

The Parishscope

Published by *Arlington Community Church*

52 Arlington Ave., Kensington, 94707

510 526-9146

www.acc-ucc.org

Volume 138 May 26, 2009

Pat McLaughlin, Editor

The Pastor's Epistle



Dear Friends,
When you come to Sunday worship this summer (June 14 through September 6) here are a few things to look for.

A semicircular set up of pews in the sanctuary.

An intergenerational service that engages children and adults in interactive worship.

A summer theme that celebrates the *Spirit in Our Lives at Arlington Community Church*.

A scripture lesson that offers a front row seat as Jesus and his followers go about ministering to people.

A different Storyteller each week - drawn from our own ACC community or from the larger community – who will open our awareness to the presence of the Spirit - past and present – in the life of our congregation and community.

An opportunity for children and youth to learn through direct doing and involvement the “what’s” and the “how’s” of Sunday worship.

An opportunity for children and adults to worship with words and songs, hands and feet, candles and bells, pictures and stories, listening and response.

An after-church party on the third Sundays of June, July, and August with food and live music.

Childcare in the Fireside Room.

How you help and be involved? Each Sunday there will be a need for children and adults to sound the bell, light the candles, welcome guests, take up the offering, co-lead gesture prayers. Either write your name of the sign-up sheet in the Social Hall or talk with Al Williams or Michael Mansfield or leave a message at the church office.

Most important of all – *Come to Summer Worship at Arlington Community Church and Bring a Friend!*

Grace and Peace, al Williams



WOMEN'S GROUP

Anna-Maria Hertzger's paternal grandparents, Dutch nationals, were living in Java, Dutch East Indies, when World War II broke

out; they were captured and spent several years as prisoners of the Japanese. When her son John had to do a family history project in middle school, he wanted to learn more about life in a prisoner-of-war camp.

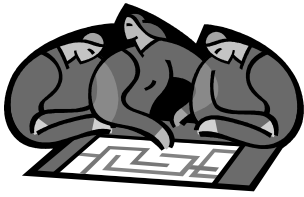
With the help of several local Dutch people, they found Helen Colijn who had written "Song of Survival" which is about her time as a prisoner in Sumatra. (She worked at Sunset magazine during her career.) In her camp, a missionary woman started a women's choir which developed into singing the notes of well-known classical pieces. These pieces were put together from memory. Since then, the Women's Choir

of Haarlem, Holland, and a group of women living on the San Francisco Peninsula have both recorded the songs.

Anna-Maria has two DVDs, one is “Song of Survival” which tells the story of those women who sang to keep up their spirits as well as those of their fellow prisoners. It features interviews with the former prisoners, and a Dutch women’s choral group singing the tunes. The other is “Paradise Road” which tells the same story, using actors, including Glenn Close.

On May 14, we watched “Paradise Road”. Anyone planning on attending the second part might first want to watch Paradise Road for the background to the June 11 meeting when we will watch “Song of Survival”.

The Women’s group meets at 6:30 p.m. for a potluck dinner; the program follows.



DISCERNMENT

Tony Lloyd

The Arlington Community Church Discernment process was introduced to the congregation earlier this year

by Revered Williams and was the topic of a one hour congregational spectrum (on April 17th), continues to gain momentum and participation. On May 16th a group of approximately ten congregation members comprised of the Discernment Steering Committee and those who have volunteered to be Mentors / Coaches in the process, attended a half day orientation program conducted by AL.

On Saturday June 6th and on Wednesday June 10th (a tentative second date added) Rev Williams will lead members of the congregation through the first of several discernment exercises to aid us in reaching a congregational consensus of “what God is calling us to be” as we go forward into the future. In the first meeting you will be invited to reflect back on your experiences at ACC when you felt most “spiritually fed” in your relationship with the church. You will be asked to go back to that time and share the example and your feelings (individual remembering). In very small groups these shares will be with a partner or partners. There will be deeper probing into these events to unlock the factors, qualities, and values that caused you to choose these examples. You will then be asked to work as teams on expressing your faith statements that can be drawn from these experiences. After a group sharing and discussion of similarities and differences the group will try to arrive at an accurate picture of Arlington Community Church today. We will close the meeting by introducing the theme of the second Discernment General Congregation meeting (Listening).

The meetings are opened and closed in prayerful meditation. They start at 9 AM at the church and conclude at noon. Refreshments in the way of beverages, fruit, and finger food will be available.

