



## Sunday Celebration Notes from Jerry Stinson

*Celebrating God's Love Every Sunday at 10 am.*

This Sunday we will have an exciting guest preacher – Milia Islam-Majeed, the Executive Director of the South Coast Interfaith Council.

Milia is the daughter of immigrant parents who migrated here in 1986 from Bangladesh. She spent her childhood and adolescence in the small midwestern town of Fulton, Missouri. She obtained her undergraduate degree in world religions and psychology from Westminster College in Missouri, where she was the only Muslim student. In 2004, she earned her masters in theological studies at Harvard Divinity School, focusing on world religions.



She has been the Program Director of the Community Empowerment Project in Boston, working with marginalized immigrants and refugees, and the Program Manager of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) Leadership Development Center in Plainfield, Indiana.

I had the privilege of chairing the search committee that hired Milia as Executive Director of the South Coast Interfaith Council in the summer of 2008. The council, founded in 1953, is an association of over 140 member congregations and related programs in the South Bay-Harbor-Long Beach area of Los Angeles and west Orange counties. Many First Church members have been involved in SCIC programs, and I current serve on the council's Board of Directors.

Milia will preach during the morning service, and then after the service she will lead a forum looking at the programs and activities of the Interfaith Council.

Libby Tigner, Lisa Davis and I will all serve as liturgists during the service, and Steve Berlanga, our baritone soloist, will provide special music.

*Next week Jerry Stinson's sermon title will be " Colonial Quakers Putting Faith into Practice ."*

## Music on Sunday

This Sunday will be a very special Sunday for First Church as we welcome our Muslim guest to the pulpit. My only experience with music from the Islamic culture is David Fanshawe's monumental multi-cultural work "African Sanctus," which we have performed twice in past years. Fanshawe lived in Africa in 1969–1970 traveling the countryside, choosing a path that formed a sort of cross when he placed his itinerary on a map. He recorded all kinds of indigenous music, including the Islamic call to prayer. As he listened to the man who chants from the tower, he wrote: "On the hill of the citadel in Cairo, overlooking the Nile, one evening I suddenly heard in my head the unlikely combination of a western choir accompanying the Islamic call to prayer."

Upon his return to England, he composed a setting of the "Kyrie" (the first portion of the mass ordinary which is in Greek – God have mercy, Christ have mercy, God have mercy – each phrase said or sung three times) in a Renaissance style, but with some

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## Music on Sunday

more contemporary harmonies that were suggested by the melodic material of the Islamic chant. You will hear the recording of the chant as sung by the man in the tower in 1969. Our Sanctuary Choir will sing Fanshawe's "Kyrie." It is a wonderful juxtaposition of two ways of praying to God and of two different cultures. Finally, your own life's experience and musical tastes will inform how you hear these two musical styles. I am sure that you will find this to be a very spiritual experience. See you in church.

*Dr. Leland Vail, Minister of Music*

## In Sunday School This Week

**Theme:** Courage for Community

**Scripture Focus:** Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

## In Adult Education This Week

*Sundays at 8:30 am - in the Sanctuary this week*

Marc Dickey will lead the second of two sessions on the wonders of the pipe organ.

## Valla Lecture October 3

*By Libby Tigner*

"Decoding the Myths and Meanings of Difficult Words in the Bible" will be the topic explored by the Rev. Jim Adams, speaker at our Sixth Annual F. Louis Valla Lecture on Progressive Religious Scholarship. Rev. Adams, a retired Episcopal priest, is the founder of The Center for Progressive Christianity (TCPC), a non-profit think tank and resource center that encourages churches to focus their attention on those for whom organized religion has become irrelevant, ineffectual or repressive. Rev. Adams continues to be an advisor to TCPC and will be in Long Beach as a part of his upcoming book tour. His conversation with us will be, in part, drawn from his latest book, *From Literal to Literary: The Essential Reference Book for Biblical Metaphors*. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing.

The Valla Lecture is Saturday, October 3, from 9 a.m. to noon. A continental breakfast will be available. The cost is \$10. To register, please call the church office at 562-436-2256, ext. 221, or email [office@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:office@firstchurchlb.org). Please register by September 30.

