

Days of Grace

*"I do not understand the mystery of grace - only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us."
- Anne Lamott.*

SPRING FLING?

You have no doubt heard about the RCA's annual event, Spring Fling. Perhaps you have attended every year. Perhaps you have wondered what exactly do we fling every spring!

This year, our keynote speaker is Tex Sample. Tex is well known for many things. If you attended Spring Fling in 2011, you heard our speaker, David Felten speak of Tex in relation to David's "Living the Questions" series. Tex is a speaker for the series. Eva Herschbach-Martin said she is looking forward to hearing Tex at Spring Fling because she finds "he is a humorous presenter of truly deep issues. On the *Living the Questions* videos, he is delightful and interesting." Tex is sure to be a thought provoking and inspirational speaker at this year's Spring Fling.

However, Spring Fling is far more than "this year's" speaker. Speakers give the gathered RCA members some food for thought, some renewal of spirit... some new perspectives. But the true blessing of Spring Fling is the fellowship found during these two days. As Don Fado says,

"(Spring Fling) is a great time to re-connect with "old" friends and be intellectually and spiritually stimulated."

Unlike Annual Conference that is jam packed with The Business of The Annual Conference, Spring Fling allows retired clergy and spouses to relax over a meal, sit outside under an arbor of spring flowers or take walk on a shady meandering path.

Christ the King retreat center is easily accessed off of Interstate 80 in Citrus Heights. A hidden refuge from city life, the walls allow wild turkeys to roam and keep the hustle and bustle at bay.

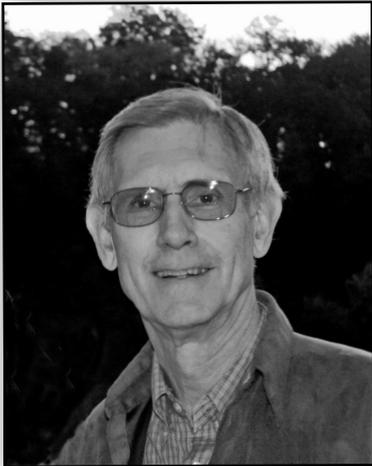
In addition to Tex, we will welcome Mariellen Yoshino, District Superintendent of the Central Valley District, as our Worship Leader. Jim and Jean Stratheed will once again join us as our music leaders.

More information and registration materials are on the second to last page of this issue of Days of Grace and can be found on the RCA website at <http://www.ca-nv-rca.org>.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Colleagues and Friends,

Once again, it is time to register for Spring Fling. I hope you will come. This year we will have the chance to experience Tex Sample. I've been acquainted with Tex through my work with the Living the Questions Series and am anticipating more of his stories



and spirit when we come together in April. Thanks to the Spring Fling committee for their work to make this possible.

Coming to Spring Fling is just one of the ways we have open to us to keep on growing even in

retirement. I hope you find your ways through a book club, a study group, a service project or some disciplined reading. Retirement is a great time to explore areas we didn't have time for when we faced all the demands of parish ministry. So find your growing edge and give it the attention it deserves.

Blessings on all of you,

~John Sublett

Opportunities to Assist Others

The RCA has two major funds that we have established to assist others. The first is our Memorial Scholarship program to assist seminary students with their expenses. The second is our Health Care Assistance Program. In the face of increasing health care insurance premiums, some are experiencing difficulties making these escalating payments. If you are in the position to help either group, please direct your contribution to our treasurer with a note indicating how to direct your donation. Together we can help those in need.

Make your check payable to: **RCA**

Send to: Dick Ernst
7930 Crystal Springs Way
Loomis, CA 95650

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

GREETINGS and salutations! I hope this issue of Days of Grace finds your days filled with grace indeed.

The February issue of Days of Grace often poses a challenge for me in this space. The hustle and bustle of the holiday season that seems to begin on October first and chugs right through to mid-January for our family, leaves me feeling VERY busy, but having accomplished little but seeing nearly everyone I know in a short amount of time!

The most favorite part of my job falls heavily during this time... gathering with RCA members during their holiday get togethers. While holidays are filled with rushing to get here or there, these places usually involve me DOING. I am rarely a simple guest. The hospitality shown to me by RCA members at these gatherings throughout the year are truly a bright spot and a place of peace for me. I thank you for including me and allowing me this unexpected 'down' time... even if it is, in theory, "work"!