Approximately 20 members of the congregation have indicated their desire to participate in the meeting process which will consist of several meetings this summer and early fall. We strongly encourage participants to commit to all the meetings (3 to 4). Someone from the mentor team will contact you to confirm your attendance for the upcoming meetings in early June. If you have not yet voiced your preference to participate. Please contact Tony Lloyd, Ruth Robinson, or Elena Caruthers by phone or e-mail

(listed in the church directory) so we can reserve a spot in one of the upcoming step I workshops.

One of the critical outputs from the discernment process will be information that we can provide the pastoral search committee that will help them profile the characteristics we seek in our pastoral search and calling which we hope to partake later in the year.

Feedback for the initial orientation workshop has been very positive. It has been particularly consistent in its affirmation that the Discernment journey will be beneficial to us all and that it is not a repeat of some of the envisioning processes we have experienced in the past.

Won't you all come and be part of this fantastic spiritual opportunity and experience together.

Blessings to All!!



CAMPING AT CAZ

Sara Laferte

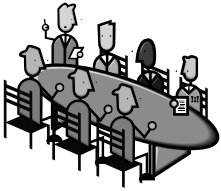
You are invited to come camping with us in a redwood grove beside Austin Creek near Cazadero, California.

This is not the campground which is operated by the church conference; it is a privately-owned property in the same area. Families and friends from Arlington Church have been camping here every summer for more than 25 years. Brochures which describe the camp in more detail are available in the church social hall on Sundays.

Briefly, this is very civilized camping. We sleep, prepare meals, and eat outdoors at Caz. The property includes a small A-frame cottage which has two bathrooms (Yes! Hot water, a shower!) and also refrigerators for storing perishable food items. We enjoy volleyball, ping-pong, and Mountain Golf (no actual golf is involved; we'll explain), creek-walking, swimming in the Russian River (a short drive away from camp), and lounging in the sun.

Camping weekends for 2009 will be Fourth of July weekend (Friday-Sunday) and Labor Day weekend (Saturday-Monday). The Fourth of July celebration includes an evening on the beach in Monte Rio to view the float parade, amazing water curtain, and fireworks display. It is not to be missed!

For more information about camping at Caz, please call Ron and Susan Yourd (524-4782) or Randy and Sara Laferte (526-8362). We'd love to see you there!



NEWS FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Jill Bryans

We received good news at our most recent Church Council meeting from our Treasurer, Randy Laferte. Church finances remain in excellent condition due to high pledge income and lower than expected expenses. Thank you all for keeping your pledges up to date!

Council also heard a report from Jeff Munnis, chair of the By-Law Committee which had been formed last year to review our current By-Laws, research church governance, and provide recommendations to Council. It has already been acknowledged that we are currently not following several requirements of our By-Laws. In addition, the committee identified a critical issue with the By-Laws, namely that authority and lines of command are not clear. In order to address this, changes are needed within our organizational structure with corresponding changes to the By-Laws. The committee recommended that this matter be re-addressed once we have clarified our identity, priorities, and long-term vision through our discernment process.

We are currently embarking on an important mission: the reshaping of our church for the future. The Discernment Steering Committee has been working hard to create what will be an inviting path toward learning more about ourselves and what we hope for Arlington Community Church. A Mentor Orientation Workshop was held on May 16 and all of us who participated found it to be an enlightening experience with the prospect of providing greater clarity to who we are and what we want to become. There are more Discernment meetings planned throughout June; I urge ALL to take advantage of this opportunity. After these meetings, there will be small listening groups formed to work on a specific task and they will meet throughout the summer. Some of you have expressed distaste for going through a process such as this *again*. It would be a grave mistake not to take advantage of the seasoned experience our interim pastor has to offer us. We cannot initiate a search process until we clearly know our identity which ultimately will be stated in our Church Profile. Yes, it will be hard work, there will be time commitments, and it will be worth it to share our thoughts and hopes with each other, and reshape our church for the future.

Other Council news: Susan Yourd, Edie Rodman, and Tom Dean have been appointed to the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. A Christian Education

Task Force led by Al will be meeting in June to develop the fall CE program. Members are Linda Jones, Margaret Kornfeld, Shanti Moorjani, Michael Mansfield, Tony Lloyd, and Jill Bryans. The Trustees recently installed new fluorescent light covers in the Fireside Room and will be installing new floor covering on the stage this summer in time for the Peace Child week. Thank you Trustees for your dedicated service!



