

# The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista  
United Church of Christ

February 2013

## PASTOR'S CORNER

*THE SITUATION:* In 1963, Birmingham ministers criticized the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's protests and demonstrations as "unwise and untimely." In his "Letter from Birmingham Jail" he listed the wise and timely steps the civil rights movement took as they pressured their communities for change:

"In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; purification; and direct action."

First they talked with the people suffering; they collected the facts of injustice. Then they negotiated with the powers who could do something about the injustice. Often these steps were repeated several times.

Finally, driven to action by the unwillingness of the people with power and authority to change, they took a step called "Purification." This step made all the difference in their survival and effectiveness. This step gave the marchers the tremendous soul force that could not be stopped, could not be denied.

"Purification" was a time of collective soul searching, of workshops on non-violence, of singing and prayer. Among their resources were the Bible and the teachings of Jesus, the writing of Mahatma Ghandi, and their own soul power formed from their histories and experience. Each person had to answer whether he or she was able to accept blows without retaliating. Each one had to come to terms with whether she or he could endure the ordeal of jail.



Only when the purification had been completed did they take action. The marches, boycotts, sit-ins, and demonstrations created tension that forced the powers to respond, and called everyone to rise from prejudice and racism to understanding and brotherhood.

I recall this for you now because the Christian season of Lent we enter mid-month is also a time of purification, an opportunity for collective soul-searching that comes around every year. May we use this time to prepare ourselves for action that seeks justice; may we be purified and strengthened in our soul force. Having been purified and strengthened, we will be led to right actions for our time and place, actions that increase love and strengthen peace, in our hearts and in our communities.

Showing up with our whole selves, may we become sisters and brothers by choice with all who have been shut out, with all who do justice and love mercy, and with all agents of expansion of life against the forces of oppression – together recognizing our inter-relatedness, together leading each other home.

May our lives be made sacred in relation to one another and to God. May we discover the Presence of God in each one and may our hearts continue to mellow together.

Pastor  
Susan

## Social Action Team Corner

**Toiletries.** Mira Vista has been collecting toiletries for a long time for the Souper Center; we will now also collect for Puente. Both organizations need shampoo, soap, razors, deodorant, and lotion. If you are traveling, the small bottles of those items from hotels/motels are great or you can find these trial/travel size items for sale in stores. Put your donations in the container in the social hall at church.

*Sylvia Sugg*

**Scarf Project.** As outlined in the semi-annual meeting last month, Mira Vista UCC has decided to encourage its members to participate in the UCC Scarf Project. Here is the gist of the matter downloaded from the UCC website:

*In a colorful, symbolic move to stem the tide of violence - most notably, the recent wave of bullying - the Rev. Marja Coons-Tornhas created the UCC Scarf Project with a goal of crafting 3,000 scarves in time for the United Church of Christ's General Synod 29 ... in Long Beach, Calif. Scarves of varying patterns - each sporting rainbow colors - are being made to be given to Synod attendees who pledge to commit to acting against violence. "It could be talking with your school superintendent about bullying, volunteering at a women's shelter or writing to your senators," said Coons-Torn of the advocacy possibilities.*

*"So when someone walks up to you at General Synod and asks you about your scarf, you offer to give it to them if they will agree to take an action against violence," she said. "Then you can return to the display hall and pick out a new scarf."*

The dimensions of the scarves are to be about 60" long and 4 - 6" wide. They can be crocheted, knit, sewn, quilted, tied, or whatever you want as long as they are rainbow-hued. Scarves will be collected, put on display in the church, and then mailed out before the General Synod (June 28th - July 2nd). If you'd like pattern suggestions, please feel free to ask.

Here are my scarves:



The mission of the Social Action Team is to coordinate Mira Vista's mission projects, focusing on civil and human rights issues at both the local and global levels.

*Amy Ukena*

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS!

### *Birthdays*

*1<sup>st</sup> Barbara Cook*

*1<sup>st</sup> Adelle Lemon*

*25<sup>th</sup> Elizabeth Claman*

*26<sup>th</sup> Deborah McClain*

### *Anniversaries*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Heather Koshinsky & Kent McCue*

*The Fellowship Post*

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United Church of Christ

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## From the Music Stand

Dear Mira Vistans,



It feels good to be back with you all again after being away for six months. Thank you for your constant love and prayers. I know I would never have made it through chemo and surgery without you. Now I'm well on the way to a complete recovery, cancer-free and with a whole new appreciation for exercise and diet.

The Amazing Graces have a new schedule from now until June; they will be rehearsing in blocks of time, rather than every Thursday evening. If you have an interest in singing but don't want to commit to weeks of rehearsals, we'll be happy to have you join in for as long or as short as you want.