On the RCA front, we are looking for "solutions" to the problem of rising health care costs. As you know, the retired clergy are not the only ones facing this very real problem both inside and outside of the United Methodist Church. None of us know what the future holds when it comes to federal health care reform and so we are looking for solutions, or at least ways to mitigate costs, under the present system. Please know that the RCA is working with the Board of Pensions to find a way to keep health care premiums in the ballpark of affordable.

I hope you will put Spring Fling on your calendar (registration in this issue). April 18-19 at Christ the King (same place as last year). I look forward to being able to visit with RCA members every year at this event!

And an update on our daughter Emma... As of this writing, we are prepping for her follow up scan. It's hard to believe it has been a year since her Thyroid Cancer treatment! All tests to this date point towards full elimination of disease. We feel confident this scan will indicate the same. Your prayers have been felt and deeply appreciated.



Peace,

Nancy

Help Wanted!

Are you wondering who the correspondent is for your area? Are we missing a report from your area? Please volunteer to be your area's correspondent! Email Nancy Daley at nancydaley@frontiernet.net for information (it's not too difficult!). This is the perfect job for the social butterflies among us who like to chit chat with everyone! (It's a great way to keep in touch with friends!)

A Little Housekeeping...

Please check your mailing label and be sure that I have your name(s) and address spelled correctly. If there is an error, please email or drop a postcard in the mail to me with the corrected information.

nancydaley@frontiernet.net
 Nancy Daley
 9328 Elk Grove Blvd. #105-141
 Elk Grove, CA 95624



DAYS OF GRACE GOES PAPERLESS..... IF YOU WISH



As you may remember from previous Days of Grace issues, the Retired Clergy Association now has a dedicated website separate from the Conference website.

One of the benefits of having our own website is that we have the ability to deliver our communication through the website.

The RCA History, past issues of Days of Grace as well as forms and registrations are available as downloadable documents.

IF you would prefer to receive Days of Grace through the website, I ask that you **EMAIL** me at nancydaley@frontiernet.net and I will notify you via email when each issue is available to download.

The benefits of receiving Days of Grace electronically are:

- It's GREEN! No paper!
- It saves money on printing and postage for the RCA.
- It is viewable in full color.

I do insist that you email me so I can create my notification list with your correct email.

You **will** continue to receive Days of Grace in your mailbox **UNLESS** you tell me otherwise.

<http://www.ca-nv-rca.org>

SANTA ROSA AREA NEWS

Celinda and Jim Current, Correspondents

Gayle Pickrel and John Davenport had a fantastic experience working as a part-time associate pastor at The Church of the Holy Cross UCC in Hilo, Hawaii for three months last spring. The congregation was primarily Japanese, with two different Micronesian Fellowships that were involved as well. She was "compensated" with a 4-bedroom fully-furnished parsonage, and a stipend for car rental and air fare. They had time to explore the island, and host many friends and family who came for visits. One of the highlights of their time there was a personal tour by one of the church members who is a leading scientist for the Subaru telescope on Mauna Kea. What a mind-boggling experience to look at a photo taken by that telescope of a galaxy 12.8 billion light years away!

Rosemary Manchester still does book reviews at First UCC in Sebastopol. Her reviews are also broadcast on the local radio station.

Jim and Celinda Current spent two months in Europe last fall thanks to a house exchange program. Celinda learned to

thread the needle piloting our rental cruiser through 32 locks and under countless bridges on the Canal du Midi.

Alice Friesen's quilts can be seen on her website, www.grandma.trevorperrier.com. Two of the quilts were featured in a recent edition of the *Quilters Newsletter*. Her grandson is now back from a 39 month tour in South Africa with the Peace Corps.



A group of twelve to sixteen of us meet every other month for lunch. Nancy Daley has been able to make many of our meetings. If you aren't on our mailing list but would like to be just drop me a line: Jim Current, 2022 Eldorado Ct, Novato, CA 94947 or email:

revjc@comcast.net You don't have to live in Marin or Sonoma to join with us! If you can't make the meetings but have something to share about what you are up to, send it to me at one of the addresses above.

