

KALOS

Congregational Church of Almaden Valley — United Church of Christ

April 2013

Pastor's Note



Dear Members and Friends,

We enter the month of April, with “Alleluias” because now we are fully into the Easter season of our church year. We have much to be thankful for as we express our “alleluias.”

One of the first blessings I want to name is the years we’ve had **Dennis Elliott** as our Joint Venture Office Manager. Dennis completed his work with us on March 28. We want to thank him for being the person who answered our calls, gave us a listening ear, and guided us to the right source for information. Dennis faithfully prepared our worship bulletins and weekly publications. He gave us many other gifts of himself through this position he held with our churches as part time Office Manager. We pray for God’s richest blessings on Dennis and we continue to be thankful that he is an active member of CCAV-UCC. In addition, we offer our prayers of blessing on **Dennis and Judy** as they exchange wedding vows in our church on April 6.

Another blessing is the gift of our volunteers who serve on our Church Council. We had a very productive and enjoyable Council retreat day on March 9 at **Connie and Mike Moore’s** home in Morgan Hill. Connie, our Moderator, was attentive to a detailed agenda that took us through good discussion on many topics. We experienced wonderful “energy” around

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ideas for growth and ways we can nurture and support our life together. Thank you, Council Members, for your dedication to lead us in outreach, worship, finances, ecumenical dialogue and participation with our Joint Venture. I’m sure that all of our members will want to thank you as well!

The final blessing I want to speak of in this writing is the blessing of our choirs, musicians, liturgists, our head usher (and all ushers), coffee hour hosts, greeters, and our many church leaders who take care of daily/weekly duties. We thank our treasurer, our web master, our newsletter “staff,” our JV representatives, and all those who regularly attend, pray, give and speak

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warmly and wonderfully about who we are and who we are becoming. We know we have many people who are part of our congregation who are unable to be in church on Sundays; we are grateful for their support with prayers and financial gifts!

For all the gifts of the “people of God,” we say thanks. May our “alleluias” at Easter convey the joyful message that God is with us and gives us the blessing of community! I look forward to entering each new season of the church year with you as we learn together what it means to be ready for God to open new doors and present new possibilities. Thank you for letting me know about any special needs or concerns you may have.

As Abraham Joshua Heschel said, “just to be is a blessing, just to live is holy.”

Easter peace,
Rev. Michele Rogers Brigham, Pastor

Note: I will be away on Sunday, April 21. We are grateful to Rev. Charles Krahenbuhl for leading our 9 a.m. worship service.

Rev. Michele Rogers Brigham
Pastor

Welcome Visitor!

Whether you’re visiting with us because you’re looking for a church, or accompanying a friend or family member, we bid you a hearty welcome!

We welcome all who would join us on our journey—for a day, a week or a lifetime—to discover who we are now and who we can become on this road of faith and inquiry.

We embrace our diversity of thought and scriptural understanding. We respect and honor all who seek to be in covenant with us as we share in the joys and responsibilities of our church family.

We are a warm and friendly bunch, but we’re not perfect! So, if in our excitement to greet our church family members, we forget our manners, please talk to us, introduce yourself and ask us lots of questions! And if you want to dig deeper and learn more about our church, please visit us at :
www.CongregationalChurchOfAlmadenValley.org.

We hope you’ll return to us soon!

Moderator’s Note

March has been a very busy month in the life of the church. As I write this we still have Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter ahead of us!

Your Council held their Annual Retreat on March 9. We gathered at our home in Morgan Hill and had a very meaningful and productive day. I will try and cover some of the highlights of the meeting in this report.



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Sue Scaff and myself volunteered to work on the new CCAV brochure. Our hopes are to get some changes made and a few brochures ready to hand out by Easter Sunday. The good news is that we can have a small number run off so therefore we can feel comfortable in making changes as they arise.

Tom Gerber and **Diane Hawes** volunteered to work on remodeling the Photo Board. Look for more info to come about new photos to be taken of CCAV, UCC members for the new display.

Pastor Michele's installation on May 19 was discussed. We will be responsible for hosting the event, the reception, flowers, and food. More details to come as we get closer to May.

There is a real need to find a person or persons to replace **David Hough** as our Treasurer. He has been volunteering in this position for six years now and overdue for retirement! It would be wonderful if you could consider working with David this year and get to know what the task involves. David would be very happy to talk to anyone who would care to consider doing this task. Thank you.

Ted Feely has been working on some Google ads for CCAV,UCC. As I understand it, when someone who lives in a zip code area close to our church googles words like "open and affirming" CCAV, UCC will pop-up. They will then be able to click on our name and go to our website! There is a charge to us for each click.

By the way, have you looked at our website lately? Ted has done a marvelous job of adding information and making the subjects easy to view. We certainly can be proud of our website! Thank you, Ted.

One last item to report and I am calling it the "Our Little Light" project! It concerns helping our "little light" shine brighter so others can find us. Our CCAV budget has no line item for Outreach. Right now the Times media ad cost is \$495, our brochures will run about 50 cents each, and the Google ads are an unknown. We would like to have signs for our sandwich boards made and perhaps a couple of banners made. We are asking for monetary donations from the congregation in hopes of raising \$2000 for 2013. Can you help make the light brighter?

