

KALOS

Congregational Church of Almaden Valley—United Church of Christ

March 2014

Pastor's Reflection



Dear members and friends,

We are still “basking” in the glow of February church celebrations as we reflect on the reception of Rev. Monique Ortiz and Thomas Mikkelsen into church membership and the ordination of Rev. Melanie Weiner on the same Sunday, February 16. Experiencing God

in the context of a faith community promises moments of seen and unseen joy, spoken and unspoken revelations. We enter the Season of Lent expectant for future moments of seen and unseen experiences of the Holy in our midst and the spiritual growth we yearn for.

We begin this “journey” into Lent with our Ash Wednesday service, on Wednesday, March 5, at 7 p.m. We hear the words of Joel 2: 12–13: “Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing.” Rev. Kate Flexer and I plan the Ash Wednesday evening worship service for our CCAV and ECA congregations (and any others in the community who wish to join us) intending a serious “return to me with all your heart” call. The call of Lent is a new call on the faith journey for the present and the future.

Lent is like packing our suitcase for a new adventure; this is a faith adventure, an intentional journey to a new place for faith to grow and shape us for fullness of life. Nora Gallaher wrote in her book, *Things Seen and Unseen*, that Lent is a journey and you start it by unpacking. I have packed and unpacked many times in my life so I know the significance of giving thought to packing the right

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things for the journey and final destination. What about you? What is your style of packing? What is your pattern for unpacking?

During Lent, may we pack disciplines for the spiritual life that will ready us for our destination? Worship, prayer, study, fasting, meditation, mourning, contemplation, conversation, service, outreach are ways we know ourselves and know God within us and within our world. How do we pack these gifts of the Spirit? Are we mindful that we need them?

Truly, the call of Lent is to journey with God, whatever our circumstance or age or destination in order to know the full meaning of life as lived in God's presence. This is story of Jesus and his spiritual life. In Lent, we reflect on Jesus forty days in the desert, his final journey to Jerusalem, and the way his life was ended. Jesus' whole life had been an encounter with systemic evil and there he was, at the end, right in the middle of it. Had he packed for it?

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Did Jesus know this would be the destination? When he unpacked was he ready for the experience of those last days of his earthly life? We believe his life was lived as one who knew the value of the call to “rend one’s heart and not one’s garment.” His heart was near to the heart of God. He drew his followers to a world of journeys and mysteries, yet he was grounded in gritty reality of the ordinary. God was with him each step of the way, even the way of the cross. God is with us in life and in death.

May this prayer be one we take with us on our Lenten journey as we pack and unpack to discover new hope, new joy, and fullness of life in the Spirit. (*Things Seen and Unseen*, Nora Gallaher)

May you walk with God
In the sharp pain of growing
In the midst of confusion
In the bright light of knowing
May you live in God
In God's constant compassion
In God's infinite wisdom
In God's passion for peace
May you walk with God
And live in God
And remain with God
This night, and forever. Amen.

I hope you’ll remember, as the author Nora Gallaher, discovered on her journey through the season of the Christian year, that “the road to the sacred is paved with the ordinary.” In our ordinary days and our sacred days, as a faith community, may we experience the gift of seen and unseen mystery giving us peace, comfort and blessing.

Lenten grace and peace on the journey,
Pastor Michele

Notes from the Pastor

Sad Note: We extend our sympathy to the Lucas family (Ken, David and Clare) as they continue to grieve the

death of their mother, Shirley Starr Lucas. We are grateful to Shirley for her many years of faithful service to our congregation. She was a beloved member of our church! Shirley died on January 17, 2014 and a Memorial Service was held in our church for her on February 7, 2014. Thank you to Audrey Wiedrick and Joan Okumura for organizing the reception on behalf of our congregation.

