

The Parishscope

Published by Arlington Community Church

52 Arlington Ave., Kensington, 94707

510 526-9146

www.acc-ucc.org

Volume 98, April 25, 2006

Pat McLaughlin, Editor

FELICITATIONS



Helen Winters, who is spearheading the church renewal discernment effort, recently asked me to reflect on what I thought were the critical elements of any tonic remedy. She wondered, “Do programs build a church, or is it worship?”

As I pondered this, my first response was to turn to the efforts of Christian Schwartz and the Natural Church Development process, in which they identified eight components to growing congregations. (I support this process because it is low-cost, quick, and engages a large number of people in discerning problem areas and then developing collaborative decisions.) But, without having gone through the full survey and decision-making process, which of the following are our strengths, and where could we use some improvement?

1. **Empowering leadership** – Leaders in healthy churches help others fulfill their potential, thereby expanding leadership and multiplying leaders. There are mechanisms and training to teach the congregation to do *its* thing, rather than allowing for top-down decision-making.
2. **Gift-oriented ministry** – Church leaders (both lay and ordained) help people identify their gifts and then work to integrate these people and their gifts into appropriate ministries.
3. **Passionate spirituality** – Are the Christians in this church on fire? Do they live committed lives and practice their faith with joy and enthusiasm? Do they worship God with their hearts, rather than the head?
4. **Functional structures** – Growing churches are open to new ways of doing business and adopt systems to incorporate desired change. “That’s the way we’ve always done it” are often the seven last words of dying churches.

5. **Inspiring worship services** – The research didn’t define the type of service (or music), but noted that 80% of the people in growing churches felt that worship was inspiring, compared with 49% in declining churches.
6. **Holistic small groups** – This was the most important discovery in Schwartz’ research. Both outreach and pastoral care were built in through the use of small groups.
7. **Need-oriented evangelism** – This requires that people take seriously the agenda of others (both within the church and in the larger community), rather than forcing one’s own agenda on others. In our case, it means identifying what is needed by the people who aren’t in our church and providing that, rather than trying to push our style of church on others.
8. **Loving relationships** – This is characterized by loving relationships and laughter. Growing churches have spontaneous humor.

Like you, I have opinions on how we fare on each of these, but I’d like to take a step back and give you my gut reaction to how we “grow” a church. To me, attracting people to church is like attracting them to anything else – e.g., a store, a school, a doctor, a hair stylist, etc.

And, for me, the decisions are fairly simple, and they are based on **joy** and **pride**. When people find joy and are proud of something, they share that information with others. We make decisions based on the anticipated results, and we make assumptions about the anticipated results based on what we’ve heard from our friends.

So it’s not so much a matter of whether to focus on programs *or* worship, because some of us will find joy and pride in one thing, while others are moved by something else. It could be a wonderful children’s program, or a fabulous music program, or great preaching, or fantastic social activities, or effective

ministry in times of crisis. The important thing is that it brings us joy and we share our pride with others.

So, as we go through the church renewal effort, please take a moment to identify 2-3 things about ACC that make you joyful and proud – and share that knowledge with those of us in church and those friends and neighbors that you think might need a place for some joy in their lives.

Women's Fellowship

Linda Jones



The women of ACC gathered again on April 20th for an evening of sharing wonderful food, conversation, poetry, song, and prayer.

We went over a proposed calendar for the remainder of 2006. Days and times change to try to accommodate the many and not the few. Please try to join us for as many programs as you can. Linda, Lisa Chilton, and Shirlee Bromley have planned and led the meetings this spring. We are looking for 2 or 3 to lead us beginning in September. Please let Linda know by June of your desire to lead this important fellowship at ACC.

- May 13th Saturday retreat, 8:30 am-11:30 am—with Victoria McDonald: “Listening, Remembering the Soul’s Voice. Cost \$15. Call to register by May 9th
- June 10th Saturday, 2pm-4pm, Old-fashioned Tea at the home of Barbara Forbes.
- July/Aug No meetings planned
- Sept. 14th Indian cooking class with Shanti and Lachu Moorjani—we all cook a feast then eat it!!
- Oct. 12th Not decided yet—call me with an idea
- Nov. 9th Not decided yet—call me with an idea
- Dec. 2nd Home for the Holidays Lunch and Boutique Co-chaired by Susan Yourd and Linda Jones with the help of all of you. This is intended as a gift to the community, not a fund raiser.



