



# ALONG THE WAY

The Newsletter of Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church • July 2015

## Reflections on my Call to Special Needs Ministry

By Jenna Burkhalter

My name is **Jenna Burkhalter** and I am 17 years old. I play active roles in SVPC's youth ministry as well as in the new Special Needs ministry as a buddy. I have been attending church for about 2 years now, thanks to a good friend who introduced me to SVPC and the grace of God. Almost a year after I had found God and begun the process of trying to find out what and who He was working to make me into, I began to tutor a boy I went to preschool with. I had been told when I was younger that he "had special needs" and his family wanted me to tutor him in reading. (I have

since learned more about the importance of terminology, that, surprisingly, even most parents do not know—people do not "have" nor "are" their special needs. The appropriate way of saying it is that they "live with disabilities." We should say "he lives with autism," not "he is autistic." This is a subtle way of not defining people by their disability.)

The boy I tutored was charming, sweet, and lovable, and I worked to make it to every tutoring session we scheduled. The year I tutored this young boy, on my birthday, I found a strange pull in my heart. I prayed about it, and felt a



desire to explore this new area of educating those who live with disabilities of all types.

Over the past year I have worked with many programs that cater to children who live with disabilities. However, the true calling I have received

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comes from working with those who live with autism. Somehow I just feel drawn to them, and I feel that I could cry and laugh at the same time because they are such magical human beings with dreams and ambitions of their own. I want to see them achieve those dreams. It is when I am working with these kids that I feel like God is with me and working in me.

A few months ago, **Whitney Hillestad** and **Carol Heath** reached out to me about the Special Needs ministry. I jumped at the chance to gain more experience and serve at my church, which is where I feel the most loved and cared for. I have had so much fun being a buddy—it is rewarding! I have learned so much from my buddy and a lot about myself. 🌱

# July Calendar

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



## July

- 5 Monthly food drive for those in our community  
served by Sunnyvale Community Services  
School supplies drive, after all services, Trinity Court  
Dinner after Intersections, 6 PM, Trinity Court
- 6 Junior High Monday Madness, 7–8 PM, Serra Park
- 7 Senior High Tuesday Time-Out, 7–8 PM,  
Resurrection Field (next door to SVPC)
- 8 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Gym  
CLUE, 7–8:45 PM, Youth Room
- 9 Senior High Great America, 9 AM–4 PM,  
meet at church
- 10–11 Junior High Lock-in, 5 PM–10 AM, Phoenix Center
- 12 School supplies drive, after all services, Trinity Court  
Dinner after Intersections, 6 PM, Trinity Court
- 13 Junior High Monday Madness, 7–8 PM, Serra Park  
Articles due for August newsletter
- 14 Senior High Tuesday Time-Out Movie, 7–9 PM,  
Youth Room
- 15 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Gym  
CLUE, 7–8:45 PM, Youth Room
- 18 CARAVAN van packing, 1 PM, Trinity Court
- 19 School supplies drive, after all services, Trinity Court  
Dinner after Intersections, 6 PM, Trinity Court
- 19–26 CARAVAN 2015: Los Angeles
- 20 Junior High Monday Madness, 7–8 PM, Serra Park
- 22 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Youth Room
- 26 CARAVAN returns late afternoon  
Dinner after Intersections, 6 PM, Trinity Court
- 27 CARAVAN Sunday planning, 1–3 PM,  
Fellowship Hall  
Junior High Monday Madness, 7–8 PM, Serra Park

- 29 FLASH, 6–7:45 PM, Youth Room  
CLUE, 7–8:45 PM, Youth Room  
30 CARAVAN practice for Sunday services, 5 PM,  
Sanctuary

