

# The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista  
United Church of Christ

May 2017

## Melinda's Musings

**Science is organized knowledge.  
Wisdom is organized life. –  
Immanuel Kant**

I am always struck by the way religion is portrayed in the wider culture. And I admit, it rankles a bit because it always seems that religion, and I admit Christianity in particular, is often reduced in the common view to its **lowest common practitioners**.

This reductionist view of faith and belief was certainly on display at the March for Science and many signs could be summed up by the “facts, not faith” meme. And I am painfully aware that **certain quarters of organized religion have indeed been the enemy of science** throughout history. Galileo certainly felt the sting of persecution by religious elites who were threatened by his research. In more recent years, anti-abortion zealots have tried to severely limit research into stem cells. And perhaps most troubling to me are the constant and ongoing attacks on science education regarding evolution by Christian creationists.

But is “faith” truly the enemy of science? It certainly need not be. And **science should not be the enemy of faith, either**. In my own view, both disciplines bring value to individuals and communities. It is not an either/or proposition.

For example, **I trust science that climate change is real and human-caused**. Our planet is warming at an alarming rate and we



are already experiencing catastrophic changes in our climate.

And here is where religion can be of service. Why, oh why, oh why has humanity collectively chosen to destroy our environment? **It is my opinion that the primary motivator for climate change denial is greed**. Super wealthy individuals and corporations, whose only goal *by law* can be to make money, stand to lose billions of dollars if we switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

These monied interests have used their money, influence, and power **to discredit scientific consensus about global warming** by *using the same political tactics* used by tobacco companies to resist efforts to increase public health by ending smoking.

The campaign for climate change denial has also **played on ordinary people's economic fears** by claiming that switching from fossil fuels to renewables will cost jobs. From the perspective of out-of-work coal miners, this *appears to be true*, even though the demise of the coal industry was primarily caused by mega-production of natural gas in North Dakota.

But because both the campaign against tobacco and the campaign to discredit the truth about human-caused climate change **have intentionally and systematically eroded public trust in science itself as a discipline**, it is very difficult to change a climate denier's

mind using facts (see documentary film *Merchants of Doubt*).

I propose that we shore up the facts about climate change with a conversation about just what kind of world is possible. **Jesus did not teach “greed is good”**. The Bible advocates that we be “stewards” of the creation, not destroyers. We are called to love one another as God has loved us, not rob the poor of their dignity and health. We have been blessed to be a blessing, not a scourge upon the earth. And none of these principles is at odds with the disciplines of science.

As people of faith and practice, if we accept the invitation to be **the hands and feet of Christ in the world**, we can be of service to a planet in peril by putting our faith into action and working with scientists, regardless of their religious affiliation, to build a healthy and just world.

I recognize that this is one of my “edgier” reflections, but the stakes could not be higher. **We do not have a “Planet B”** and we cannot afford to destroy our earthly home just so that the rich can get richer.

As a community of faith and practice, we are blessed to be able to do our justice work with love and caring, recognizing that even those who would appear to be enemies today, are also our neighbors beloved by God. **It is not a small thing to wield love for all creation as our greatest tool for change.** May it be so.

Love,  
Melinda



*UCC folks at the March for Science include: Michael Patrick Ellard, Thom Longino, Deborah Streeter, Colleen Rodger, and Melinda V. McLain*

## May Celebrations

### Happy Birthday



- 1<sup>st</sup> Eliot Hariton-Aretskin
- 4<sup>th</sup> Rev. Katie Morrison
- 7<sup>th</sup> Marilyn Colbert
- 12<sup>th</sup> Mhel Kavanaugh-Lynch
- 14<sup>th</sup> Tom Emanuel
- 19<sup>th</sup> Rev. Melinda V. McLain
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Wendy Mahoney
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Beth Koutz



- ### Happy Anniversaries
- 26<sup>th</sup> Nancy Lemon & Blain Devine

Best wishes to each of you with love  
from Mira Vista

## ALLELUIA

*by Tom Emanuel*

*she hadn't managed  
to keep solid food  
down  
since the last meal  
they shared,*

