

# The Parishscope

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September Issue

Pat McLaughlin, Editor

## *The Pastor's Epistle*



Dear Friends,

Walter Wink, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York City, speaks of Jesus as “a person who gambled his last

**drop of devotion on the reality of God and the coming of God’s new world. ... he lived out, in his flesh and blood, the archetype of what that new humanity might entail. .... the revealer and catalyst of our true humanity.”**

Walter Wink’s assertion that Jesus reveals and motivates us to become more fully human is the premise for our worship and sermon themes during the months of September, October, and November prior to the beginning of Advent. The overall theme will be: **On the Way to Becoming Human.**

Based on stories about Jesus and the early church - found most often in the Gospels of Mark, John, or Matthew - the sermon reflections will lift up some of what is asked of us on our way to becoming more human: *We Listen, We Struggle, We Inquire, We Sing, We Walk Humbly, We Weep, We Seek Enlightenment, We Pray, We Practice Hospitality, We Examine Our Lives, We Are Grateful.*

Reflecting on how we personally can become more human – with Jesus as the archetype of what humanity entails – offers an essential dimension to our commitment to be more like the community of faith the Spirit calls Arlington Community Church to become. It is hoped that a theme, challenging us to become more fully the human beings we were created to be, will provide grounding for our discernment and equip and motivate us to move from discernment to implementation.

A reminder: Each of us is invited to participate in this time of spiritual discernment through our daily

prayers. One such prayer might be: *God of Covenant, bless and empower the covenant the members of this congregation have made with you and with one another: to listen and to respond to your leading, as we seek to discern the community of faith you call Arlington Community Church to be and to become.* Grace and peace, al



### **ACC SEPTEMBER WOMEN’S AND MEN’S GROUPS – A TWO-FER!!**

**Women:** We’ll provide a pot luck that the men will enjoy, too. Bring extra. Men – you are invited to join us on Thursday, September 10 at 6:30pm. You’ll have great company and excellent food. Our program: Rick Steve’s DVD on Iran. Very entertaining and informative.

**Men:** The women will look forward to joining the Men’s Fellowship and Bar-b-que on Thursday, September 17 at 6:30pm. Women: we’ll need to let them know what our menu preference might be and bring some cash to assist with the funding. Program: the second half of Rick Steve’s Iran DVD.

Mark your calendars for consecutive Thursday evenings!

### **GREATER RICHMOND INTERFAITH PROGRAM**

**23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Harmony Walk to end hunger**

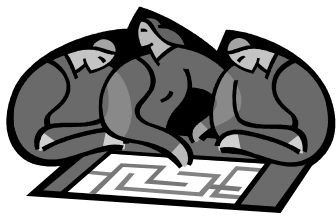
**Saturday, October 10, 2009**

**Civic Center Plaza in Richmond**

**Register at 8:00 AM; Start walking at 9:00 AM**

If you are interested in Volunteering, Walking or Sponsorship Opportunities, or would like more information: 510 233-2141, ext. 304.





**THE DISCERNMENT  
PROCESS AT  
ARLINGTON  
COMMUNITY CHURCH  
FOR AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2009**

Tony Lloyd

Discernment Committee Chairman 2009

In September ACC will enter into its 9<sup>th</sup> month of discernment over the question of what God is calling our church to be. During the majority of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2009 the church discernment focus has been engaged in the listening phase of the process. Seven teams of ACC congregation members have been interviewing or reviewing (1) Non-members, neighbors, and friends, (2) Marginal and former members /friends, (3) Scripture narratives, (4) leaders of the larger ACC community, (5) Leaders of other congregations, (6) ACC Youth, (7) Tenants, (8) Demographic resources. Preliminary reports are now being written in preparation for a Discernment Team meeting to be held on September 12<sup>th</sup>. From that meeting finite action steps will be recommended for adoption along with criteria provided to the pastoral search committee to aid in their preparation of a candidate profile for our next minister. During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2009 a final discernment plan will be presented to the Church council for review and to the congregation for review and adoption.

