

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista United Church of Christ

September 2014

Melinda's Musings

God made the world round so we would never be able to see too far down the road. - Isak Dinesen

The process of being a "church in transition" is somewhat mysterious. On the one hand, with a Designated Term Pastor in place: worship, mission, community, pastoral care, singing, and the ordinary things of congregational life continue with very little sense of interruption. On the other hand, there tends to be a bit of restlessness and anxiety about what will come next. In the case of Mira Vista church, you have in some ways been in transition a long time (since you left your building) and so I know you are also good at simply being "at home" wherever you are together as a community.

That's the big picture! But life is lived mostly in the details, so I'm busy creating a pattern for ministry here. I plan to be in El Cerrito in the office, visiting with you out in the community, or in various nearby cafés on

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Once I get started, I will let you know the café hour locations so you can drop by and join me!

I will also be writing a weekly devotion email and if you wish to receive this let me or Diane know and we'll add you to the list! I know that some of you have yet to venture online, but don't worry, we can have a few hard copies available on Sundays. As a church seeking to extend its' welcome, having a regular and easy



presence online is important. I will be inviting folks out in the community to join this email list to learn more about Mira Vista. It is an easy way to invite people to find out more about us!

In addition, I invite those of you who like to walk/hike to join me for **"walking office hours" on Tuesdays and Thursdays from**

4:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. or at other times. This helps me keep up with my own need for exercise and I have found that conversations while walking are rich and wonderful. Show me your favorite spots as I continue to learn about El Cerrito and environs. In previous churches, I have discovered that this late afternoon time doesn't work well in the winter, so it will shift at some point, but for now we can enjoy the Fall sun together! I will take **Friday as my "writing" day** from home in San Francisco, but do feel free to contact me via phone or email. **Monday will be my Sabbath day** so I can recharge my spiritual and physical batteries and I hope you will let non-pastoral care emergencies wait until Tuesday each week.

Beyond our worship and table fellowship time on Sundays, I look forward to thinking about what learning/serving opportunities we will create together. You can certainly expect me to be a part of serving at GRIP and I look forward to meeting everyone in the mindfulness group and yoga too! Let me know what times and things are of interest to you as we go forward.

My cell phone number is: 415-378-3193 and you are welcome to call or text. I want to hear

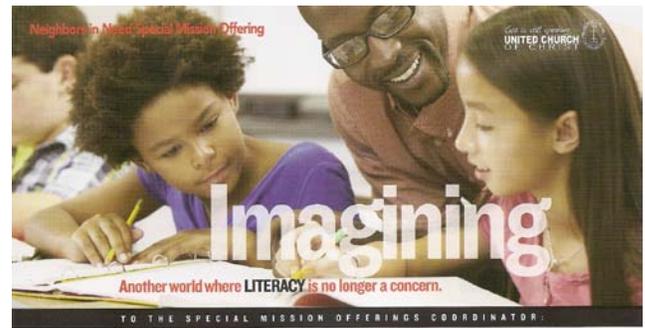
from each of you about your lives, your concerns, and your hopes and dreams for your own life and for this church. To reach me via email: melinda@miravistaucc.org. Also feel free to friend me on facebook or follow me on twitter (revgirrl) or instagram (revmelinda) I also blog at melindamclain.com and plan to take up blogging once a week again through Advent with special attention to the topic: why church? I have been working on a book about this since last year.

So indeed, "why church?" Why Mira Vista church? What do we have that feeds us and helps us to grow as people of faith and as a community? What do we offer to our local communities and the wider world? What do we want to be able to do for ourselves and offer to others? Why church?

I look forward to our journey together and I thank you so much for the opportunity to serve among you at this time.

*Love and many blessings,
Pastor Melinda*

Rev. Dr. Melinda McLain
revmelinda@me.com



Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on Sunday, October 5, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice & Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through UCCTakeAction.org, our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM).

Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickar, and Hock in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S. **NEIGHBORS IN NEED HELPS MAKE ANOTHER WORLD POSSIBLE. IT NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!**

-Marilyn Colbert

September Celebrations

Birthdays

21st Iris Ridgway
23rd Elisabeth Severson,
29th Carmen Anduiza

Anniversaries

18th Joah Thompson & Ken Alboin
20th Ruth Ann Clark & Ardith Hayes
25th Kathe Kiehn & Heinz Lankford

*Best wishes to each of you
from Mira Vista!*



Seminarian Feedback

From **Kathryn Schreiber**
she greets us "Mahal na
mga Kapatid ng Kristo

(dear sisters and brothers) in one evening after a long day, I was tired, a little low in spirit, and there was your check for \$2500. A gift that will allow me to answer God's call to return to the Philippines to teach. My heart inflated and tears rolled down my cheeks. I couldn't speak, but I heard God whisper: "Yes".

Kathryn goes on to say she is in communication with friends in the Philippines and what the next steps are in getting back there and teaching. She also says "I find a way to introduce you to the people I'll be working with, so they can see who made the ministry possible." I'll be in touch later on about that and more as details are worked out. And, I'll offer some sort of communication link while I'm there and will be available to give presentation and preach when I return." She ends her letter with "I wrote tonight to let you know how deeply your gift blessed my soul. It has also been equally moving to friends in the Philippines whom I told. You have blessed many with your act of generosity. Maraming Salamat! (Thank you very much!)."

From **Meighan Pritchard**

"To my Friends at Mira Vista,
Wowee wow wow! When my niece was about five, she read books about a girl named Jenney B. Jones. Whenever Jenney B. Jones was really excited she would say, "Wowee wow wow!" That was the essence of my reaction when your generous contribution toward my seminary debt arrived recently. What an amazing gift! Wowee wow wow!"

"I loved seminary and my time with all of you at Mira Vista. Both were life-changing experiences and have launched me into ministries that invite me to serve God with great joy. Your gift allows me to focus on the work itself while also paying down the large debt from student loans. My loans are in a 10-year repayment plan, but that plan just got a

little shorter. Thank you for this most generous gift. God bless you all."

From **Nancy Miller**.

"Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! What a wonderful surprise. It will really help me. My Medicare and supplement and part D take about 1/3 of my retirement-UCC, each year." Nancy goes on to ask lots of questions about Mira Vista since her time in the 80's with us. She was the minister at the UCC in Weaverville. Now retired on disability in Redding ,CA.

From **Amos Smith**.

"Dear Mira Vista UCC,

Wow! I am at a loss for words. When the \$2500 check came in the mail a tear welled in my eye. This is a beautiful gift that touches a deep place!

I feel great gratitude for your care and generosity. I was in care with Mira Vista before I received a call. I can see that I am still in your care today. In Christ, Amos "

It's wonderful for us, Mira Vista, to see that our gifts have made a difference to our seminarians. Please see the bulletin board in the Social Hall to read the letters.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Sugg*



Congratulations to **Meighan Pritchard** called to a halftime settled pastor position at Prospect UCC in Seattle. **Meighan** will be ordained Sunday, October 5 at University Congregational UCC. **Meighan** will also serve as the UCC Minister for Environmental Justice.



Congratulations & Best Wishes to **Theron & Davena Hambrick Jones** married, Sunday, August 10.



The choir is coming back from summer break and I am planning music for a wonderful fall beginning. I have been spending time with family over the summer, and with a family friend who was ill – but it was good to return some Sundays and to revel in Wendy’s musical expertise as she played songs called out by the congregation, with no time to prepare! What an amazing gift.

There was a study completed on the sounds of music and the brain and in it, we discover that most music is designed to spur feelings of anticipation in the listener. We wait for the anticipated last note, for the climax of a song, for the end rhyme, the way in which the music waves in and out/up and down. And then there are the ways in which the very nature of the music, or the way in which it is presented, is different, and stops us – connects with the very essence of our being, and makes us listen – just because it is different. There is a singer, a man named John Legend, whose music is quite beautiful, including his piano accompaniment. He has a love song, made famous recently, called “All of Me,” and I think a part of what makes the song captivating, is the fact that the words do not completely rhyme, and their difference makes one think twice about what the song is saying.