**[www.firstchurchlb.org](http://www.firstchurchlb.org)**

### First Church Staff

**Jerald Stinson**

Senior Minister ext. 230  
[jstinson@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:jstinson@firstchurchlb.org)

**Libby Tigner**

Associate Minister ext. 224  
[ltigner@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:ltigner@firstchurchlb.org)

**Ed Bloomfield**

Minister of Visitation  
[bloomfield\\_ed@yahoo.com](mailto:bloomfield_ed@yahoo.com)

**Mary Ellen Kilsby**

Senior Minister Emerita  
[revmek@aol.com](mailto:revmek@aol.com)

**Leland Vail**

Minister of Music ext. 231  
[lvail@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:lvail@firstchurchlb.org)

**Tracy Halter-Balin**

Assistant Director of Music  
[thalter@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:thalter@firstchurchlb.org)

**Marc Dickey**

Organist  
[mdickey@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:mdickey@firstchurchlb.org)

**Wally Hoeger**

Director of Children's and Youth  
Ministries ext. 226  
[whoeger@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:whoeger@firstchurchlb.org)

**Ruth Warkentin**

Office Manager ext. 221  
[office@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:office@firstchurchlb.org)

**Yvonne SaMarion**

Maintenance Supervisor ext. 227  
[ysamarion@firstchurchlb.org](mailto:ysamarion@firstchurchlb.org)

**Heather Chambers or Melody O'Keefe at Halter & Associates**

Bookkeeper ext. 225;  
[halter.assoc@verizon.net](mailto:halter.assoc@verizon.net)

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## Kindred Spirits

Absence makes the heart grow fonder! After taking August off, Kindred Spirits will gather again on September 26 at Barb and Jan's (4125 Heather Road, Long Beach; phone: 562-429-2890). See you at 6 p.m. with a potluck dish to share and a sweater to wear -- we'll be sitting outside.

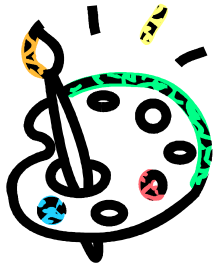
Thanks to those who contributed items for the Drop-In Center benefit/silent auction. There were several cute, clever items, and there are rumors that someone hosted a pink flamingo party, thanks to your goodies.

See you on the 26th.

*Deanna and Ron*

## Craft Fair Workshop

*By Cathy Chambers*



Dig out your painting smock and join us Saturday, October 10 for our next Craft Fair Workshop. David Cavanaugh will teach us how to make splatter paintings which we'll sell at the Craft Fair. We'll meet in the church basement Dining Room from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.; light refreshments will be served. Sign up at church or by email with Cathy Chambers ([cathcham@otis.edu](mailto:cathcham@otis.edu)).

## New Adult Ed Series to Begin Next Week: Reading Materials Available Now

*By Libby Tigner*

A brand new, DVD-based program called "First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom of God" will be the source material for our next Sunday morning adult class. Created by the same folks who made the very successful programs "Living the Questions," "Saving Jesus" and "Questioning Capital Punishment," "First Light" features scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan and examines the beginnings of the Jesus movement. Filmed in and around Jerusalem and the Galilee, the DVD segments explore life in first-century Palestine and the social and cultural world into which Jesus was born and on which his teachings made such a deep and lasting impact.

Our Sunday morning classes will begin at 8:30 a.m. and will include viewing a 20-minute video segment and discussion. To deepen understanding our understanding of the subject and help our conversations, reading materials prepared by John Dominic Crossan are available. The materials for the whole series, including study questions, have been printed and are available for \$1. You can pick up your copy after church this Sunday, or on any Sunday morning in class.

"First Light" will begin on Sunday, October 4 and will finish on Sunday, December 20. While each week's video and discussion will no doubt build on what has gone before, you'll still find each session both informing and engaging even if you have to miss some Sundays.

