



# The Fellowship Post

## Mira Vista United Church of Christ

June 2018

### Melinda's Musings

by Pastor Melinda

***Without love our earth is a tomb.*** - Robert Browning (1812-1901)

The San Francisco Opera is producing Richard Wagner's 14-hour epic the **Ring of the Nibelungen** this month. This mammoth work of art is in four parts performed over the course of one week and we'll be seeing it all between June 19th and 24th. Yep, we are excited and can't wait to see those Valkyries fly again because in this production they are dressed a bit like Amelia Earhart and they actually fly!

We first saw this production by American director Francesca Zambello in 2011 and were completely blown away by Zambello's interpretation that **the fate of the world hinges upon whether we choose love instead of power.** When Wotan cuts his "spear of power" from the world ash tree, he becomes chief among the gods, but in so doing, sets in motion the destruction of the world.

Wotan's daughter, the valkyrie Brünhilde does not follow in her father's path. **She chooses love at every juncture** - even though her final act of love leads to her death. And in her dying for love, the world is reborn again.



The Ring, unlike many other mythic stories, is **not about the struggle between good or evil.** The main characters cannot be so easily classified. Instead, each character's destiny, and by extension the destiny of the world, is determined by whether or not they choose love.

This is not the way we usually think about our choices, but I do think that Jesus knew something about choosing love, even if it leads to death. It is also helpful to stop trying to place people, places, and things into good and bad binaries. Instead we might ponder these questions:

***What would you be willing to risk for love?  
What power would you be willing to  
relinquish? How might we all choose love?***

Love and many blessings,  
Melinda

Mira Vista United Church of Christ  
Semi-Annual Meeting  
Sunday, July 1  
following La Mesa

## anamnesis

by Tom Emanuel

(for Ariel Aaronson-Eves)

a strawberry is a ritual  
of planting and picking,  
kneeling and rising,  
licking juice from  
innocent fingers  
in summerhood and childhood.

a strawberry is a liturgy  
I've learned by rote:  
sowing and reaping,  
wanting and forgetting.  
a kneeling and a savoring  
and a ripening of recollection.  
the work of the people.

a strawberry is a prayer  
for rain. for amnesty.  
a steady job  
and a home and a bed.  
*una oracion migrante:*  
a traveling mercy.

a strawberry is a prophecy  
of hands stained only  
w/crimson hollow threats  
and syrup, the promise  
of a New Jerusalem  
and an end to exploitation.

a strawberry is an olive branch,  
an anointing, a covenant  
poured out  
in blood + sweetness  
for the forgiveness of many  
in the fullness of Time.

a strawberry is a sacrament.  
a great thanksgiving.  
an acceptable sacrifice.  
a memorial.

*for this is my Body, broken for you.  
take this, all of you, and eat of it,  
in remembrance of me.*

Author's note: *anamnesis*, a Greek word meaning "memorial," refers to remembering the Last Supper during the Christian Communion ritual. I offer this poem "in memory of" all migrant workers, as I prepare to spend 10 days at the U.S.-Mexico border exploring issues of immigration and economic and environmental justice with other faith leaders.



## Update for *the GOOD table*

by Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain

Over the past couple of months, and at our recent retreat, we have been talking about the prospect of purchasing a specific property on San Pablo Avenue to house our dreams for **the GOOD table**. Colleen Rodger and I, with help from others, have worked hard to determine whether or not we could afford to develop this property and also whether or not it would have a good chance of becoming financially sustainable. We have also consulted with a variety of folks to get feedback and more information about various permitting issues.

We have now come to the conclusion that **this particular property is not viable** so we do not recommend purchasing it. Lots of things led us to this realization, but ultimately, it is too expensive and would be too small to become sustainable. Basically, the staffing for a coffee shop with 40 seats is the same as one with 20, but the sales are not! Also, the assembly space is too small to accommodate the flexible use we have in mind with only 50 seats max.

For the next few weeks, Colleen and I are going to take a breath and then imagine other ways to turn our vision into new ministry. We invite you to do the same!

Thank you for your trust, your willingness to dream big, and for all the ways that we are community for and with one another.

## News from the Pews

The City of Berkeley gave **Adelle Lemon** an award for her many years of service to those living with mental health issues including being the founder, in 1971, of the Berkeley Creative Wellness Center previously known as the Creative Living Center. Congratulations Adelle!