## Looking Ahead

August 2 CARAVAN Sunday

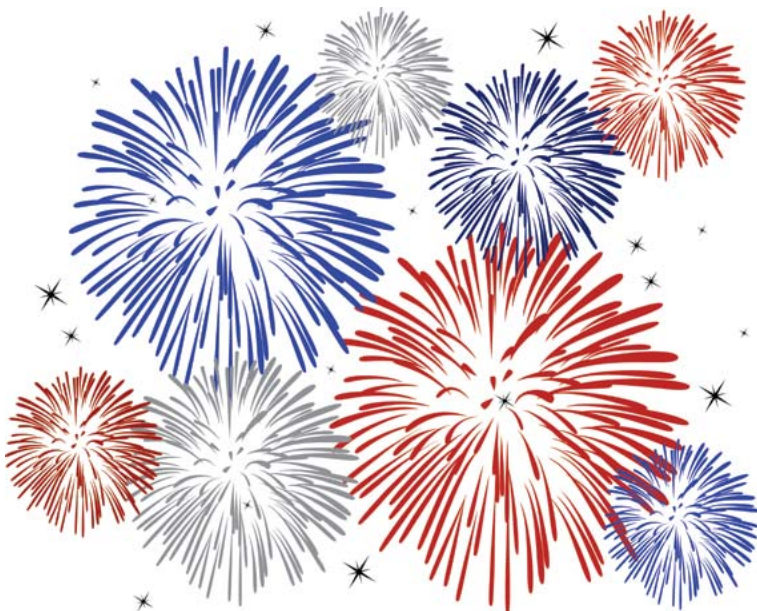
August 9, 16, 23, 30

Hymn Sing precedes 10 AM service

All-Family Worship at 10 AM & 5 PM services

September 4–7

All-Church Camp, Redwood Glen near  
La Honda



## Newsletter Deadlines

The newsletter deadline is Monday, July 13, for the August edition. Articles may be up to 120 words in length. Send your article to [newsletter@svpc.us](mailto:newsletter@svpc.us), and, if possible, include a photo with your article.



## Go green!

Go Green! Consider joining the more than 420 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](mailto:newsletter@svpc.us) with your request.

# The View From Here

by Rev. Debbie Whaley

## *Friends,*

Summer is often the time when the longer days and beautiful nights prompt us to be more inclusive of our neighbors. The more leisurely pace invites us to host more dinners, relax outdoors with friends, and time off prompts vacations that explore new and often exotic cultures. Summer seems to call us to renew as well as explore what is new.

I watched this very thing unfold this week as we welcomed gobs of children to our campus for Vacation

Bible School. The kids' excitement for Jesus was infectious. Their welcome of many kids who live with special needs into their friendship circles was truly love in action.

It may just be that our children and youth will show us new ways to embrace those who are delightfully and disconcertingly different from us. CARAVAN, our high school mission and service trip, will be wading into the turbulent waters of racial reconciliation at the end of July. As we pray for them, we need to remember

to pray for ourselves that we might be open to the wisdom they will share when they return. I'm quite sure they will challenge the status quo on what it means to Christ's church here in Sunnyvale.

And while we are praying for our kids, let's keep **Karin** and her family in our prayers as they head out to Ecuador for her sabbatical starting July 10. We will miss her! We look forward to her return in mid-October when we anticipate hearing how this time of renewal has re-focused her call to ministry at SVPC.

How will God's bounty and wisdom unfold as we continue in this time of transition and growth together? Let's continue to pray and listen. God's next steps on this journey may become clearer as the summer unfolds. 🌱

Blessings,

*Debbie*



# Rooted in Christ...

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

## What are Your Favorite Hymns?

During August, we'll open our 10 AM worship services with a hymn sing. Which hymns will we sing? Well, this summer we'd like to feature the favorite hymns of our congregation—let's call it our “top 10” or “top 20” for summer 2015.

From June 21 through July 12, look for a hymn-ballot box in Trinity Court after the 10 AM worship service. Please write down your all-time favorite hymn, and place your hymn-vote in the ballot box (one hymn-vote per ballot, please). Our organist **Valerie Sterk** will tally the votes and give our list of top 20 hymn favorites to the pastors, who will lead the August hymn sings. We'll also try to weave your favorite hymns into 10 AM worship services throughout the year.