## Get Connected!

*By Debbie Byrne*

Looking for a way to get connected and get to know people on a deeper level? As a new member last year, I found it a little intimidating coming to such a large church not knowing anyone. I was also not the type to wander back to Patterson Hall and walk up to total strangers and introduce myself. Looking for ways to meet people, I got involved with a committee working to develop community through small group activities at First Church. We sponsored Mardi Gras and Dos De Mayo and are now launching the new Getting to Know You groups. I have been participating in the first pilot group and have met some wonderful people, had

*(Continued on back page)*

## Interfaith Opportunities

By Jerry Stinson

Diana Eck, Professor of Comparative Religion at Harvard says, "If you know one religion, you don't know any." I think she is right. In a world of rich pluralism, we need to know more about the religious faith of others and we need to be in dialogue with people who follow other pathways to the divine. We are fortunate to live in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area where there are many interfaith events. Here are some opportunities in October and November:

### GANDHI REMIXED

Sunday, October 11

The University of Southern California and the Southern California Committee for a Parliament of World Religions are sponsoring "Gandhi Remixed: Pluralism and Nonviolence in Today's World" on Sunday, October 11 from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. at USC's Mark Taper Auditorium (near Jefferson and Hoover). Speakers include Ralph Fertig, Professor of Social Work at USC, and Chris Chapple, Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology at Loyola Marymount University. The event and refreshments are free, followed by a free concert at 6 p.m. by one of the world's foremost sitar players, Nishat Khan.



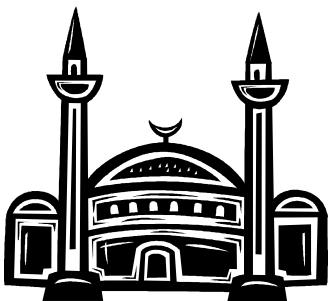
### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA OPEN MOSQUE DAY

Sunday, October 18

The Islamic Shura Council of Southern California is holding an "Open Mosque Day" on Sunday, October 18 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Several mosques will be open to neighbors and community members of all faiths. This is an opportunity for people to know more about their Muslim neighbors. The programs at the various mosques will consist of speakers, presentations, displays, mosque tours, international food, and the opportunity to meet local American Muslims. The following mosques in our area will be participating. I would suggest

that you phone the mosque you wish to attend to verify times and locations. If you cannot reach a particular mosque, call the Shura Council at 714-239-6473.

**Anaheim:** Islamic Institute of Orange County, Masjid Omar Al-Farouq, 1220 N. State College Blvd., Anaheim, CA 92806.



Phone: 714-533-6271.  
[www.masjidomar.com](http://www.masjidomar.com).

**Garden Grove:** The Islamic Society of Orange County (ISOC), 1 Al-Rahman Plaza, Garden Grove, CA 92844. Phone: 714-531-1722.  
[www.isocmasjid.com](http://www.isocmasjid.com).

**Hawthorne:** Islamic Center of Hawthorne, 12209 Hawthorne Way, Hawthorne, CA 90250 (behind Home-town Buffet). Phone: 310-973-8000. [www.ichla.org](http://www.ichla.org).

**Irvine:** Islamic Center of Irvine, Masjid, 2 Truman, Irvine, CA 92620. Phone: 949-786-ICOI (4264). [www.icoi.net/index.php](http://www.icoi.net/index.php).

Our former moderator, Michele Wilson, and her son Dante visited the Anaheim mosque during Open Mosque Day two years ago. She wrote an extensive *Pilgrim* article about what a wonderful and enlightening experience it was. I urge everyone to take advantage of this opportunity.

### THE INTERSECTION OF ISLAMOPHOBIA AND U.S.-SPONSORED TORTURE

Sunday, October 25

This event will be held on Sunday, October 25 from 3 to 5 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral (514 W. Adams at S. Figueroa, Los Angeles - near USC). It is sponsored by

the Los Angeles Religious Campaign Against Torture (of which First Church is a member) and the Christian Muslim Consultative Group (of which I am a member). Dr. Malek Moazzam-Doulat of Occidental College and Dr. Maher Hathout of the Muslim Public Affairs Council will be the keynote speakers. There is no cost for this event and no reservations are needed.

**SOUTH COAST  
INTERFAITH COUNCIL  
FESTIVAL OF MUSIC  
BENEFIT CONCERT**

**Sunday, November 1**

On Sunday, November 1 at 3 p.m., musical choirs and artists from several diverse faith communities in Long Beach and the South Bay area will perform. This event will be held at California Heights United Methodist Church (3759 California Avenue, Long Beach). No reservations are required, and there will be a free will offering taken to support the work of the Interfaith Council.



