The Cornerstone

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

February 2019

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

It is time to celebrate on **Sunday, February 17**, with those in our church family who have been or were married for 50 years or more. We would love to post the stories of how you met as well as display your wedding photo. If you'd like to tell your story, please send us an email with a short description of how you met. We still have the anniversary list from last year, but if you are new to the congregation, or have now been married for 50 years, please let us know your name and wedding date. Contact us by email at churchoffice@rhumc.org or call the church office at 310-377-6771. In addition to sending in your stories, please consider bringing a wedding photo to the church office during the week of February 11th identified with your name. Photos may be retrieved in the office the following week. Thanks for your help! And congratulations!

from the pastors — *Jonathan Chute*

Later this month, in St. Louis, Missouri, United Methodists from around the world will gather to decide how our denomination will relate to persons who are gay or lesbian. This has been a source of discussion in our church and others since the early 1970s. It has been a source of pain for individuals and families across our denomination. We are clearly not of one mind as we understand the issue before us or the biblical resources that undergird our faith. We disagree with other United Methodists across the globe, within different regions of our own country, within our congregations and even within our own families.

This special session of our General Conference will be considering three different plans that have been brought forward by a special commission which included representatives from every corner of the church. One of the proposals, the Traditionalist Plan, would seek rigorous enforcement of our current rules. These do not allow United Methodist clergy to participate in same sex marriages or to be ordained themselves if they are openly gay or lesbian. Persons who violate the rules would be required to give up their ordination. Churches who do so would be sanctioned as well.

Another plan, known as the One Church Plan, would remove the restrictive language around same sex issues from our Book of Discipline, leaving to each minister, congregation, annual conference, and region the decisions around these matters. No minister would be required to participate in a same sex marriage, but none would be charged with violating our rules if they did. It allows the church to respond differently based on the needs of the communities we serve.

The third plan, called the Connectional Conference Plan, would allow churches to affiliate with one of three Conferences around the world, each with its own understanding and approach to the issue. Congregations would be free to associate with others who share their views, without regard to geographical location. Each plan has its own set of difficulties, and each makes a large number of United Methodists unhappy. Of course, so does our current situation.

The Commission on the Way Forward was formed three years ago to help advise the church in this matter. It has recommended the One Church Plan, though there are also many congregations, clergy and bishops who favor the Traditionalist Plan. Others are working to bring forward other options, or modifications to one of those already being considered.

I have been reluctant to focus our attention on this denominational struggle over human sexuality. First, I do not believe that this argument is a central matter of our faith. I do believe that how we relate to our fellow human beings is a central matter of our faith. That's what Jesus meant when he said that loving our neighbors as ourselves was the other half of the most important commandment – to love the Lord our God. Treating people with dignity, recognizing their inherent worth as God's children is a central matter of our faith. But arguing about this is not a sign of a welcoming, a healthy, or a loving community. And that's what our denomination has been doing.

Your pastors feel fortunate to be of the same mind when it comes to our approach to ministry. We both believe that we are called to serve, and respond to the needs and hopes of anyone who finds a sense of welcome and home in our congregation. We are not interested in making distinctions around sexual orientation, any more than we would around gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background, political persuasion or anything else. When we meet with someone who is in a healthy, loving, mutually respectful relationship we are glad for that. When someone comes to us with a question, or is seeking help with a situation that has become unhealthy, abusive or harmful, we want to offer care for them, period.

At the moment, if I were a delegate to the special General Conference, I would probably support the One Church Plan. I believe it encourages each region, each congregation, each minister, to let their respective consciences be their guide. But I also regret that we find ourselves in this situation at all. What other members of our churches, of our families, would ever be the subject of such a vote? I am sad that anyone's status in their church should be called into question.

The reason I am writing about this today is because I don't want you to be surprised to see the United Methodist Church in the news a few weeks from now. There are some voices on either side of the debate crying out that the sky is falling, and that our denomination is about to split apart for good. I do not believe that is the case. No matter what we decide – and assuming that we actually *do* decide – there will be many things to work out in the months, even years, that follow.

April and I look forward to continuing to serve this congregation and doing so as clergy of the United Methodist Church. Whatever the results of the General Conference I am confident that RHUMC will continue to be the healthy, generous and loving church I have been blessed to serve for the past 21 years.

Grace and peace,

Jonathan

April Herron

Dear Friends

Seven years ago, when my daughter moved to Brazil, I started taking classes, at a UC extension, in how to speak Portuguese. The classes were always full of young adults planning to travel to Brazil or engaged in a romance with a Brazilian. I was the only one who ever said, "I want to learn Portuguese so that if I ever get to have grandchildren I will be able to communicate with them."

