



Open and Affirming: We Need Everyone's Input

Prayerfully Consider, Fill Out the Surveys, and Share Your Thoughts

Should Kensington Community Church declare itself *Open and Affirming (ONA)*? This question – and discerning exactly what that means and how this declaration would affect our church -- is an important step to take during the interim/transition time. After all, the thoughtful consideration of this question and the decision to declare or not to declare, ourselves *Open and Affirming* is critical to pastoral candidates.

What is Open and Affirming?

According to Wikipedia, *Open and Affirming* is an official designation of congregations and other bodies within the [United Church of Christ](#) denomination affirming the full inclusion of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered persons (LGBT) in life and ministry of that church body.

KCC has formed an ONA Exploration Committee, which includes: **Bill and Sue Ehlers; Rev. Paula Elizabeth, Lee Howeth, Debbie Loomis, Carla Mathison, Ross Putnam, and Rich Wayman.**

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ONA Exploration Thus Far

Our ONA committee wants as much input as possible from all of our members. At three congregational meetings, we have received involvement from a wide cross-section of the congregation.

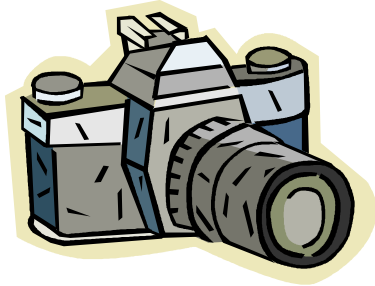
Yet, we appreciate that some congregation members will prefer to share their thoughts in a survey, which the ONA committee has developed. The survey/questionnaire is concise, yet it will help us establish the next steps to take, steps which must truly reflect the heart of KCC's congregation.

The questionnaire will be distributed during worship on April 25, May 2 and May 9. The results of the questionnaire will enable us to more accurately address your questions and concerns at a program and potluck to which all the congregation is invited after the 10 o'clock service on May 16.

What Does The Bible Say?

A group of 20 congregation members met on Thursday evening, April 15, for a potluck and a review of what the Bible says about homosexuality. That night, Rev. Elizabeth relayed the difficulty of understanding ancient Biblical passages in light of historical context, language translations and societal norms. In essence, our modern grasp of the texts and the prohibition on homosexuality, is substantially different than the original authors' look like, and "living out" of our ONA policy.

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Thank You, Sharon!

Many, many thanks to Sharon Young for our beautiful new church photo directory. Sharon put in countless hours to singlehandedly produce this lovely resource for our church. If you have not received your directory yet please see Donna in the church office. A donation of \$5.00 is suggested to help defray the cost of color printing. ♦

Kensington Community Church United Church of Christ

4773 Marlborough Drive
San Diego, CA 92116
619-284-1129 Fax:: 619-284-0160
www.kensingtonucc.com
info@kcc.sdcoxmail.com

Rev. Paula J. Elizabeth, Interim Minister
John Hansen-Tarbox, Director of Music
Nina Deering, Organist
Connie Cleland, Preschool Director
Donna Hanson, Administrative Assistant

Chimes Editor Marg Stark
Chimes Lay-out Assistance John Hansen-Tarbox
Chimes Production Staff Millie Medigovich
Beverly Patch

**Sunday worship at 8:30 and
10:00 a.m.
All are welcome!**

On May 1, Join the 30, 40 and 50-Somethings For Wine and Cheese



Brendan and Bonnie McCarthy, in partnership with the KCC Events Committee, are hosting a Wine and Cheese Party for the “30, 40, and 50-somethings” of KCC, on Saturday, May 1, 6:30 p.m.

Join us for an evening of socializing and wine tasting. Please bring a bottle of wine to share. Adults only please. RSVP or call for more information, 619. 284. 5207. ♦

Open and Affirming, Continued from page 1

understanding or intent. In our congregational discussion, we also noted other Biblical prohibitions including those that pertained to marriage, women, slavery, dress, and eating which are routinely ignored today.

Finally, we discussed what the inclusivity of the ONA statement might look like and how our church, should it declare itself *Open and Affirming*, would “live out” this policy.

