

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista United Church of Christ

May 2016

Melinda's Musings: Ministry and the Marketplace by Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain

We have now completed this semester's work with our student legal team from the **New Business Law Practicum at UC Berkeley Boalt Hall**. And although there is so much more work to do, they have helped us immensely! We now understand how to legally operate a café business while remaining a non-profit. We have also learned how to adapt our by-laws and file the correct amended forms with the IRS plus we received model agreements to use in creating new non-profit partnerships. They also helped us understand some of the employment issues raised by having the staff potentially come from an intentional spiritual living community and the students also did some great beginning research about how our café could address food insecurity and social isolation in Contra Costa County.

We have also been connected with a **volunteer MBA** who can help us begin to develop a business plan and we can continue to receive support from Professor Kell over the summer and can get a new team of students in the Fall if we feel we need additional legal assistance.

Meanwhile, 20 of us gathered for a **retreat on Saturday, April 23rd** to hear **Bob Pearson of the One World Everybody Eats** talk to us in great detail about the pay-what-you-can model for running a community café. His presentation also included a terrific handout with checklists,



great start-up advice, and lots of great ideas. While the model he presented might not be an exact fit for us, it was inspiring and thought-provoking

If you want to hear more about this process in detail, do speak **Bonnie Hariton, Tom Emanuel, Colleen Rodger, or Pastor Melinda**. Also, many thanks again to **Nancy Lemon** for connecting us to this program!



Strengthen the Church on Pentecost

On May 15th, the Day of Pentecost, we will receive the Strengthen the Church offering for the United Church of Christ. This special national offering supports new church development, revitalization of existing ministries, and funding for the unique UCC identity campaign, the Stillspeaking initiative.

As a congregation considering a new ministry future, it makes sense for us to vigorously support this offering that will support others doing the same. In particular, the terrific marketing materials that are constantly in development to further the God is Still Speaking message will be of great help to us. Give as you are able to this highly valuable offering opportunity.

Minding the Mindfulness Circle

by Joan Thompson

"We are only the light bulb and our job is just to remain screwed in." Desmond Tutu.

For 3 years, the Mindfulness Circle, made up of members and non-members of Mira Vista, has met in different peoples' homes to "remain screwed in." We read books related to mindfulness practice – books that open our minds to new ways of thinking and open our hearts to new ways of being. Being part of this group has helped me to expand my knowledge of the convergence between Buddhism and Christianity, to accept the ineffability of things, to be more conscious of being in the now, and to feel comfortable with the fact that some things that I believe in are simply a mystery.

Our first book by Eckart Tolle's, "A New Earth, Awakening to your Life's Purpose," asserts that our ego-based consciousness needs to be transcended in order to discover our True Self. The True Self is like the immortal diamond, buried deep within us that must be separated from the debris of the ego that surrounds us. God gives us our True Self and we spend quite a few years to discover it. One experiences the two halves of life, one half consisting of developing a structure for the ego, and the second half letting go of ego structure and falling upward toward a spiritual awakening through the failures we experience. Recurrent themes in many of the books relate to living in the now, issues of duality and non-duality, discovering the True Self, and recognizing the divine in all aspects of life.

The group has been challenged to a new way of thinking, questioning Enlightenment Christianity, and some doctrines that were appropriate for concerns of the early church. We are now in new era and must consider re-thinking our story, so that it is commensurate with the quantum era.

Melinda has helped us to select *The Zealot: Life and Times of Jesus*, by Reza Aslan, as our next book. We will begin soon, but a date has

not yet been set. We welcome anyone who would like to join us and get "screwed in." We meet every first and third Tuesday at 7:00 pm at Adelle's room at the El Cerrito Royale. For those who are interested in a pure practice oriented group, the Interfaith Zen meditation group meets every Thursday at the church at 6:00 pm.