I've been diligent with trying to keep up what I learned, which was a pretty good ability to read and to grasp basic grammar. I made less progress with understanding and expressing myself in the spoken word. And now my time is just about up! A baby is coming! In July! The baby will be born in São Paulo. I've been invited to be present. Where is the crash course that will get me up to speed?! I guess I might just have to learn to speak Portuguese alongside my grandchild.

I am thrilled at the prospect of becoming a grandma, and also surprised that the moment is actually coming. I selected the books for spring 2019 discussion before I received the big news. Now I think that the choice of a guiding question was a fortuitous one. What makes a family? The three books in the series invite us to reflect on how families are formed, how families may be shaped by culture and tradition, how families express their care for one another when close at hand or far apart, how families change and adapt to new circumstances and times, and what happens when family members feel betrayed by one another. The grandma plays an especially important role in the February book, *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*, by Lisa See.

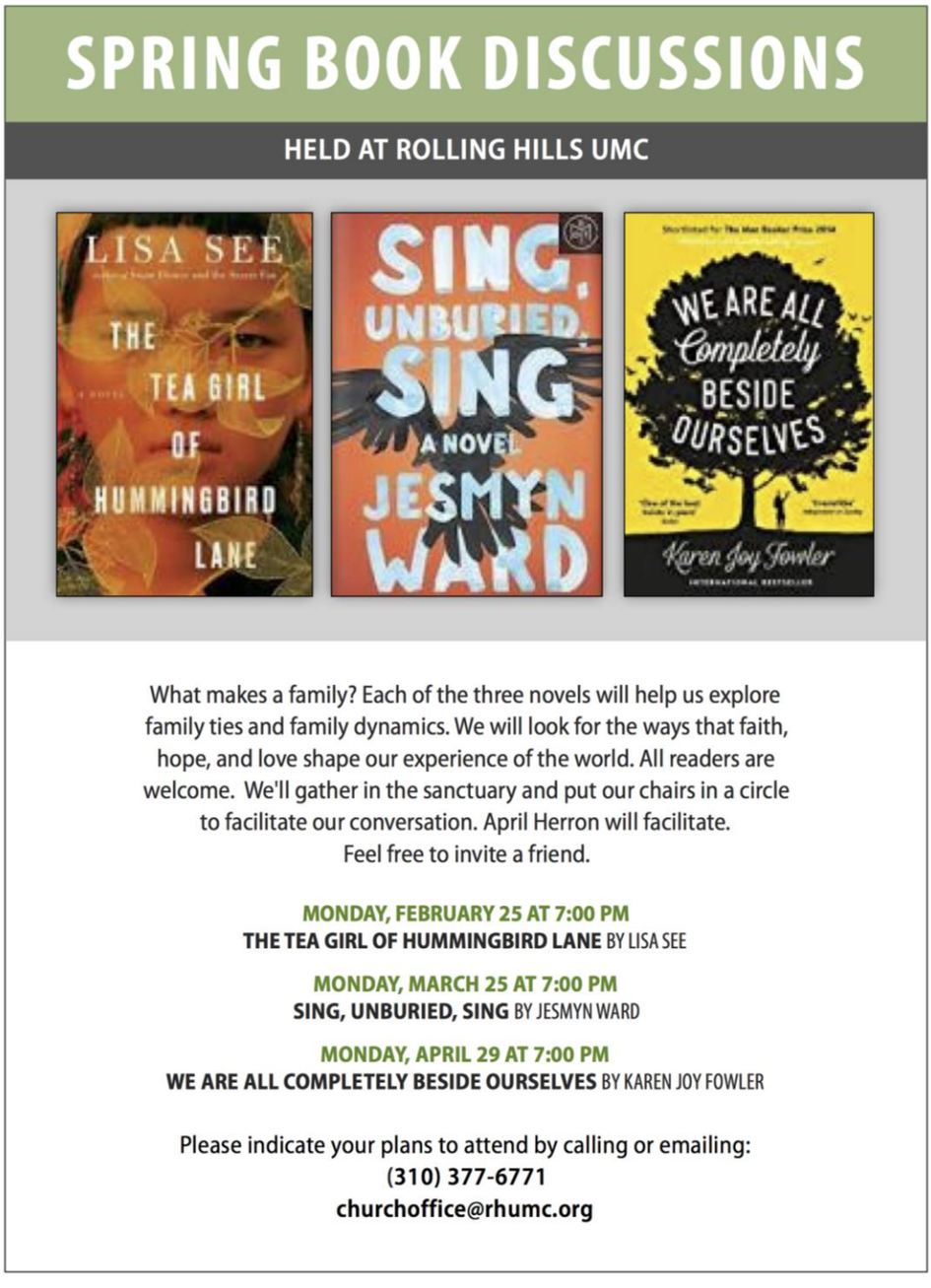
Lisa See is a best-selling author who has written memoir, historical fiction, mystery books, and even an opera libretto. She lives in Los Angeles and has curated exhibits at the Autry Museum and the Chinese American Museum. She designed a walking tour of L.A.'s Chinatown and wrote the companion guidebook for Angels Walk L.A. to celebrate the opening of the MTA's Chinatown station. *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* was published in 2017 and should be easily available via whatever strategy you usually acquire books. I look forward to discussing it with you (and maybe drinking some tea together) on Monday, February 25, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary at RHUMC.