Plan now to arrive by 9:50 AM on those August Sundays to warm up your souls and singing voices with our favorite hymns.



## New Organ Pipes!

Our church recently received a generous donation for new organ pipes, a solo Cornet stop on the Great manual (the main, center keyboard on the organ). This Cornet stop was part of the original tonal design for our Balcom and Vaughan organ (1985). We are thrilled to finally add this solo stop, which will make beautiful music for many years to come.

**John Moir**, the builder of our pipe organ, constructed the Cornet windchest in Everett, Washington, while the 96 Cornet pipes were hand crafted in the Netherlands. Listen for the new Cornet tone color singing out from our organ, or stop by the organ after worship, and **Valerie** will gladly show you the new Cornet stop.



## All-Church Camp

September 4–7, Redwood  
Glen near La Honda

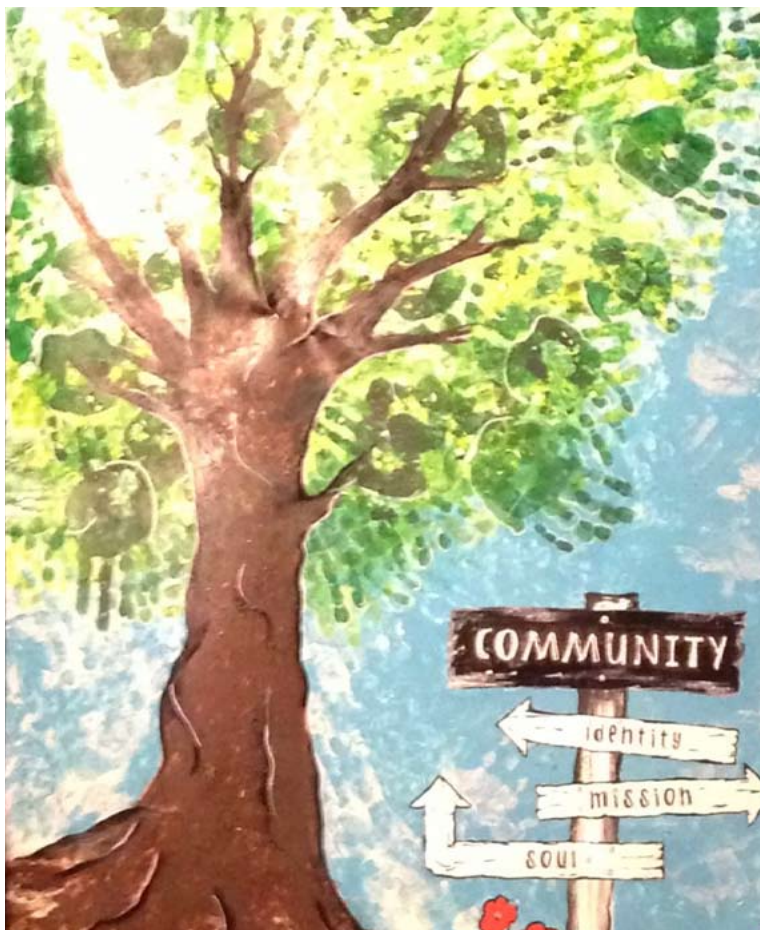
All-Church Camp is a great opportunity to make new connections, strengthen your faith, and enjoy being in fellowship in a spectacular redwood setting. In the mornings there are programs for adults, junior and senior high school students, and elementary school age students.

The afternoons and evenings provide a wealth of activities from which to choose. All of this is possible thanks to our many volunteers. For more information about available volunteer jobs and accommodations, please see the camp web page, [www.svpc.us/calendar/camp](http://www.svpc.us/calendar/camp).

Sign up for All-Church Camp after the 10 AM and 5 PM services most Sundays. Questions? Contact **Renée Wigginton** and **Jenny Wharram**, 2015 Camp Directors, at [allchurchcamp@svpc.us](mailto:allchurchcamp@svpc.us).

