

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista
United Church of Christ

May 2015

Melinda's Musings

One of the primary miracles of Pentecost was the ability of those assembled to understand and hear one another, despite the fact that they spoke a multitude of different languages. This is foundational to our faith tradition that we can find unity in our diversity when we listen through the power of the Holy Spirit. In the United Church of Christ (UCC), we have always followed up this listening into action in order to enact the prayer of Jesus that "all may be one".

A review of the history of the UCC and the four denominations that preceded its' founding in 1957, reveals us to be a people who have always moved out in front on behalf of social equality. Whether the issue was slavery, affirmation of Chinese immigrants, the ordination of women, and later gay and lesbian people, we have followed the leading of the Still-Speaking God and stepped forward with faith toward justice and greater inclusiveness.

Historically, each time the UCC has taken a prophetic stand, the impetus often came from the visionary leadership of a small number of conferences whose witness moved the General Synod in an amazing way to speak as one voice. Then, bit by bit, the members and congregations of our denomination and then wider society slowly, slowly catches up.

For example, when our Congregationalist ancestors first took a stand against slavery in 1700, it would be another 150 years before the question would even be fully addressed by the rest of the nation. Similarly, when Antoinette Brown was ordained to Christian ministry in 1853, it would take another 100 years for other



communications to even consider the question of women's ordination. Of course, on gay and lesbian issues, our Northern California Nevada Conference approved the ordination of openly-gay man, William R. Johnson in 1972, at least 10 years before other churches even took up the question.

And so it is astonishing now to remember that it was only ten years ago in 2005 that some visionary leaders within the United Church of Christ invited the General Synod to take a stand for marriage equality, the extension of marriage rights to gay and lesbian couples. At the time, it was a prophetic vote because most of the other churches and the nation did not appear to be ready at all for this change.

As the Supreme Court now takes up the issue of marriage equality, it is already settled law for 31 states and support for marriage equality nationally now stands at 61%. The speed of change on this issue is nothing short of miraculous - a true outpouring of the Spirit.

We have a goodly heritage and we have inherited the call to be bringers of a wide and extravagant welcome in a world that is still divided in far too many ways. As we move forward to imagine new ministry together as Mira Vista church, I invite you to consider how we might be living into these questions:

How shall we learn to hear the voices in our current time of those who feel alienated, lonely, and outcast? Where could we work to widen our welcome? Can you hear the Still Speaking God calling again?

Welcoming New Members and Staff



On Easter Sunday, **Colleen Rodger** joined Mira Vista church. In her brief, but heartfelt remarks, she told us that she chose to join because she has finally found a “spiritual home” among the Mira Vista community. Colleen was born in Los Angeles

and raised in San Diego as a Christian Scientist. Her early spiritual study and training taught her the power of prayer. More recently, she sang in the choir of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Belvedere for over 10 years soaking up the melding of her love of music with worship. Melinda and Colleen have now been in partnership for thirteen years, married for six and legally married for nearly three years. Though Colleen has often been active in other churches that Melinda has served, Mira Vista is the first church that Colleen has joined and she is already active in every aspect of the church’s life and mission in the world bringing her particular gifts for music to the Amazing Graces, her commitment to prayer and spiritual development to the Mindfulness Circle, her skills as an interior designer to the renewal of our office space, and her passion for healing the earth and conserving natural resources to La Mesa. Welcome Colleen!



Our new pianist/organist **Ray Capiral** began serving among us on April 12th. Ray is a classically-trained, rockstar pianist, composer and teacher, who was

born and raised near Chicago, Illinois. He came to California with his family in 1996. After graduating from UCLA in 2009, he has lived in the Bay Area since 2011. Ray has taught piano and music theory for thirteen years, and currently works with private students in all of

the Bay Area communities. He also serves as the Music Director for Open Door United Methodist Church and has previously served as pianist and organist at Calvary United Methodist Church and Geneva United Methodist Church in San Francisco. His favorite book is *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac. Do visit youtube to hear Ray play!



Become a Member of Mira Vista!

On **May 24th, Pentecost Sunday**, we would be delighted to **welcome new members** to Mira Vista during our worship service. Simply let Pastor Melinda know if you would like to join. Membership is open to anyone who wants to declare this community their spiritual home. There are no spiritual or theological tests or barriers of any kind. Becoming a member simply means that you have decided to “cast your lot” with us as we continue to grow our community of faith and practice. So “no matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are invited and welcome here”.

May Celebrations

Birthdays

- 1st Eliot Hariton
- 4th Katie Morrison
- 7th Marilyn Colbert
- 12th Mhel Kavanaugh Lynch
- 19th Melinda McLain
- 22nd Wendy Mahoney
- 23rd Beth Koutz
- 29th Ken Alborn



Anniversaries

- 22nd Betty & Howard Coates
- 26th Nancy Lemon & Blaine Devine

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



Mira Vista United Church of Christ

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2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion Social Action Team during La Mesa	4	5 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10 am Mindfulness Circle @ Patsy Stubbs, 7 pm Pastor Melinda at Opera America thru May 9 →	6	7 Amazing Graces choir rehearsal, 7:30 pm	8	9
10 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion <i>Mother's Day</i> Worship Team during La Mesa Rev. Paul Honigs, preaching	11	12 Council meeting, El Cerrito Royale, 6:45 pm	13	14 Amazing Graces choir rehearsal, 7:30 pm	15	16 All Church Retreat, Our Emerging Path, @ Sylvia's, 10 am
17 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa	18	19 Mindfulness Circle @ Patsy Stubbs, 7 pm	20	21 Amazing Graces choir rehearsal, 7:30 pm	22	23
24 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa <i>Progression Sunday</i> Strengthen the Church offering New members received	25 <i>Memorial Day</i>	26 Pastor Melinda in Texas thru May 29 →	27	28 No Choir rehearsal	29	30
31 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa						

Our worship life together . . .



Join us on Sundays at 12 noon for our celebration with music, preaching and Holy Communion then stay for lunch because our worship continues as we share food and friendship together at La Mesa. All are welcome at our table!

May 3, Easter 5, John 15: 1-8, "Shared Roots", Social Action Team during La Mesa

May 10, Easter 6, Rev. Paul Honigs preaching and the Amazing Graces singing, Worship team during La Mesa

May 17, Easter 7, 1 John 4: 7-21, "The Testimony of Love", followed by La Mesa

May 24, Pentecost, Psalm 104: 1-6, "Cosmic Fire," the Amazing Graces singing and Sermon feedback and theology circle during La Mesa. New members will be received.

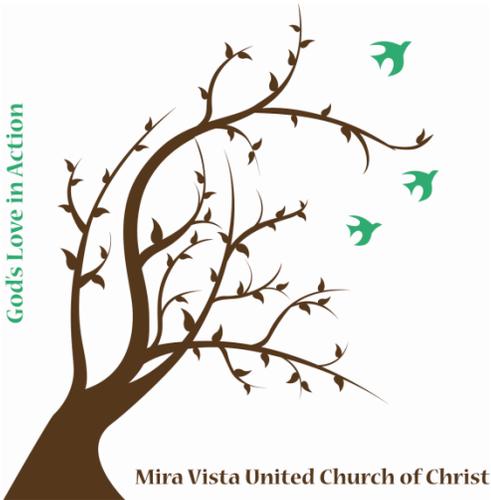
May 31, Trinity Sunday, John 3: 1-8, "Birth and Rebirth", followed by La Mesa

Sunday, May 24 we will have Strengthen the Church offering. Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through the Strengthen the Church offering, they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be a 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.**"

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Address Change Requested

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