

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista
United Church of Christ

April 2014

Pastor's Corner

I'm late! I'm late! It's April 1, and here I am still working on the POST for April. March was an eventful month for me, with acute illness and a trip to the emergency room followed by surgery and recovery.

This all happened a lot faster than I could adjust to it: my body may still be confused over whether it has a gall bladder, and some part of me is still in a sun-covered hospital bed glorying in the sacredness of the flowers all around me.

Just because we live at warp speed doesn't mean that we can stay present to each rapid change without a period of adjustment. That period, that in-between time, the time for our bodies, our psyches to catch up with what is truly the present moment, is called transition time, the liminal space.

Transitions are a powerful time for rest, reflection, solitude: so much of the power is in the waiting and the listening and the trusting (or not trusting).

Sometimes we may think of it as "stuck," wondering if anything is happening.

A friend wrote this to me: "I seemed to be stuck in an old pattern for what felt like a long time, and now I realize I wasn't stuck at all. I was moving into a new awareness and freeing myself to move on in my life in a new way. It's such a peaceful transition now. (I understand that this could change at any time!) I have clarity about a new project I want to start. Not sure of anything but the beginning steps, and that feels exactly right. The next steps will



come. And I have clarity about some next personal steps to take. Nice!"

Nice, indeed. Most of the people I talk to these days feel a little bit guilty about how fast Lent is whizzing by and how they haven't kept up whatever it was they had hoped to do or not do. Now let that go....

How about using the rest of Lent to catch up with yourself? Take some deep breaths and wonder at the pace of your life. Imagine if there were nothing you needed to fix or improve. Sit in the sun or walk in the rain and simply notice what is.

Dear souls, you have been through so much. Let it be....

With love and admiration,

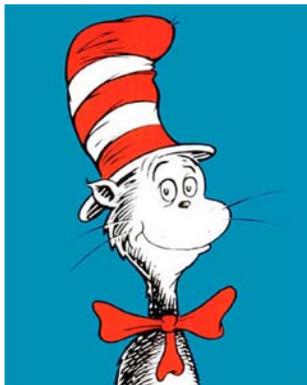
Pastor
Susan

If you are following the gospel stories each week in church, Jesus is in his own transition time: between small-town teacher and healer to notorious revolutionary in the big city. In the coming weeks we will see how the Creator's beloved, sent to show us the love of God, copes with the events that lie in his path, and the Great Love that becomes visible to his nearest and dearest even after his violent death. This is your legacy; inhale the power of Jesus' name. Alleluia!



One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, April 6, 2014

*But now, says the Once-ler,
Now that you're here,
the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear.
UNLESS someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.
It's not.*



What if Dr. Suess were giving this One Great Hour of Sharing pitch? It is clearer than clear and as muddled as mud, we're connected we are, no matter the fuss. See here, you might say, I live in the hay and you in a castle high. How

can you see from your point in the sky the struggles of mine, the wherefores and whys? And furthermore why do you care?

Well since I asked for you, then let me reply, I'm connected to you and you to I. First I must ask your forgiveness you see. Dr. Thurman did say in his own special way that forgiveness is needed indeed. For me to help you is a oneupamus pose; what I need is a levelasana. It's not your hunger I need, to make me feel good. It's all of your personhood.

And while I'm at it, just let me say, well, let me understand that is, what's up with the hay? Is that what you want; would you rather the sky? Because I'm a practical sort, not all touches and feels. If you need some new digs we'll just cut to the chase; we'll work it together, we'll do it post haste.

Dr. Suess with commentary by Barbara Cook

Congregational Meeting April 6

Join us after church for an
important "Next Steps"
meeting.

April Birthdays!

1st Dan Hariton
4th Joan Thompson
7th Bill Willcuts
7th Paul Honigs
10th Cordell Britt
13th Bishop Edwina
Perez-Santiago

The Fellowship Post

Editor: Latifah Abdullah
published monthly by Mira Vista
United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
780 Ashbury Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(510) 526-0110
office@miravistaucc.org
www.miravistaucc.org

Rev. Susan Meeter, pastor
revmeeter@miravistaucc.org

An Open Door . . . My Florence Experience

Buon giorno;

I have to share a magical experience I had this Sunday morning in Florence. I had spent the entire morning (4 hours) grading essays and was getting cross eyed and cranky. I decided to go out to the Santo Spirito market to get some food. It was pouring rain with thunder and lightening so the market was closed.

What was open, however, were the great wooden doors to the church of Santo Spirito (the neighborhood church containing various Michelangelo sculptures and Renaissance paintings I hadn't visited yet). I wandered in as they were doing communion mass. Singing was a choir whose voices echoed throughout the stone walls.

The priest was African and had a very gentle and melodic voice. His Italian was simple and I could almost follow it. I sat down and stood up along with the crowd. Afterwards I went up to one of the brothers cleaning up the altar and wanted him to tell the priest (who was gone by this point) that although I could not understand it all, I appreciated his voice and energy during the service.

It turned out he and the priest are from the Congo and speak French better than Italian, which was great since I speak much better French than Italian as well, but he was very eager to speak in English. I discovered that he had wanted to practice speaking English but all the parishioners at the church of course spoke only Italian. He was happy to introduce me to the priest who preached earlier (a visiting priest, working on his doctorate, who also spoke French). They gave me a private tour of the cathedral and explained various things to me about the history of the church and I asked a lot of questions about Catholicism and their St. Augustine order. It was a great lesson in English for them to try to explain about their

religion to me. I was invited to coffee in their parish kitchen and we exchanged emails. Brother Abel (the first priest I spoke to) wants to meet for coffee next week to practice speaking English, and I want to know more about what it's like to be a Congolese Catholic priest in Italy. In a time when there is so much political strife, it's a good to feel like you are building bridges of peace where you can.