FYI Note: Some people have asked about the removal of the kneelers from the sanctuary space. Rev. Kate Flexer and I and teams from both churches are giving a “new eye” to the worship space (without the kneelers present) in order to think creatively about the use of the space. How can we be intentional about how we move about the space, decorate it, and reflect on the church seasons? I know we’ll look forward in a positive way to see where the thoughts/discussion may go with new ways we may “refresh” the space and celebrate its beauty, its invitation to wholeness. Questions? Our team consists of Risa Feely, Linda Farr, and Dot Allfrey. If you have interest, please let me know! You are welcome to join our CCAV team.

Thank You Note: I’m grateful to Connie Moore, our Moderator, for bringing together the opportunity for the Ecclesiastical Council on Feb 9 conducted by the Santa Clara Association. Connie and others organized the welcome and reception after the discussion and affirming vote to ordain Melanie to the gospel ministry.

We are grateful for what followed, the Ordination Service on Feb 16 in the afternoon. Thank you to our musicians, reception planners/doers, ushers, participants and all those who could attend the service of ordination for, now, Rev. Melanie Weiner. Special gratitude is extended to Connie and Mike Moore, Audrey Wiedrick, Joan Okumura and Betty Benson and others for coordinating our lovely reception. We extend our prayers for Melanie as she continues to be faithful to her call to ministry at the Ladera Community Church, UCC. She took with her the gift of altar flowers and preaching stoles, our blessing gifts for that special day.

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FYI: Prayers for our CCAV Church Council as we meet for our Retreat Day on Friday, March 7.

FYI: Prayers for those on our prayer list each Sunday; please call in your prayer concern, with permission, for the person to be listed. You may let us know if you are ready for the name of a loved or your name to be removed.

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!

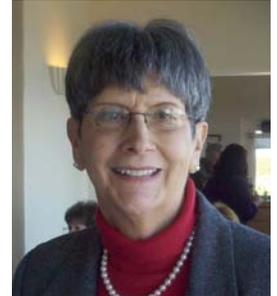
We welcome all who would join us on our journey—for a day, a week or a lifetime—to discover who we are now and who we can become on this road of faith and inquiry.

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.

Moderator's Note

We hosted three special events in February. Melanie Weiner's ecclesiastical council meeting, where she was accepted to be ordained the following Sunday into the ministry. We celebrated that service with a reception and gift giving. On that same Sunday, February 16., we welcomed into our congregation two new members Rev. Monique L. Ortiz and Tom Mikkelsen. A joy and a gift to have Monique and Tom join our family.



We also had another productive CCAV council meeting. David Hough has volunteered to be our Pledge Recorder for 2014. Tom Gerber has stepped right in to the Treasurer position, and enthusiasm abounds for this year's life of the church!

We are looking forward to Dr. Hi Dong Chai's book discussion on Mar. 14, the headlight restoration project on Mar. 15, and the Round Table discussion on Mar. 16, with a Taize service at 7:00 p.m. that evening. A full weekend for many! Be sure to read the mid-week email and the Sunday Announcement sheet in your church bulletin for details.

The Outreach Committee has been gathering information about the Santa Clara County Faith Re-Entry Collaborative. It was established as an innovative project of the Mental Health Services Act, with a network of multi-faith religious institutions, community based organizations, and volunteers designed to provide transitional services to newly released inmates. They offer hope, compassion, forgiveness, trust, and accountability together with immediate and long-term resources and supports to individuals and families as they return to the community from incarceration. I hope we will be hearing more about this project

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as more information is gathered to help us determine how we as a church and individuals can help and support this effort.

As always, it has been a joy & honor to work with each of you this month in an effort to make those “three special events” special for those we were hosting. The love and support that is felt as we walk through these times is a blessing to be a part of.

Thanks to all,
Connie

Announcements

March Schedule

Sunday, March 2, 9 a.m. Worship and Communion Birthday Blessings! (see note below)

Wednesday, March 5, 7 p.m. Joint Venture (ECA and CCAV) Ash Wednesday Service.