Moderator's Musings

April Council Meeting

Jim Cottle

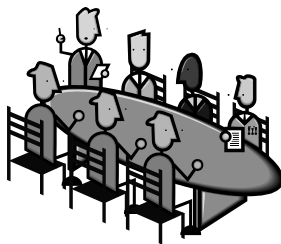
- Helen Winter’s summarized our March 26th “Growth” lunch and discussed future plans for accessing areas of congregational interest. An opportunity to designate program priorities and indicate areas of individual talent as well as willingness to provide financial support will occur May 7th: on “Dot Sunday”.
- Allan Essex reviewed actions taken by the CE Board to move forward w/ a committee to evaluate w/ the 3 downstairs schools programs they might be interested in ACC providing and to establish a summer musical/arts program that might morph into a year-round program.
- Jill provided an update on sanctuary renewal including the new estimated cost of \$56,000 for the carpet and pews.
- Progress continues to be made in updating our web-site. More pictures are needed and Boards need to supply program information.
- Following last month’s decision to move to a centralized information system, contact was made w/ the Conference to determine what systems they would recommend a meeting w/ Trustees, Phyl and Jim will occur next week to narrow the choices and to plan site visits of potential solutions.
- Efforts are progressing to cull designated fund line items which are no longer current. This would assist in creating a more efficient cash management program.
- No MIT candidates at this point but a plea has been delivered to PSR for assistance.
- A lunch meeting w/ the management committee of Mira Vista and Council will occur on May 7th.
- Jim will try to set up Felicity’s next Section D meeting w/ Conference personnel.
- Ruth will assist in providing an outline and plan for Felicity’s upcoming Pastoral Review by ACC’s congregation.
- Phyl provided updated financial statements showing improved cash flow and income.
- Sara will work w/ Christy and others to improve the timely dissemination of publicity items to the community.
- Felicity, Jill, Randy and Jim will meet next week to iron out continuing financial and expense issues.



A Message from Shanti

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank-you to all who participated in the Good Friday service. The singers from our choir are a beautiful group of people to work with; special thanks to Dorothele Fites for hosting rehearsal groups at her house. Oscar is a dedicated musician who is always there when needed. Pat McLaughlin, again created a stunning program. The community singers, handbell ringers, Joe Pratt on the clarinet and lastly, all the readers and creators of the biblical scenes helped to evoke a true Good Friday experience. Last, but not least, I like to extend a thoughtful thank you to you, the good people of this church who serenaded me with song, cake and flowers. Do I need to be reminded why I am here at this church? Could it be the unconditional love and support of this congregation that inspires me to give the best of what I have to offer? Thank you.

Note: On May 12, Mother's Day, the children's choir will come to sing for you Sunday morning.



NCNC-UCC Events Schedule

Meeting of Bay Association

April 30th, 5:30 p.m.

First Congregational Martinez

http://www.bayassociation.org/html/spring_meeting.html

NCNC-UCC Annual Conference 2006

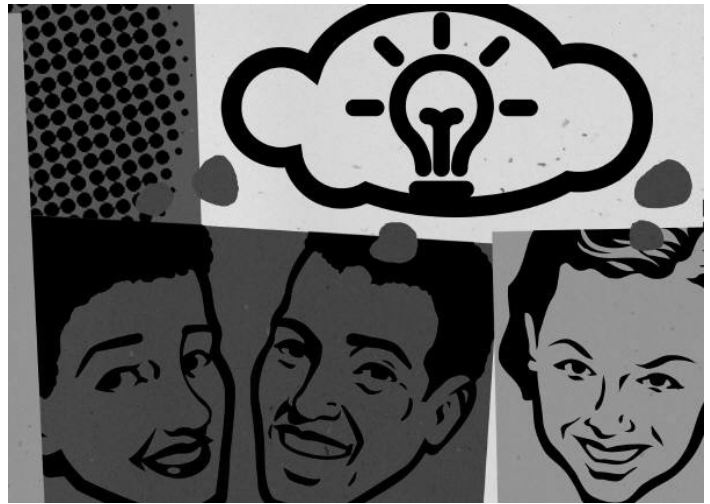
May 18- 21 - Register TODAY!

Asilomar Conference Grounds, Pacific Grove

<http://www.ncnccucc.org> and click on Annual Meeting

Future Bay Association Ecclesiastical Councils

June 10th & October 14th, 9 am - 4 pm.



