

Circuit Writer

Sunnyvale United Methodist Church

535 Old San Francisco Rd, Sunnyvale, CA 94086



January 2026

2025 IN REVIEW



Notes from the Associate Pastor

Pastor Bayani Alkuino



Happy New Year, everyone!

I hope your hearts are still full from the Christmas season. Many of us were blessed with time to slow down—even for just a week or two—to enjoy family, friends, and the joy that comes with being together. As a Filipino tradition, we usually make Christmas and New Year the most special season of the year. No matter how busy life gets, we do everything we can to be with the people we love.

But now, as we step into a brand-new year, we also return to our routines—the daily work, the responsibilities, the challenges we face to provide for our families. And sometimes, that shift back to “real life” which can feel heavy. From the heights of all the excite-

ment, celebrations, and fanfare, we now return to the quiet realization of everyday reality.

So, here’s a simple reminder for all of us: **God knows exactly what we’re going through.** Nothing about our situation is hidden from Him. Psalm 139:1 says, *“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.”* Whatever you carry this year—hopes, worries, or quiet prayers—God sees it. We may still have challenges from last year, and we may face new uncertainties ahead, but God knows everything we’re going through—now and in the days to come.

And God doesn’t just know us; **He sees every person, whatever their economic or political status.** Scripture reminds us in 1 Samuel 16:7, *“The Lord does not look at the things people look at... the Lord looks at the heart.”* In God’s eyes,

we are valued, known, and deeply loved. Simply put, God loves all of us. Whether we recognize it or not, whether we believe it or not—God’s love remains. If you’re sick, God loves you... If you’re tired or burdened, God loves you... If life feels uncertain or heavy, certainly God loves you.

So, as we walk into this new year, let’s hold on to His promise in Jeremiah 29:11: *“For I know the plans I have for you... plans to give you hope and a future.”* God’s plans for us are always good, and He will never leave us nor forsake us—this is His promise... Amen!

God is good.

All the time—**God is good.**

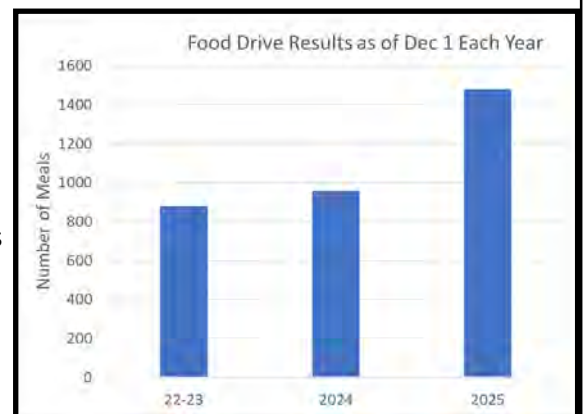
Happy New Year, and may God bless you and your family!
To God be the Glory!

Pastor Bayani

Church and Society

West Valley Community Service (WVCS) Pantry Food Barrel Program Success

Each year the Church and Society's Pantry Barrel team members periodically check to see how well the current year's pantry barrel is doing, in comparison to previous years, in terms of meals provided to the West Valley Community Services. In 2023 and 2024, it was almost a tie to the end. A total of 1,087 meals were supplied at years end in 2023; and a total of 1,078 meals were supplied at years end in 2024. Needless to say, it was a jubilant surprise when the 2025 number of meals passed the 2024 yearend number on September 1st 2025. From that point on, it was like watching Secretariat win the 1973 Triple Crown horse race by 25 lengths. This years' barrel passed the 1,200 mark on October 8th. Recall that Bob Cloke, who is responsible for monitoring the Pantry Barrel Project, was asked to set a higher goal for meals provided in 2025 than that achieved in 2024. He said we will do 1200 by years end in 2025; and, for sure, on October 8th we did! Then on November 2nd, the barrel set a new record for pounds of food items collected on one Sunday, and that was 125 pounds! And then the final, year-to-date, recorded number of meals was 1,480 on December 1st. Extending the rate of increase on December 1st to years' end yields 1,575 meals, a 46% increase over that at the end of 2024. Once again, this is a tribute to those of you who had been donating food items consistently, year after year, to the WVCS pantries via our red barrel in the narthex.



United Women In Faith

Janet Clifton-Treasurer

Someone recently asked me, "Where does the money raised by our UWF fellowship group go?" To begin answering that question, I will share **Our Vision** as written on the **UWF** website (<https://www.uwfaith.org>): *"We are a powerful, fearless force driven by God's love and united in sisterhood. With a focus on women, children and youth, we work to improve their lives, we act for justice and transform communities. Every day, we show up. We take action. We get it done."*

How do we do all of that? By sharing God's Love in our local, national and international communities. Some of the ways we take action are:

Local – 1) Providing copies of the **Upper Room Devotional booklets** for the congregation several times a year; 2) Helping support the **Vacation Bible School** event annually; 3) Adding books to our **Church Library** for spiritual growth and learning; 4) Making Jam and craft items for the **Holiday Craft Sale** to earn money for Mission programs; 5) Giving a donation to **El Camino Real District UWF** for Special Mission Recognition of our church members; 6) Donating money to **Sunnyvale Community Services and West Valley Community Services** to provide food and supplies for local families in need; 7) Sharing money with the **Bill Wilson Center** to assist homeless youth and families in our community with housing, counseling and educational support; 8) **Sending cards** to our members in celebration and when in need of support.

