

The Fellowship Post

Mira Vista United Church of Christ

March 2018

Melinda's Musings

by Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain

It may be that when we no longer know which way to go that we have come to our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings. – Wendell Berry

Our tradition often describes the liturgical season of Lent in **terms of wilderness**. The metaphor is apt because the season's forty days of contemplation in preparation for Easter mimics the Biblical account of Jesus' spending forty days in the wilderness before he began his public ministry.

For Lent at Mira Vista this year, Tom Emanuel, Tim Murphy, and I have been expanding the idea of wilderness to encompass the realms of creativity and art. In our Sunday worship encounters, **we have been exploring how we engage the mystery of the Divine** in the world around us and make meaning from that encounter using music, icons, sounds, and even the smell of wet earth. The experience has been rich so far and deeply fulfilling for me, personally. If you haven't been able to be present, check out our sermon podcast on www.soundcloud.com/miravistaucc to hear some of our reflections.

On March 7th, I will head out again to the **actual wilderness** surrounding the Monastery of Christ in the Desert. On this trip, I will make my full oblation to the community and take the name of Sister Hildegard. In truth, I have no idea what this really means, but I know that I



feel called to this particular path of Benedictine spirituality and to this particular community of monks who live in the remote beauty of Northern New Mexico.

This year's Lenten journey in the wider world has been marked by increased awareness of violence. From the #MeToo movement to the strong voices of the students who survived the Parkland mass shooting, there appears to be a **growing chorus of "voices calling in the wilderness"** saying that sexual harassment and violence will not be tolerated and covered up

anymore. This chorus has been joined by magnificent young voices saying they will not accept constant mass shootings at schools as the new normal.

These voices in the wilderness are **preaching fierce love and increased justice** in a world that seems paralyzed by fear and anger. May we listen and learn to sing our own songs of love in harmony with them. And may the realm of God draw near to hearts bringing strength for the journey.

Love and many blessings,
Melinda

Good News Report: All-Day Retreat on April 28th

by Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain

At the March Council meeting, we scheduled an all-day retreat for **Saturday, April 28th** to ponder anew our plan for **the GOOD table**. In the meantime, **Colleen Rodger** and **Melinda V. McLain**, with help from **Brian Campbell-**

Miller and Bonnie Hariton, continue to look for appropriate real estate, while figuring out what we need to learn from our experience with the mid-city property we looked at in December.

The problems with the mid-city property centered on three things: **price was too high** and appears to be non-negotiable; **no dedicated parking** which could impact the use permit; and it had a potentially **difficult to remove tenant** in the middle building. The property was in Richmond, but the sidewalk in El Cerrito, so we need to **learn more about Richmond's regulations and planning processes** going forward and will hopefully be able to report more on this at the April retreat.

At the retreat, we also need to evaluate whether we have the **energy and skills to continue** with this project and/or how can we **identify and develop exterior partnerships** to provide what we lack since it is clear that our dwindling volunteer base may not be big enough nor do we have all the skills we need. For example, while we love food and many of us cook well, no one in our congregation is a licensed food professional, let alone someone who knows how to develop and run commercial food service.

We may have identified one new partner in this area! Through **Bonnie Hariton**, we have begun conversations with **a local chef and baker** who might be interested in working with us on the project. She brings amazing experience in commercial food service and we are now talking about how her skills and dreams might mesh with our vision.

So **mark your calendars now for Saturday, April 28th** and if you have any feedback, questions, or comments, do speak with any member of Council or Pastor Melinda.



5th Patsy Severson
7th Patsy Stubbs
12th Kathe Kiehn

♥ Happy birthday to each of you ♥
with love from Mira Vista

Psalm 1

by Tom Emanuel

[Author's note: on 10 February 2018, I was invited, in my role as Mira Vista's Associate Minister for Worship Arts, to facilitate a spiritual poetry workshop with youth at Epworth United Methodist Church in Berkeley. Together we walked through a process almost identical to the poetry reading/writing reflections we Mira Vistans did together in worship throughout February 2017; this is the poem that appeared that afternoon.]

Then I would pray the way trees do. They don't need ungracious things like words; their hymnody is richer, surer of its object. Respiration. Give and take. Wind rain and light. Clarity of expression. I spoke to the eucalyptus and told him that we are both foreigners in this place, wondered if he feels homesick. He told me: *grow where you're planted*. That's it. That's how I want to be human.

February 2018
Berkeley, CA



Here's great photo of **Wilma West** who died on January 22nd at the age of 97. The family will plan a memorial service to be held in May or June here at Mira Vista.

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United Church of Christ

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MARCH

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Community Office Hours with Pastor Melinda each Thursday @Catahoula Coffee, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	2 	3
4 12 Noon Worship & Holy Communion followed by La Mesa with Social Action Team Live jazz w/ Melinda V. McLain and Ray Capiral @El Cerrito Natural Grocery, 6-8:30p. <i>FREE - invite your friends!</i>	5	6 Mira Vista prepares lunch, GRIP Souper Center, 10 am  Council meeting, 7p	7 Mindfulness Circle, El Cerrito Royale, 7p Pastor Melinda on study-leave March 7 – March 13	8 No Community office hours Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	9	10 Time to Spring Ahead! 
11 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa Tom Emanuel preaching Daylight Savings Time begins	12	13	14	15 Community office hours, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	16	17
18 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa	19	20	21 Mindfulness Circle, El Cerrito Royale, 7p	22 Community office hours, 2-5p Interfaith Meditation @Sycamore UCC, 6p	23	24
25 12 Noon Worship followed by La Mesa Tom Emanuel preaching 	26	27	28	29 Maundy Thursday service, El Cerrito Royale, 7p	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!

Mar. 4 Changing the B-roll John 2: 13-22
Social Action Team meets during La Mesa

Mar. 11 Love and Death John 3: 14-21
Tom Emanuel preaching

Mar. 18 Gathered Glory John 12: 20-23

Mar. 25 Palm Sunday John 12: 12-16
Tom Emanuel preaching

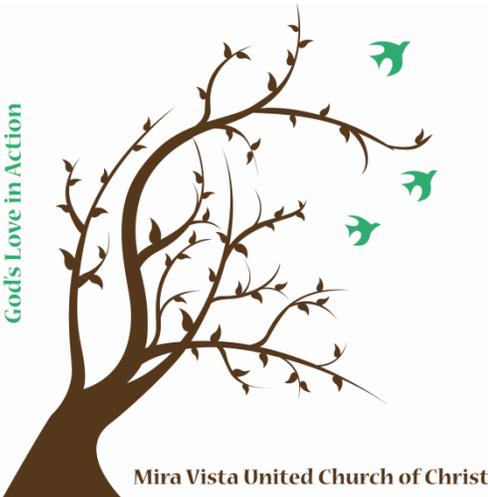
Mar. 29 Maundy Thursday Taizé Service @El Cerrito Royale, 7p

Apr. 1 The Foolishness of Easter John 20: 1-18
*In honor of the wonderful juxtaposition of Easter and April Fool's Day, all are invited to participate in our first (and possibly only) **foolish Easter bonnet contest** during our shared feast, La Mesa! Prizes will be awarded.*

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Address Change Requested

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