



The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista United Church of Christ

August 2014

Moderator's Corner

One hot day in New Orleans in May, we volunteers from Mira Vista UCC spent the morning painting the outside of a house in Orleans parish a shade of "Hazy Jade" green. The interior of the house had been cleared of furniture and belongings, and the wallboard had been removed in every room. So it was dark inside with only the wood framing showing, and cool from a little breeze coming through the living room front door and out through the dining room, kitchen, and back door. The house was built off the ground by about four feet, and even so, inside, the water line from the Storm came up to my waist. After lunch, I was resting in the living room with "legs up the wall" - a rejuvenating yoga pose, boots on. Along comes Pastor Susan. "What are you doing there?" she asked me. "It is time to get back to work!" When Pastor Susan calls you to action, there is nothing you can do but get up and get going.

Goodbye, dear Susan - and Barbara also, and thanks for putting me to work! I remember doing so many things together. In New Orleans, setting up scaffolding, painting "with the grain," learning how to cook blackened catfish; at church in El Cerrito, creating a Día de los Muertos offering table, making prayer bracelets, piecing together the paper "stained glass" logo with tree and birds; at Susan and Barbara's home, planning the big MVUCC move, writing a grant proposal, developing a web site,



making plans for Advent and for Easter. "A person cries out for work that is real" says Marge Piercy in the last line of her poem, *To be of use*. How grateful I am for these past years together, moving, as the poet says, "in a common rhythm," with work that

promotes social and economic justice in the world, art that brings happiness, and worship to a loving God that brings health and healing.

Now our church feels somewhat empty. We are in transition, like the house in Orleans getting ready for its family. It is not easy to say goodbye! At home our parting is always, "I love you!" except, with Ursul our dog, we always say "We'll be back!" We humans need that reassurance of continuity and love. This separation from Susan and Barbara is harder, because we know they will not be back, not for a long while, at least, and never in the same way as before. I don't know about you, but letting go lightly is not one of my strong points! Yet, it is satisfying to have made Church together and finished well with celebrations and worship. Our time as a congregation with Susan and Barbara has a roundedness, a completeness, an ample wholeness. One thing I'm certain of: for us, as for the house in Orleans, there will be more work to do, more people coming to join in, more memories to treasure. A blessing on our separate ways: may they be full with work that is real, and love that is lasting.

-Bonnie Hariton



Social Action Team

This past week checks went out to San Francisco Night Ministry Van fundraiser, RYSE (welcoming &

affirming youth community center in Richmond), Breast Cancer Action Fund (activism on environmental causes of cancer), Puente de la Costa Sur (UCC project with low-income farm workers & their families), Common Ground Relief (New Orleans on-the-ground, local-initiated action for change), Contra Costa Crisis Center (resources for people in crisis), Charlotte Maxwell Complementary Clinic (low-income women with breast cancer), Textweek.com (free, comprehensive links to progressive Bible resources for study, worship, and research). After the above donations we have approximately \$3,000 remaining for donations during the fall of this year.

We recall the amazing variety of projects our Social Action Team has initiated and organized over the past years and how enthusiastically the entire congregation & friends have participated. The Social Action Team will deeply miss Pastor Susan and the guidance and insight she has contributed to our group. There was a lot of love and laughter in our meetings.

We will now move forward to assist our new minister with future priorities for social action in our communities and worldwide, and we will be recruiting additional members to our team in the fall.

We are planning to engage our whole congregation in a new UCC 2014-2015 low-literacy campaign across the U.S. The first action, this fall, invites everyone across the UCC to read and discuss "Hotdogs and Hamburgers: Unlocking Life's Potential by Rob

Shindler. We can purchase multiple books at a discount through the UCC.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Sugg



Support for Our Former Mira Vista UCC Seminarians

At our Semi-Annual Meeting in June we voted to send \$2500 to 10 of our previous seminarian students. Last year in a Social Action Team meeting we started talking about the school debt that our seminarians had incurred and wondered if some had paid it off or were still burdened by the debt.

We passed our thoughts on this subject to Council and they were concerned also. We sent out letters and got a number of replies confirming that there is a great deal of debt among our previous seminarians. Some as much as \$70,000.

You have probably read some of the lovely letters from seminarians in the POST. It was a joy to hear from them. One letter particularly nice was from Jennifer Mills-Knutsen. Because of her positive experience as a minister in training at Mira Vista, she now mentors students from a local seminary.

We hope that our checks to our previous seminarians might ease their burden a bit, show how we value the contribution they are making, support the future of the UCC, and do our small part in making seminary education more affordable.

Respectively submitted,
Sylvia Sugg



What is Covered California?

Covered California is our state's new health insurance marketplace, the place to go for affordable health care coverage.