MUSIC NOTES

Shanti Moorjani

The Spring Music Celebration held last Sunday in the social hall drew a packed house. The performers alone were over 50 when you add up the bell choirs, children and adult choirs and Spirit and the Arts group. The general mood of the afternoon was upbeat with a community feel to it. It was hot, but we all managed to keep our collective cool.

So many "thank you"s need to be passed around for all the commitment of time and talent and not to mention all the logistics to create a program of this complexity.

Thank you to the choir which came to extra rehearsals, learned a new and difficult piece of music. Thanks to the adult bell choir for their music. The new children's bell choir attempted a hard piece for such a short time playing, making the sound effects for "Noah and the Ark" as the Spirit and the Arts children acted out the story.

We'd like to thank Thomas Duden for professionally singing the tenor solo.

Last, but not least, were the children who not only sang their own special songs, but joined with the adult choir to perform the "Mass for Children" Given their age (7 to 13) and experience, I was impressed.

Thank you"s need to be extended to Chieko Chamber, Sara Laferte and Elena Caruthers for organizing and executing the reception. A big thank to Oscar Burdick for all the extra hours of practice to learn this piece and fine playing. Also Tom Dean came to many rehearsals to turn pages for Oscar - thank you. And finally, thanks to Pat McLaughlin for a superb program, Michael Mansfield for spirit and arts numbers and Pastor Al for moral support and welcoming, Clyde for set-up.. For me personally, I was so pleased with the quality of music and the appreciative comments following the performance. After all the months of preparation, the day came together and was very enjoyable.



WHO IS JESUS TO ME?

Sara Laferte

My childhood experience of church was rather eclectic. My mother certainly believed in God, but she didn't belong to a particular church. Her grandfather was a Methodist minister; she may have been raised a Methodist, but she never claimed it. She thought it was important for me to go to church, but as a single working mom, she apologetically stayed home.

So, as a toddler, when Mother and I shared a house with her childhood friend Alma, I sometimes went to the Catholic Church with her. Later, I attended an Episcopal church near my godparents' home, because I often spent Saturday night with them and they went to church there. I was baptized there at the age of 8. Mother was more than a little amazed when I came home one Sunday and announced that I would be baptized the following week and she ought to be there. After that, when I was old enough to walk to a church near us, she sent me to the Swedenborgian Church on Lyon Street in San Francisco. I don't know how she learned about that church, but it was a good choice, and I was confirmed there and found a happy home there for many years. The Swedenborgian ways of describing God, heaven, and hell made a kind of sense to me as a teenager. Eventually, after Randy and I married (in the Swedenborgian Church) and had our first child, we moved to Kensington, and it was sadly time to find a new church closer to home. It might have been the Unitarians or even the Lutherans if I had visited one of them first, but somehow it turned out to be Arlington. I didn't know anything about the UCC, but the church was welcoming for me and the children. Randy joined with me, but he wasn't really interested; he said he figured he would get interested when he was older.

The other strong religious influence in my life was my friends in high school and college, who were nearly all Jewish. I earned the praise of being "an honorary Jew" and was included at Seders, confirmations, etc. The way Tevye speaks to God in *Fiddler on the Roof* is more like the way I speak to God – personal and direct, no intermediary.

I often think about the question, Who is Jesus? The answer continues to change over time. Here's where I am today. I believe Jesus was fully human. I believe we are all children of God, that we all have the divine spark. I suspect we may all be capable of doing

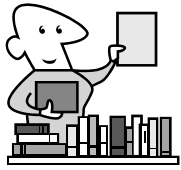
what Jesus did – feeding the multitude, healing the sick, driving out demons.

It's impossible to talk about God, because everything I might say is at once true and untrue. Words are too limiting. I'm sure that's also why God commanded us not to make any images. But one way to talk about God is as an endless source of love and wisdom, and we all have the ability to tap into this source. It requires faith and focus, prayer and sitting quietly in God's presence. Miracles can come out of this. But we get distracted, discouraged, disconnected. We forget, we get lost. God is always there; we're the ones who get unplugged. To be connected is to be in a state of grace. To be disconnected is a kind of hell.

Jesus is a model of what can happen when someone stays connected, keeps the focus, uses the power. I don't think he is the only model; I think there have perhaps been many others. And I don't think of him as the exclusive path to salvation. But if I were to practice staying connected to God, like Jesus, I'm sure I could do more good in the world. Can I be like Jesus? Do I even want to be like Jesus? What are the things that prevent me from practicing connectedness all the time?