## July is a Big Month for Children's Ministry

It is during this month that we hope to fill the *many* Church School teacher and shepherd volunteer positions for both morning and evening Church School. Some spots have been filled, but *many* more are empty. Would you consider teaching or shepherding during the next Church School year? *Many* are needed, so we hope *many* will come. Please call or email **Carol Heath** at [carol@svpc.us](mailto:carol@svpc.us) for morning volunteering or **Kristin Matthews** at [kristin@svpc.us](mailto:kristin@svpc.us) for evening volunteering.



## Vacation Bible School— We Took a Voyage to the Son!

This year during VBS we had over 250 children and youth who came and learned about many different ways to seek Jesus through Bible stories, crafts, dramatizations and music. Please pray for the children who attended VBS that God would continue to be a part of their lives as they grow and mature in their faith.



## Spotlight on Staff—Suzanne Ungson, Director of Communications



**Suzanne Ungson** joined the staff of Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church in May 2005 as Director of Lay Ministry. Since then her title and responsibilities have evolved. Her technology background and the use of technology in church communications have led to her current role as Director of Communications with oversight of church communications and tech support.

Suzanne ensures that the newsletter, website, Constant Contact email, outdoor monitors, Facebook [page](#) and recently launched [YouTube channel](#) are produced in a timely manner. She attends weekly worship planning meetings so she can arrange for the required slides and to have people to handle projection, sound and video recording for the 10 AM and 5 PM services.

When tech problems arise on site, Suzanne is the first responder. She acts as liaison to the computer engineering support contractor when greater expertise is needed.

Suzanne works Monday thru Thursday and can be contacted at [suzanne@svpc.us](mailto:suzanne@svpc.us) or [director\\_communications@svpc.us](mailto:director_communications@svpc.us).

*This is the first in a series of articles sponsored by the Personnel Committee to inform the congregation about the roles of staff members.*



**SAGE** Seniors **Actively**  
**Growing & Engaging**

SUNNYVALE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## **Thank You Rev. Dr. Libby Boatwright!**

It's hard to believe, but it was just a year ago that the **Rev. Dr. Libby Boatwright** became part of our church staff and part of our lives. In that short time, Libby has become not only known, but also much loved. She

has re-energized senior ministries, brought the GriefShare program to life, established Seniors in Service, assisted with pastoral visitation and home communion, and in countless other ways, cared for us and served with us. Some months ago Libby was offered a full-time position in spiritual care at Stanford Hospital and took that job, but continued working here with fewer hours. Libby's time with us on staff is coming to a close, but we are thrilled that she considers us her home church and you will continue to see her assisting in worship and present among us. Please take a moment today to thank her for the many ways she has made a difference in our midst. Thank you, Libby!





## New Pastoral Care Team to be Commissioned

We are pleased to tell you that there is now a Pastoral Care Team made up of lay people who are gifted and trained to visit folks in the hospital or care facilities, make phone calls to those recovering or just to check in, and write notes and cards. The impetus for the creation of this team is **Karin's** sabbatical and the need to have a team of people who can respond to such needs in the congregation during that time, but the reality is that in a church our size, having more people to do this level of pastoral care is just the right thing to do! We'll be introducing and commissioning this team on Sunday, July 5. Thank you in advance for welcoming them and receiving the care they extend within our community!

## Welcome Jean Ranck

Please give a warm welcome to **Jean Ranck** in her new role as Pastoral Administrative Assistant. As one who grew up at SVPC, Jean both knows and loves the SVPC community and we are thrilled to have her join our staff. Jean is currently on the Ministry Renewal Team and so many of you have met or reconnected with her in groups or via email in her role with that team. In her new role, Jean will be supporting **Pastor Karin Hejmanowski** and assisting in all aspects of Nurture ministry as well as interfacing with families in planning memorials. Jean looks forward to serving God through this community. Please contact Jean with any prayer concerns or celebrations at [jean@svpc.us](mailto:jean@svpc.us), [pastoral\\_administrative\\_asst@svpc.us](mailto:pastoral_administrative_asst@svpc.us) or 408-739-1892 ext. 317.