Thanks for Your Input

For all of you who have participated in discussions or will share your thoughts in survey, thank you. Your participation is crucial as we approach this significant decision in the life of KCC and forge the future of God’s church in this place. ♦



A Message from Our Interim Pastor

What do we do with the memories? Bertha Lander was one month short of turning 105 years old!

I can't even begin to imagine all that Bertha "saw" in her lifetime, the changes she experienced, the people she met, the things she did, the places she went, the faith she lived out. One thing is sure – Bertha had spirit – holy – to which I can testify, and *perhaps* otherwise, also.

Bertha didn't suffer fools lightly! She was outspoken, honest -- maybe a bit in your face, as the saying goes today. But you always knew where you stood with her. She was intelligent and forthright .

So, how do we remember her? How do we honor her as we survive her? And for that matter, how do we remember and honor all those who have gone before? This church is young enough so more than a few members – and friends – can remember much of Kensington Community Church's history.

So the question of memories is pertinent at this time reflecting on Bertha's life and legacy, and we are at a major vantage point during this interim and transition time. As we honor Bertha and all the holders of KCC's heritage, how do we create a bridge from her and our past into the future for our church, our children, our community, and our world? What can we do to continue, to add to, and to expand the inheritance KCC has received from all who have passed through its doors? Each of us personally, and collectively together, need to wrestle with this question. Each of us individually, and as a

congregation, are called to discern how to build on what we have received.

The Acts of the Apostles are the lectionary's main focus during this Easter season. It is also the story of how a small group, the fledgling band of disciples, carried on after Jesus' crucifixion. They had to "step up to the plate" and examine/discern their part in continuing the movement begun, which meant fostering their own relationship with God, determining how to build on that and build up the community of faith. It meant addressing many challenges, and even, like Jesus rewriting old ways into new, formulating new meaning for their lives and others' with different guidelines, different interpretations, breaking with old traditions and establishing a new order, a new way.

That was Bertha, through and through – a spunky woman who forged a way through a culture not necessarily embracing of women. It was the way of Jesus and his disciples 2,000 years ago. It is our way now. How do we move forward? What is it that we need to interpret differently? What traditions need to be broken? And what newness needs to be established?

I will leave you all with those questions, those ponderings. They are yours to grapple with during this transition time. I will be there with you and for you as we travel this interim journey together. There is much history to draw from, and many memories to enlighten the way. Including those of a radical and itinerant carpenter who turned the tables upside down, figuratively if not literally, as well as, a hundred and five year old woman, who sometimes got in your face.

May Spirit be your guide!

Blessings,
Paula ♦

A Moment with Our Moderator

Pentecost is the time of the birth of the church. It occurs 50 days after Easter. On the day of Pentecost, a strong wind came down from heaven and filled the disciples with the Holy Spirit. They all started to talk in other tongues but the Spirit allowed them to understand each other. I see the Holy Spirit moving through KCC as we go through the interim time (rebirth) and explore the Open and Affirming process. All of us have our own beliefs and speak in our own tongues but if we listen carefully, a mutual understanding and consensus will be reached.

To help discern what the true concerns and beliefs of the church community are, the ONA committee has created a survey. I hope that everyone takes the time to fill out the survey. Results will be tabulated and used by the committee to determine the next step in the process. The process is not just to have an informed vote on a possible statement but to determine what a statement would mean and what the community would do to implement the statement.

April was a busy month with the Easter services, an ONA meeting, the "Still Speaking" Bible Classes and the Souper Social, along with all the regular activities. May looks just as busy!

Now is also the time that volunteers are recruited for committees in the next program year. The Nominating Committee, chaired by Damon and Susan Curtin-Schamu, is looking for volunteers to staff the various committees. Serving on a committee is a great way to get to know fellow KCC members, learn about how various functions in the church operate, be informed of the current events at KCC and have fun. I encourage everyone to volunteer.

--Rich Wayman, *Moderator* ♦



Welcome New Members!



On Sunday, March 14, Chris Cundari and Jim O'Donnell (pictured at top with their son Oliver) and Patrick Thomas (pictured above) joined Kensington Community Church, United Church of Christ, by Affirmation of Faith. Please take a moment to welcome our new members when you next see them at worship or around the neighborhood. ♦

Welcome and Thanks to Sunday Refreshment Attendants

Please welcome Marc Marchant as our new Sunday Refreshment Attendant! He joined us on Sunday, April 18. If you have not already met Marc, please stop by Lander Hall during fellowship time and say hello!