RETIREED CLERGY IN NEW ORLEANS
FIFTH ANNUAL UMVIM PROJECT

John Sublett, RCA president

Seven members of the Retired Clergy Association made the fifth annual trek to New Orleans for a mission project. Led by Nadine DeWitt, the group included Betty Pagett, Kathleen Kaplan, John Sublett and Joe Hurd as well as surviving spouses Linda Butler and Joan Wheeler. The annual UMVIM project fulfills the RCA's goal of providing opportunities for service.

This year we had the opportunity to put the finishing touches on a duplex owned by Mrs. Greene in Midtown New Orleans. Water had flooded this

home up to the windows. Over the years since Katrina the 100 year old building had been ravaged by termites. Volunteer teams had gradually rebuilt and repaired until it was ready for us to finish the two stairways, the front porch, and to clean up and touch up to get the two sides ready for occupancy. There was lots of sanding, wire brushing, and painting. The team contributed 234 hours of work which also represented \$4388 that the state of Louisiana does not have to pay back to the federal government.

Next door to this home was one still in a state of disrepair with the roof caving in. Likewise across the street another home had

not been recovered. These are among the 40,000 homes still waiting reclamation in New Orleans. For many it will be too late.

Mrs. Greene and 20 members of her family fled New Orleans for Jackson, Mississippi during Katrina. All of them stayed with Mrs. Greene's brother for six weeks, many of the adults sleeping in their cars. Now, six long years, after the disaster she and her family will return to their home.

This year our work was coordinated by the Epworth Project located at Aldersgate UMC in Slidell, LA. We were impressed with their commitment and organization. They have the vision of

continuing work to address the profound needs in the New Orleans area.

As we have done for all five of the New Orleans UMVIM trips, we stayed at the North Ramparts Community Center, a project of the Women's Division. Next door is St. Mark's UMC where we worshipped and grew in our appreciation of the powerful ministry of Anita Dinwiddie, a local pastor with a passion for the homeless. The center is located at the edge of the French Quarter. On Halloween we were reminded of the struggles of New Orleans as violence wracked the city, especially the French Quarter where gunfire killed one and wounded seven.



The North Ramparts Center was basically put out of business by Katrina. The efforts of many have led to its renewal and present outreach to children in need. Contributions from an earlier RCA project put their swimming pool back in operation. After Katrina a group of actors from New York came to the Center to organize young people in a performance that raised money for the Center and led to the group taking their show to New York. It was documented in a wonderful DVD "After the Storm."

Our RCA UVMIM committee will be planning future trips and offering more opportunities for RCA members to be involved in projects like this. In February the committee is planning a reunion for those who have participated in any of the five past projects.



Retired Clergy Association Annual Luncheon

June 22, 2012

PLEASE MAKE NOTE THAT OUR
LUNCHEON WILL BE HELD AT THE

HYATT HOTEL!

Ray Alderman had pneumonia before Christmas, and it seemed to be worse than when he had it four years ago. He had a quiet, but very nice, Christmas. He is adjusting to new glasses, and has difficulty reading the newspaper. Ray states that he appreciates having had good times as a youth. He and his son, Mark, would like to visit family in Texas.

David and Sherry Atkins had a delightful Christmas in Irvine with their children and families. The most exciting news in their family is that their son, Michael, and wife, Glenda, have completed their Masters degrees in counseling. David underwent corrective surgery in November, two years after his prostatectomy, and is slowly returning to normal activities.

Ivan and Ruth Ball had a good Christmas with their son, Eric, who now lives in Porterville. Ivan is enjoying his new stationary bicycle, which helps his bursitis. Ruth has recovered from hip surgery well. Ivan continues his study group which will be reading, The History of Civilization. He just completed a 12,000 page compilation of Mark Twain's books.

Dick Bayard spent a fantastic week with all of his descendants at his oldest daughter's in South Carolina. The fourth generation was all present with only one missing from the third generation, who was in Sweden. Before Christmas, Dick participated in a memorial time for his oldest brother's widow. He gives thanks to God to be so blessed with his family.

