dog, cooking my family favorites, and sleeping in a familiar place.

So I wondered what I would savor as I returned to the rhythm of work and life here at SVPC. I have missed the staff and am eager to catch up with each of them and see how life has been unfolding. Even though I enjoyed worshiping in a variety of churches while I was gone, there is nothing that can compare to the variety and depth of music at SVPC. But as I arrived on campus this past Sunday, I realized what I missed the most—you!

Just over a year ago, I could hardly recognize faces, much less remember names. But in the 12 months since, I have come to love you as

part of my extended family. Looking out over the congregation, I see an amazing group of gifted people, each with their own story. The affection that springs up because of the time we have shared together reminds me that the great strength of this church lies in the people who make us this wonderfully diverse body of Christ. It is a gift that should not be taken for granted, nor one to be neglected.

As we move into the glories of spring weather,

I invite you to renew your friendships and connections. Reach out and welcome a new friend into your life. Every week for the next few months, I have set a goal of sharing a meal with someone I don't know well. Why don't you join me in deepening our connections with one another. Trust me, it will be worth it.

Blessings,

Debbie

“Reach out and welcome a new friend into your life.”



Rooted in Christ...

Sunnyvale Presbyterian offers everyone an opportunity to connect with the church community.

Spotlight on Staff— Luan Nguyen, Maintenance Staff

About seven years ago, **Luan Nguyen** was working at the service station/convenience store near Mary Avenue when his good friend and regular morning customer **Pedro Cadenas**—one of our maintenance staff—told Luan there was a position open at SVPC. Luan applied for and got the job, which includes cleaning rooms, offices, and restrooms; setting up for Church School and other events; using the blower to rid the grounds of debris; and cleaning the Sanctuary after memorial services, weddings, Music School rehearsals, and setting up for Early Light worship.

When asked what he likes about his job, he said that he feels working at the church serves God. You will find Luan on the job from 7–11 AM Tuesday to Friday and 7:30 AM–4 PM on Saturday.

Luan is very proud of his service in the Vietnamese Navy and says that he would be happy to serve in the US Navy, if needed.



Adult Lunch

May 15, 11:20 AM–1 PM,
Fellowship Hall

Musical entertainment will be **Bendik Kleveland** on the saxophone. The cost for lunch is only \$5. Please join us and bring a friend!



Fiscal Year End Update

By Tavie Armfield, Church Comptroller

I am thrilled to report that we ended our fiscal year in March with a \$53K surplus! While expenses were very close to budget, your giving was more than expected causing this surplus. We are ever grateful for your faithfulness and generosity to this church.

Year Ending 3/31/16	
	Actual
Income	\$ 1,780K
Expenses	\$ 1,727K
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 53K



Maximizing Your Gifts

We have two new ways you can maximize your donations to SVPC.

AmazonSmile—Amazon will donate .5% of all eligible purchases to SVPC if you list the church as your charity. Go to smile.amazon.com. It's that simple!



Benevity and **YourCause**—These are employer matching plans. SVPC is a registered charity with them. See if your employer participates.



Session Summaries

April 19 Session Meeting

The meeting began with Session listening to a reading of Isaiah 55 and sharing in small groups any phrase that stood out that might relate to our church community. Correspondence from four organizations was shared, including Convalescent Hospital Ministry and World Mission. **Frank Emery** reported from a recent Presbytery meeting, and Comptroller **Tavie Armfield** shared a financial report. The session meeting was closed with prayers of intercession and the Lord's Prayer.

Vacation Bible School: **Camp Promised Land!**

June 13–17, 9:30 AM–NOON, for 4 years old (by 9/1/16) through entering 4th grade. We invite older students *who attend our church* to be youth counselors.



Come on a camping adventure with us on our continuing search for greater understanding of the love and life of Jesus Christ. At this year's program, children will learn about the events in Moses' life through stories, songs, crafts, music, and worship. On top of that,

your child will have an opportunity to be part of a fellowship of loving and caring people committed to Christian education.

Online registration is open and the cost for the week is \$50 per child. VBS is a great opportunity for your children to invite their school, sports, or neighborhood friends to enjoy this fantastic program at our church. For questions contact **Carol Heath** at carol@svpc.us or 408-732-1892.

 www.svpc.us/groups/summer

Bridge Over **Troubled Water**

Back in the 1970s Simon and Garfunkel had a hit song titled *Bridge Over Troubled Water*. This song was popular during the time when I was going through a rough patch in my life. I played this song many, many times to comfort myself. Some of the lyrics refer to places that many of us find ourselves from time to time, "When you're weary," "when tears are in your eyes," "when you're down and out," "when pain is all around." The lyrics go on to state that "Like a bridge over troubled water, I will ease your mind."