ACC Renewal 2006

(Helen Winters)

Did you see the insert in the last *Parishscope* about some of the exciting new directions being considered for ACC? More of the new ideas are outlined in the insert in this *Parishscope*; be sure to look for it. Read about these plans, talk to each other, pray mightily for guidance and inspiration, and give any feedback you like to any Council member, to Pastor Felicity, or to Helen Winters (helenkwinters@yahoo.com, or 237-9705).

The next step on our ACC Renewal path is to **hear from the congregation**. The Council plans to do this in two ways. The first is a *Time & Talents Sheet* (enclosed in this *Parishscope* and also available in the Social Hall after worship) on which you are asked to consider how you will be able to help in 2006 with the proposed new programs. Please return your completed *Time & Talents Sheet* by Sunday, May 7 (May 14 at the latest, OK?) by dropping it in the big box in the Social Hall marked *Time & Talent Sheets*, or by mailing it to the church office.

The second method of feedback will be more visual and colorful, and more fun! After worship on Sunday, May 7, we will play the “dot” game. Everyone who comes to worship that day (members, friends, visitors, guests) will be given a group of sticky dots. In the Social Hall after worship will be posters describing each of the new ideas/directions. You get to “vote” by placing your dots on the ideas that you think are the best new directions for ACC. By the end of Social Hour, by looking at where the dots have landed, we should have a pretty good idea of where to place our collective energies in 2006. **Please come on “Dot” Sunday, May 7!**

ACC Calendar - May 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:45 PM Bell Choir	2 6:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 7:00PM Deacons	3 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:00 PM Choir Rehearse 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	4 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	5	6
7 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship (Sn) 11:30 AM Deacons 11:30 AM "Dot" Sunday 6:00 PM Meditation(FR) 7:00 PM Music and Meditation Service	8 7:45 PM Bell Choir	9 6:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 10:30 AM Duplic. Bridge 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 7:30 PM Church Council(FR)	10 Parishscope 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	11 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) Potluck & Program(SH)	12 7:30 PM Mini Concert	13 8:30 AM Women's Retreat
14 Mother's Day 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship (Sn) 11:30 AM Knitting Ministry 6:00 PM Meditation(FR)	15 7:45 PM Bell Choir	16 SOUPER CENTER 6:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 3:30 PM *Children's Choir	17 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:00 PM Choir Rehearse 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	18 Asilomar 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 6:30 PM Men's Dinner	19 Asilomar 6:00 PM Bridge Potluck & Play(SH)	20 Asilomar
21 Asilomar 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship (Sn) 6:00 PM Meditation(FR)	22 7:45 PM Bell Choir	23 6:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 7:00 PM Trustees 7:30 PM Christian Ed.	24 Parishscope 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:00 PM Choir Rehearse 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	25 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	26	27
28 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-up 10:00 AM Worship (Sn) 11:30 AM Missions 6:00 PM Meditation(FR)	29 Memorial Day 7:45 PM Bell Choir	30 6:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 3:30 PM *Children's Choir	31 3:30 PM *Children's Choir 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing			

Arlington Community Church

United Church of Christ
52 Arlington Avenue
Kensington, CA 94707

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 187
Berkeley, CA

The Parishscope

«AddressBlock»

SUNDAY, APRIL 30	SUNDAY, MAY 7	SUNDAY, MAY 14
8:45am - Adult Study & Discussion 10:00am - Worship & Sunday School Taize Service 6:00pm Meditation (Fireside)	8:45am - Adult Study & Discussion 10:00am - Worship & Sunday School Rev. Felicity Wright preaching 6:00pm Meditation (Fireside) 7:00pm Music and Meditation	8:45am - Adult Study & Discussion 10:00am - Worship & Sunday School Rev. Felicity Wright preaching 6:00pm Meditation (Fireside)

*****THE NEXT DEADLINE IS MAY 10TH FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MAY 16TH ISSUE*****

[Send *Parishscope* email to: pat@patricia-mclaughlin.net]

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday, May 7th	11:30am	Renewal "Dot" Sunday
Friday, May 12th	8:00pm	Mini Concert: Bobby Ingrams Piano/Comedy
Tuesday, May 16th	10:00am	Souper Center
Thursday, May 18th - Sunday, May 21st		Asilomar Conference
Friday, May 19th	6:00pm	Bridge Potluck & Play