There's something else I've been thinking about Jesus. What if one of the things he was trying to say to us is that death is not a reason for fear and grief? What if that was an important part of Jesus' message? Then I wonder, if death is no big deal, what do we make of the idea that "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son . . ."? What would this mean? What is the sacrifice? Maybe the concept of sacrifice is mistaken thinking. Jesus' calling was not to be some sort of sacrificial lamb, but to model for us how to be connected to God, how to build God's kingdom, to draw from the greatest source of wisdom and love.

This is an interesting exercise, Al. Thank you for asking. Our children attended Arlington Church, went to Sunday School and youth groups, and were confirmed there. But now we have three grandchildren, and I doubt that any of them will get religious education. I'm sorry about that. I may have opportunities to talk about faith and about God with my grandchildren, and it's important to get in touch with what I want to tell them. Didn't Paul say something about always being prepared to account for our confidence in God?



HAVE YOU READ THIS?

[Notes from the Book Table]

New books coming to the Book Table in June include some light summer reading and some serious discussions. Check it out.

- For young children, **Listen to the Wind**, by Greg Mortenson and Susan Roth. This is the inspiring *Three Cups of Tea* story told for children age 4-8.
- **The Tortilla Curtain** by T. C. Boyle. Fiction. The lives of immigrants hiding in Topanga Canyon and prosperous middle-class homeowners collide, physically and metaphorically. Let me know if you like this book, because T. C. Boyle has written several others we might also enjoy.
- **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society** by Mary Ann Shaffer. Finally, this book is available in paperback! It is a fictionalized account of true events on the island of Guernsey during the World War II German occupation.
- **Hands of My Father A Hearing Boy, His Deaf Parents, and the Language of Love**, by Myron Uhlberg. Myron Uhlberg's tender and often amusing memoir of growing up in a loving family, where he provided the connection between his deaf parents and the rest of the world.
- **Jane Brody's Guide to the Great Beyond: A Practical Primer to Help You and Your Loved Ones Prepare Medically, Legally, and Emotionally for the End of Life**, by Jane Brody. Jane Brody has gained a good reputation for intelligent, straightforward reporting on health-related topics. This book has been described as "the essential travel guide for the journey toward the inevitable."



THE JOY OF MUSIC

Carolyn Margrete

This summer I am offering a Six Lesson Introductory Piano Lesson Series. Learn some new skills, play songs you love, and bring more music into your life.

Scheduling can be structured around vacations and other activities.

Call me for more information, 510-236-0376

carolynmargrete@gmail.com



SPECIAL OFFERING

June 21st, 2009 Father's Day

Kennedy-King Scholarship Fund

There will be a special offering on Sunday June 21st for the Kennedy-King Scholarship Fund. The Arlington Community Church has contributed to this fund which gives an \$8,000.00 scholarship over a two year period to undergraduates and a \$4,000.00 scholarship to graduates. This Fund was created in 1968 to give scholarship to minority groups under-represented at California four year colleges and universities. These students have shown success at one of the three Contra Costa County's community colleges. Please help these worthy recipients help themselves.



THANKS AND GOODBYE...

Lauren Lotko

As some of you may already know, I am moving to Washington, DC, this summer to begin a master's degree program at Georgetown University in September. I want to take a few brief words to express my gratitude for the members of ACC and this community. It has been a blessing to worship with you for over a year, and I will miss seeing you on Sunday mornings. Thank you for opening your hearts to me and inviting me into the wonderful community you have built at ACC.

READ A GOOD BOOK THIS SUMMER

Allan Essex



Deepak Chopra is the author of more than fifty books including numerous *New York Times* best sellers in both the fiction and non-fiction categories. Chopra's Wellness Radio airs weekly on

Sirius Satellite Stars (Channel 102), which focuses on the areas of success, love, sexuality and relationships, well-being, and spirituality. He is founder and president of the Alliance for a New Humanity. *Time* magazine heralds Deepak Chopra as one of the top one hundred heroes and icons of the century and credits him as "the poet-prophet of alternative medicine."

The Sunday morning adult study group (meeting at 8:30am every Sunday morning) will be reading and discussing issues raised in Deepak Chopra's latest book *The Third Jesus*. You are welcome to join in the reading, reflecting, and sharing your spiritual life journey.



4TH ANNUAL PEACE CHILD SUMMER ARTS CAMP

August 10-14, 2009

- Singing, Dancing, Acting, Art, Music, Puppets, and More
- One-Week Musical Theater

Production Based on the Social Justice Themes of Peace, Kindness, Community, and Gratitude

- Monday through Friday -- 9-1 each day with a culminating show at 7 PM on Friday
- Morning snack and lunch included.
- Artist Instructors:
Lisa Klein (Visual Art and Puppets)
Michael Mansfield (Acting and Dancing)
Shanti Moorjani (Singing and Music)
- \$150 For the Week

For more information, contact:

Michael Mansfield 673-5150 jeangarcon@aol.com

Shanti Moorjani 843-7745 leslieshanti@yahoo.com

Applications and information available at the Church office.