Sorrow, sickness and grief find all of us during the course of our lives. When we are experiencing a rough

patch, we need people around us to provide that Bridge Over Troubled Water and to ease our mind. The Pastoral Care Team (PCT) exists to be part of that bridge for anyone who may need help. We are willing and eager to provide care in the form of visits to hospitals, care facilities or homes; as well as to make phone calls and to write notes to people in need of pastoral care.

If you, or a friend, are in need we hope that you will call on the PCT to be that Bridge Over Troubled Water for you. To make your need known, please contact **Jean Ranck**, SVPC's Pastoral Administrative Assistant, at jean@svpc.us or 408-739-1892.

All-Church Picnic

**Sunday, June 12, 11 AM–2 PM,
Las Palmas Park, Sunnyvale**

Our beloved annual All-Church Picnic is coming in June, and we hope you will plan to be there. Enjoy a barbeque, fabulous side dishes, delicious desserts, summer treats, a bounce house, face painting, sports, and, best of all, an opportunity to visit with one another under the lovely shaded trees.

All picnic activities are run by volunteers and there are opportunities to help before, during or after the picnic. For more information, contact **Pam Ferreira** at pfereira@netzero.net.

🖱 Visit <http://bit.ly/1NE3YVD> to sign up.

What should I bring to share?

If your last name starts with:

A-N, please bring a dessert;

O-Z, please bring a side dish.





54th Annual All-Church Camp

Labor Day Weekend, September 2–5,
Redwood Camp, Loma Mar

For many people at SVPC, All-Church Camp is the best event of the year and sign-ups continue this month in Trinity Court after all services. Camp offers time to relax with friends and family and to engage in spiritual growth, all in the splendor of Redwood Glen. Complete details are on the website at www.svpc.us/calendar/camp.

All camp activities are run by volunteers. Choose your volunteer job and then select your accommodations, from campsites to motel rooms. Volunteers in the children's program must be Safe Church trained for most positions. See www.svpc.us/difference/safechurch for details.

If you have questions or want more information about camp, please contact **Chuck** or **Lisa McManis**, 2016 Camp Directors, at 408-475-2527 or churchcamp@mcmanis.com.



Reaching Out In Love.

Christ commands us to love one another as He loves us. Here's how.



Palestinian Cultural Day

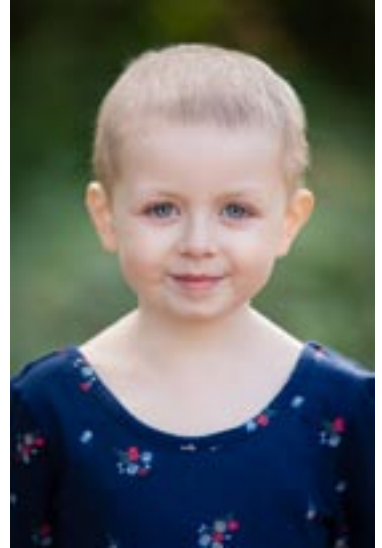
Friday, May 13, 3:45–5 PM

You're invited to come learn about and celebrate the local and international Palestinian culture. **Samir Laymoun**, who spoke at our church recently on Islam, is the founder and has sent us a special invitation. This free event is at the Santa Clara County Government Center (70 W. Hedding Street, San Jose) and is wheelchair accessible. For information on parking, visit www.facebook.com/events/997362170343330/.

PELC hosts Blood Drive

Friday, May 20, 9 AM–1 PM, Phoenix Center Gym

Maya Rye, a five year old former Presbyterian Early Learning Center (PELC) student, has leukemia. Since she was diagnosed in March 2015, our amazingly brave and spirited Maya has endured 34 blood transfusions (among many other procedures and treatments). To honor Maya, PELC will be holding a blood drive and we would love for you to participate. For questions please contact **Grace Randle**, Executive Director of PELC, at grace@svpc.us.



Choir of Bells Spring Concert

Sunday, May 15, 3 PM, Sanctuary

Invite your friends and family to join you for the Choir of Bells Spring Concert. Join us to hear a unique blend of sacred and contemporary music celebrating the majesty of God's creation!



Parent Support Group

Next meeting is May 3, 9 AM, Coleman Room

Whether you have a child or youth with a diagnosed special need, learning difference, behavior challenges, physical differences, or you just need a supportive community, the Special Needs Ministry welcomes you to this informal parent support group. Come and ask questions, share frustrations, learn about resources, and share joys and accomplishments along your journey.

Join **Whitney Hillestad** and **Julie Clinton** the first Tuesday of every month from September through May. For more information send email to specialneeds@svpc.us, or visit the Special Needs Ministry at www.svpc.us/groups/specialneeds.

