

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista
United Church of Christ

October 2013

Pastor's Corner

Dear friends, at Mira Vista UCC we are talking about resources right now: how we use our resources and gifts, how to share them for the common good, how to bless and release what we have been given. This story from the Beatitude Society shows how one person walks his talk. Key sentence: "We have a choice to do whatever we can with the power we have been given." Power and peace to you!



was not pleased about, but my protests and excuses were warmly dismissed.

On the day of the shareholder meeting, we walked into the auditorium at the Seattle convention center and found seats among our brothers and sisters in the executive class. When the meeting seemed about to begin, a dozen faith leaders stood up and walked to the front of the room, lined up

facing the audience, and grasped hands. I had prepared to talk over a loud room, but at this strange sight in a corporate shareholder meeting, the congregation silenced itself and I said,

"Peace be with you. Salaam Alaykum."

They stared.

"Some workers and faith leaders and shareholders asked me to pray before this meeting began, so if you are a praying type person, you are welcome to pray with me."

I closed my eyes and bowed my head. Then the prayer I had carefully prepared and memorized escaped my mind. I had no words. The prayer was written out on a piece of paper in my jacket pocket, but my hands were being held by sisters and brothers in faith. Very inconvenient. So, I prayed in my own mind, "God! Help me!" And help came. Words came out and they were from the Heart. Then I heard

Guerrilla Prayer at a Shareholder Meeting

by Rev. John Helmiere



Last spring, I was among 100 airport workers and community leaders who attended the Alaska Air Group annual shareholders meeting to speak out about poverty wages and unfair working conditions endured by contracted employees at

SeaTac [Seattle] Airport. We all bought a share in advance and had a legal right to voice our feelings about the ethics of the company we partially owned. A group of interfaith leaders decided to pray before the shareholder meeting began as a show of support. The group nominated me to lead the prayer, which I

some of the words from my prepared prayer coming out of my mouth, but it was Spirit-led, not a memorized recitation. This is the gist of what I prayed:

“God of Mercy, God of Justice, God who transforms our hearts,
“We give thanks for the privileges and powers that we have been given.
“We are grateful for the profits produced by hard workers and skilled managers.
“God, teach us to use these blessings in the right way.
“Save us from the snares of selfishness.
“Guard us from the gravity of greed.
“Forgive us where we have gone astray,
“And grant our leaders the wisdom and courage to make our company a beacon of success in business AND in ethics.
“Help us to live your ultimate and eternal truth that we belong to each other and to you.”
Amen.

I said thank you and we sat down. Afterwards, I talked to the CEO, Brad Tilden, for quite a while. We had a real dialogue. He said he had no choice but to play by the rules of the market system. I said that we always have a choice when conscience conflicts with the accepting the rules of an unjust system. **We have a choice to do whatever we can with the power that we are given. I don't make the right choice every time, not by a long shot. I'm glad I believe in forgiveness. But I also believe that the Jesus Way is resisting the temptation to accept easy excuses to escape from morally complex situations, and allowing the creative tension that this produces to generate an alternative vision, an alternative system, and an alternative set of desires within our own hearts.**

The contracted workers of Alaska and other Sea-Tac airlines are still living on \$19,000/year wages without benefits, job security, proper training, safety measures, and respect on the job. But they are determined to find an alternative and I am determined to walk with my brothers and sisters along the way.

*“If you bring forth what is within you
what you bring forth will save you.
If you do not bring forth
what is within you,
what you do not bring
forth will destroy you.”*

---Yeshua (Jesus), from
The Gospel of Thomas



***The Neighbors in Need
Offering is Sunday, October 6!***

The United Church of Christ's annual **Neighbors in Need** offering: 1) supports local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects; and 2) supports the UCC'S Council for American Indian Ministries.



AN INVITATION TO PRAY DAILY FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Back to School Blessing

*God of all true wisdom and knowledge,
Bless the children as they return to school or begin school.
Take away any fear or apprehension.
Give them caring, creative, patient and resourceful teachers
Open their hearts, minds, ears and eyes to the miracle of everything in creation.
Engage their imaginations and souls to see beyond written facts and figures.
Help them to see possibilities beyond what they know.
Help them to be disciplined in their studies.
May they find new abilities they did not know they possessed.
Help them to be caring, cooperative and compassionate with others.
May they find joy and laughter in the midst of their school day.
Amid all of their learning this year, remind them the teachings of Jesus are central to their identity as disciples.
Let the presence of your Spirit guide them in the year ahead. In the name of our great teacher, we pray. Amen.*

A Blessing for Teachers in the New School Year

*Teaching God,
Bless those who have heard and accepted the call to be teachers.
May they find meaningful purpose in this high calling.
Be their constant companion each and every day.
Surround them with supportive colleagues.
Let them use fully the gifts of creative teaching you have given them.
When they are weary, lift them up, and restore their bodies and souls.
When they feel discouraged let them know there are those who deeply respect and care for them and the work they do.
May they find moments of deep joy and satisfaction in their teaching and with the children they instruct.
In the seeds of knowledge and imagination they sow, grant them the vision of what growth can come in the future.
Give them hope, courage and patience when needed.
Remind them of the teachings of Jesus which are central to their identity as disciples.
Send your loving, empowering Spirit to guide them in the year ahead.
We pray in the name of our great teacher and Savior, Jesus the Christ.
Amen. -Rev. Deborah Payden, UCC Milwaukee WI*

