

**December 2025**

**Volume 25 No. 12**

**SIMI VALLEY**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**



# THE HERALD

## ABOUT OUR CHURCH

Rev. Stacy Brooks  
Senior Pastor

Becky Valenzuela  
Children, Youth & Family  
Ministries



Diane Freyling  
Office Administrator

Nancy Reyes  
Front Office Assistant

Erin Newman  
Communications Specialist



Leslie Frank  
Organist

Garo Avestian  
Choir Director



Cindie Stump-Gamboa  
& Kelsey Rodriguez  
Child Care Providers



## CROSSROADS CHILDREN'S CENTER

Michelle Gordon  
Principal  
(805) 526-2887



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United Methodist Church  
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## CHRISTMAS AT SVUMC

**14 DECEMBER** 10 am Sunday Service  
with the Message  
through Music

**21 DECEMBER** 10 am Sunday Service  
with Children's Pageant  
5 pm Blue Christmas  
Worship Service

**22-24 DECEMBER** 6-7 pm Living Nativity

**24 DECEMBER ~ CHRISTMAS EVE**  
5 pm Family Service with KidzBells  
& Youth Handbell Choir  
7 pm Traditional Lessons & Carols  
Service with Chancel Choir & Adult  
Handbell Choirs

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING  
YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS!**



# December

## WORSHIP & STUDY

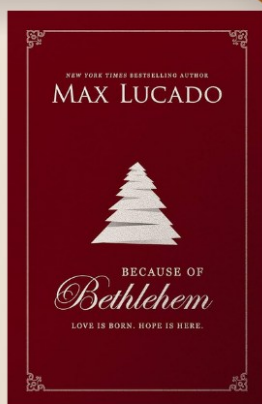
Sunday, Dec. 7th  
"Worship Works Wonders"  
Luke 1:46-55

Sunday, Dec. 14th  
"God Guides the Wise"  
Matthew 2:1-12  
Message through Music

Sunday, Dec. 21st  
"Every Heart a Manger"  
Children's Pageant

Sunday, Dec. 28th  
"Meet at the Manger"  
Luke 2:8-20

"Because of Bethlehem"  
Study



Tuesdays 1-2:30 pm  
and starting in December:  
Wednesdays 7-8 pm

BLUE  
*Christmas*

SUNDAY, DEC. 21ST  
AT 5 PM IN THE  
MEDITATION GARDEN

BLUE CHRISTMAS IS A  
MOMENT TO PAUSE IN THE  
HOLIDAY SEASON TO  
ALLOW THOSE WHO ARE  
GRIEVING OR STRUGGLING  
TO FIND SOLACE AND  
COMFORT IN SCRIPTURE  
AND PRAYER.  
BRING A BLANKET, IT  
COULD BE CHILLY.

Watch for Advent  
Devotional Kits in  
the narthex!





**SAVE THE DATE OF  
DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup> FOR A  
SPECIAL MORNING  
WORSHIP SERVICE!**

*MESSAGE  
THROUGH MUSIC*

Join us for a special worship service! Musical selections, scriptural text and narration from the Christmas Cantata "Silent Night" will be our morning message.

Includes our Chancel Choir, organist, and guest musicians

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14 @ 10AM | SVUMC**



**MAKE, TAKE, AND SHARE!  
CHRISTMAS EDITION**

Join Pastor Stacy in the Church Kitchen on **Sunday, December 14 from 3-5 pm** to make Christmas Lasagna. Make one for yourself to take home and bake, as well as one (or two) to take to someone who could use an easy, home-cooked meal.

*RSVP by December 12*



**ALTERNATIVE  
CHRISTMAS**

**SUNDAY,  
DECEMBER 14  
AFTER  
WORSHIP**

Join us on the patio for our annual holiday event. Come learn about our local nonprofits and the good work they are doing. Find the perfect gift for anyone on your list by donating in their name to any of these wonderful groups! A holiday card will be provided with each donation.

Charities include *Simi Free Clinic, Samaritan Center Ventura County Animal Shelter, Forever Found, Body Brain Train and For the Troops.*

The shelter welcomes donations of towels, blankets and unopened pet food (and they may bring small animals to the event!) Our Giving Garden will have fresh produce and seed packets.



# Children & Family Ministries

December 2025

## 1st-5th Grade Sunday School

God didn't need cable news or social media to broadcast the greatest birth announcement of a time. Instead, God sent an angel to Mary and to Zechariah and a full-on angel choir to the shepherds. And then, because no-big-deal, God placed a brand-new star to share the news with the wise men. Throughout history, the extraordinary news of Jesus' birth has been spread in every way imaginable, which is why we're shouting it out through this month's theme: "Extra! Extra! Celebrate the Good News of Jesus' birth."

December Bible Verse:  
 "Today in the city of David, a Savior  
 has been born to you; He is the  
 Messiah, the Lord."  
 Luke 2:11



## Pre-K Sunday School

Christmas is such a special time of year. That's why we want to use shapes that preschoolers already know to help them remember the most important thing they will ever know: God gave us Jesus. The shapes we're talking about this month are so much more than just hearts, squares, circles, and stars. They are fun ways to help preschoolers remember the true story of Christmas. Our Bible verse for December is John 3:16 - "God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son."