Sunday, March 9, 9 a.m. First Sunday of Lent and Amistad Sunday

Friday, March 14, 5–7 p.m. Potluck Supper Lenten Program—Dr. Hi-Dong Chai, Speaker. Hi-Dong will be sharing his life story, based on his newly published book, *Shattered by the Wars But Sustained by Love*. Come and bring a friend for this Lenten study opportunity. Look for sign up on Bulletin Board for the potluck supper! If you cannot make it to the supper, please come at 6 p.m. to hear Hi-Dong speak. (See flyer for more details about the event and Dr. Chai’s book.)

Sunday, March 16, 9 a.m. Worship and Round Table Discussion—We’ll have our Round Table discussion on Sunday, March 16 (3rd Sunday) at the end of

our Coffee Hour (10:30–11:15). “Science, Faith and Technology” will be our discussion topic; since we used the 2/16 Coffee Hour to welcome our new members, we’ll go back and pick up this topic. Please come and speak from your experience of how you integrate the “three.”

Sunday, March 16, Taize Lenten Worship Service, 7 p.m. ECA/CCAV will join together for Lenten prayers and candle lighting. Come light a candle and pray for a friend, pray for yourself, pray for peace for our needy, hurting world.

Sunday, March 23, 9 a.m. Rev. Monique Ortiz leading worship in Rev. Michele’s absence

Sunday, March 30, 9 a.m. One Great Hour of Sharing Mission Offering Sunday (this offering may be received in March and April)

Quest: The weekly ladies Quest group which meets on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. in the choir room, will begin reading together/discussing *10 Prayers You Can't Live Without* by Rick Hamlin, Executive Editor of *Guidepost* magazine. Know that you are welcome to join the group any Wednesday morning. For more information you may contact Phyllis Chai at (408) 226-7150.

Worship News

New Event—Birthday blessings in worship: Every 1st Sunday, we’ll have a birthday blessing in worship for all who have celebrated or will be celebrating birthdays / anniversaries in the current or past month. You may bring birthday pennies for a mission offering to support our outreach ministries.

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Invitation to sing your favorite hymn: Please remember that Pastor Michele will be glad to sing your “favorite” hymn on a “special” day you name; just give her a call or email!

Invitation to serve: Please call or email the church office if you would like to serve on Sundays in 2013 as a Greeter / Coffee Host, Liturgist, or Communion Server. Youth may sign up to read on 2nd Sundays. (Adults of our youth, think about signing up with your young person to serve together.) On Sunday you will find a sign-up clip board circulating Please fill in your name for the Sunday of your choice! (During the week Margot has the sign up list in the church office.)

Flowers: During Lent our ECA sister congregation prefers no flowers in the sanctuary or narthex. We may bring flowers for our services and take them home after the service. Look for a sign up sheet for Easter flowers / dedications in April.

Outreach

CCAV Outreach/Mission Committee invites your participation in our ongoing outreach programs. Join us if you can to help us continue to shape meaningful outreach at CCAV-UCC.

Collection for March and April: UCC One Great Hour of Sharing offering. Offering date is March 30, 2014. The United Church of Christ has at its core transforming lives! Through One Great Hour of sharing, lives are literally changed in 138 countries daily. Your support provides clean water, food, medicines, shelter, healthcare and education as well as responds to disasters in both the US and Internationally. Checks may be made out to CCAV,UCC with OGHS in the memo section. Thank you for your prayerful consideration of what you may be able to share in this yearly offering.

Ongoing collection for San Francisco Night Ministry: (socks, gloves, hats, blankets....warm clothes: Please place your gift in the “red” box in the narthex. Rev. Monique Ortiz will receive the gifts and pass them to those in need.

Donations for Second Harvest Food Bank: These non-perishables, nutritious items, are high priority: low-sugar cereals, 100% fruit juices in single serving boxes, canned fruit packed in juice, canned vegetables (low salt), meals in cans, tuna and canned meat, peanut butter, canned foods with pop-top lids.

Donations/serving for San Jose shelters we support: contact Phyllis Chai at (408) 226-7150 regarding needs.