Até logo! (which is Portuguese for "See you soon!")

April

Message from Martha Rowlett, Senior Pastor Emeritus

January 2019 has come and gone. New Year's resolutions have been made and broken. Which makes one wonder, "Why bother?" Why not just accept that things are going to continue to be pretty much like they have been? Then a message comes. Jonathan tells me that construction fencing is up, and RHUMC folk are having to deal with piles of dirt and loud noise. Over the last few years, some people have felt discontented with the buildings that were just not what the congregation needed to house the fantastic ministry of the congregation and the possibilities you saw for the future. So some hopeful visions were created and resolutions made. Without those resolutions there would be no fencing, dirt or noise – or beautiful, adequate new facilities. I am still a believer in resolutions and made some for myself this year. If you know me, you know that one of them has to do with weight. The older I get the rounder I become. I am more hopeful about some of the others, a couple of which I have already made the personal equivalent of fence, dirt and noise. The clean slate of a new year is a great time for a fresh look at what needs to happen in your life and to create some hopeful visions for the future. Who knows? You may soon have to contend with some personal fence, dirt, and noise.



Missions Committee

The Missions Committee is starting a new year with new leadership. If you are interested in joining the committee or would like more information on volunteer opportunities, contact Kim Hall at kimhallhomes@gmail.com or Kathy Platnick at KSanders@OMM.com.

Save the Date

Our 2019 church-wide Blood Drive is coming!

Friday, March 8, 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
and
Monday, March 11, 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Sign-ups will be taken by Health and Wellness team members in the 3 weeks prior to the drive.

Second Sundays At Two
Sunday, February 10, at 2:00 p.m.
~ presents ~
Stars of Tomorrow
~ from the ~
USCThornton
School of Music

The Felix Quartet

YUQI LI *violin* **NAO KUBOTA** *viola*
KEVIN TSAO *violin* **ALLAN HON** *cello*

A top student ensemble from the USC Thornton graduate program selected by Professor Karen Dreyfus, renowned violist and USC Thornton School of Music, Viola and Chamber Music Faculty.

Performs Mendelssohn's Early Masterpiece
String Quartet No. 1 in E-flat Major, Op. 12

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

Copenhagen Girls' Choir: Opportunity to Be a Host Family March 26-29

We are looking for a few more families to host 2, 3 or 4 girls (whatever suits your family), ages 14-16, from the Copenhagen Girls' Choir. Thanks to the families who have already expressed an interest! The girls arrive by bus Tuesday, March 26, and return to Copenhagen from LAX on Friday, March 29. Families who participate provide a place for the girls they host to sleep, breakfast Wednesday through Friday morning, maybe light snacks in the evening, and transportation to and from RHUMC where they will take their buses for their day's activities. And there is always the fun of spending time together, getting to know each other! We will have a table between services on Sunday, February 10, if you have any questions or would like more information. Also, feel free to contact Susan Deo at nasdeo76@gmail.com.

Dawn Unity

Dawn Unity's Annual Interfaith Bible Lecture will meet on **Sunday, February 10**, at 7:30 p.m. in our sanctuary followed by light refreshments. Rabbi Ron Shulman, Congregation Beth El, from La Jolla, CA will lecture on "Debate and Disagreement in the Bible and Beyond." For more information, call 310-833-7008.

Club Maintenance

On a rainy Saturday, January 12, twelve members of Club Maintenance and two Boy Scouts tackled a variety of tasks at Church. Working hard were Bill Bails, Steve Boilard, Bob Chamberlin, Clarence Fung, Bruce Harkins, Gene Koester, Dave Larson, Keith Levan, Nicole Lowery Zakman, Yasuko Martin, Oren Sheldon, Jim Showalter and Neil Stolz along with Scouts Nash and Landon. Tasks accomplished included replacing filters on heaters, replacing EXIT signs in Wesley Hall, replacing fluorescent bulbs in Wesley Hall, and moving supplies and furnishings out of the end of the Office Building in preparation for demolition. Club Maintenance meets next on **Saturday, February 9**, with Bob Chamberlin in charge. New members are always welcome!