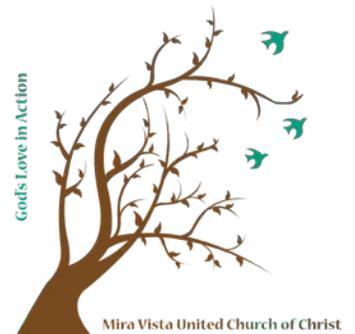
Next up: the Amazing Graces will be singing on Racial Justice Sunday, Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. As we've done in the past, we will be using music to highlight the struggle and the successes of our ancestors and allies during the worship service.

The following Sunday is the first Sunday in Lent. The Amazing Graces will sing all throughout Lent, culminating on Palm Sunday (March 24<sup>th</sup>) and Easter (March 31<sup>st</sup>). We hope that our offerings throughout this season bring you joy.

May peace "reign" down on us all,

Amy

“Without singers  
our drum will wither away.  
Without singers  
our culture will wither away.  
Without singers  
our children will wither away.”  
a Native American song



## NEW MEMBER SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Two people have committed to new membership in Mira Vista United Church of Christ on February 24 – you too are invited and welcome! Please speak to Pastor Susan if you feel ready to make this commitment.

In joining our congregation you are saying **“I want my relationship with this church to have a future. I would like to share my commitment with all of you and be held to what I want to be and do as I walk the life of faith with you.”**

Mira Vista UCC is a direct descendant of the earliest congregational churches in the New England settlements (for better and for worse). For your amazement I share with you the Salem Covenant of 1629, which was the affirmation people made when they joined the Congregational Church in that time and place.

**We Covenant with the Lord and one with an other;  
and doe bynd our selves in the presence of God,  
to walke together in all his waies,  
according as he is pleased to reveale himselfe unto us  
in his Blessed word of truth**

Church and state were one in this settlement: you could not be a citizen of this community unless you were also a church member. Prospective member/citizens were examined carefully as to their knowledge, experience of grace, and godly conversation. As the community became less homogeneous, they enlarged the covenant to include articles covering harmony and fellowship.

Students of human nature and history that we all are, you may recall that a paper covenant was never enough to keep people from turning into a foul mob against a perceived other, as in the Salem witch trials.

Still, covenants do help as plumb lines in times of uncertainty. I offer you here affirmations of Progressive Christianity, of which we are a member. What needs to be added?

By calling ourselves progressive Christians, we mean that we are Christians who....

1. Believe that following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life;
2. Affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide one of many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom in our spiritual journey;
3. Seek community that is inclusive of ALL people, including but not limited to: conventional Christians and questioning skeptics, believers and agnostics, women and men, those of all sexual orientations and gender identities, those of all classes and abilities;
4. Know that the way we behave towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe;
5. Find grace in the search for understanding and believe there is more value in questioning than in absolutes;
6. Strive for peace and justice among all people;
7. Strive to protect and restore the integrity of our Earth; and
8. Commit to a path of life-long learning, compassion, and selfless love.





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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Yoga, 9-10:15 am
3 Holy Communion 12 Noon Worship 	4 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm	5 Mira Vista prepares lunch, Souper Center, 10am   Mindfulness group @ 6:45pm; Location tbd	6 Council Meeting @ Pastor Susan's, 7pm	7 Choir, 7pm	8	9 Yoga, 9-10:15 am
10 12 Noon Worship	11 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm	12 Bible Study, 1pm	13 Ash Wednesday Ritual / Soup @ Pastor Susan's, 7pm	14 Choir, 7pm	15	16 No Yoga
17 12 Noon Worship	18 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm	19 Bible Study, 1pm	20	21 Choir, 7pm	22	23 Yoga, 9-10:15 am
24 12 Noon Worship New Member Sunday	25 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm	26 Bible Study, 1pm	27	28 Choir, 7pm		

## Worship for February 2013

Sunday, February 3, 12 noon  
Holy Communion  
Luke 7:1-10  
*Intersections of Healing*

Sunday, February 10, 12 noon  
Racial Justice Sunday  
Luke 9:28-45  
*Chop Wood and Carry Water*

Sunday, February 17, 12 noon  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent  
Luke 10:25-42  
*Walking the Jericho Road with Jesus*

Sunday, February 24  
New Member Sunday  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent  
Luke 13:1-9, 31-35  
*Desperate Hope with Jesus*

- As we continue our journey through the Gospel of Luke, we add another lens of perspective by adding our Christian season of Lent.
- What hope and encouragement can we harvest from these stories of Jesus and his desperate people in a time of persecution and approaching war?
- In all situations, in any and all times, Jesus teaches that all of us together must **recognize what is just; turn and repent where needed; repeat.** That is the call; that is the cure. We do not walk alone, dearly beloved. May the kingdom of God rise like leavened bread – may the Presence of God be yeast in us.



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Address Change Requested

**Dated Material**  
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