Many thanks to John Loomis for his service over the past 18 months! His dependability and dedication were outstanding! ♦

Now's Your Chance... Volunteer!

If your term on a church committee is up and you'd like to serve on a different committee or, if you've not volunteered before, please contact one of the following: Damon & Susan Curtin-Schamu, (619-280-6717), Helen Vreeland (619-282-5648), Amy Winn (619-516-4486) or Sharon Young (675-9592). The full slate of nominees will be presented for approval at a congregational meeting in June (date to be announced). Thanks in advance for your participation. ♦



Organist Nina Deering to Perform Recital

On Friday, May 7, at 2:00 p.m., KCC Organist Nina Deering will be performing her Senior Recital at Smith Recital Hall on the San Diego State University campus, 5500 Campanile Drive, San Diego 92182. This will be her last event as student in the Bachelor of Music Program, with emphasis in piano performance.

All are invited, and admittance is free! ♦



The New KCC Cookbook Is Coming!

The Secret Sisters are organizing a new, improved and very delicious KCC Cookbook that will be on sale this fall. It will have new recipes as well as some oldies but goodies and we'd like to include YOURS!

If you have a favorite recipe(s) that you would like us to include in the cookbook please send a copy (not the original) to Cathy Stephenson by email at cathy163@cox.net, or drop it off for her at the church office. Please include your name so we know who to credit for the recipe. We can take typed or handwritten recipes, and if you have it on an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper, that's even better.

Deadline for submission of the recipes is May 21 so hurry and don't be left out! ♦

Missions

Summer 2010 City Heights Face Lift Saturday, June 5

Please join us for the City Heights Face Lift. It's a morning filled with a lot of hard work, alongside a lot of community-spirited people like yourselves. The rewards are immense: another blighted block beautified, the 500th home rehabbed, and the personal satisfaction that comes with helping your neighbor. Sign up sheets are in Lander Hall.

Interfaith Shelter Network Homeless Rotation Program - Thanks to Mary and Bob Parkinson for the food they prepared the night we hosted the program.

The Partnership Churches And Then There Was One...

by Carol Rainey

Partnership? What is this Partnership?

The San Diego Partnership of UCC Churches, which counts UCCLM among its members, was created in 1982, one of 20 such alliances instituted by the National UCC to promote understanding through shared activities. Scattered around the country, these “Partnerships” were made up of geographically related churches whose members represented a variety of ethnic, racial and social groups.

Only the San Diego Partnership is still active.

The original members of that partnership were Chinese Community Church, Christian Fellowship Congregational UCC, Kensington Community Church UCC, Mission Hills UCC and Ocean View UCC. This partnership flourished, enthusiastically sharing picnics, choir festivals, worship services, pulpit exchanges and delicious international potluck dinners. The members marched together in Martin Luther King Day parades and ran Vacation Bible Schools, with each of the five (5) churches hosting a day.

All but Chinese Community remain in the Partnership today. Happily, others have accepted the invitation to join and add to the richness of shared experiences. They are Pioneer UCC (when they merged with Ocean View), University City United Church (UCUC) and, most recently, UCCLM. We worship together on Thanksgiving Eve and Ash Wednesday at one of the member churches. We have an annual pulpit exchange (the pastor of each church preaches at another) on the Sunday of Martin Luther King Day weekend, followed by a potluck dinner and program at one of the Partnership churches. An annual picnic is held in August and each year scholarships are offered to qualifying college students. In 2008-2009 we held several “Sacred Conversations on Race” which were well attended and very enlightening. The

Partnership has sponsored and/or participated in joint mission activities, forums and community events for/involving adults and youth.

How does all this happen and what keeps it going? The Partnership Steering Committee meets bi-monthly to plan the activities and events. Each church is represented on the Steering committee by (at least) one pastor and one layperson. Each Partnership church makes a financial contribution (sort of like dues) to the Partnership treasury, which is used as seed money for the picnic and other events. Collections received at the worship services are designated for the Partnership Scholarship Fund or a specific mission project. The joyful fellowship of worshipping, working, learning and socializing together with old friends and new ones keeps the Partnership vital. There’s talk of a Partnership musical or theatrical production in the near future and, really, the possibilities are endless.