Reflections on the Israel/Palestine Pilgrimage

**Saturday, May 12, 10 AM–NOON,
Fellowship Hall**

Presbyterian Women invite everyone to their May event, “Reflections on the Israel/Palestine Pilgrimage,” presented by some of the participants on the recent trip to the Holy Land led by the **Rev. Debbie Whaley**. In early April a group of 23 traveled to Israel and Palestine following in the footsteps of Jesus. They visited the Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea areas, Jerusalem and Bethlehem and a variety of other Biblical sites. Hear a few share some of their meaningful moments. For more information, contact at **Sue Slavik** at ssslavik@comcast.net or 408-735-9720. We hope to see you there for a morning of coffee, sweets, and sharing.



Grateful Giving

**Gary Ruschke,
Mission & Service Elder**

Thank you for your generous giving to One Great Hour of Sharing. This year we collected over \$16,000 for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Self-Development of People and Hunger Programs. All we have belongs to God and it is in gratitude that we give back a portion to do God's work. Thank you for making this work possible!

And this from **Pat Plant** at First Presbyterian Church, San Jose: Thanks so much for the donation of assorted toiletries for homeless folks. As always they were enthusiastically received. The city of San Jose now has a roving shower van that stops each Thursday at First Presbyterian Church, San Jose. Now our people have showers *and* soap.

Habitat and Presbyterian Women Connect

Our church has long supported Habitat for Humanity in making houses available for qualified low-income folks, most recently contributing labor on homes in Sunnyvale. Since buying land here is prohibitive, the East Bay/Silicon Valley chapter has a new plan to partner with individuals and families to repair their manufactured homes. Many owners are elderly or disabled and cannot afford maintenance, even if a home is unsafe.

To implement the plan Habitat for Humanity applied for a PC(USA) Presbyterian Women 2016 Birthday

Offering grant. **Sue Slavik** and **Miriam Kishi** provided references and from among many applications, Habitat for Humanity was chosen as one of four projects to share this year's offering.



Habitat for Humanity Opportunities

May 21, June 25 and July 23

Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley gives families with limited incomes the opportunity to purchase or repair a home at a price affordable to them. Habitat home owners work together with volunteers like you to build or repair homes—over 50 families will be assisted this year. Teams are beginning the foundation of a brand new home on Delmas Avenue in Willow Glen and repairing dozens of homes across San Jose. Volunteer workdays are 8:30 AM–4 PM. Volunteers can also sign up to serve lunch.



To learn more or sign up to volunteer, contact Don Varney at 650-670-4067 or DVarney@HabitatEBSV.org. Join Habitat to put your hands to work to address the need for housing in our county.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers...

For the loss of loved ones:

Marian Bush; Joe Don Heath's father (**Eddie Heath**); **Dot Dansey's** mother (**Ruby Adamson**)

For post-surgery recovery:

Gary Schultz

For rehabilitation: **Barbara Brown**

For continued prayers:

Connie Adler, Roger Beall, Ann Coleman, Ray Pole

In Celebration...

We celebrate the 25-year wedding anniversary of **Mike and Rhonda Murray**.

Commissioned Choir Anthem

The anthem, "Fear Not, for I Have Redeemed You," performed on March 13, was a world premiere piece commissioned in loving memory of **Valerie Steffen**. The words about courage, strength and assurance are from Isaiah 43, passages that were very meaningful to Valerie and her family over many years, and especially during her long battle with cancer. **Mitchell Covington** composed this anthem for choir, organ, flute, and French horn. Mitchell formerly served as choir director at the First Presbyterian Church Berkeley and currently is a full-time composer in Pleasanton.

🖱️ YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6fg1eCCGwQ>



Email Newsletters

Do you receive the Children's or Youth email newsletters each week? This is the best way to stay current with what is happening in Children's and Youth Ministries. To be added to the Children's Ministry mailing list contact **Kristin** at kristin@svpc.us. To be added to the Youth Ministry mailing list contact youth@svpc.us. Or from the website, www.svpc.us, sign up by selecting "[Join Our Email List](#)" at the top of any page.

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The Table—facebook.com/TableSVPC





SUNNYVALE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

728 West Fremont Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Thanks for saving paper and postage by reading this online!

Parent's Night Out—What is it?

Parents' Night Out (PNO) is a church ministry for parents and their children. PNO is a cooperative child care program, where parents take turns watching one another's children on Saturday evenings from 5:30–8:30 PM. It's an amazing ministry and fellowship group. Through PNO, participating families have grown closer as they work together and care for one another's children.



We operate in 16-week trimesters where parents from each family work four Saturdays during the trimester (just once a month) with another couple. Then for the remainder of the Saturdays, we drop off our children and have a "Parent's Night Out" on our own or sometimes with other couples from the group.

As with all church groups that care for children, Parent's Night Out complies with the Safe Church program guidelines.

We often have openings at the beginning of each 16-week session. Please sign up on our waiting list if you are interested in being part of this wonderful ministry by emailing **Kristin Matthews** at kristin@svpc.us or **Michelle Schmidt** at dancingschmidt@yahoo.com.