Faith Re-entry Collaborative: Hearing the presentation not long ago by Maureen O'Malley-Moore, the Director of the Re-Entry Center in downtown San Jose, was very inspiring and energizing. The need for interested volunteers and supplies is great and ongoing. We learned that Grace Community Center where our own Harriet Yamada is on the staff, is connected with the Center. Sobering was hearing that those who are newly released inmates, return to our community at midnight on the release day, and at times with no one to greet them; if their jail entry clothing must be detained, they are issued a "paper white" jumpsuit, with nothing else, no matter the temperature outside. People have been known to sleep on the concrete steps of the jail till morning when the Re-Entry Center opens at 8:00 a.m. to assist them. Gratefully, there are some volunteers who have been willing to be at the jail on those midnight nights when they take a former inmate to a motel to sleep, pick them up in the morning to go to breakfast, and then to the Re-Entry Center. There are training sessions several times a year for folks who are led to help in that way. Maureen told us that Imam Tahir who hosted our Quest group a few years ago at his downtown mosque, is

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part of the Faith Collaborative. We were told that a Re-Entry Center is expected to open in Morgan Hill.

Maureen apologized for the cluttered state of her office where she daily eats breakfast when she arrives at 7:30 a.m. She was asked whether the Center had a connection with NAMI, the local support/educational group for the mentally ill and their loved ones; oh yes. She had a meeting that afternoon with NAMI. Catholic Charities and Second Harvest Food Bank are supportive of the Center also. Maureen's weekdays end at 7:30 p.m. when she heads home. A truly dedicated person is she!

For more information, contact Phyllis Chai.

South Bay CROP Hunger Walk: The annual local CROP Walk will be on Sunday April 6. The CROP Walk is sponsored by Church World Service (CWS) (with which our UCC Global Ministries works) to raise funds to end hunger at home and around the world. For many years Kathy Kisabeth headed up our congregation's support of the CROP Walk, and for that we are truly grateful.

Last year at least six from our congregation "walked" on that Sunday, taking the Light Rail to City Hall where we met many others from various local churches. It was a fun and informative walk through some historic parts of our city. And—it was a very easy walk with two options for a one mile walk or a 3.5 mile walk—well marked and all flat! The Disciples of Christ congregation kindly opened its bathrooms for walkers to use, and at the end, the nearby Presbyterian Church provided ice cream treats for everyone. It was a "feel good" afternoon!

This year, Kathryn McAbee will get us going for the CROP Walk—our team is called, "Congregational Church of Almaden Valley".

Want to join the walk? Go to the team page by typing the link below and click the "Join Team" link next to our team's name.

http://hunger.cwsglobal.org/site/TR?team_id=103638&pg=team&fr_id=18564&et=XqDtWqOvzPe39OvqKsx53g&s_tafId=126391

Out of town that week or walking just isn't your game? You can still donate online with the same link, or contact Phyllis Chai or Kathryn McAbee. More information will be coming out in the mid-week bulletin.

Christian Education

This month we begin our spring session of Sunday School continuing to learn about Jesus' ministry and the events leading up to Holy Week and Easter. One highlight will be a short presentation of one Gospel story under the direction of Sandie Mueller on March 30.

We are fully staffed with teachers, but could use a few more shepherds to help us during this session. A shepherd provides an extra set of hands for the teacher and is available when a child needs special attention or help. It is important that we have 2 people for each class each week. Could you help? High school youth are also welcome to fill this role. No special training is needed, just a willingness to serve and work with children.

Coming up early in April everyone will be invited to join us for "It's a Family Affair Lenten Experience." It will be a wonderful community builder for all ages. So save the date, Saturday, April 5, 3 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and join us for worship, an interactive study with the Stations of the Cross, special crafts and dinner. This will be a great opportunity for those without children to interact with our families with children. This will also be a wonderful time to invite new families to our church. If you would like to help with some aspect of this event, let me hear from you. Everything you need will be provided. We just need some willing hands for helping. Watch for the sign up for the event in fellowship hall.