Shalom
Connie

Sunday School Nuggets

For the month of April we will be learning about *A New Paul* and how believing in Jesus can change a person's life.

April 7—*Paul's Conversion* is an exciting and dramatic story that will be shared with the children by **Sandie Mueller** and **Alex Alvarado**.

April 14—Paul will have to escape for his life in a basket *Down the Wall* with the help of **Debbie Estill** and **Kelli Casale**.

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April 21—**Wendy Martin** and **Kelly Yamanishi** will introduce the children to *Lydia* who can teach us what happens when we follow our hearts as the Lord leads us.

April 28—*Paul and Silas* show us their unwavering faith and strength as they face imprisonment through their story told by **Debbie Estill** and **Ann Mayers**.

Visitors of children ages four through fifth grade are more than welcome to join us at 10 a.m. each Sunday for all the fun. Everyone is always invited to bring a friend. Middle School and High School youth who would like to be here during our Sunday School hour (10–11 a.m.) are invited to be classroom helpers. Please contact Susie Ferguson, christianed@jointventurechurches.org, if you have any questions or need further information.

In Your Faithful Service,
Susie Ferguson
Director, Christian Education

Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, May 19, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Ecclesiastical Council and Service of Installation

You are invited to the installation of **The Rev. Michele Rogers Brigham** (3 p.m.) as Pastor/Teacher of the Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC, by the Santa Clara Association of the Northern California Nevada Conference, UCC. We welcome area churches and our neighborhood friends to celebrate our covenant to be pastor and people. The **Rev.**

David Clarke, UCC Minister, and close colleague of Rev. Michele will be our guest preacher. We are inviting both our choirs (CCAV and ECA) to sing and are honored to be led by **Dr. Kristal Kim**, our Music Director.

Note: At 2 p.m. an Ecclesiastical Council will be conducted by the Santa Clara Association of churches prior to the Service of Installation. You are invited to be present. This is a time for the Association to hear Michele talk about her call to ministry and call to serve CCAV. The Association will take an official vote to welcome Rev. Michele by transfer of standing and grant an “official” installation.

Shalom
Connie

CROP Walk



CROP Walk 2013 will be on Sunday April 21, downtown San Jose.

The event starts at City Hall Plaza downtown. Registration will begin at 12:30 p.m., and the walk (one or four mile routes) at 1:30 p.m. **Phyllis Chai** has been alerting the congregation to this event in our weekly bulletins (thanks, Phyllis), and it moved me to start a

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team for our church! If you'd like to hear more about the event or would like to join the walk, feel free to contact either Phyllis at (408) 226-7150) or myself at (408) 203-4794. You can also go to the following team page set up for our church to either join in the walk or donate directly to the cause.

<http://hunger.cwsglobal.org/goto/CCAV-UCC>

Shalom,
Phyllis Chai and Kathryn McAbee

Can We Satisfy Your Wishes?

New to the JV Board, I am head of the committee called, variously, "Gifts and Donations" or "Donations and Memorials." As such, I am the Keeper of the Wish List, which comprises the following categories:

1. You see or hear that we really need something. Recent examples: refrigerator and microwave oven.
2. You feel that we really need something—this is actually more of a desire. Example mentioned by many people: new chairs to replace the pink-upholstered chairs in the narthex and choir room.
3. You know that we need something in particular and would like to donate the item directly or to donate the money to purchase that item (the latter is often easier and more cost-effective). Example: new child-size chair for the Learning Center (Old Fellowship Hall, which has been beautifully restored and is now devoted to Sunday school and adult meetings).

4. Something really expensive is on the list, and you would like to make a donation toward the eventual purchase of that item. Recent example: air conditioning for Fellowship Hall.

Let me know if you see a need, have a wish, or want to donate! Donations can also be designated as memorials.

As well as maintaining the list, I will post the list on the JV bulletin board in Fellowship Hall and will update it periodically.

Thank you for your assistance!!!

Ann Mayers
(408) 826-7238
amayersdmd@yahoo.com

Tabard Theater Party

A Tabard Theater party is planned for Friday, April 12. *Babes in Hollywood* is a fond look back at the music and lives of legendary stars Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney. Songs performed will include the glories of the golden days of MGM: *Babes in Arms*, *Over the Rainbow*, and *Strike Up the Band* to mention only a few. If you like upbeat music and tap dancing and these legendary actors you will love this show.

This will be opening night so book your tickets now via www.tabardtheatre.org or 1-800-838-3006. A pre-theater party is planned at the Fergusons beginning at 5:45 p.m. Please bring a hearty appetizer or dessert (finger food preferable) and your favorite beverage

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to share. Meet some new friends. We leave for the theater in downtown San Jose by 7:20 p.m. to make the 8 p.m. show time.

After you book your tickets sign up for the pre-show party on the ECA bulletin board. Feel free to invite new friends to join us and introduce them to Tabard and your ECA family.