Alf Christiansen had a busy Thanksgiving with family, and a lovely candlelight service at the Lutheran Church he serves at Christmas. Alf has written several short

stories, and his daughter is interested in publishing them. There will be a large family reunion on his 7 1/2 acre place this summer. Folks will come from Minneapolis, Washington, Virginia, and more.

Cecilia Cluff is delighted that her daughter, Becky, and two girls from Bakersfield are now living with her in Shafter, moving from Bakersfield. She and her daughter are putting two households together. They had a lovely Christmas. Her daughter's family from Reno came at Thanksgiving, and helped Cecilia do some work around the house in preparation.

John and Sylvia Corson participated in the 7th presentation of the *Stephen E. Corson Award for the Distinguished Teaching of Freshmen* at Pacific. Their October Mediterranean Cruise was delightful. John has recovered well from recent hernia surgery. Their family gathered on December 26th for a Christmas dinner, followed by an extended visit with their grandsons.

Harry and Anita Dutt had a good time during the holidays with their children. They moved to Santa Barbara to be near one of their daughters, and are enjoying it a lot. There are many activities available. Harry is in a ukulele group. Anita had cataract surgery on one eye. They attended an International RV Rally in Indio, and traveled with their siblings in January.

Mark and Young Moon had a wonderful holiday. Two of their sons, (one lives outside San Antonio and the other in Houston), and Young's sister and family from San Jose were able to be with them. It was a busy time. Mark has been following a strict diet and exercise program for health reasons..

He continues to enjoy helping out at Christ UMC in Santa Maria.

Don and Donita Roulsten are both healthy and doing fine. They had a nice Christmas with Donita's brother. Don is engaged in his part time ministry position at Visalia UMC as the pastor for senior adults. Donita serves as the accompanist for the choirs at Porterville College, and the Sierra Vocal Arts Community Choir. Don sings in the community choir.

Bob and Nancy Schwartz spent a lovely Christmas in the Bay Area with family and friends. Bob also preached in Alameda, where he was Youth Pastor fifty years ago. In mid-January they enjoyed "lolling" in Cabo San Lucas. It was a good time for both of them to relax in the sun, as Nancy is still recuperating from foot surgery, and Bob from a knee replacement.

Alpha and Mary Takagi enjoyed the holidays with their children Alpha says they are doing okay, considering he is now 94 years old and Mary is 92! They celebrated

their **67th** wedding anniversary on December 10th and look forward to their 68th. They attend the Japanese language service at Christ UMC once a month. Alpha's tomatoes were great this year.

Sharon Watson had a delightful, but busy holiday with family. Her son, Jon, is still in Japan and will be home from the service in eight months. Sharon had an exciting time on her cruise to the Mediterranean with daughter, Kandi, this fall. In May, she will travel to Europe with her son, Joel, and looks forward to a more leisurely trip on a riverboat. She loves her new Kindle.

Harry and Ruth Wood had a marvelous holiday. This past November, Harry became Interim Pastor for the Selma Baptist Church. Harry says, "After 24 years in Visalia, people hear the news and say, 'Amazing, that's great.' At age 71, I'm enjoying the work." The previous pastor was also a United Methodist. The church is a vital congregation, and ecumenical in spirit.



DELTA IS-BEENS NEWS



Ed and Eva Martin are traveling in southern Arizona - Organ Pipe Cactus Monument, Tucson, Catalina State Park, Kartchner Caverns and Frank Lloyd Wright's creation, Taliesin West. They are looking forward to hiking and seeing new sites.

Don and Jean Fado have returned to good health after a difficult year. They are doing some traveling, including taking grandchildren. Travel plans include Phoenix as their first great-grandchild is due to be born there in July. Don keeps active serving on the Board of Directors of Loaves and Fishes in Sacramento, the areas major ministry with those in poverty and homeless.