Soon after the passage of the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the State of California became the first state in the nation to enact legislation to establish a health insurance marketplace. Although originally known as the California Health Benefit Exchange, the state adopted "Covered California" as the business name for California's health insurance marketplace through which individuals and small businesses can access affordable health insurance plans.

Beginning in 2013, Covered California has been helping individuals compare health insurance plans and choose the plan that works best for their needs and budget. Covered California will also allow individuals to understand whether they qualify for insurance affordability programs, such as premium assistance and advanced premium tax credits. Small businesses will be able to purchase competitively priced health insurance plans, offer their employees the ability to choose from any array of plans, and some small businesses may qualify for federal tax credits.

The vision of Covered California is to improve the health of all Californians by assuring their access to affordable high quality care.

For some individuals, navigating the healthcare exchange can be burdensome. Covered California has trained Certified Enrollment Counsels (CEC) whose sole function is to provide one-on-one, in-person assistance to educate consumers on health care options and guide the enrollment process. The Certified Enrollment Counselor's functions within Certified Enrollment Entities which are made up of trusted and known organizations that serves as critical resources for consumers.

The Certified Enrollment Entity (CEE) is the organization that provides the resources for consumers. The CEE is responsible for promoting Covered California as a trusted

resource for health care coverage by establishing an internal system of quality and compliance while adhering to Covered California's monitoring and evaluation requirements. CEE's have direct access to Covered California's primary populations.

Certified Enrollment Counselor (CEC) is an individual that works for or volunteers with a CEE. This is the individual that is responsible for providing one-on-one, in-person assistance to educate consumers on health care options and guide the enrollment process.

Open enrollment for Covered California is November 2014 (and for those who qualify for Med-i-Cal, there is no open enrollment, you can enroll at any time). If you or anyone you know need assistance enrolling in a health plan, please feel free to contact me. I am a trained Certified Enrollment Counselor and can assist you with the process. You can contact me at Mira Vista UCC at 510-526-0110 or 323-864-4698 (cell).

-Diane Young

August Celebrations



4th Pastor Susan Meeter
8th Thom Longino
16th Nan Smekofske
18th Tharon McDavid
19th Ardith Hayes
30th Michael Ozenberger



3rd Wendy & Michael Wisely
22nd Barbara & Bob Bly
24th Patsy & Stan Severson

Lots of happiness to each of you on your special day!

With love, Mira Vista



Dear friends,

This is the gift you gave Barbara and me: 2 nights at a cottage in Inverness, which is on Tomales Bay in Point Reyes National Seashore. We can't wait! And at the same time I want to wait, to savor my anticipation a bit longer. Perhaps early October would be a good time to get away for a bit.

This is an extraordinary gift, and you couldn't have consciously known that every time I have driven past this cottage on the way to the ocean, I have always thought, "What a cool place! I wonder what it would be like to stay there." I love water, and love to be in it, on it, or near it, and I suspect this weekend will include all three.

with gratitude, admiration, and love,

your former pastor
Susan Meeter



**Mark your Calendars:
Candidate for Minister Preaching on
Sunday, August 17, 2014!**

The Search Committee is happy to announce that we have selected a candidate for our pastor position! The candidate will be leading worship and preaching at Mira Vista UCC on Sunday August 17. After worship we will hold a Congregational Meeting to vote on accepting the candidate as our full-time, three-year designated term minister. We urge everyone to come to worship to meet and hear the candidate. Everyone is also welcome to participate at the congregational meeting, and MVUCC members will be asked for their votes. This is an exciting next step in our transition from one minister to another, and in our continuing ministry as an open and affirming spiritual community that actively supports social and economic justice.



Mira Vista United Church of Christ

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2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 HOLY COMMUNION Worship Service, 12 Noon Rev. Thom Longino, presiding	4 No Yoga	5	6	7	8	9
10 12 Noon Worship Chris Hockley, former minister-in-training, presiding	11 No Yoga	12	13	14	15	16
17 12 Noon Worship Candidating Sunday, Congregational meeting after Church	18 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	19	20	21	22	23
24 12 Noon Worship	25 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	26	27 Council meeting @ El Cerrito Royale, 6:45 pm	28	29	30
31 12 Noon Worship						

Mira Vista UCC Worship Services, August, 2014

August 3, 2014, 12 noon
Holy Communion
Rev. Thom Longino, presiding

August 10, 12 noon
Chris Hockley, former minister-in-training, presiding

August 17, 12 noon
Candidating Sunday

August 24, 12 noon
New Min



The Fellowship Post

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*An Open and Affirming
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Bonnie Hariton, moderator
Sylvia Sugg, Vice moderator

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Dated Material
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