Peace Conference

Not long ago on a rainy evening a group from our congregation attended a Peace Conference at De Anza College. The event was presented by the local Ahmadiyya Muslim Community whose mosque is in Milpitas. Saleem Qadir, a young father, born in the U.S., and now living with his family in S. San Jose was the contact for our group. Those of us to arrive first at the conference were warmly greeted; The wife of the Imam (the spiritual leader and born in Pakistan) introduced herself to us and spent time speaking with us as we waited for the others. I sensed a feeling of peace emanating from her, as I did from other members of her Community. It felt good to me to be there. We were told that snacks would be served at the event, and the snacks were samosas, nan bread, small pieces of fish prepared in their native tradition, fruit, and tea. Each of us was given a colorful gift bag on arriving which contained a bookmark sharing on one side about Islam and information about the Community; on the other side were these words along with the American flag: Love for all Hatred for None. There was also a pamphlet, “Muslims for Peace” which stated:

“The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the leading Islamic organization to categorically reject terrorism in any form. Over a century ago, Ahmad emphatically declared that an aggressive ‘jihad by the sword’ has no place in Islam. In its place, he taught his followers to wage a bloodless, intellectual ‘jihad of the pen’ to defend Islam’. Each of the conference attendees was also given a book, LIFE OF MUHAMMAD. Throughout the two-hour conference several men in the community, including the Imam, gave presentations about their beliefs. Also, and very impressive, were somewhat lengthy readings from the Qur’an by a young boy and girl. Time was allotted for questions and responses. One question was about the role of Muslim women in society, and it was answered by the woman who heads up the Community women’s organization. She calmly said that women are the nurturers in this family-centered religion. They may also have jobs, as well as control over their own money, and they may ask for a divorce.

Bessie Hutchins “was touched by the humanness of the evening—The troupe of proud fathers photographing their children’s “performance,” the welcoming handshakes from men obviously not used to shaking hands with women, feeding your guests, the wiggly kids who came and went without any frowns from their elders, the women clustering for a shared talk, the wisdom of the Imam as he explained the reason why suicide was unforgivable (“as is murder/suicide because you won’t be around to ask forgiveness,” said **Mike Moore**). Bessie also added that she “felt the difficulty of living (their) beliefs in a society that didn’t under-

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stand those beliefs”...And though Bessie was aware of most of the beliefs of the Muslim faith, she “had never before been touched by the love of it. The evening certainly softened my feelings of otherness about that faith”. **Sue Scaff** agreed with Bessie and added that she “thought the atmosphere was warm and authentic, and I loved the kids. The speakers did a good job of presenting the basic beliefs of Islam.”

Mike Moore added: “I was also impressed by the totally non-defensive attitude expressed (in the conference presentations).” And he went on to tell of “a friend who was a well-known EE Professor at UCLA. He was a Muslim Cypriot. He moved his wife and small son to Morehead State University in Morehead, KY, where he was going to be a key player in turning it into an engineering school. I saw him frequently as he was assigned to an antenna construction job our company was overseeing. He and I would sometimes be up on the antenna alone, and we would discuss the problems he and his wife were having with eastern KY and social culture. After a couple years, one day when we were up on the antenna, he said, ‘Mike, I am sorry to say, but I have to leave this place’. I asked him why, and he said, ‘My son has now started school. He is being treated badly, and I am scared to death that something might happen to him.’ I felt really sorry for him, and I never forgot that moment. I never saw him again. I firmly believe, as do we all, that we need to support our Islamic brothers and sisters, stand up for them, and respect their faith beliefs.” Mike also shared that

“those Ahmadi folks believe fervently in the precepts of their faith, and they humbly go out and do a lot of humanitarian good...We heard at the conference that 1.9 billion people in the world are Muslim, and that Islam is a way of life, not just a religious belief.”

I believe that it would be the consensus of our group of attendees that our evening was very well-spent.

Very honored were those of us who attended the Lenten Wednesday evening soup supper/talk where Saleem and Imam Mubshar Ahmad very knowledgably shared with us more about Islam, India, and their faith.

Here is Imam Mubasher’s contact information:

mubahmad@aol.com
(630) 229-7582
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
Silicon Valley California
926 Evans Road
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 941-0400
www.MuslimsforPeace.org
1-800-Why-Islam

Here is Saleem Qadir’s contact information:

6133 Dunn Ave.
San Jose, Ca 95123.
(408) 204-3740

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Kalos appears on the CCAVUCC website and in a few printed copies for those who request a mailing. If you would like *Kalos* to be sent to your home, please contact **Sue Scaff** (sscaff@sbcglobal.net or 960-4452).

We encourage you to share stories and inspirations in our newsletter! Tell us about your experiences, your

reflections, your hopes for the church, anything of interest to the community that you would like to share. Send us images, poems, links for our Inspiration section. We want to hear from you!

To submit an article, send it by the 15th of the month to kalos@ccavucc.org. *Kalos* editors are **Sue Scaff**, **Kathryn McAbee** and **Risa Feely**.

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