MINDFULNESS GROUP

Tuesday October 22, 7 pm



The Mindfulness Group is beginning a new book and is open to you now! Join the ten of us to begin a meditation practice and to read, discuss, and apply to your life the first section of Jack Kornfield's *A Path with Heart*. This Christian group is exploring the mystical space beyond religion where all consciousness meets in the holy One. We have previously read and discussed Eckhart Tolle's *The Power of Now* and Richard Rohr's *Immortal Diamond*. Gatherings are at a member's home in El Cerrito or Richmond from 7 to 9 pm once a month on a Tuesday evening. (As the group becomes too large for intimate sharing, we will spin off a second day and

time.) Rides can be arranged; speak to Pastor Susan or Iris Ridgway if you are interested in trying it out.

The format of our gatherings: the first 10 minutes we sit in silent meditation. For the rest of the time we discuss the reading/meditation practice we have lived with since the last group and how it applies to or is affecting our daily lives (or not). Most of us are also committed to "meet" in Spirit space each noon: breathing, remembering each other, and taking a consciousness break for a minute or more.

The goal is mindfulness, to fully live in each present moment; to fully inhabit the beautiful mind-body-spirits we have been given; and to love ourselves and each living thing. Another way to say it is that we are motivated to let go of our grasping egos in order to recognize and act on the unity of all things.

You need not have any experience with meditation in order to join us; there is no "ahead" or "behind." Mindfulness is not something we can achieve and then say "I've got it," nor is it something to perfect. Rather we are walking together on a conscious journey toward awareness.

--Pastor Susan



“ Down To The River To Pray

As I went down to the river to pray
Studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the starry
crown?

Good Lord show me the way!

O sisters let's go down
Let's go down, come on down
O brothers let's go down
Down to the river to pray”

The Fellowship Post

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October



Notes

Dear Friends,

Well, it's been awhile since I added my article to the Post. It's been a summer... and then some. Thank you for your prayers and your love as the months went by. They all helped me to get through.

SAVE THE DATE: Rehearsals with the Amazing Graces will start up again **on October 17th at 7:00 pm**. We'll jump right into Advent and Christmas music, as well as get some "general" anthems going. We generally rehearse until 8:30, so come to the sanctuary and sing with us.

The choir is in need of sopranos and altos, so if you're inclined, come check it out. We are an all-women's group – some read music, some don't, some are trained, some aren't, and we all learn from each other. Each one of our members is a highly valued, greatly loved voice, and the sounds we make together sustain us throughout the week. I don't care if you've been in choirs before or if you've never sung with others in a "controlled environment." We are in this together and we make it work. You won't believe how inspiring or how beautiful the sounds you'll make together.

Oh – and I don't ask you to make a long-term commitment. Come sing, see if it works for you, and decide. We'd love to see you there!

In harmony,
Amy

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1st Kari Anduiza • 11th Joann Pavlinec
11th Michael Wisely • 13th Bonnie Hariton
17th Diane Young • 17th Latifah Abdullah
19th Kristi Anduiza
25th Ali Edney (Amy Ukena's daughter)

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARY

22nd Barbara Cook and Susan Meeter






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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Mira Vista prepares lunch, Souper Center, 10am  Susan at NCNC Ministers' Retreat	2	3	4	5 Yoga 9am-10:15am 
6 Noon Worship Holy Communion Worship Team Meets after Church	7 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm 	8	9 Council Meeting @ El Cerrito Royale, 6:45pm	10	11	12 Yoga 9am-10:15am
13 Noon Worship	14 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm 	15	16	17  Amazing Graces, 7pm	18	19 Workshop w/ Wayne Muller, UCC Tiburon 9-1pm, \$20
20 11am Outdoor Worship & Picnic	21 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm 	22 Mindfulness Group @ Pastor's Susan, 7pm	23	24 Amazing Graces, 7pm 	25	26 Yoga 9am-10:15am 
27 Noon Worship	28 Yoga, 5:30–6:45pm 	30	31			

Worship for October 2013

October 6, 2013, 12 noon
World Communion Sunday
Neighbors in Need offering
Luke 17:5-10; 2Timothy 1:1-14; Psalm 37:1-9
How to Be a Gift of God

October 13, 2013, 12 noon
Luke 17:11-19; Psalm 111
Show Up and Bring Your Best

October 20, 2013, **11 am**
Children's Sabbath celebration
Outdoor Worship & Picnic!
(details forthcoming)

October 27, 2013, 12 noon
Luke 18:9-14
Practicing True Humility



“School for the Heart, from 2 Timothy: ... So keep at your work, this faith and love rooted in Christ.... Guard this precious thing placed in your custody by the Holy Spirit who works in us.... Concentrate on doing your best for God, work you won't be ashamed of, laying out the truth plain and simple. Stay clear of pious talk that is only talk. Words are not mere words, you know. If they're not backed by a godly life, they accumulate as poison in the soul.”

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Address Change Requested

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