Thanks to Bruce Ramet of Mission Hills UCC for sharing the history and to Carol Rainey for putting the above article together.

And now:

The Partnership Churches are alive and thriving. Our annual picnic at Christian Fellowship will be held on Sunday, August 15, at 12:30 pm. There is also an active Woman’s Group who has met for brunch, a spring lunch, and on October 23, there will be a woman’s one-day retreat. Put those dates on your calendar and look for further information.

Also – it would be great to have another representative (or two) to attend the Partnership Planning gatherings. Our next meeting will be at Mission Hills UCC on Tuesday, June 1, from 9 a.m. until noon. We will be doing some strategic planning for the Partnership itself bringing new ideas into action. If you are interested in attending, or even have some visions for the Partnership, please contact Rev. Elizabeth. ♦



In Our Prayers

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

David Adams

Kathleen Andrews

Denzil Atkinson

Brian Brewster

Marian Brewster

Charlotte Frank

Diane Guerra

Jim Langford

Frank Lantry

Janice Minor

Marilyn Tarbox

Katie Trischman

Barbara Underwood

Hazel Van Harten

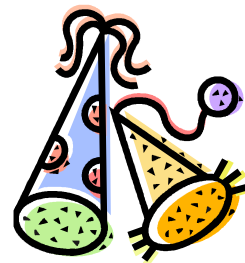
Janis Wilson

and the family and friends of

Bill Atkinson and Bertha Lander. ♦

May Birthdays

2	Christian Jimenez
4	Hazel Van Harten
5	Sam Howeth, Laura Short
7	Kathy Hosler
8	Nicholas McCarthy
11	Coco Conover
12	Katie McKenney
13	Erin Neal, Fredric Radick
14	Margaret Downing, Joe Odle, Jay Trischman
15	Melanie Winn
16	Mary Jane Swann
18	Victoria Robertson
19	Hahn Trinh
21	Penny Ward,
24	Dillon Lesniak
25	Froman Barrett
26	Margaret Burgess
27	Benjamin Mason
28	Mallie Odle
29	Kenneth Klauber, Mary Annah Hengst
30	Joann Morrison ♦



Kensington Community Church UCC
4773 Marlborough Drive
San Diego, CA 92116-2513
619-284-1129
www.kensingtonucc.com
info@kcc.sdcoxmail.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS

WINE & CHEESE PARTY

WHEN: SATURDAY, MAY 1, 6:30 P.M.

WHERE: BRENDAN & BONNIE MCCARTHY'S HOME
BRING A BOTTLE OF WINE TO SHARE

SPECIAL FUNDRAISING CONCERT: SUNDAY, MAY 2, 7:00 P.M.

WHAT: "MAY MELODIES"

WHERE: KCC SANCTUARY

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$15. PER PERSON, \$35. PER FAMILY

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 9

WHAT: KCC CELEBRATES MOTHERS DURING BOTH WORSHIPS

DISCUSSION AND FELLOWSHIP

WHAT: ONA (OPEN & AFFIRMING) DISCUSSION & POTLUCK

WHEN: SUNDAY, MAY 16 AT 11:15 A.M.

WHERE: LANDER HALL

PIZZA & MOVIE NIGHT, MAY 22, 6:00 P.M.

WHERE: LANDER HALL

MOVIE: "E.T."

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT!

PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 23, 8:30 A.M. AND 10 A.M.

WAVE THE FLAG! MEMORIAL DAY, MONDAY, MAY 31

WHAT: "HOLIDAY AT HOME" PARADE, PANCAKE BREAKFAST
AND BARBEQUE

WHEN: FESTIVITIES BEGIN AT 8:00 A.M.

WHERE: PANCAKE BREAKFAST IN LANDER HALL AT 8:00 A.M.
BARBEQUE ON KCC FRONT LAWN AT 10:00 A.M.

SEE THE FULL CHURCH CALENDAR
AT WWW.KENSINGTONUCC.COM