

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista
United Church of Christ

April 2016

Melinda's Musings:

by Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain

The eye through which I see God is the same eye through which God sees me; my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one love. – Meister Eckhart, Sermons of Meister Eckhart

Meister Eckhart was a 14th century mystic and theologian who was tried several times for heresy by the Inquisition and finally censured by the Dominicans. Many of his admirers continue to work to have his censure lifted and while Pope John Paul II quoted him on occasion, Eckhart's teachings still lie beyond Roman Catholic orthodoxy.

Amongst other things, Eckhart was an early Christian proponent of **non-dualism** which has become very popular in this century in part because it creates so much common ground with our Buddhist friends. Non-Dualism asserts the somewhat simple, yet powerful idea, that "the universe in all its multiplicity are ultimately expressions or appearances of the same reality." (Espin and Nickoloff, *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies*, 2007)

Our **Mindfulness Circle** has spent a lot of time discussing and thinking about non-dualism while studying the works of Richard Rohr. We also encounter non-dualism during our **Interfaith Zen** meditations on koans. I personally believe that Eckhart and Rohr's ideas about non-dualism are beautifully consonant with the mystical unity that is at the heart of the Gospel of John.



As the lectionary moves into the **Gospel of John for Eastertide**, the seven Sundays after Easter, before the Day of Pentecost on May 15th, I invite us all to ponder our sense of the "**seamlessness of things**" as a way to gain strength to counter a culture that would divide us at every turn.

What difference would it make if we could stop categorizing things (and people!) as either "good" or "bad"? Have you ever been told that you are "bad" in some fundamental way? How did that make you feel? How can we help one another to break down the walls of intolerance that keep us separate from one another?

Finding the Right Form

By Pastor Melinda

Our meetings with our legal team from the **New Business Law Practicum** continue and we are now considering the pros and cons of whether to remain a **non-profit, a for-profit, or a hybrid entity** for our café church. The team has also given us a primer in employment law including job training models and a model that includes seminarians and/or vowed religious workers.

The perfect path forward is not clear, but we are working diligently and researching lots of models to find one that we think will work well for Mira Vista. We are also working on a **business plan** and would appreciate input from any of you about resources that could help. In order to produce this plan, we need to investigate real estate possibilities (without going into "buying" mode) and most

importantly: projected operating and staffing costs for our envisioned enterprise.

If you want to hear more about this process in detail or offer ideas and suggestions, do speak with **Bonnie Hariton, Tom Emanuel, Colleen Rodger, or Pastor Melinda**. And do save the date now for an **all-day retreat on Saturday, April 23rd** when **Bob Pearson of the One World Everybody Eats** foundation will come to talk to us about the pay-what-you-can café movement. By that time, we hope to be able to present more of the potential business model and plan.

News from the Pews

Virginia Carrieri has now moved into “Life’s Garden” memory care unit at El Cerrito Royale where our member **Tharon McDavid** already lives. Her son and daughter-in-law will continue to have Teresa bring her to church on Sundays, but she will no doubt appreciate visits and calls. She will soon be giving up her cell phone, so the best way to reach her will be to call the main line at **El Cerrito Royale (510) 234-5200** and ask for **Life’s Garden** so they can take the phone to her.

Our office administrator, **Diane Young** will be traveling to Southern California again to help with the care of her beloved uncle. Traveling mercies for her and prayers for her 92 yr. old uncle.

Bonnie and Dan Hariton have just returned from Montana where their grandchildren presented science projects for a national conference. **Eric** did a presentation on fog and **Vivian** did a project on the effects of different kinds of sugar on blood sugar levels using her family as her test subjects. Bonnie and Dan have great videos of their presentations.

The **Masquer’s Playhouse** in Point Richmond where **Kathe Kiehn and Heinz Lankford** are leaders had to be closed for the rest of this season for serious renovation. What will happen when Heinz has more free time?

Any other news? Let Pastor Melinda know by the 20th of the month. We are especially desirous of news from our extended Mira Vista community.

Sprained Ankles

by Tom Emanuel

Jesus asked his disciples, “Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?”

Far be it from me to quibble with the Master, but at the risk of impudence, might I suggest... you should’ve retold the parable, J.C.

I know, I know. You were riffing on your favorite theme, tossing off variations like the virtuoso you always were. “Do unto others.” “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” “Don’t be a wretched prick.”

But this time you made it sound like we might one day pluck that pesky mote from out our eye and see all things clearly, achieve that long-coveted perfection.

After all, weren’t you the one who rebuked the rich young ruler: “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.”

(I know, I know. It’s not as if you expected anyone to write this all down, let alone chapter and verse it.)

But you know as well as I that the pollen count of human existence is too high for any spiritual antihistamine.

The blind *always* lead the blind. It’s just that some people (like you) have stumbled ‘round in the dark long enough that they’ve learned where the ditches are—and they’ve got the sprained ankles to prove it.

May 2015 - Berkeley, CA



1st Dan Hariton
4th Joan Thompson
7th Bill Willcutts
7th Paul Honigs
10th Cordell Britt

Happy Birthday to each of you with love from Mira Vista!

Mira Vista United Church of Christ

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April

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Pastor Melinda & Colleen at Interfaith Zen, April 1-3	2
3 12n Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion Tom Emanuel, preaching	4	5 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10a  Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	6	7 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p No choir rehearsal	8	9
10 12n Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion	11	12 Council meeting, Melinda's office, 7p	13	14 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p	15	16
17 12n Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion	18	19 Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	20	21 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p	22	23 Mira Vista All-Day Retreat @Colleen and Melinda's, 10a-3p. Lunch will be provided
24 12n Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion	25	26	27	28 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p	29	30

Our worship life together . . .

Join us on **Sundays at 12 noon** for our celebration with music and preaching, then stay for lunch because our worship continues as we share food and friendship together at La Mesa. We celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion every First Sunday in the sanctuary and during La Mesa on subsequent Sundays. All are welcome at our table! During **Eastertide**, the seven Sundays of Easter culminating with the **Day of Pentecost on May 15**, we will encounter the Risen Christ as reported in the **Gospel of John**.

- April 3 "Doubting Thomas: My Patron Saint" John 20: 24-29
Tom Emanuel, preaching
- April 10 "Beach Blanket Breakfast" John 21: 1, 12-17
- April 17 "More About Sheep" John 10: 22-30
- April 24 "Earning your Bona Fides" John 13: 31-35
- May 1 "The Peace of Love" John 14:23-29



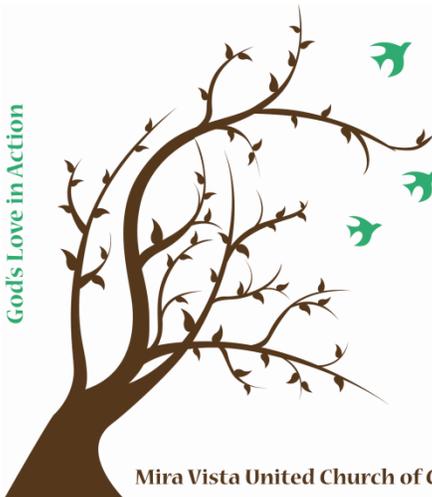
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God's Love in Action



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