Many discernment team members have put significant energy into the discernment process at Arlington. Our discovery has led the committee to the following set of conclusion thus far.:

1. We have concluded that ACC seeks to nourish and deepen the spiritual life of all who call this community of faith their spiritual home.
2. We have concluded that ACC enters into, serves with, and is served by the larger community.
3. We have concluded that ACC invites, receives and values all people who pass through and / or pass by its always welcoming door. We have come to these conclusions through a set of principles which provide us with conceptual guidance and beliefs that:
  - a There is a self-revealing god who will guide our search through the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - b And that doing God's will is the ultimate goal of Christians and we will submit to God's will when it is revealed to us.

- c Because we believe that discerning God's will is an ever-deepening and unfolding path we want to follow.

During July and August we have been testing these conclusions using the listening process with the audiences and sources highlighted in the preceding paragraph. We have now reached the stage where the discernment members will begin assembling their final conclusive beliefs and transforming them into discernment statements of recommendation for the congregation and church council.

It is suggested that Discernment consists of ten movements sometimes called stepping stones because the practice can move back and forth between them. ([www.uccanlonconf.org/Discernment.htm](http://www.uccanlonconf.org/Discernment.htm)),

Here are the steps:

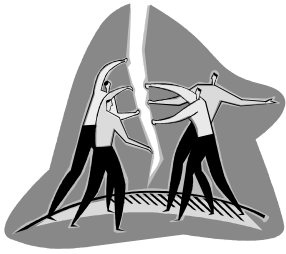
1. Framing the question to which we seek God's answer.
2. Grounding the search by listing the key values or principles which will guide our search.
3. Rooting the search in the Biblical story.
4. Shedding our personal desires and prejudices toward or against a particular outcome.
5. Listening to the voices of all those who may be affected (Current Activity)
6. Exploring all the available possibilities (August / September Programmed Activity)
7. Improving three to five possibilities that seem to have the most merit.
8. Weighing those after they have improved.
9. Closing on the option(s) that seems to be the one toward which god is pointing us.
10. Resting with that choice to see whether it brings feelings of consolation or desolation.

The practice moves back and forth from one stepping stone to another and always there is prayer throughout. It is an adventure of faith. It takes time and commitment and it can transform our life together if we enter the practice with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Do we really want to discern God's will for our church? This is the question many of us asked ourselves before we embarked on the journey. We believe that if we follow this path, we will be changed.

### **TRACKING DVD'S**



Anna-Maria Hertzler has lost track of two DVDs. Paradise Road & Song of Survival. She does not need them back immediately, but it would be happy to know where in the system they are, as several have not yet seen one, the other, or both. She is hoping whoever has them can let her know where they are. (524-3225).



**Spirit and the Arts IV:  
ACC Young Peoples' Dance  
Theater - Ages 8-14  
Thursdays, 6:15-7:30 PM  
Beginning September 24**

This year our company focus will be on dance and theater training that teaches us about thanksgiving and gratitude in response to the abundance in our lives. Using story, ritual, song, spoken word, and dance, young people will learn about the skills it takes to be a generous performer while simultaneously preparing for a December production of ACC's *Amahl's Most Excellent Adventure Returning Home*.

**ACC Young Peoples' Dance Theater** will collaborate with ACC Children's Choir and ACC Children's Handbell Choir for several performances in December. Meets Thursday, September 24 through Thursday, December 24

[No gatherings on October 29 or November 26 (Thanksgiving)]

Cost: \$50 for 1 child, \$75 for 2, \$100 for 3 -- scholarships available upon request

For more information, contact Michael Mansfield at jeangarcon@aol.com or 510-673-5150



**SOUPER CENTER**

Tom Dean

Special thanks to the volunteers from ACC at the Souper Kitchen on Thursday, July 30th.

We were advised to prepare for about 225 but ended up serving 261 for lunch.

The staff was Barbara St. Michaels, Bill Sakamoto, Tom Dean and Jim Gallardo.

All of us were busy making a variety of sandwiches starting at 10 a.m. and serving until the kitchen closed at 1 o'clock. It was the usual fine lunch with soup, sandwiches, fresh fruit, a selection of desserts and beverages.

Volunteers are always needed and should contact Eloise Schmidt, (848-5958) for serving dates.