It all happened because I walked into an open door.....

love
Wendy

Wendy & Michael Wisely in Venice



Olivia visits the Pope



Cindy Acker



The Amazing Graces are thrilled to introduce to you our new music director, Cindy Acker.

Cindy has been a member of two professional choirs: the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir and the Glide Ensemble, and a choir director for over ten

years. She has been involved in choir leadership for social justice, singing in the Governor's chambers, local jails and in Canada for a musical she wrote to give voice to the youth of LGBT families of faith.

Cindy has a degree in spirituality from Holy Names University's Sophia Program. She is a native San Franciscan, who by day, is principal of a Montessori school in Alameda and a public policy adviser. She has three adult children (Brionna and Jonathan live at home, along with two cats - Munchkin and Bo, and Brionna's dog, Bandit).

Cindy loves live theatre; she loves to walk, and to listen to NPR radio.

We at Mira Vista UCC are so happy to know you and your family, Cindy. We are eager for your music leadership and trust the Spirit-led music we are making together. May God bless these new bonds.

Virginia (Lindberg) Carrier's WWII Adventures

At Ventura High School in 1940, the boys were given a class in *Cooking*: I thought there should be a "boys' class" for girls. So I went to the Dean of Women (who later became a Marine Corps officer) and she said if I could get 15 girls to sign a petition she'd find something for us. The result was that 25 of us were able to enroll in a "*Sheet Metal*" class, to the delight of the instructor. He'd never had a class of women before and he brought in all kinds of tools for us to learn and use.

At the end of the year he brought in applications to Douglas Aircraft, Lockheed, and many others. I filled out and mailed all of them and shortly I received an interview application to Douglas in Long Beach. I went to Douglas and was told that if I passed the physical, I would be hired. I did pass the physical and Daddy took me home to pack and back to Long Beach

where I worked on B27s. I was there for almost a year until I was needed at home. Daddy came to get me and the next day took me down to Marin Ship in Sausalito where I was hired as a drill-press operator.

I worked there until I heard women were going into the Marine Corps. So I took off work and went in to San Francisco and applied, but I had to wait until my 20th birthday before I could be inducted. I continued work at Marin Ship until January 28, 1944, my birthday, when I became a Marine. I was sent to North Carolina for six weeks of boot camp. When that was completed I was shipped to the Marine Corps Base in San Diego where I enjoyed every minute of it.

One of the highlights was being chosen with 49 other women Marines and 50 male Marines to go to Hollywood to be in a movie with Fred MacMurphy, June Haver, and Joan Lesley called "Where Do we Go From Here?" We spent 3 days on the set and when the movie was released, it took my parents three times watching it before they could find me in the group.

When the war was over, I was discharged in February, 1946. The unexpected and wonderful benefit of having been in the Marine Corps was the GI Bill, which allowed me to graduate from UC Berkeley in 1949 and also to attend and do my practice teaching at the University of Hawaii.





Mira Vista United Church of Christ

780 Ashbury Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530

Email: office@miravistaucc.org

Website: www.miravistaucc.org

Phone: 510 526 0110

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | 1 Mira Vista prepares lunch, Souper Center, 10am Mindfulness @ home of Laura Perez, 7pm | 2 | 3 Amazing Graces Choir Rehearsal, 7pm | 4 | 5 Yoga 9am-10:15am |
| 6 Noon Worship Holy Communion <i>OGHS Offering</i> Congregational Meeting after Church | 7 Leadership Meeting @ Namaste, 12:30pm Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm | 8 | 9 Council Meeting @ El Cerrito Royale, 6:45pm | 10 Amazing Graces Choir Rehearsal, 7pm | 11 | 12 Yoga 9am-10:15am |
| 13 Noon Worship  Palm Sunday Worship & Potluck | 14 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm | 15 Mindfulness Group @ Susan & Barbara's house, 7pm | 16 | 17 Amazing Graces Choir Rehearsal, 7pm | 18 | 19 |
| 20 Noon Worship Easter!  | 21 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm | 22 | 23 | 24 Amazing Graces Choir Rehearsal, 7pm | 25 Susan @ NCNCUCC Training | 26 Yoga 9am-10:15am |
| 27 Noon Worship Rev Lois Mueller Preaching Social Action Team Meeting After Church | 28 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm | 29 Mindfulness Group, 7pm | 30 | | | |

Worship for April 2014

April 6, 2014, 12 noon
Holy Communion
John 11:1-45; Ezekiel 37:1-14
Breath of Life

Congregational Meeting follows

April 13, 2014, 12 noon
Palm/Passion Sunday
from the Gospel of Matthew
followed by Middle Eastern potluck

Spring Song
by Lucille Clifton



April 20, 2014, 12 noon
Easter Sunday!
Matthew 28:1-10
Shalom! Don't Be Afraid

April 27, 2014, 12 noon
Guest preacher Rev. Lois Mueller
John 20:19-31
Trust Me, Rely on Me

the green of Jesus
is breaking the ground
and the sweet
smell of delicious Jesus
is opening the house and
the dance of Jesus music
has hold of the air and
the world is turning
in the body of Jesus and
the future is possible

Address Change Requested

Dated Material
April 2014