United Methodist Men's Breakfast

Join us for breakfast on **Saturday, February 16**. We'll meet in the Mission Room for Coffee at 7:30 a.m.; Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. and Guest Speaker at 8:30 a.m.

Charcoal Art Class

Thank you to all who participated in the charcoal art class instructed by Curtis Green. It was a rainy day but inside were budding artists!

Sponsored by our Health and Wellness team and parish nurse

2019-2020 FALL REGISTRATION

Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool

310/377-0742

REGISTRATION DATES

Friday, February 15th to Friday, February 22nd

Rolling Hills United Methodist Church Members and Preschool Committee Members

Monday, February 25th through Monday, March 4th

CURRENTLY ENROLLED and RETURNING FAMILIES

All registration cards MUST BE RETURNED by Monday, March 4th.

Monday, March 11th through Friday, March 15th

WAITING LIST FAMILIES

The waiting list families will be contacted by phone to come and register based on available spaces left after the above registration. Boy/girl ratio is also taken into consideration.

Wednesday, March 20th – NEW FAMILIES, OPEN ENROLLMENT

After all the above registration, if we have an available space, the child will be enrolled based on boy/girl ratio in class and age. If not, the child will be put on the waiting list and will be contacted as soon as a space becomes available.

FALL CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Currently enrolled families will receive fall class assignments on Monday, March 25th and Tuesday, March 26th.

Lic. # 191600604

Children's Ministry

SAVE THE DATE
VACATION BIBLE CAMP
JULY 30TH – AUGUST 3RD, 2019

Youth Ministry

Ignite Youth Mid-Week Ministry

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. (Dinner is provided)
Feb. 6 - "Spread the Love" with Valentine's care packages
Feb. 13 - "Top Chef" Food and Faith Edition
Feb. 20 - "Game Night"
Feb. 27 - "Creation" with baking, crafting, painting and more
***Community Service Opportunity: Feb. 9, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.**
Volunteer at Walteria UMC by helping serve a hot meal for those experiencing homelessness. Please sign up with Kristin if you plan to attend.

Confirmation 2019

Youth 9th grade and older are invited to enroll in RHUMC's Confirmation program starting at the beginning of February. Please contact Kristin if you are interested in participating or would like more information.

Sierra Service Project 2019

Spots are filling fast; submit a $100 deposit as soon as possible to reserve a space on our service team! Youth entering 7th grade or 8th grade in fall of 2019 will attend the Junior High SSP, July 21-July 26 in San Diego, CA. Youth entering 9th grade through graduating seniors will attend the Senior High SSP, July 27 through August 3 in Spokane, WA. We are also looking for adult counselor volunteers that would like to chaperone with our team. Please contact Kristin to sign up.

Kristin Reksc, Director of Youth Ministries
Kristin@rhumc.org
Stay connected on social media
Facebook page: facebook.com/groups/RHyouth
Instagram: rhumcyouth_
Text Reminders: send keyword "RHUMCyouth" to 33222

Kid Zone

We are looking for fun, energetic youth interested in becoming a part of our summer family. You must be 16 years old to apply for a paid Counselor position. Graduating 8th graders and older may apply for our Jr. Counselor/Volunteer Program to earn volunteer hours.

Applications are due by **MARCH 25, 2019.** Here is how to apply:

1. Email Megan: kidzone.midzone@gmail.com

2. Fill out the Application that can be found on the website – rhumc.org/ministries/childrens-ministries/kid-zone-camps

Senior Pastor	Jonathan Chute	Associate Pastor	April Herron
Senior Pastor Emeritus	Martha Rowlett	Music Director	Chuck Dickerson
Preschool Director	Myra Ghabrial	Organist/Pianist	Althea Waites
Kid Zone Director	Megan Pelc	Music Dir., 3rd Service	Patti MacLeod
Children's Ministry Dir.	Debra DeLuca	Exec. Asst. to Pastor	Roksolana Vecerek
Youth Ministry Dir.	Kristin Reksc	Church Office Admin.	Peggy Roulette
Youth Ministry Asst.	Ryan Perry	Admin. Assistant	Ana Ysabel Lopez
Parish Nurse	Annette Matsuda	Custodian	Miguel Portillo
Treasurer	Robin La Tourette		
Church Business Mgr.	Nicole Lowery Zakman		

Church Office Phone	310-377-6771	Resident Bishop	Grant J. Hagiya
Fax Line	310-544-4123	District Superintendent	Mark Nakagawa
Web Site	www.rhumc.org		

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 25
www.rhumc.org