**IN MEMORIAM**

**John Grosvenor - August 22, 2009**

John died peacefully, with the love and care of his family, along with the prayers of the congregation to support him. A memorial service is planned for Saturday, September 12 at 3:30pm



**YOU CAN'T DO IT ALL,  
EVEN IN CHURCH**

(from Edie Rodman)

Excerpt from Acts 6:1-7

*And the twelve disciples said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait at tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven people of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." What they said pleased the whole community...*

**Reflection by Lillian Daniel**

Back in the early church, the twelve disciples were trying to do it all. They were teaching, preaching and taking care of feeding the widows of their community, when a conflict broke out. The Greeks believed that the Jews were feeding their own widows, but not the Greek widows. Now, you know how church fights can break out over preferential treatment. So they brought the matter to the disciples to fix.

The disciples finally hit their limit. They told the group that this was not their job, and that someone else had to step up to take care of feeding the widows. Different people needed to have different jobs.

This is a great lesson for any church today. Surely you have people in your church who are trying to do it all. Because they do it all, everyone comes to them with every matter of church business until they are exhausted and burnt out. But whose fault is that?

A good disciple knows when to say "No, that can't be added to my job description." And a healthy church allows people to have limits. Our churches should be like the church here in Acts, which, after the disciples reached their limit, stepped up with seven fresh volunteers.

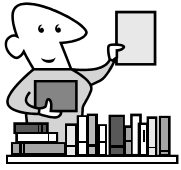
And were they mad at the disciples for saying "No?" Not at all. What the disciples said "pleased the whole community." A healthy church lets people say "No." And a healthy disciple takes them up on it.

**Prayer**

Almighty God, creator of the universe, you are the only one who can really do it all. Help me to discern where it is I should put my creative energy. And where it is I should not. Amen.

**About the Author**

Lillian Daniel is the senior minister of the First Congregational Church, UCC, Glen Ellyn, Illinois.



## HAVE YOU READ THIS?

(Notes from the Book Table)

Sara Laferte

The first good news is several of you asked for Concha Delgado's popular book **Prickly Cactus**, and now we have copies for you. Our book table is sporting some other bright new titles. For example,

- **Bad Girls of the Bible and What We Can Learn from Them** - by Liz Curtis Higgs

Publisher's Weekly says: "Humorist and popular storyteller Higgs (Help! I'm Laughing and I Can't Get Up) takes a look at the vamps and tramps of the Bible, searching for the lessons these wicked women have to teach. She acknowledges that she finds her own life contains many of the shortcomings of women such as Rahab, Delilah and Lot's wife. When Higgs begins her study of Jezebel, she notes, "I understood her pushy personality, I empathized with her need for control, I tuned into her angry outbursts...but boy did she teach me what not to do in my marriage." Higgs opens each chapter with a fictional retelling of the biblical story and then proceeds to a verse-by-verse exegesis and commentary on the biblical text. Each chapter closes with four lessons to be learned from the life of the bad girl and eight thoughts worth considering." Anyone interested in turning this into a book discussion group?

- **The Little Friend** - by Donna Tartt

You may have heard Nancy Pearl, librarian and book reviewer, on NPR. Here is what she says about **The Little Friend**: "Run, don't walk to . . . pick up a copy of Donna Tartt's stunning novel, **The Little Friend**. Part mystery and part coming-of-age novel, with a young heroine who is reminiscent of Scout in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This is the story of 12-year-old Harriet Cleve and what happens when she decides to track down the person who murdered her older brother Robin--a terrible event that happened when Harriet was only a few months old. Compulsively readable, beautifully written, and filled with three dimensional characters, . . . this is one of those novels where I regretted having to put it down to do anything like else, like sleep, eat, or work. Quite simply: do not miss it.

**Confessions of a book buyer**, by Sara Laferte. Sometimes when the new books arrive at my house and I sort through them, there is a book that just looks so great I have trouble giving it up to the book table. Yes, it's true! I probably buy one of every ten books I order, and you never even get to see it. OK, with a deep sigh, I'm putting the

following book on the book table, but if it's not gone in a couple of weeks, I'm buying it back. I think it's a keeper:

- **Narrow Dog to Indian River** - by Terry Darlington

Terry and Monica Darlington sail their English narrowboat down the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. This is a great travelogue, written with style and humor.

- **It's All Too Much: An Easy Plan for Living a Richer Life with Less Stuff** - by Peter Walsh

This book led to the all-church garage sale last year (which helped pay to refinish the social hall floor). Who knows what it might do to change your life? Walsh gives us a workable approach for clearing out the clutter in our lives. If you have trouble keeping everything in its place, this book is for you.