**COUNCIL OF AMERICAN ISLAMIC RELATIONS  
ANNUAL BANQUET**

**Saturday, November 7**

This event will be held on Saturday, November 7 from 6:30 to 10 p.m. at the Anaheim Hilton Hotel. This year's theme is "A New Era of Hope: Our Role, Our Future." Banquet speakers include Dr. Sherman Jackson, professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan; CAIR National Board Chairperson and North Carolina State Senator Larry Shaw; and Shaikh Alauddin El-Bakri, Imam of Saratoga mosque. For the past three years, approximately 2,000 guests have attended the annual banquet, including about 300 guests from interfaith, political, civil rights, news and entertainment circles. Kay and I regularly attend this event. We will be doing so again this year. **If there is enough interest it would be great to reserve a table for 10 people from our congregation. The cost is \$45 per person. If you are interested in attending please notify me as soon as possible at [revjstinson@verizon.net](mailto:revjstinson@verizon.net) or 562-436-2256, ext. 230.**

**SOUTH COAST INTERFAITH COUNCIL UNITY AWARDS  
DINNER**

**Sunday, November 15**

The Sixth Annual SCIC Unity Awards Dinner and Silent Auction will be held on Sunday, November 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Redondo Beach Center for Spiritual Living (907 Knob Hill Avenue, Redondo Beach.) Last year, Bud and Mary Kilsby and I were recipients of unity awards. The cost of this event is \$60 per person. For reservations please send your check to SCIC, 759 Linden Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90813.

**Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Classes**

*By Bob Kalayjian*

I will begin another cycle of eight weekly classes Tuesday, October 6 at 5:30 p.m. This form of stress reduction is grounded in Mindfulness and we learn three practices: sitting meditation, yoga and a body scan meditation.



If you are interested in exploring Mindfulness as a way to alleviate stress and dis-ease, contact me at church, at [robkal@mac.com](mailto:robkal@mac.com), or 562-754-5334.

## October Anniversaries

- 1 Miguel Criado and Paul Mclain, 4 years
- 8 Debbie and Scot Bond, 15 years
- 14 Ron Nelson and David Schnur, 32 years
- 18 Raj and Sasha Advani, 6 years
- 19 Marsalee and Brent Malatesta, 7 years
- 31 Rick Wilmouth and Eric Shull, 1 year

## Homecoming Sunday, September 13

*Photo courtesy of Adreana Langston*



## October Birthdays

- 1 Danica Witter
- 2 Pat Green
- 3 Bruce Woods
- 4 Marsalee Malatesta, Tracy Sachtjen
- 6 Todd Faux
- 7 Alida "Montana" Montañez-Salas
- 9 David Clements, Libby Tigner
- 10 Robert Stapp
- 11 Zane Witter
- 12 Keith Butler
- 13 Mary Lou Klar
- 14 Bill Armstrong, Robert Borrero, Grace Moore
- 16 Matt Jaeckel
- 17 Robert Halter
- 18 Isaac Hanna
- 19 Kathleen O'Neal, Trystan Scott
- 21 Ginger Heil, Jim Miech, Bill Mueller, Milo Penner
- 22 Doug Ramsay
- 23 Susan Dorsey
- 24 Sonny Brown, Gil Griego
- 26 Terry McKiernan
- 28 Nancy Boyd-Batstone, James Frisby
- 29 Sarah Estes
- 30 Leonie Baliscao, Dorothea MacNeil, Tom Penner

