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# The Cornerstone

Rolling Hills United Methodist Church  
26438 Crenshaw Blvd.  
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274  
310-377-6771

**January 2017**

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Dinner for 8 is a fun way to get to know and meet people in our church. Each dinner group will be comprised of 6-8 people who meet 3 to 4 times during the year. Each individual or couple is

expected to host one gathering. The time and place depends on the group – options include weekend dinner at home, an afternoon picnic, a Sunday brunch, or even a dessert buffet. Generally, the host provides the main course and beverages and assigns other parts of the meal to other group members.

This year, we will be giving participants an option to belong to sub-groups if they wish. The subgroups will be Restaurant Group and “Kids are Welcome” Group. The point of Dinner for 8 is to form new relationships, so we will do our best to “mix” everyone who signs up. To sign up or for more information, visit our website [www.rhumc.org](http://www.rhumc.org). You can also call or email Rachel Stam at [rachel@rhumc.org](mailto:rachel@rhumc.org) or 310-377-6771.

*from the pastors*

*Jonathan Chute*



I have never been much for New Year’s resolutions. I’m happy for those who find them helpful, but it’s been a long time since the last time I made one – and even longer since I kept one! I enjoy having New Year’s Day to get together with friends, but it’s never really meant as much to me as I know it does to others. Even when I was younger I remember staying up late to watch the ball drop at Times Square on TV, thinking “Is that all there is?” when it came down.

This year I know I’ll be busy with the usual activities of any other Sunday. Two morning services, an afternoon nap and 3rd service are plenty. At least I won’t miss the Rose Bowl, since they never hold it on Sunday!

But John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, felt that New Year’s was a wonderful opportunity for us to renew our covenant with God. As Christians look to the year to come, he thought we could focus our hopes, our intentions, our energies, toward God’s purposes. Over the years he developed prayers for a service on New Year’s Eve, which he called “Watchnight.” It was intended as an alternative to some of the existing New Year’s revelry, and included prayers of confession for the past year and a rededication of our lives for the new.

It includes one of my favorite of Wesley’s prayers. Over the years it has meant a great deal to me and been a source of encouragement and renewal. I thought you might also find it helpful as we move into the coming year together.

Grace and peace,

*Jonathan*

## A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition (Contemporary Version)

I am no longer my own, but yours.  
Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you.  
Let me be praised for you or criticized for you.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service.  
And now, O wonderful and holy God,  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,  
you are mine, and I am yours.  
So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.



"Who knew that biblical birds held so many of the keys to what the Scriptures have to say about God? Yet birds do!" – Laura Winner

"...visitations of spirit are very like being stunned by a wild bird..." – David James Duncan

"You think birds are just birds-undifferentiated fluttering, then you find one magnified in your lens." – Debbie Blue

Dear Friends:

I appreciate the season after Epiphany for its encouragement to think bigger and look from new perspectives. Epiphany is about enlightenment and expanded understanding. It's about Christ coming for all and not just for some.



Epiphany is marked by the arrival of the magi to kneel before the baby Jesus and present their gifts. Their wisdom in returning, as Matthew's gospel puts it, to "their own country by another road" reverberates through the first several weeks of the calendar year, inviting us to consider what we know and what we might yet learn about the journey of faith.

In honor of the opportunity to "see and be radiant" (Isaiah 60:5) that Epiphany represents, I invite you to join me in a unique three-week study in January. I'm taking inspiration from Debbie Blue's book *Consider the Birds* and calling the class "Birds of the Bible." There may be more birds in the Bible than you think, and they offer a surprising doorway into theological reflection.

To participate, you can choose either Wednesday evenings at 7 pm on January 11, 18, and 25, or Thursday mornings at 10:30 am on January 12, 19, and 26. We'll gather in the Aldersgate Room. Any and all learners are welcome to participate; no expertise in birds or the Bible is required!