## Youth Ministry

**DECEMBER PARENTS' NIGHT OUT!**

WE KNOW THE MONTH OF DECEMBER IS A BUSY TIME... HOW ABOUT A NIGHT OFF?

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19TH**  
**5:30-8:30PM**

\*CHILDREN AGES 2 YEARS - 5TH GRADE  
 COST- \$20 PER CHILD OR \$50 PER FAMILY  
 JOIN US FOR DINNER, CRAFTS, AND CHRISTMAS GAMES  
 REGISTER BY WED., DEC. 17TH WITH MS. BECKY

\*ALL CROSSROADS' STUDENTS ARE WELCOME!

**TWEEN SCENE**  
**MINUTE TO WIN IT!**

**DEC 7TH 5-7PM**

BRING A FRIEND AND JOIN US IN WITMAN HALL FOR A NIGHT OF CHRISTMAS FUN & GAMES! DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED.

**Thursday Night "Dinner & Devotion"**  
 6:00pm in Witman Hall

Each week, the youth team will be there for check-ins, dinner, & devotion. We will be finished by 7:15 for those who play bells. All Teens & Tweens 4th-12th grade are invited to join us!

## December at CrossRoads

Looking back on this year, I feel grateful and relieved that we overcame challenges and adventures. Thank to the support of our church community, we made it though. I look forward to what God has planned for 2026!



This month, we have our Christmas program on Friday, December 5th. We will be celebrating Jesus' birthday and have lots of fun activities planned for this Christmas season. CrossRoads will be closed from December 24th through January 2 for our Christmas break. The staff and I are looking forward to this time off to rejuvenate and relax! Wishing You a very Merry Christmas!

*Mrs. Michelle Gordon, Principal*  
 CrossRoads Children's Center



**Soup & SANTA!**

It's too chilly for Burger Bash, but come by Witman Hall after worship for soup, kid-friendly finger foods, and a visit with SANTA!

**DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>  
AFTER WORSHIP**

Donations are welcome, and help offset the cost of the meal.

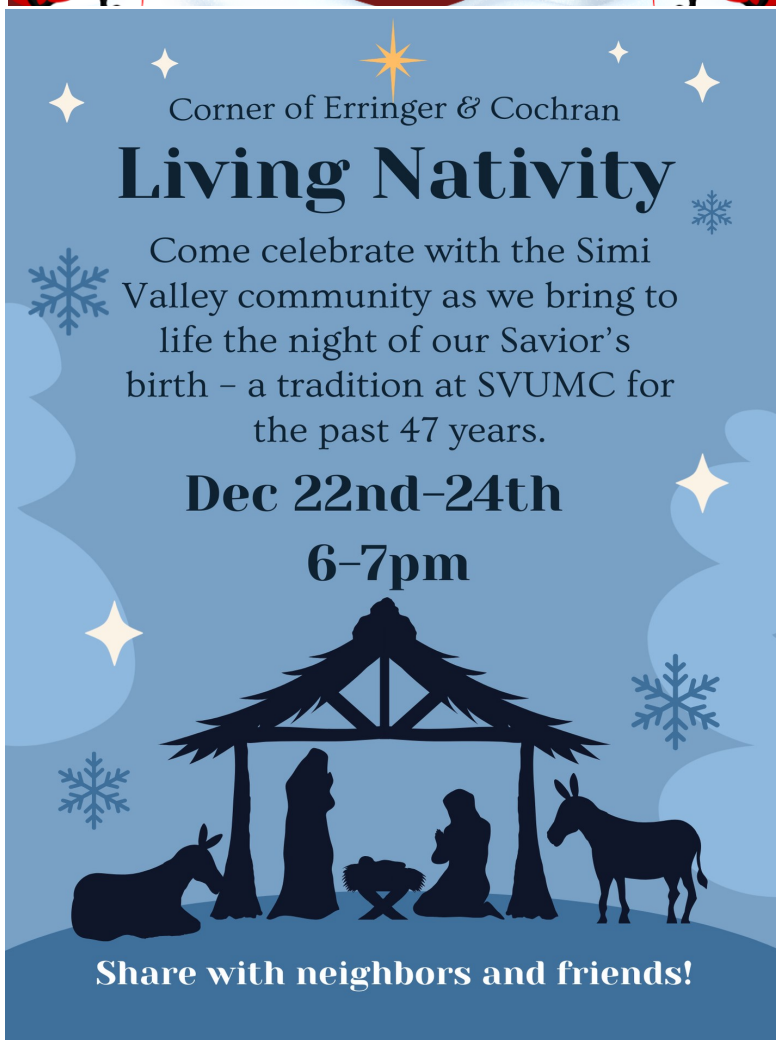


Join us for a merry Lunch Bunch  
**Hot Cocoa, Movie  
& Cookies Party**

featuring...  
*"It's a Wonderful Life"*

Thursday, December 11

1 pm	In the Chapel
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Corner of Erringer & Cochran

# Living Nativity

Come celebrate with the Simi Valley community as we bring to life the night of our Savior's birth – a tradition at SVUMC for the past 47 years.