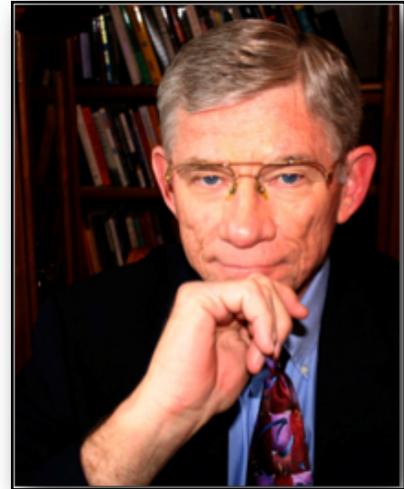
TEX SAMPLE

Tex Sample, an ordained UMC elder, is a former Academic Dean and Professor at the St. Paul School of Theology. He has authored nine books and is currently writing a book about Reinhold Niebuhr. He was featured on the "Living the Questions" series.

He has been described as *"...a man with a baseball bat in one hand and a copy of the philosopher Wittgenstein in the other...a man of the people and a man of the academy...a man who can tell it like it is to a group of tough urban Job Corps participants, to an upper middle class white suburban Sunday school class, and to distressed Heartland farmers...a man who is comfortable at his daddy's taxi-cab stand and on the General Conference floor, a man of the community and a man of the church...a man who was born in the South, 'trained up' in the Northeast, who has grown to maturity in the Midwest."*

Sample works with story as a means to embody his presentations so they take on a personal and social concreteness. He weaves his own life experiences into themes of justice, economics, peace, faith, and church. Tex continues a rigorous regimen of

reading and writing and has been heavily involved in community organizing for the past 10 years in Metro Phoenix. He is also active in the Arizona Interfaith Movement and is part of a wonderful church that is multiracial, multiclass and half gay and lesbian.



His real name is Tex. His father named him after Texanna Gillham, an African-American woman who was born in slavery and helped raise his father.



Mariellen Yoshino

Mariellen was born in Japan but grew up in the South Alabama-West Florida Conference as a "preacher's kid". She attended St. Paul School of Theology; Tex Sample was one of her professors.

Mariellen has served as staff and director of the Appalachia Service Project, 'missioning' as a US-2 (in the Iowa Conference) and pastoring for 8 years in the Kansas East Conference before moving to the Cal-Nev Conference 22 years ago. She was most recently pastor of Wesley UMC in San Jose, and is currently the Central Valley District Superintendent. She says of her assignment, "This district has so many truly committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Together, we are working to 'grow the church'."

Mariellen is married to Steve Yoshino. There are five precious small people in this world who call this DS "Grandma Mariellen".

Jean and Jim Strathdee

Jean and Jim Strathdee make a repeat appearance at Spring Fling. Jim and Jean are well known to the Cal-Nevada Conference as internationally honored concert artists and musical leaders. The music they write and perform is intended for heartfelt and joyful congregational singing. Their music brings a message of compassion, justice and healing.

They will bring their musical talents and warm spirits to keep us in tune once again! We are delighted to have them join us.



SPRING FLING!!!

Mark Your Calendar: April 18-19, 2012

Christ The King Retreat Center

6520 Van Maren Lane

Citrus Heights

Register today!

Registration Form

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Street Apt# City State Zip

Email Address _____

I/We will (check one): **Stay on Campus** _____ | *Bring an RV for lodging* _____ | Commute daily _____

COMMUTERS, will you eat Thursday breakfast on campus? Yes _____ No _____

Bed preference: Two single beds _____ Double bed _____

Cost: On-campus: \$106 EARLY BIRD SPECIAL **per person** by April 1 (\$116 after April 1)

First time attendees \$ 53 EARLY BIRD SPECIAL **per person** by April 1 (\$116 after April 1)

RV/Commuter: \$ 65 EARLY BIRD SPECIAL **per person** by April 1 (\$75 after April 1)

First time attendees \$ 32.50 EARLY BIRD SPECIAL **per person** by April 1 (\$75 after April 1)

Scholarship Assistance? _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____ Do you have special needs? _____

Make Check Payable to: RCA

Send to: Registrar Nancy Daley, 9328 Elk Grove Blvd. #105-141, Elk Grove, CA 95624

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EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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Calendar

See website for updates

February 15, 2012

Full Board Meeting

February 16, 2012

UMVIM Reunion

March 6, 2012

RCC

March 9, 2012

Is-Beens (George's)

April 18-19, 2012

Spring Fling

June 19-23, 2012

Annual Conference

June 22, 2012

Annual Luncheon