

# The Fellowship Post

## Mira Vista United Church of Christ

June 2017

### Melinda's Musings: *What we remember saves us.* – W.S. Merwin

In the smash hit musical “Hamilton”, Aaron Burr intones, “I wanna be in the room where it happens.” I know the feeling! Getting tickets to see “Hamilton” was a great coup in the category too! I actually got to be “in the room” at the Orpheum theater where this wonderful musical is performed in San Francisco back in April.

I believe most of us want to be “in the know” and have firsthand knowledge of significant events. We want to be a “fly on the wall”, “at the table”, or “inside the inner circle”. We don’t want to be hoodwinked by “fake news” or “false prophets”. We want to trust what we know is true. And our desire to understand is not limited to the present, it also applies to history too.

The old gospel song, “I walked today where Jesus walked”, becomes for many a desire to travel to Palestine/Israel in an effort to grow closer to the earthly experience of Jesus. We also flock to other historic sites such as battlefields and ancient cathedrals in an effort to imagine how it might have been for those who witnessed those places before us. When we visit such places, our view of the past shifts and hopefully our knowledge of the particular history of a place and time becomes broader.

Each Sunday, as we read from ancient scripture, we too are reading texts that have been sung, prayed, and preached upon for



thousands of years. I know each morning when I chant the psalms, I think about the fact that these texts have been prayed each day by countless people for thousands of years. King David prayed these psalms. Jesus prayed them. My

patron, Saint Hildegard chanted them everyday. George Washington prayed these psalms during his morning prayer.

But even as a remember that these great personages prayed the psalms, do I regularly remember that George Washington’s slaves ALSO prayed these psalms in the form of sung spirituals? And that when his slaves sang songs based upon the experience of the ancient Hebrews being set free from bondage in Egypt, they were also singing about their own desire for freedom. What difference does it make when I choose to think about history from the point of view of those slaves?

In the musical “Hamilton”, Lin-Manuel Miranda helps us “remember” the story of the American Revolution differently by using contemporary music and language to tell the story. The characters wear 18th century clothing, but keep their contemporary hair styles. And, most of the principal characters are played by people of color. These artistic choices make the story of Alexander Hamilton immediately recognizable in our own time. It also makes it clear that many of our current political

disagreements have been going on since the very beginning.

The task of remembering is central to understanding ourselves in the present and it also affects our future endeavors as we make choices about traditions to carry forward. We are also given the opportunity to learn from the past in order to create a more just and peaceful world.

Happy Memorial Day to all!

Love,  
Melinda



### **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Japanese Internment** by Nancy Lemon

On April 26, 2017, I attended a talk and a memorial service commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1942 internment of Japanese and Japanese American people. The talk at UC Berkeley was by Sam Mihara, taken with his family at age 9 from San Francisco to Heart Mountain, Wyoming. He later graduated from Cal. From his slide show presentation I

learned more than I had previously known, including that there were several times the guards shot internees and killed them.

I also learned that even though the rationale for removing all Japanese citizens and Japanese Americans from the West Coast was because they might be spies for Japan, there was not one instance in which that had been proven, or even suspected. Furthermore, the General in charge of Hawaii, the part of the US closest to Japan and most directly affected by the attack on Pearl Harbor, did not call for relocation of Japanese Americans and Japanese citizens there because they made up such a large percentage of the population that if they were interned the entire economy would shut down.

In contrast, Japanese Americans and Japanese citizens in California were a much smaller minority, so the economy could continue without them; the General in charge of this state ordered their removal from the coast.

Mr. Mihara also pointed out that the first step taken was requiring all Japanese Americans to register with the government, then freezing their bank accounts, then confiscating their property, etc. He likened this to the Nazi's treatment of Jews in WWII, which started with



registration, and cautioned that our president's call for registration of Muslims follows this same pattern.

I invited a friend who had also been interned at Heart Mountain, and a student of mine who is a prosecutor in Japan, to go with me to these events. Both of them were very moved by this experience.

The memorial service after the talk was held in the chapel at First Congregational Church of Berkeley (FCCB), a sister church of ours. Officiating were the minister of FCCB and the pastor of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, who is the 11th generation of Buddhist ministers in her family. The beautiful and moving service included songs, prayers, stories of camp life, and works of art made in the camps. Survivors of the camps were asked to stand to be honored, and my friend reluctantly stood when I urged her to do so. I think this is the first time she has ever publicly done this. The theme of the service was "never again" -- this should never again happen to any group of people.

I learned in the service that members of FCCB had organized to try to stop the internment, but failing that had offered their building as the gathering place for the internees. The Army had designated a used car lot in Berkeley for this but yielded to the church's invitation. During the four days of gathering, FCCB members and members of other churches offered food and friendship, found places for

the pets of their Japanese American neighbors, and set up pen pal relationships that lasted through the interment. When the buses came to take people to the camps, many FCCB members came to say goodbye and to show

their opposition to this illegal and immoral action by our government. After the war, some of the Japanese Americans joined FCCB and are still members today.