God's love and hope to you in the new year,

April

## A New Year's Prayer from Dr. Martha Rowlett

Eternal God, creator of everything that ever has been, is now and ever will be, we give thanks at the beginning of this new year for the amazing gift of life as a part of this stream of history new in every moment to both you and to us. We give thanks that we can trust your presence and your love to be with us always and everywhere. We can hear your voice calling us from the heart of life to be part of what you are doing to fulfill the best possibilities for what is here now. In this season we define as a new year, we remember that our selfishness often has blocked your love. We trust your mercy in forgiving us and your grace in renewing the light and the love with which you would bless our lives. As we step out into this new future, may we be strong in our souls, resistant to the wrongs of the world, compassionate toward those who suffer, and faithful to what is dear to you. In the power of your Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. AMEN.

Dr. Martha Rowlett, Senior Pastor Emeritus

## Dawn Unity



The Interfaith Discovery Series will next meet on **Tuesday, January 10, 7:30 p.m.**, at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 2200 Via Rosa, PVE. The topic of discussion is Music and Worship. The panel will consist of Dr. Jeannie Cobb, Music Director at St. Francis Episcopal Church; Reverend Jon Gathje, St. Paul's Lutheran Church; Mr. Grant Hungerford, Music Director at St. John Fisher Catholic Church; and Cantor Sam Radwine, Cantor Emeritus of Congregation Ner Tamid.



*Refreshment for the Thirsty  
Soul, Hope for the Hungry  
Heart*

*Led by April Herron*

*A variety of individual and shared activities will help us to identify God's presence with us in both the full and the empty times in our lives. We will enjoy solitude and friendship, rest and reflection. movement and stillness. worship and wonder.*



**When:** Saturday, February 25, 2017  
9 am to 3:30 pm  
**Where:** Mary & Joseph Retreat Center  
5300 Crest Rd, Rancho Palos Verdes  
**Cost:** \$50, including lunch and snacks



Registration will begin on Sunday, January 15 after all 3 services. You can also stop by the church office during the week. We have 20 spaces available, so to secure a spot, be sure to sign up early. **Please note that priority registration will be given to first time retreatants.**

A deposit of \$25 is due at the time of registration and final payment will be due by February 19. Limited financial assistance may be available. Contact Rachel Stam at the church office for more info.

Childcare, housed at RHUMC, will be available for a small fee. Please indicate your needs at the time of registration.

***Second Sundays At Two***

*Sunday, January 8, at 2:00 p.m.*

*~ presents ~*

***Grand-Prize Winner of the  
Los Angeles International Liszt Competition***



*Pianist*

**STEVEN VANHAUWAERT**

A native of Belgium, **Steven Vanhauwaert** was hailed by the *Los Angeles Times'* Mark Swed for his "impressive clarity, sense of structure and monster technique." Steven earned his Master of Music degree from the Royal Conservatory in Brussels and continued his graduate studies at the USC Thornton School, where he won the USC Concerto Competition. He has also performed as concerto soloist with the Pacific, Flemish, Bryan, Auburn, Santa Monica, and Peninsula Symphonies, amongst others. He is a two-time Beverly Hills National Auditions winner and a frequent pianist on leading chamber music series including Jacaranda and Dilijan. Steven is a Steinway Artist.

***Contribute What You Can ~ 100% for the Artists  
All Are Welcome!***

# De-stress

Be Still and Know I Am God!

**Wednesday, January 11th**  
**6:00-8:15 pm**

Finals can be a stressful time! All youth, **6th-12th grade**, are invited to come destress with massages, puppies, art, yoga, music and prayer. Set your mind, body and soul to a place of peace so you can do well on your finals!

RSVP to Kimmie at [Kimmie@rhumc.org](mailto:Kimmie@rhumc.org)

## Start the New Year with a Parents' Night Out!

Moms and dads can enjoy some grown-up time while the children have a blast! We will be making crafts, playing games, and watching a movie. Pizza dinner will be provided.

When: Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 5:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Who: Infants to 5th graders

Cost: \$20/child, \$5/each additional child per family

Registration: Email [familyministries@rhumc.org](mailto:familyministries@rhumc.org) with your child's name and age or call 310-377-6771, ext. 105.



## Shawl Ministry Ready to Include You!

You don't know how to knit? We'll show you how. Knit 3, purl 3. That's it! Easy stitches for the heartening shawls we make for those in need of comfort. Both those who knit, as well as those who receive the shawls, are loved and blessed.

The shawls we make give solace to those who are ill, and bring hope to those who are in despair. After we make a shawl we bless it, and a blessing is included for the receiver. We welcome your loving hands to knit for a good cause: to date we've donated over 225 shawls.

Meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month at 11:00 a.m. in Martha's Room. Our next meeting is January 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information, contact Karen Sakura at 310-375-1216.

*"Shawls have been made for centuries; they are universal and embracing, symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving, God. They wrap, enfold, comfort, cover, give solace, mother, hug, shelter and beautify. Those who have received these shawls have been uplifted and affirmed, as if given wings to fly above their troubles..."* – Janet Bristol

## Mission Committee Welcomes Volunteers

The Missions Committee is looking for smiling faces as we head into the new year. This is an opportunity to be involved with the planning of events which raise money and RHUMC involvement with both local and international Mission projects. It's a friendly, low-key group whose aim is to be helpful where we are able. We meet monthly – usually for an hour on the second Tuesday of each month. Come be part of a fun group. Everyone is welcome! Interested? Please contact Bill or Barbara Leone at 310-377-2628 or via email at [wleone@aol.com](mailto:wleone@aol.com).

## Ad Board Charge Conference

Ad Board Charge Conference will next meet on **Wednesday, February 1**, at 7:30 p.m. in the Choir Room.

## Festival of the Nativity Appreciation



Hundreds of RHUMC members and visitors had the opportunity to view The Festival of the Nativity during the evening of December 17 following the Christmas Concert and the next day between services. Over 250 Nativity scenes from around the world were on display in every imaginable form: figures carved into a single log, windmill-driven spinning mangers, gorgeous heirloom sets, hand-painted figures, and scenes featuring Peanuts cartoon characters are just a few that were notable. A special thank-you to Kathy Platnick and Jan Johnson for organizing this beautiful event (and for contributing dozens of their own Nativities). Way to go, ladies!



## Recording of RHUMC's Christmas Concert

The Christmas Concert is available as a free download. DO NOT GOOGLE. Just put this link in your address bar: <http://mccoysound.com/themessiah/>. When you click on it, you will be taken to a page with a zip file of the concert. Download the zip file to your computer and open it. The wonderful performances will be a source of continual enjoyment for years to come.

## Trek to the Tree

Our annual Trek to the Tree program was once again a huge success. During the first two weeks of Advent, over \$4,000 was generously donated by the congregation towards 160 Target gift cards (in addition to many toys) for children and families at the Toberman Community Center in San Pedro. RHUMC's participation in this event truly makes a difference in bringing Christmas to these families. Our thanks to Noucha Jasanis for organizing the event, collecting the toys and coordinating with Toberman on our behalf. Way to go, Noucha!

## THANK YOU!!!

A heartfelt thank-you to all who helped transform our church for the Advent & Christmas seasons. From those who decorated, donated (& watered) poinsettias to those who helped take down the decorations. We couldn't do it without your help. Merry Christmas, Chris Larson



## Club Maintenance



Club Maintenance will next meet on **Saturday, January 14**, at 8:30 a.m.

Senior Pastor	Jonathan Chute	Music Director	Chuck Dickerson
Associate Pastor	April Herron	Organist/Pianist	Althea Waites
Senior Pastor Emeritus	Martha Rowlett	3 <sup>rd</sup> Service Ensemble	Patti MacLeod
Preschool Director	Myra Ghabrial	Adm. Assist. to Pastor	Curt Wuestenhagen
Director of Children & Youth Ministries	Kimmie Stradling	Church Office Admin.	Peggy Roulette
Family Ministries Dir.	Rachel Stam	Admin. Assistant	Ana Ysabel Lopez
Kid Zone Director	Megan Pelc	Treasurer	Robin La Tourette
Junior High Youth	Nicole Benson	Bookkeeper	Nicole Lowery Zakman
Parish Nurse	Annette Matsuda	Facilities Manager	Rick Mitchell
		Custodian	Miguel Portillo
Church Office Phone	310-377-6771	Resident Bishop	Grant Hagiya
Fax Line	310-544-4123	District Superintendent	Mark Nakagawa
Web Site	<a href="http://www.rhumc.org">www.rhumc.org</a>		

SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS

8:30 & 10 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**Next Cornerstone deadline is January 27**

[www.rhumc.org](http://www.rhumc.org)