*and so it was  
dehydrated and  
faint w/fear  
that she came  
to the Tomb, awaiting  
the reek  
of despair and rotting,  
unsure  
if she would be able  
to withstand it,  
knowing only  
that she had to Know.*

*only weeks before  
she had seen  
her brother  
emerge  
from beyond Hope,  
from out the miasma  
of Ending,  
but this was different.*

*she had known how  
to love Lazarus,  
w/all the fierceness,  
the childish loyalty  
of siblings.  
she had never quite  
figured out  
how to love Him.*

*and so it was dizzy  
and faint  
w/insecurity that she came  
to the Tomb*

*and, kneeling,  
looked inside*

*and He was not there.  
the second wounding.*

*it was the gardener  
who found her after,  
huddled  
in the cold wet warmth  
of aching  
and the Garden  
on the third day.  
it was the gardener who  
recognized her  
as one of His.*

*her pain recalled to him  
her Name.  
he spoke it aloud:*

*Mary.*

*her Name  
on a Stranger's lips:  
my Child long-hoped-for.*

*it was then she first  
learned how  
to love Him: no  
trumpets. no lilies. just  
dewfall, and tears,  
and Rising  
in unexpected places.*

*...*

*16 April 2017  
(Easter Sunday)  
Berkeley, CA*



540 ASHBURY AVE, EL CERRITO

Buy your tickets at:  
[tinyurl.com/richmondrenaissance](http://tinyurl.com/richmondrenaissance)

Advanced tickets:  
\$10 youth / \$15 adults / \$50 VIP

Tickets at the door:  
\$15 youth / \$20 adults



FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT [MOLLY@RYSECENTER.ORG](mailto:molly@rysecenter.org)



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**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](mailto:office@miravistaucc.org)  
 website: [www.miravistaucc.org](http://www.miravistaucc.org)

**2017**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10a	3 Mindfulness Circle, El Cerrito Royale, 7p	4 Community Office Hours with Pastor Melinda each Thursday @Catahoula Coffee, 2-5p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	5	6 Bay Association Spring meeting 1 <sup>st</sup> Congregational, Martinez, 9a-12p
7 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa with Social Action Team  Live jazz w/Amy & Hans @El Cerrito Natural Grocery, 6-8:30p <i>FREE – invite friends!</i>	8	9	10	11 Community office hours, 2-5p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p  Mira Vista Council, 7p	12	13
14 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa  	15	16	17 Mindfulness Circle, El Cerrito Royale, 7p	18 Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	19	20
21 Worship & Picnic @Colleen & Melinda, El Sobrante, 10a-12p	22	23	24	25 Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	26	27
28 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa	29 	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 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!

- |        |   |               |
|--------|---|---------------|
| May 7  | “Breaking Bread”<br>with Holy Communion. Social Action Team meets during La Mesa  | Acts 2: 42-47 |
| May 14 | “The Good in Evil”  | Acts 7: 55-60 |
| May 21 | Mira Vista Picnic @Colleen and Melinda’s, 10a-12n<br>We will gather for worship in the beauty of our garden and celebrate Tom Emanuel’s ministry with us. |               |
| May 28 | “Waiting for God”   | Acts 1: 6-14  |
| June 4 | “Unknown Language”<br>Day of Pentecost with Holy Communion  | Act 2: 1-4    |

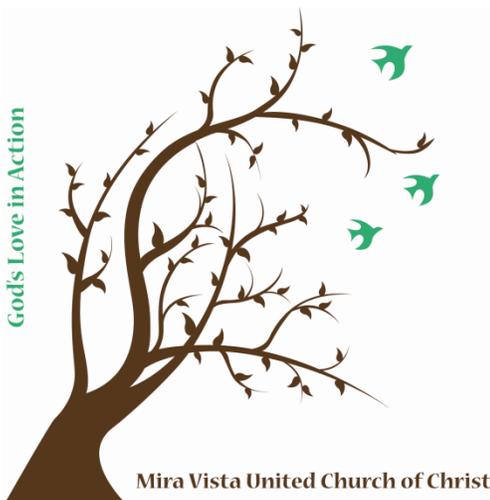
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*Mira Vista United Church of Christ  
780 Ashbury Avenue  
El Cerrito, CA 94530*

Address Change Requested

Dated Material

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*The Fellowship Post*

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