



The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista
United Church of Christ

June 2014

Pastor's Corner

Some of you reading this have just met me, perhaps, or have not travelled closely with Mira Vista United Church of Christ for the past eight years. My hope is that your reading of this reflection will help you to feel included during the transition that is our immediate challenge and opportunity.



The photo on this page was taken on Sunday, September 3, 2006, at the front door of Mira Vista UCC's new worship space – remember? It was taken moments after we (those of us who could) walked from our former Cutting Boulevard location to Christ Lutheran's home on Ashbury Avenue, where we were welcomed gracefully and generously.

O happy day! On that day, all of our shoes were walking in the same direction: down the hill, across town and into a new space. After years of struggle and challenge, we were walking together, headed in the same direction, a "community of faith and farewell." Can you see how happy and relieved I am? A story in *The Graceful Exit*, by Mary Lindberg, reminds me of that day when we and our shoes walked down the hill:

"Twenty girls, ages three to twelve, pile into the entrance of the Korean Cultural Center, where they have come to practice traditional Korean dance. According to Korean custom, everyone takes off their shoes when they enter a building, and the girls observe this ritual – in their own

fashion. They topple over one another as they toss their shoes into a large pile and head off to rehearsal. While the dance teacher leads the class, one of the mothers methodically picks up each of the dozens of pairs of shoes and sorts them into pairs. She matches up the shoes and sets each pair neatly down, with the toes pointed outward toward the door. By the end of her ritual she has turned all the shoes around. When our daughters finish dancing, their shoes are ready for them to head out the door and on to the next event of their lives."

Ah, what a beautiful ritual of transition! As a congregation we have shared many precious and many ordinary moments for years and years, and our shoes have sometimes been jumbled into a pile, yes, and often our shoes have pointed in the same direction. What a blessing it has been to walk with you, to learn from you!

This year it came to me that the Presence we call God or Spirit had subtly turned my

shoes, turned my shoes from the path of my beloved congregation, turned my shoes in order to prepare me for new directions. With grief and gratitude I have shared with you my need to say farewell.

Consider this moment in the life of our faith community alongside the parallel present time of our wider church's liturgical year – *Ascensiontide*. Our tradition has named this time in between – from Jesus' last moment amidst his community till a new infilling of the Holy Spirit – as *Ascensiontide*. It was a brief, unsettled time when everything was “up for grabs”; grief and fear were rampant in Jesus' small band of followers. Jesus' wisdom was for them to stay together and to pray, watch, and wait. And so they did – shoes in a circle – until they were sent out by the Holy Spirit.

And now you too, beloved congregation, are turning your shoes as you search for a new pastor who will help you discover a *mira vista* or *nueva vista* – new vision – for the days and months and years to come.

As we all navigate this transition time, apart and together, I am hoping to connect with you: to share a meal or cup of coffee, go for a walk, stop for a prayer. I hope for opportunities to share with each of you how much you mean to me, and just how wild and wonderful and worthy you are. My heart is full with all that we have been for each other, for all that you have taught me while I have been your pastor and teacher. I want to ask your forgiveness for where I have fallen short, and I want to tell you what I have received from our years together, beloved ones. Our worship times each Sunday from now through July 20 is most precious to me.

***I see the love of God in you;
the Light of Christ comes shining through;
and I am blessed to be with you,
oh holy child of God.***

*Pastor
Susan*

Now is the Time

-Hafiz

Now is the time to know
That all that you do is sacred.

Now, why not consider
A lasting truce with yourself and God.

Now is the time to understand
That all your ideas of right and wrong
were just a child's training wheels
To be laid aside when you finally live
With veracity
and love.

Hafiz is a divine envoy
Whom the Beloved
Has written a holy message upon
My dear, please tell me,
Why do you still throw sticks at your
heart
And God?

What is it in that sweet voice inside
That incites you to fear?

Now is the time for the world to know
That every thought and action is
sacred.

This is the time for you to compute the
impossibility
That there is anything
But Grace.

Now is the season to know
That everything you do
Is sacred.



UNITING FOR JUSTICE!

Fellowship of Affirming Ministries

UCC Coalition of LGBT Concerns

Oakland, CA June 5-8, 2014

Don't miss this event!

The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries and the UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns invites you to attend a Gathering in Oakland, CA, called "Uniting for Justice" from June 5-8, 2014. Spearheaded by Coalition Leadership Team members Bishop Yvette Flunder (who is also Presiding Bishop of the Fellowship) and Coalition Moderator Phil Porter, most of the event will take place at the new location of City of Refuge UCC (where Bishop Flunder is founding pastor) near the Oakland airport.

The event will bring together all those who hold the issues of LGBT people in church and society, including the LGBT community, Fellowship of Affirming Ministry church members, Open and Affirming (ONA) church members, those wishing to become ONA, and family, friends and allies.