A new cultural exchange program has selected **Olivia Wisely** to be an “ambassador” to China. She will spend nearly a month this summer meeting with other teenagers while exploring and learning about the culture and history of China.

**Beth Koutz** celebrated her 96th birthday on May 23rd. She continues to enjoy living in Carmichael, CA and has finally sold her home in El Sobrante. She is also sad to report that her son David died of cancer in early May.

Our Associate Minister for Worship Arts, **Tom Emanuel** travels to Watertown, SD on June 2-3rd to be the ministerial candidate for First Congregational Church. If the congregational vote is successful, Tom will begin his new position in mid-July. His final Sunday to preach for Mira Vista will be Sunday, July 1.



Adelle Lemon with her award.



Nancy and Adelle Lemon with Phoebe Sorgen



The Celebration of Life for Wilma West will be Thursday, June 7th at 5:30p with food and conversation to follow.

## June Celebrations

### Birthdays

12<sup>th</sup> Olivia Wisely  
15<sup>th</sup> Cable Noble  
17<sup>th</sup> Randi Nielsen  
28<sup>th</sup> Wendy Nielsen



### Happy Anniversary

17<sup>th</sup> Rev. Susan Meeter & Barbara Cook

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



# REVIVING OUR DEMOCRACY

A CONVERSATION ABOUT  
VOTER SUPPRESSION, CIVIL RIGHTS,  
AND THE 2018 ELECTIONS

WITH REVEREND **WILLIAM J. BARBER**  
AND *MOTHER JONES*' **ARI BERMAN**

Mother Jones | FS TV | BEN & JERRY'S | THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION

Nearly two years after Election Day 2016, Americans' rights are under siege across the nation, from voter suppression and gerrymandering to police violence and attacks on immigrants. Yet there has also been a surge in civic action to protect these rights, and it is gathering dramatic momentum as we near the midterm elections.

Join America's preeminent civil rights leader **Reverend William J. Barber**, architect of North Carolina's Moral Monday movement and co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, and Mother Jones' senior reporter **Ari Berman** for an in-depth discussion about the current state of civil rights and democracy, and how we can energize both.

Books will be available for sale; book signing to follow the main program.

**Thursday, July 12, 2018**  
**7:30 - 9p**

First Church Berkeley  
2345 Channing Way

Tickets: \$12-20 via Eventbrite



# Mira Vista United Church of Christ

780 Ashbury Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530  
 phone: (510) 526-0110 fax: (510) 526-0110  
 email: miravistaucc@earthlink.net  
 website: www.miravistaucc.org

# 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
<b>3</b> 12n Worship with Holy Communion followed by Social Action Team @ La Mesa  Amy Ukena & Hans Raag @El Cerrito Natural Grocery, 6-8:30p	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10a   Tom Emanuel in Mexico June 5-15	<b>6</b> Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	<b>7</b> No Community Office Hour  Wilma West memorial, 5:30p	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 12n Worship followed by La Mesa	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Council meeting, 7p	<b>14</b> Community office Hours, 2-5p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Picnic Worship @Bonnie & Dan Hariton's, 10a  FREE Live music Ray Capiral & Friends @El Cerrito Natural Grocery, 6-8:30p	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Mindfulness Circle @ El Cerrito Royale, 7p	<b>21</b> Community office Hours, 2-5p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 12n Worship followed by La Mesa <i>Rev. Paul Honigs, preaching</i>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Community office Hours, 2-5p  Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

# 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!

- |         |   |                |
|---------|---|----------------|
| June 3  | True Sabbath<br><i>Social Action Team meets during La Mesa</i>  | Mark 2: 23-28  |
| June 10 | Unifying Power  | Mark 3: 20-30  |
| June 17 | <b>Mira Vista Picnic Worship</b> @Bonnie and Dan Hariton's, 10a<br><i>No worship service will be held this day at 780 Ashbury Ave</i> |                |
| June 24 | Peace, Be Still!<br><i>Rev. Paul Honigs, preaching</i>  | Mark 4: 35-41  |
| July 1  | Search Me and Know Me<br><i>Tom Emanuel preaching, Semi-Annual meeting to follow</i>  | Psalm 139: 1-6 |

\*\*\*\*\*

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

Address Change Requested

**Dated Material**  
June 2018

God's Love in Action



Mira Vista United Church of Christ

*The Fellowship Post*

Editor: Diane Young  
published monthly by Mira Vista  
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