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Sparks Fly will be our theme for our Summer Spirit Camp (formerly known as VBS). This fun week is being offered June 16 through June 20. Once again we are trying to provide an exciting, enriching, and unique week for our children. Registration officially opens March 1. We will have a great staff of adults (teachers and helpers) and youth (counselors and training counselors.) Watch for our banner announcing this exciting week. A big thank you goes to Kelly Yamanishi and her business, West Mountain Sign, for designing and providing our banner this year.

God often calls us in and out of various ministries over time. There are all kinds of opportunities for many different skill levels. Perhaps you are being called into this ministry at this time to replace another who is being called out into another ministry. If you are being called into Christian Education and Youth ministries, please let me hear from you.

In your faithful service,
Susie Ferguson

Meet Our New Members!



Thomas Mikkelsen

I was born in Campbell, California in April, 1955. I am the third born son of parents that emigrated from Denmark. I am a Father to four incredible children, three daughters and one son. Grandfather to two granddaughters, one grandson and one more on the way in September.

Raised in the family printing business, I found my love in creativity which I nurtured into my vocation of graphic design, sales and marketing. I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ when I was 15 years old and grew in Him over these years. I found my relationship with my Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit filled with love, grace, faithfulness and mercy. He always has seen me through by hearing and answering my prayers. My hope is that I will always hear His voice whenever He may call my name. I am involved with those in the San Francisco Night Ministry which has been a very fulfilling an eye opening experience. I am honored and humbled by the people that God has put into my life, my church family, my friends, my children, grandchildren and now the love of my life, Monique

Rev. Monique Lynette Ortiz-Abrate

Born in Mexico City, Mexico. From Spanish and French decent. Moved to Tucson, AZ at 11 years old. Upon graduating from High School I lived in Paris for one year and studied at the University of the Sorbonne. The following year I moved to Mexico City and studied International Relations. Moved back to Arizona where I graduated from Arizona State University with a BA in Broadcast Journalism. For the subsequent eleven years I worked in Television Stations in Arizona and the Bay Area as a General Assignment TV News Reporter. I left the news to work for a non-profit, Parents Helping Parents specializing in families with children of special needs.

While still involved with PHP and with a homeless ministry for the second time in my life I heard a call to serve God and His/Her children. Received an M.Div. from the Graduate Theological Union – Pacific School of Religion/Berkeley in 2006 while I was already serving Pescadero Congregational Community Church as their p/t pastor. Ordained in the NCNC/UCC February 17, 2007, with a formal call to continue serving Pescadero Church. Since the end of 2008 to the present I have served The San Fran-

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cisco Night Ministry as their Associate Night Minister. Although, I have been a single mother for many years, I have been truly blessed with two wonderful children: Dominique, age 21, is a graduate from Leland High and Alessandro age 16, currently a sophomore at Leland. Both are black-belts in Tae Kwon Do. Many blessings surround me, among them Tom, my future husband, a beautiful mother and now you...my church family. Thank you for opening your arms and hearts to us!

We welcome Tom and Monique into the life of our church; we are grateful that Dave and Rae Harris are serving as their church sponsors!

Congratulations to Melanie Wiener

Congratulations to Melanie Wiener on her ordination into the United Church of Christ! On Sunday March 16, CCAV-UCC was honored to host the ordination ceremony for Melanie, a longtime member of our church. With over 100 people in attendance from near and far, Melanie emerged as an ordained minister. Here is a picture of Reverend Melanie cutting the cake for our celebration of her achievement.



March Birthdays

Sandy Baldwin	3/3
Justin Juanitas	3/4
Brandon Yang	3/7
Athena Ballek	3/11
Samantha Yang	3/16
Kristie Bemis	3/17
Connie Moore	3/26
Stan Yumen	3/30

Kalos Publication

Please remember you may take a copy of our *Kalos* Newsletter home each month if you are not reading on line. It is located along with other UCC info on the wall to the left of the sanctuary entrance.