Books we have studied are:

Goldman, Caren, *Finding Jesus, Discovering Self*

Hammack, Doug, *Re-thinking Our Story: Can we Still be Christian in the Quantum Era?*

Kornfield, Jack, *A Path with Heart: A Guide through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life*

Nhat Hahn, Thich, *Going Home: Jesus and Buddha as Brothers*

Rohr, Richard, *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See*

Rohr, Richard, *Falling Upward, a Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*

Rohr, Richard, *Immortal Diamond*

Tolle, Eckhart, *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*



The Garden of Earthly Delights

A Postmodern Apocalypse
(after Hieronymus Bosch)
by Tom Emanuel

I. June 1998 – The Black Hills of South Dakota

Slip on your day-glo-green Velcro sneakers, hoist the plastic tubs of Legos you have laboriously sorted by color and size because you are as anal-retentive an eight-year-old as ever lived, and roll out onto the sidewalk to build yourself a World free from the constraints of time and space 'cause today is the First Day of Summer and you have no responsibilities to anybody or anything except to swing from the rigging of a Spanish Main schooner into the banner-spangled courtyard of an early medieval fortress where you climb aboard your interstellar cruiser (powered by crystal-cold fusion because humanity sucked the earth dry decades ago forging planes and trains and automobiles and Velcro sneakers and little petroleum-plastic building blocks) and sail away far away from school-bell structure away from parental supervision away from straitjacketed Causality and into a world of Pure Imagination.

...even the Garden contains the seeds of its own destruction.



NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Marilyn Colbert has settled into her new home: Please send her greetings:
6432 Gregory Lane, Paradise, CA
95969-2512; (530) 762-2555

May Celebrations

Happy Birthday

- 1st Eliot Hariton
- 4th Katie Morrison
- 7th Marilyn Colbert
- 12th Mhel Kavanaugh Lynch
- 14th Tom Emanuel
- 19th Melinda McLain
- 22nd Wendy Mahoney
- 23rd Beth Koutz



Happy Anniversary

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



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



Mira Vista's Cafe Development team with our student lawyers from Boalt Hall's New Business Law Practicum. I to r front: Bonnie Hariton, Melinda V. McLain, Justine Black. I to r back: Tom Emanuel, Jaoa Nascimento, Nathaniel Mouyal.



Mira Vista
United Church of Christ
 780 Ashbury Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530
 phone: (510) 526-0110 fax: (510) 526-0110
 email: office@miravistaucc.org
 website: www.miravistaucc.org

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 12 noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa with Social Action Team 	2 Pastor Melinda in Austin, May 2-7	3 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10a Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	4	5 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p 	6	7
8 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion 	9	10	11	12 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p	13	14
15 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion Strengthen The Church offering	16	17 Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	18 Council meeting, Melinda's office, 7p	19 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p	20	21
22 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion	23	24	25	26 Open Door Interfaith Zen, 6p Amazing Graces, 7p	27	28
29 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa with Holy Communion	30 	31				

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!

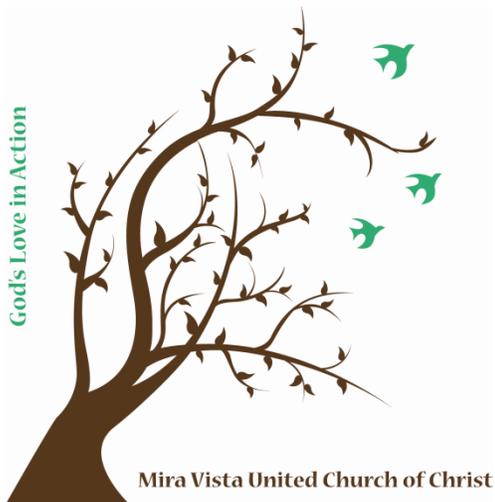
On Sunday May 15, Tom Emanuel and Aaron Eaves will again create a drama for the Day of Pentecost. Do bring your family and friends!

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| May 1 | “Beyond the Pool” | John 5: 1-9 |
| May 8 | “The Power of One” | John 17: 20-21 |
| May 15 | "The Flame Dances: A Pop Musical Pentecost." Acts 2:1-4
<i>Tom Emanuel and Aaron Eaves</i> | |
| May 22 | “Holy Mindfulness” | Psalms 8:1-9 |
| May 29 | “Humble Power” | Luke 7: 1-10 |

Mira Vista United Church of Christ
780 Ashbury Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Address Change Requested

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Editor: Diane Young
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United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
780 Ashbury Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530
(510) 526-0110
office@miravistaucc.org
www.miravistaucc.org

Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain, pastor
melinda@miravistaucc.org