**Dec 22nd-24th  
6-7pm**

Share with neighbors and friends!



Thank you to Carol Conner, Chuck McKee, Patrick McInnis, Joseph from UMYF, and Pastor Stacy, who all made chili for our chili cookoff at the fall festival!

**CONGRATS TO WINNER CHUCK MCKEE WITH HIS DELICIOUS CHICKEN CHILI!**



**Our church website  
has been redesigned!**

*Check it out!*

**WWW.SIMIVALLEYUMC.ORG**

Your resource for ways to learn, worship, connect and serve, plus event info, a live calendar, and much more. It will be updated weekly, so keep checking back in!





The musical entertainment at this year's UWF Christmas Program & General meeting will be by Dr. Garineh Avakian, alto, and accompanied by our own Garo Auessian.

Dr. Avakian performs with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, is a voice and choral music college professor, and is the director of music at Northridge UMC.



United  
Women  
in Faith

## Coming Up

Wednesday, December 3: Christmas Meeting with dessert, entertainment and installation of UWF officers in Witman Hall

Wednesday, January 8: UWF Board meeting in the Chapel at 10 am

Sunday, January 25: UWF Sunday

## CIRCLES

Circle of Joy: Wednesday, December 10 at 12 pm in the Chapel. Leslie will be our hostess. This is our annual Christmas salad/potluck luncheon.

Seekers Circle: Monday, December 15 at noon in the Chapel.

Night Owls: Will not meet this month, but will attend the Christmas Meeting.

Circle of Faith: Wednesday, December 17 at noon at the home of Valerie Bergh, 3192 Lori Circle.

Teresa Circle will meet each month to visit those who are homebound.

## DECEMBER

Birthdays

12/1 Ruth Dempsey  
 12/3 Glen Bihler  
 12/5 Paige Huggins  
 12/6 Scott Alexander  
 12/7 Jamilee Hernandez  
 12/8 Alan Langville  
     Chris Seckman  
 12/9 Natalie Motzel  
     Regina Sua  
 12/10 Judy Thomson  
 12/13 Ezio Urgero  
 12/15 Walker Garbo  
 12/16 Helen Loring  
 12/17 Curtis Ouimette  
 12/19 Veronika Heteniak  
 12/23 Colorado Bastian  
     Evan Bastian  
 12/25 Debra Barbey  
 12/28 Justin Copen  
     Jeanne Corr  
     Mary Fry  
     Joye Grove  
     Steve Thomson  
 12/29 Don Cameron  
 12/30 Lori Pahls  
 12/31 Todd Goldman  
     David Waye

## DECEMBER

Anniversaries

12/19 John & Laura Hole  
     Mike & Jackie Seckman  
     Stu & Diane Thomson  
 12/23 Cindy & Drew Johnson  
 12/28 Alan & Nenifa Langville



### CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

CLOSED

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24  
 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25  
 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26

*Merry Christmas!*



### Worship Attendance

	In Church	Online
10/26	150	22
11/2	129	22
11/9	112	22
11/16	116	30
11/23	115	18

### NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12



**Recycle  
Sunday  
drop off  
before worship  
December 28**

Enter from the Cochran entrance and look for the easy up in the east parking lot.

CRV value plastic and glass beverage bottles and beverage cans accepted.

Proceeds help fund Outreach Dinners!

### Outreach Update

#### Monthly Outreach Committee meeting:

Wednesday, December 17 at 1 pm in the Chapel.

#### Saturday Outreach Dinner: December 20th.

Contact Barbara Bagwell if you'd like to donate supplies or lend a hand.

### Blessing Bags

Outreach would like to hand out Blessing Bags to our guests at the December Outreach dinner. Items such as snacks, fruit cups, hand sanitizers, tissue packs, toothbrush kits, fragrance-free deodorant, combs, socks and small cold weather items such a gloves and beanies are welcome. Donations can be placed in the wicker baskets in the Narthex.

THE

# HERALD

Simi Valley United Methodist Church

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(805) 526-6231 [www.simivalleyumc.org](http://www.simivalleyumc.org)

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## ANGEL TREE

*Drop-off Sundays:  
December 7 & 14  
in the Narthex*



Help Ventura County kids & youth in the foster care system through the James Storehouse holiday shop! New toys, gift cards, art supplies, sports equipment, clothing, tech, Legos, action figures and gift wrap are welcomed. See Rebecca Sandoval for more info. Thank you!

SEE JUANITA ON THE PATIO  
AFTER WORSHIP  
DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup> & 14<sup>TH</sup> FOR  
POINSETTIA ORDERS.

Poinsettias will be displayed on  
Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> and on Christmas Eve

Each poinsettia is \$8