Schedule

- ❖ Thursday, June 5 at 7 pm: Meet Coalition Executive Director Andy Lang (First Church Berkeley, 2345 Channing)
- ❖ Friday, June 6 from 10 am to 4 pm: Special Pre-Event "Stories, Connection, Power" (City of Refuge, 8400 Enterprise Way Oakland, CA 94621)
- ❖ Friday, June 6 at 7 pm to Sunday, June 8 at 4 pm: Main Event: "Uniting for Justice" (City of Refuge, 8400 Enterprise Way)

Come for worship, education, community-building and fun! The main part of the event will begin on Friday, June 6 in the evening and

continue through Sunday afternoon, June 8. A special pre-conference event will take place Friday during the morning and afternoon called "Stories, Connection, Power" where participants will have a chance to connect their individual stories with the bigger story.

Expect to be moved and inspired!

Please contact the Coalition Office at (216) 736-3228 or office@ucccoalition.org to register.



Next Step Committee has met and started the process of reviewing applicants for a designated term minister. Please keep us in prayer as we go through the process of finding the right fit for our congregation.

--Bonnie Hariton, Moderator

June Semi-Annual Meeting & Potluck

On June 22, 2014, we will hold our semi-annual meeting and election of Council members. Each June the Vice-Moderator and Moderator positions come open for another one-year term. I am happy to say that Sylvia Sugg and I are willing and able to continue as your Vice-Moderator and Moderator, if you so choose.

Other items to discuss:

- Consider acknowledgment and gift to the former MV UCC Seminarians
- Election of council members

See you there!

--Bonnie Hariton, Moderator



Invest IN THE Vision

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

God is still speaking,
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST 

Dear Friends,

On Pentecost Sunday, June 8, we celebrate the birth of the church. We know this story as recorded in the Book of Acts: *“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit...”* Acts 2:1-4

Peter quotes the prophet Joel to the startled crowd: *“In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”* Acts 2:17

What vision does God have for our church? What does God dream for the many people who are still seeking and yearning for a little love, a little hope, and a reassuring word; people who have not heard the Pentecost message of the unconditional love of our still speaking God?

Each year, we receive a special offering called Strengthen the Church, an offering that invests in the vision of the United Church of Christ. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is still speaking.”

We will receive this offering on June 8, 2014 – the birthday of the church – Pentecost Sunday. I invite you to celebrate by giving to Strengthen the Church. Your generous gift today ensures a vibrant church tomorrow.

Peace,

Barbara

June Celebrations

12th Olivia Wisely
17th Randi Nielsen
21st Alice Parks
28th Wendy Wisely



17th Susan and Barbara

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

The Fellowship Post

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United Church of Christ
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*Mira Vista Church Council
Presents*

*Celebration of Ministry & Farewell Picnic
for
Susan & Barbara*

*@Dan & Bonnie Hariton's
2725 Garrity Ct.
Pinole, CA 94564
Saturday, June 14, 2014
12 Noon-3 pm
RSVP Church Office, 510-526-0110*





Mira Vista
United Church of Christ

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2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 12 noon Worship HOLY  COMMUNION	2 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	3 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10 am 	4	5 Amazing Graces, 7 pm June 5-June 8, UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns	6	7
8 PENTECOST Strengthen the Church Special Mission Offering 	9 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	10 Leaders' meeting @ Namaste, 12:30 pm	11 Council meeting @ El Cerrito Royale, 6:45 pm	12 Amazing Graces, 7 pm	13	14 Farewell Celebration & Picnic @ Bonnie's, 12 noon-3pm
15 12 Noon Worship  HAPPY FATHER'S DAY	16 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	17	18 Mindfulness Group, 7-9 pm	19 Amazing Graces, 7 pm	20	21 Mindfulness group field trip
22 12 Noon Worship Semi Annual meeting & Potluck	23 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	24	25 Exit interview with Pastor Susan, 12:30 pm	26 Amazing Graces, 7 pm	27	28
29 12 Noon Worship	30 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm					

Sunday Services Yet to Come

Sunday, June 1, 2014, 12 noon
Holy Communion, Ascension Sunday
Acts 1:9-11, John 17:1-11
Ambiguity, Uncertainty, and Waiting

Sunday, June 8, 2014, 12 noon
PENTECOST, Acts 2:1-21
Left Behind and Loving It

Sunday June 15, 2014, 12 noon
Father's Day – Genesis 1 & Psalm 8
Reviewing Our Original Mission Statement

Sunday, June 22, 2014, 12 noon
Semi-Annual Meeting & Potluck Lunch
All Together Now

Transition Series: The Art of Passing Over
June 29, July 6, July 13: *Letting Go; Letting Be; Letting Grow*

Sunday, July 20, 2014, 12 noon
Service of Farewell: Going Forward



Address Change Requested

Dated Material
June 2014