I was glad to hear that FCCB had played a role in protesting the internment. The service also made me think about our sister congregation in El Cerrito, Sycamore UCC, which has so many Japanese American members. I am glad we are sharing a weekly meditation with them.

It also made me think about the Japanese Americans at El Cerrito Royale, where my mother lives now. How do they feel when they walk down the hall where there are photos of US military veterans from WWII, including our own dear Virginia Carrieri, across from photos of Rosie the Riveters, including our wonderful Betty Coates, who fought the Japanese on the home front? Are they remembering being interned? Do they wish their photos were displayed too, or would they rather forget this part of history?

I'm glad that we at MVUCC as well as the larger UCC community would raise even more opposition if our government issued a similar order today.



## News from the Pews

Beloved longtime member of Mira Vista, **Virginia Carrieri** died on May 25th. Do plan to attend a music-filled celebration of her life among us on **Saturday, August 12th at 11a.**



We are so grateful to have had the pleasure of Virginia's presence with us for so many years. If you wish to send cards to the family, do contact the church office for the address of her son Stefan in Berkeley.

[office@miravistaucc.org](mailto:office@miravistaucc.org) or call 510-526-0110.

**Tom Emanuel** will be rejoining us in August as our part-time **Associate Pastor for Worship Arts**. Although he will still be a student at PSR next year, he will no longer be our student, but instead our colleague in ministry helping us as we move towards realizing our vision for becoming a café church.

Another longtime member, **Beth Koutz** recently celebrated her 95th birthday! She is living in Carmichael, CA near her son David. Beth is healthy, still drives, and enjoys going to theater and to a nearby church, even though she reports "Mira Vista will always be my home".



*Mira Vista at San Francisco LGBTQ Pride which we support every year. This year's parade will be on Sunday, June 28th and all are invited to march!*

## June Celebrations

### Birthdays

12<sup>th</sup> Olivia Wisely  
15<sup>th</sup> Cable Noble  
17<sup>th</sup> Randi Nielsen  
28<sup>th</sup> Wendy Wisely



### Anniversaries

17<sup>th</sup> Susan Meeter & Barbara Cook

**Best wishes to each of you with  
love from Mira Vista!**

## Strengthen the Church on Pentecost Sunday

Strengthen the Church (STC) is a special mission offering to reimagine and build the future of the UCC. Shared at the conference and national levels, STC largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.

Mira Vista United Church of Christ has repeatedly won awards for consistently supporting all the UCC national offerings. Please give as you are willing and able on Sunday, June 4th or by sending a check to the church office with "STC 2017" in the memo line.

Mira Vista Semi-Annual meeting  
Sunday, June 11



Mira Vista  
United Church of Christ

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2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> Community Office Hours with Pastor Melinda each Thursday @Catahoula Coffee, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa with Social Action Team  Strengthen the Church special offering  Live jazz w/ Amy Ukena and Hans Raag @El Cerrito Natural Grocery, 6-8:30p. <i>FREE - invite your friends!</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10 am	<b>7</b> Mindfulness Circle, El Cerrito Royale, 7p	<b>8</b> Community office hours, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p Council meeting, 7p	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa  Semi-annual congregational meeting	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Community office hours, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p  NCNC Annual Gathering, June 15-18 →	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa  → 	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Mindfulness Circle, El Cerrito Royale, 7p	<b>22</b> Community office hours, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Community office hours, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	<b>30</b>	

# 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 our common table, **La Mesa**. Feel free to bring food to share as you are able. We celebrate the sacrament of **Holy Communion every First Sunday**. All are welcome at our table!

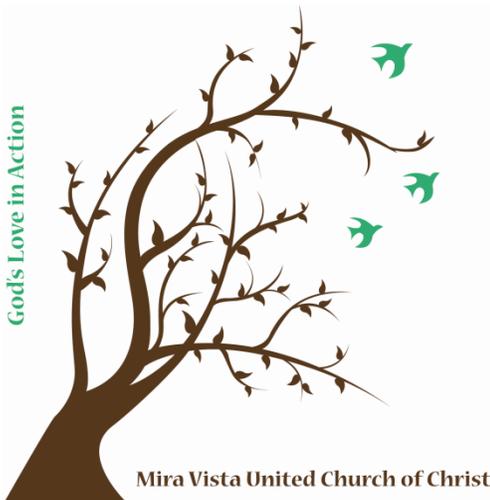
June 4	“One Spirit” <i>Day of Pentecost with Holy Communion</i> <i>Social Action Team meets during La Mesa</i>	1 Corinthians 12: 4-13
June 11	“A Little Lower than God”	Psalms 8: 1-9
June 18	“Tending the Harvest	Matthew 9: 35-38
June 25	“Lost and Found”	Matthew 10: 39
July 2	“Wielding Welcome”	Matthew 10: 40-42

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Address Change Requested

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*The Fellowship Post*

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