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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CCAV-UCC Budget for 2014

AND 2014 APPROVED BUDGET

	2014 Budget*	2013 YEAR-END	2013 Budget
<u>Income</u>			
Pledge	98000	97,609	99,748
Plate	12500	10,562	12,000
Interest	20	17	100
MiscInc	100	22	200
Prior Yr. Carryover	668		
Fund Raising	0	0	0
Total Income	111,288	108,210	112,048
<u>Expense</u>			
Salary	-3,000	-860	-860
Housing	-24,000	-24,000	-24,000
SETaxOffset	-2,066	-1,902	-1,902
Benefits	-16,711	-16,711	-17,000
MinistersAuto	-1,000	-997	-1,000
MinistersExp	-1,000	-343	-1,000
Minister's Package	-47,777	-44,813	-45,762
UCCShare/OCWM	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000
Mission & Outreach	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000
Membership	0	0	0
MusicExp	0	0	0
Fellowship	0	0	0
Stewardship	0	0	0
Technology	0	0	0
PulpitSupply	-500	0	-900
Committees	-500	0	-900
Insurance	-2,300	-2,259	-2,300
Miscellaneous	-500	-40	-1,000
Advertising		-715	-2,000
Postage	0	0	0
Admin/General	-2,800	-3,014	-5,300
JVOperating	-53,165	-55,715	-55,715
JVCapital	-3,000		0
Total Expense	-111,242	-107,542	-111,677
Surplus/(Deficit)	46	668	371

* Approved by Council 2/11/14

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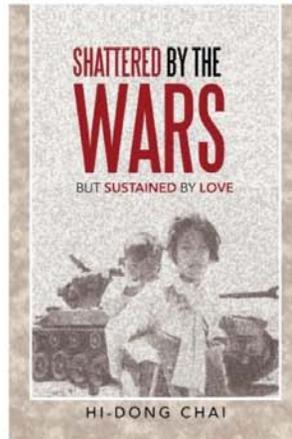
SHATTERED BY THE WARS

A Book Discussion with the Author,

SJSU Professor Chai

ALL ARE INVITED

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2014 FROM 5-7 PM



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ALMADEN
VALLEY, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
6581 CAMDEN AVE IN SAN JOSE

A LENTEN Program

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COME MEET THE AUTHOR AND JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF TABLE FELLOWSHIP  
AND SHARING WITH DR. CHAI. POTLUCK SUPPER BEGINS AT 5:30 P.M. AND  
PRESENTATION AT 6 P.M.

# KALOS

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**YOU ARE INVITED TO A *LENTEN PROGRAM***

**FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2014 FROM 5–7 PM**

**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ALMADEN  
VALLEY, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
6581 CAMDEN AVE IN SAN JOSE**

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**COME MEET THE AUTHOR AND JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF TABLE FELLOWSHIP AND SHARING WITH
DR. CHAI. POTLUCK SUPPER BEGINS AT 5:30 P.M. AND PRESENTATION AT 6 P.M.**

Shattered by the Wars is a story of a Christian family in an anti-Christian world. It is a story of how the author's mother led her family with love and grace and absolute faith in God through the heartbreaking years during WWII under Japan and during the Korean War. It is a story of the author's father, a Christian minister, who was willing to give his life for his God. It is a story how the author's love for his mother and her love for the author enabled him to survive through the two wars in Korea and first seven years in America alone to get an education with the poor command of English and without money.

Since 1953, the author's journey through America took him to Flushing, NY, Stony Brook, LI, Austin, TX, Columbus, OH, Andover, MA, Boston, MA, Endicott, NY, and finally San Jose, CA. During his journey, he received a Ph.D. in electrical engineering; married to an Ohio State graduate from Canton, OH, fifty years ago; raised two wonderful children; worked for IBM and taught at several universities; established himself as an authority in his field with many publications and inventions. After retiring from San Jose State University in 2002, he focused his time to complete the story of his family, *Shattered by the Wars*. The book was published by Inspiring Voices of Guideposts Magazine in November, last years.

The book is available at \$15 per copy on 3/14 evening. One can also purchase the book on Amazon.com (\$16.94) and Inspiring Voices (\$17.99).

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