State – 1) Designating gifts for **El Camino Real District UWF** to help fund the Mary Elizabeth Inn and the Gum Moon Home in San Francisco; 2) Making a donation to the **American Red Cross** for disaster relief during the California wildfires; 3) Giving to **Global Ministries/UMCOR** for aid after California wildfires.

National – 1) Sending money to **UWF National Mission Institutions** "to be the hands and feet of Jesus in marginalized and vulnerable communities," especially now that Federal funding has been cut; 2) Making a gift in honor of our five SUMC high school graduates to the **UMC General Board of Higher Education and Ministry** to provide funds for national scholarships for students going into the ministry.

International – 1) Sending our Pledge money and World Thank Offering to the **El Camino Real District UWF** so that we can support Mission programs around the world; 2) Donating a gift for a **Philippine Youth Group** (via Pastor Bayani) to help children attend local church camps.

UWF members honored Donna Phillips with a \$1000 donation to the UWF Legacy Fund. This was in recognition of the 10+ years Donna served as the FUMC UMW president and then SUMC UMW/UWF president. Donna has agreed to serve as president for 2026! Thank you, Donna. Gloria Castor reports our UWF December donations to SCS were outstanding! Here is the data: food \$38.55; toys \$300; socks \$150; diapers \$62; gift cards + checks \$320...total \$870. Our gifts were eligible for matching funds... add \$1370 to our total. Thank you for your generosity, UWF!!!

UWF Monday, January 12, 2026, gathering at 1:30 PM in Johnson/Shaner rooms.

Craft workshop: Thursday Craft workshops will resume January 8 in the Johnson/Shaner rooms from 10 AM until 2 PM, unless cancelled by Pat Tubbs or Tonya Oravetz.

One Warm Scarf Project...Scarf sizes: adults 8"x80", teenagers 6"x60", children 4"x40" (janeedredge@gmail.com)

Special Offering Sunday

Human Relations Day

Human Relations Day is a denomination wide Special Sunday that celebrates and raises awareness about the strength of human relationships. A Special offering is received the Sunday before Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Day and contributes to building his vision of "the beloved community" by supporting ministries of advocacy and community engagement such as the Community Developers Program, United Methodist Voluntary Services and Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs. This year it will be celebrated on January 18, 2026.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

17 Ronald Nathan
23 Rijula Edwin
31 Pam Hardin



2 Donald & Mary Jo Morin
27 Ronald & Ruhi Nathan

Looking Back

- Our church was blessed with the birth of baby, Aiden Solomon born to Eunice Daphne and Nishanth Solomon.
- The Church took in new members: Chandra Lama, Chewang Lama, Constantine Boch, Jan Thompson, Vicky Ortega, Pam Guerrero & Frances Scott.
- We also lost beloved members: Emile Roth, Kim Ong, Joyce Molyneaux, Lloyd McBeth, Flo Lord, Sally Flick, Tom Morse, Leslyn Lyons.
- We celebrated the baptism of Pam Guerrero.
- We conducted a church wide survey and held a workshop in January led by Rev. Sam Yun to help us build a thriving congregation.
- Our vision & core values were created.
- Our new vision statements reads: *"More than a church: an intergenerational, multicultural, inclusive community where faith is alive, love is action and transformation is real."*
- Our Core values are *welcome, service and renewal*.
- Our ethnic and international diversity was apparent in the multicultural month in February where we had our altar displaying beautiful artifacts from different parts of the world.
- On the 1st Sunday of April we celebrated our 3rd anniversary as a merged church.
- We held our Vacation Bible School in June which was very well attended by 14 kids and 6 youth volunteers.
- UWF awarded Mission Recognition Awards to Mary Ruth Green & Chris Perianayagam.
- We enjoyed music from the Hanul Hamul Sori children's choir and New Choir.
- Proceeds from the United Women in Faith Holiday Craft Sale were close to \$8100 to be used in mission projects.
- Operation Christmas Child was able to supply 102 shoeboxes to children in different parts of the world.
- Our annual picnic, Ice cream social, Halloween Carnival and Thanksgiving lunch were enjoyed by one and all.
- We installed a new HVAC system in the Choir Room, J/S Room, Ralston Room and the library.
- We replaced the roof over the office and Johnson Shaner Room.
- New lighting was installed in the sanctuary.
- We updated our Audio system in the sanctuary and Nick's Hall.
- We installed a new LED sign with our church's name and updated the new map of our campus.
- A new Angel garden was created in front of the office in memory of Mike Yamada.
- The sacristy was cleaned, painted and new cabinets installed to house worship & A/V supplies.
- The children and youth put up a magical performance depicting the birth of Jesus.
- The Cantata and gift exchange Sunday was enjoyed by all.
- Our Christmas Eve evening worship service was very well attended and liked by many.