I like to spend time with the background of the songs we sing – it is a piece that I plan to focus on with the choir – what the words mean when the song writer sang, “this train is bound for glory,” or even “Amazing grace – how sweet the sound” – how does grace have a sound? What sound – and how is the sound lifesaving? Or what is the Ave – in Ave Maria? As the choir begins to examine some parts of music, I think the individuality of their own voices will begin to flow within the music.

We begin practice again on the second Thursday evening in September, and almost

right away, we will begin to consider the music of the holidays.

See you soon.

Blessed Be,
Cindy



Love. Grow. Serve.

Social Action Team Corner

We may be in a state of flux at Mira Vista UCC, but one part of our church’s life that is “going strong” is the Social Action Team. You know who we are – we’re the folks who decide where to spend our money, which organizations to support with time, money, and effort, and what topics the church will consider during the coming year. Yup, that’s us. We get a lot done, and we have fun doing it!

Now, going forward, we’d like to hear FROM YOU. What are your passions? Where do you feel led to get involved? What do you read in the papers or online that make you think, “Oh I want to DO something about that?” Here’s a chance for you to bring that concern, that passion, those ideas, directly to the Social Action Team, because frankly – that’s where a lot of our church’s mission ideas come from.

So come be a part of it. We’ll have an “open house” sort of meeting on Sept 21st after church. Anyone with an idea or half an idea should come and let us know what gets you motivated, or happy, or resolved, or intrigued, or even, dare I say, angry enough to want to fix it.

We want YOU.

Signed,

The SAT folks:

Rev. Melinda
Sylvia Sugg
Patsy Stubbs
Amy Ukena

September

Mira Vista United Church of Christ

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2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10 am 	3	4	5	6
7 Holy Communion 12 Noon Worship 	8 LABOR DAY  No Yoga	9	10 Council meeting @ El Cerrito Royale, 6:45 pm	11 Amazing Graces choir rehearsal resumes, 7 pm	12	13
14 12 Noon Worship	15 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	16	17	18 Amazing Graces choir rehearsal, 7 pm	19	20
21 12 Noon Worship Social Action Team (SAT) meeting, after church	22 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	23 	24	25 Amazing Graces choir rehearsal, 7 pm	26	27
28 12 Noon Worship	29 Yoga, 5:30-6:45 pm	30				



Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain!

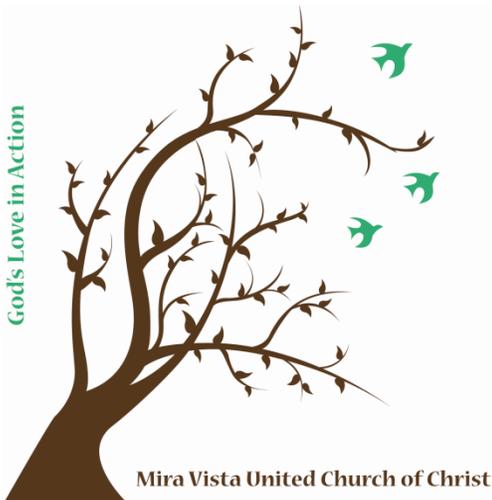
Mira Vista United Church of Christ is delighted to announce that Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain has accepted the position of Designated Term Pastor at Mira Vista for the coming three years, starting on September 1, 2014. Her tasks will be to help us through this transition period as we discern where God is leading us. She comes with many gifts, expertise, and experience. We are excited to have someone so competent to help guide us into the future! Pastor Melinda will begin preaching on September 7th. Greetings also to Melinda's spouse, Colleen Rodger. Melinda and Colleen make their home in San Francisco. A very hearty welcome to them both! A blessing on our new beginnings!

-- Joan Thompson, Chair, Pastor Search Committee
-- Bonnie Hariton, Moderator

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Address Change Requested

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