

# The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista  
United Church of Christ

January 2016

## Melinda's Musings:

by Pastor Melinda

### **God is a verb, not a noun. – Buckminster Fuller**

It strikes me that any attempt to describe God is futile. Some poets and psalmists get close, on occasion, but the best descriptions, in my view are woefully inadequate. And so I love Buckminster Fuller's wise words that "God is a Verb".

Of course, this is not an original thought. Ancient Kabbalah, the system of esoteric Jewish mysticism also asserts that God is a Verb and many other wisdom traditions teach this in one form or another.

I have said in a number of settings that we are a community of faith *and practice* because I believe our response to God ought to be one of movement, practice, and action that mirrors the example of the Divine incarnate, Jesus.

During the Season of Epiphany, we will explore ways of embodying our faith so that we too might further develop our practice of "Love in Action".

***What difference does it make when you stop trying to take a "snapshot" of the Divine and instead start to look for God in action? How does your spiritual life shift when you stop trying to understand God and simply start to follow Jesus? How***



***might we leverage this key understanding to invite others in who are turned off by "dogma" and "doctrine"?***

### **Open Door Interfaith Zen**

By Melinda

We continue to meet on Thursday evenings from 6-6:45 and we have been blessed by the presence of the **Rev. Kevin Omi** and several of the members of our nearest UCC neighbor church, **Sycamore UCC**. This practice of sitting and meditating on a koan taken from the teachings of Jesus and/or other spiritual traditions is a wonderful respite of quiet and connection with others who love silence in community. Join us!



**Michael D. Miller and Kathryn Burroughs** celebrated the birth of a new grandchild on December 7, **Marley Janea**, daughter of **Zay and Darcy**.

## News from the Pews

**Pastor Melinda** will make a quick trip to New York for the Opera America New Works Forum, Jan 15-20. While there, she will also have a chance to meet with her composer for *The Broken Land*, Sarah Hutchings, and she will see at least seven new operas in various stages of composition!

**Bonnie Hariton** fell and broke her left wrist just after Thanksgiving necessitating surgery to install a titanium plate. She is healing well and her new name is “Bionic Bonnie”.

**Nancy Lemon**, Legal Director of the Family Appellate Project, chalked up yet another 3 victories in December! In two of them, the Appellate court ordered the trial court to enter Restraining Orders protecting battered mothers; and in the third, the trial court was ordered to hold a full and fair hearing regarding whether sending a young girl back to her father in Denmark presented a grave risk to her safety.

Our Minister-in-Training, **Tom Emanuel** will travel to South Dakota over the holidays to preach at his home church and to hopefully be accepted as a minister in discernment. Tom’s pastor at Vermillion United Church of Christ, the **Rev. Steve Miller**, recently gave a TEDx talk on “Millennials as Spiritual Free Agents” that is worth a look on youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csiiHqB5wAA>>

### January Celebrations



7<sup>th</sup> Colleen Rodger  
15<sup>th</sup> Rev. Davena Jones  
16<sup>th</sup> Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch  
21<sup>st</sup> Betty Coates  
28<sup>th</sup> Virginia Carrieri

**Best wishes, with love from Mira Vista**

## Holy Saturday

*by Tom Emanuel*



I never feel alone in an empty church.

Even when there’s nobody there, the pews still creak like geriatric joints.

Even when the nursery has finally gone quiet, the hymns are still playing hide-and-seek between the bellows of the pipe organ.

Even when Pastor Steve locks up early on Sunday afternoon so he can drive his youngest son to Little League, if I squint I can still see his sermons hovering over the chancel like holy ghosts.

Even when the last candle has been snuffed out, the wicks are still kneeling in whispered prayer.

And even when the only answer I get to my midnight lamentations is my own hollow voice echoing in negative space, I know that Somebody’s listening—even if Somebody is just me.

*November 2015  
Berkeley, CA*

**Mira Vista United Church  
of Christ**

**Semi-Annual Meeting  
& potluck lunch**

**Sunday, January 24, 2016**

Our 2016 budget is the agenda for this meeting, right after church.





# Mira Vista United Church of Christ

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## January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	2
3 12n Worship with Holy Communion followed by La Mesa 	4	5 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10a  Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	6	7 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p  Amazing Graces, 7p	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 <b>Martin Luther King Day</b> 	19 Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	20	21 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p  Amazing Graces, 7p	22	23
24 12n Worship followed by Semi-annual meeting & Potluck	25	26	27	28 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p  Amazing Graces, 7p	29	30
31 12n Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion						

# 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!

The **liturgical season of Epiphany** begins on the 12th day of Christmas, January 6, and stretches until Ash Wednesday (in 2016 Feb. 10) and the beginning of Lent.

January 3	“Follow the Light” Feast of the Epiphany	John 1:1-9
January 10	“Take the Plunge” Baptism of Jesus	Luke 3:15-16; 21-22
January 17	“Drink the Wine” <i>Tom Emanuel preaching</i>	John 2:1-11
January 24	“Catch the Spirit” Mira Vista Semi-Annual Meeting	Luke 4:14-21
January 31	“Love Your Enemies”	Luke 4: 21-30

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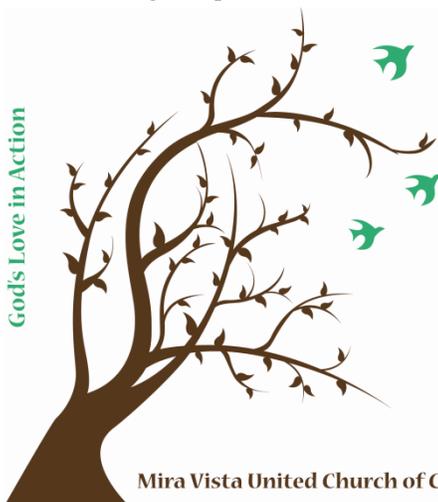
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God's Love in Action



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*The Fellowship Post*

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