HATE CRIMES AT CURT MINER'S CHURCH



(Excerpts from San Luis Obispo Tribune, thanks to Helen Winters)

(Many of you will remember Curt Miner from his days as a student at

PSR and later, his return to PSR and ACC for a brief period.)

A sign outside a San Luis Obispo church meant to welcome and promote tolerance has been the repeated target of vandals, and one instance represents a hate crime, police said.

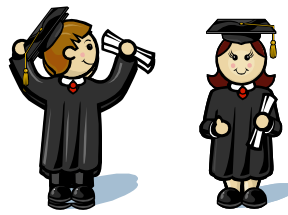
“Someone is sending us a message,” said the Rev. Curt Miner of the United Church of Christ (Congregational) of San Luis Obispo. Someone used a blowtorch-like device to melt the Plexiglas over the message.

The church had put the phrase “A Family of Faith for Everyone” and a rainbow decal on the 4-foot-by-5-foot sign outside the building facing Los Osos Valley Road at the end of April.

The central tenet of an open and affirming congregation, a status held by the church, is that people of all sexual orientations are welcome in the church and ministry.

Insurance will cover the damage after a \$1,000 deductible.

If you would like to contact Curt Miner, the Email is office@sloucc.org . and Website is www.sloucc.org



**CONGRATULATIONS
2009 GRADUATES!**
A wonderfully diverse group.

Lydia Chilton, daughter of Ed and Lisa Chilton: Received her Master's degree in Engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology – specializing in Computer Science.

Leah Forrest, granddaughter of Janet Messman: Graduates this June from El Cerrito High School. She will be starting her freshman year in September at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, Oregon.

Alison Kosel, daughter of Jan Kosel: Graduated from Pomona College with a double major in Math and Neuroscience. Alison is planning to pursue a Doctoral degree in Biomedical Statistics at the University of Washington beginning this fall.

Morgan Lloyd, daughter of Carol and Tony Lloyd: Received her Master's degree in Social Welfare from the University of California, Berkeley. Morgan is looking to begin her clinical practice to meet the qualifications for the State of California License Board. She has also applied to the UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare Doctoral Program.

Jeff Munnis, our former Minister-In-Training: Graduated from Pacific School of Religion on May 24. Jeff will now work on preparing his ordination paper for presentation this fall. Meanwhile, he will be busy with ACC commitments, helping his wife Stelli, and with their non-profit publishing company.

Becky Parks-Ramage, daughter of David and Christy Parks-Ramage: Received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the San Francisco Art Institute. Becky was named outstanding student in the department of New Genre. She plans to spend the year building a portfolio, prior to applying to graduate school.

ACC Calendar - June 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	3 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	4 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	5	6
7 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 10:00 AM Worship	8	9 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 10:30 AM Duplic. Bridge 7:30 PM Church Council(FR)	10 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	11 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 6:30 PM Women's Potluck & Program(SH)	12	13
14 Flag Day 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 10:00 AM Worship 11:30 AM Knitting Ministry	15	16 SOUPER CENTER 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	17 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	18 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 5:00 PM Souper Dinner	19	20
21 Father's Day 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 10:00 AM Worship	22	23 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	24 PARISHSCOPE 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	25 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH)	26 6:00 PM Bridge Potluck & Play(SH)	27
28 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 10:00 AM Worship	29	30 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)				

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, June 7	SUNDAY, June 14	SUNDAY, June 21	SUNDAY, June 28
8:45am - Adult Study 11:00am – Worship Alfred Williams Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 11:00am – Worship Alfred Williams Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am – Worship Alfred Williams Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 11:00am – Worship Alfred Williams Preaching

THE NEXT DEADLINE IS JUNE 24TH FOR PUBLICATION IN THE JUNE 30TH ISSUE

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

SPECIAL EVENTS		
Thursday, June 11	6:30pm	Women's Potluck & Program
Tuesday, June 16	10:00am	Souper Center
Thursday, June 18	5:00pm	Souper Center Dinner
Sunday, June 21	10:00am	Father's Day – Scholarship Offering
Friday, June 26	6:00pm	Bridge Potluck & Play