- **Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear** - by Lensey Namioka

Recommended for children Grades 3-6-- Poor Yang Yingtao. From the moment he was born, nine years ago in China, his parents expected him to be as talented as his siblings and complete the family string quartet. The trouble is, he's tone deaf, but his family won't believe it. He knows he will let them down at the upcoming recital for his father's music students, when the string quartet is supposed to play a grand finale, impressing the audience with Father's skill as a teacher. Yingtao's friendship with curly haired Matthew eventually saves the day. Matthew's family regards his love of the violin with suspicion, wishing he would work harder at baseball. Joining Matthew at practice, Yingtao discovers he's a natural athlete. Namioka uses their growing friendship to explore cultural differences and the problems of adjustment to a new society with a light but sure touch. Warm, humorous black-and-white sketches illuminate each character with casual, but astute, perception. -- Margaret A. Chang, North Adams State College, MA



## BRIDGE PLAYERS

We need hosts for the coming dates:

Friday, September 25

Friday, October 23

Friday, November 20 (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday)

Friday, December 18 (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday)

Mark your calendars, choose a date to act as host, then come and enjoy!

### ACC Calendar - September 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	<b>2</b> 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 10:00 AM Worship	<b>7</b> Labor Day	<b>8</b> 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys) 10:30 AM Duplic. Bridge 7:30 PM Church Council(FR)	<b>9</b> 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>10</b> 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 6:30 PM Women's Potluck & Program(SH)	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 9:00 AM Discernment Meeting 3:30 PM John Grosvenor Memorial Service
<b>13</b> 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-Up 10:00 AM Worship 11:30 AM Knitting Ministry	<b>14</b> 7:45 PM Bell Choir	<b>15</b> SOUPER CENTER 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	<b>16</b> 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>17</b> 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 5:00 PM Souper Dinner 6:30 PM Men's Dinner	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-Up 10:00 AM Worship	<b>21</b> 7:45 PM Bell Choir	<b>22</b> 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	<b>23</b> PARISHSCOPE 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>24</b> 9:00 AM Senior Center (SH) 6:15 PM Spirit & Arts	<b>25</b> 6:00 PM Bridge Potluck & Play(SH)	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 8:45 AM Adult Study(CE) 8:45 AM Choir Warm-Up 10:00 AM Worship	<b>28</b> 7:45 PM Bell Choir	<b>29</b> 7:00 AM Prayer Group (Kelleys)	<b>30</b> 5:00 PM *Yoga (SH) 7:30 PM *Folk Dancing 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal			

# Arlington Community Church

United Church of Christ  
 52 Arlington Avenue  
 Kensington, CA 94707

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## The Parishscope

«AddressBlock»

<b>SUNDAY, September 6</b>	<b>SUNDAY, September 13</b>	<b>SUNDAY, September 20</b>	<b>SUNDAY, September 27</b>
8:45am - Adult Study 11:00am – Worship  Al Williams Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 11:00am – Worship  Al Williams Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 10:00am – Worship  Al Williams Preaching	8:45am - Adult Study 11:00am – Worship  Al Williams Preaching

**\*\*\*THE NEXT DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup> FOR PUBLICATION IN THE SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> ISSUE\*\*\***  
 [Send *Parishscope* email to: [pat@patricia-mclaughlin.net](mailto:pat@patricia-mclaughlin.net)]

<b>SPECIAL EVENTS</b>		
<b>Thursday, September 10</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	<b>Women's Potluck &amp; Program with the Men</b>
<b>Saturday, September 12</b>	<b>9:00am</b>	<b>Discernment Meeting</b>
<b>Saturday, September 12</b>	<b>3:30pm</b>	<b>John Grosvenor Memorial Service</b>
<b>Tuesday, September 15</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Souper Center</b>
<b>Thursday, September 17</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	<b>Men's Dinner &amp; Program with the Women</b>
<b>Thursday, September 17</b>	<b>5:00pm</b>	<b>Souper Center Dinner</b>
<b>Friday, September 25</b>	<b>6:00pm</b>	<b>Bridge Potluck &amp; Play</b>
<b>Save the Date!</b>		
<b>Saturday, October 10</b>	<b>8:00am</b>	<b>GRIP Harmony Walk</b>