# Reaching Out In Love.

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

## Congratulations 2015 Graduates!

### High School Graduates

<i>Name</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>College</i>
Carmen Annevelink	Los Altos High School	UC Berkeley
Liam Hanlon	Fremont High School	Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
Michelle Hunt	Homestead High School	DeAnza College
Megan Johnson Guthrie	Homestead High School	University of Oregon
Blake Lewis	Leigh High School	Purdue University
Rory McCaffrey	Homestead High School	University of the Pacific
Marie Papamarcos	Homestead High School	Miami University (Ohio)
Dillon Perry	Waldorf School of the Peninsula	Trainee, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle WA
Lukas Resch	Waldorf School of the Peninsula	Grinnell College
Joey Wilson	Homestead High School	Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

### College Graduates

<i>Name</i>	<i>College</i>	<i>Degree</i>
Rachel Beck	Eckerd College	BA Environmental Studies & Political Science, Minor in Spanish
Tyler Case	Rutgers University	BS Meteorology
Curtis Kummerehl	California Lutheran University	BA Communications
Michaela Moffett	Scripps College	BA Economics & Political Science
Andrew Shaver	UC Davis	BS Biological Sciences

## Thank You...

We have felt the outpouring of support, concern and love from our church family with the many cards, prayers and hugs we have received during the illness and death of our beloved daughter, **Kristy Smith**. We are grateful to **Pastor Karin** and the awesome Church staff, the Presbyterian Women Reed Circle, the Dolphin Fellowship Group, the reception volunteers and all our church family who made the celebration of her life a lovely tribute to her memory. We have been truly blessed by you all. Thank you!

With love and appreciation, **George and Marge Connell**



## Online: What's at svpc.us

- Young Adult monthly dinner— [www.svpc.us/youngadult](http://www.svpc.us/youngadult)
- Sermons— [www.svpc.us/sermons/past](http://www.svpc.us/sermons/past)
- Event Calendar— [www.svpc.us/calendar/events](http://www.svpc.us/calendar/events)

E-mail— [info@svpc.us](mailto:info@svpc.us)

*Like us on Facebook:*

SVPC— [facebook.com/SunnyvalePres](https://facebook.com/SunnyvalePres)

Youth— [facebook.com/SVPCYFM](https://facebook.com/SVPCYFM)

Children's— [facebook.com/SVPCMWC](https://facebook.com/SVPCMWC)



## Summer Dinners after Intersections

June 28–August 2

You're invited to join us for dinner this summer after our 5 PM worship service from June 28–August 2. It's one of the ways we build community and practice hospitality. We eat outside at tables in Trinity Court. The meals range from pizza to specialty food trucks to BBQ, and we work hard to include gluten-free and vegetarian options. There's always a donation basket set out to help cover costs, but never let that stop you from joining us.

Your support of these dinners is appreciated! Make plans to join us when you're in town these summer Sundays, and consider offering to help setup and/or clean up. We're also looking for a couple of groups to volunteer to prepare a couple of the meals. Preparing a meal with your small group or with friends is another way to be in community. Contact **Beth Treitel** ([beth@treitel.org](mailto:beth@treitel.org)) or **Carol Heath** ([carol@svpc.us](mailto:carol@svpc.us)) or **Suzanne Ungson** ([suzanne@svpc.us](mailto:suzanne@svpc.us)).





# SUNNYVALE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

728 West Fremont Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94087

*Thanks for saving paper and postage by reading this online!*

## School Supplies Drive

July 5, 12, 19

Although we just finished the school year and are enjoying the beginning of summer, Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS) and Refugee Transitions (RT) are looking ahead to the start of school in the fall. Each year these groups provide a backpack full of school supplies for the school-aged children of their clients. Here's where we can help—on July 5, 12, and 19, after each service, we will have a blue barrel available for you to drop off donations. Check out the SCS website for specific requests. Financial donations are also welcome, just write "Backpack Drive" in the memo area of your check made out to Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church.