# October at First Congregational Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sundays</b></p> <p>8:30 Una Voce Rehearsal, Adult Education*</p> <p>9 All Seasons Choir</p> <p>9:30 All Seasons Continued, Charming Chimes, Prayer in Sacred Space*</p> <p>12:30 Drop-in Center</p>		<p>*Childcare is provided. To request childcare for a church event, contact Wally Hoeger at 562-436-2256 x 226 or <a href="mailto:whoeger@firstchurchlb.org">whoeger@firstchurchlb.org</a>.</p>		<p>1 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:30 Bellissimo 6:45 ZONE 7:30 Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>2 6 Parents' Night Out 6 Friday Night at First Church</p>	<p>3 9 Sixth Annual Valla Lecture on Progressive Religious Scholarship</p>
<p>4 10 Service of Celebration*: Jerry Stinson preaching 11:30 First Church Café 12:15 Meetings: Christian Education, Diaconate, Outreach, Parish Life, Stew/Finance, Communications</p>	<p>5 7 Getting to Know You Groups (offsite)</p>	<p>6 9 <i>The Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Congregational Care Committee (offsite) 7 Drop-In Center Committee</p>	<p>7 7 Getting to Know You Groups (offsite)</p>	<p>8 5:45 Beloved Bells 6 Board of Cultural Arts 6:30 Bellissimo 6:45 ZONE 7:30 Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 10 Craft Workshop</p>
<p>11 8:30 History Ministry Team 10 Service of Celebration*: Cantor Steve Puzarne, guest preacher 11:30 Craft Fair; Forum on Autism</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Theological Study Group</p>	<p>14 7 Sacred Practices; PFLAG</p>	<p>15 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:30 Bellissimo 6:45 ZONE 7:30 Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 9 Interfaith Organizing Committee Workshops</p>
<p>18 10 Service of Celebration*: Jerry Stinson preaching 11:30 Craft Fair; Getting to Know You Group; Church Tour</p>	<p>19 6:30 Air Quality Ministry Team 7 Urban Community Outreach Board</p>	<p>20 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:30 Bellissimo 6:45 ZONE 7 Social Justice Committee 7:30 Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Central Association Fall Meeting (offsite)</p>
<p>25 10 Service of Celebration*: Jerry Stinson preaching 11:30 Craft Fair 2 Avocation and Friends Concert with Craft Fair before and after</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 9 <i>Pilgrim</i> mailing 7 Church Council</p>	<p>28 7 Sacred Practices</p>	<p>29 5:45 Beloved Bells 6:30 Bellissimo 6:45 ZONE 7:30 Sanctuary Choir</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>



*The Pilgrim*  
 241 Cedar Avenue  
 Long Beach, CA 90802

Periodicals  
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 Long Beach, CA

TO:

“Never place a period  
 where God has placed a comma”  
[Gracie Allen]

## Parish Concerns

Your thoughts and prayers are requested for Danielle Malone (Larelle Hendon’s sister-in-law); Maureen Coleman upon the death of her father; Patrick Farrell (Marion Hinze’s daughter-in-law’s brother); Janet Rhodes; Cynde Soto; and the friends of Jim Thomas, who recently died.

In the armed forces: Daniele Ware (Karen Miller’s granddaughter, in Iraq).

*To put someone on this list, put a note on the Parish Concerns board on the Third Street landing or contact Ruth in the office (562-436-2256 x221 or office@firstchurchlb.org).*

## Online Calendar

Check the online church calendar at [www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html](http://www.firstchurchlb.org/calendar.html) for details about all church events. You can use the online calendar to email invitations to friends to church events and to set up emailed reminders to yourself. Just click on any event to see information about it.

## Fist Church Café Returns Next Week

*By Libby Tigner*

Just a reminder that that the First Church Café will be open on Sunday, October 4. The first Sunday of the month lunch will be prepared by Karen Cannon, and everyone is invited to stay for lunch. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children ten and under. If you need financial assistance with the lunch, please see Jerry or Libby – vouchers are available.

*(Continued from page 3)*

## Get Connected

some good laughs and shared some touching moments. It has been a great way to get to know people in the church and make some new connections.

If you are looking to meet new people and help build our church community, I highly recommend the Getting to Know You experience. Sign up in the courtyard after church for new groups forming this fall. You may also call Tim at 562-773-8707 or Bill at 562-596-7546 for more information.



## Becoming a Member of First Church

Whether you have been attending for a few weeks, a few months or several years, we would like you to consider becoming a member of First Church. When you are ready to take that step, please call or email the Rev. Jerry Stinson at 562-436-2256, ext 230 or [revjstinson@verizon.net](mailto:revjstinson@verizon.net).