



Cal Aggie Christian Association
 SPRING 2010

In the House

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Kristin Granted Sabbatical Leave



BY REV. KRISTIN STONEKING,
 DIRECTOR & CAMPUS MINISTER

With five national and local awards received in the last year, the latest being the UC Davis Chancellor's Achievement Award for Diversity and Community, the model that CA House has established for ministry in a complex and pluralistic environment is being given tremendous recognition.

Moreover, we are regularly sought out to consult with regional and national church bodies, and to speak and write about what we have created, how it is working, and what we have learned. While this approbation is certainly welcome and affirming, the potential of CA House, and particularly of the Multifaith Living Community, remains nascent. To bring more of what is possible to fruition, the board, staff and I regularly review our programs and consider how we can use what we are learning to deepen our ministry.

And yet, the reality is that, due to lack of time and training, we are not able to do the kind of analysis and measuring of outcomes that would help us move ahead on more than anecdotes and our sense of the spirit (not to diminish that, of course!) Though my experience with the Multifaith Living Community has been incredibly enlightening in the past two years, and I have done work on my own to be able to be in pastoral relationship with a community that includes students from a variety of faiths, my formal training and professional experience is primarily in Christian theology and practice.

To allow me the opportunity to deepen my own understanding of the diversity of religions and theologies, the board has granted me a six-month sabbatical leave which began March 1. In February, I began taking a class at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley in pluralism in Islam, which will apply to the Ph.D. work I will formally begin there this fall. This summer, my family and I will travel to Cambridge, MA, where I will work in Harvard University's Pluralism Project, developing a case study to be used in their Cities Based Case Study Initiative. I'll also be blogging (www.cahouse.org/Weblog) and spending much needed time with family.

I'm grateful for this time to rest and reflect, and grateful for Ted Adams, a member of our board and longtime director of UC Davis's Student Programs and Activities Center, who will be filling in for me while I am gone. Ted brings a wealth of experience and a background in both campus ministry and university programming. I'm also deeply grateful to our current staff, Brett Kersten, Meredith Jackson, Jen



("Sabbatical Leave" continued from front page)

Macway, Karamjit Dhaliwal and Aman-deep Singh, who are taking on significant additional roles to make my time away possible.

My hope is that upon my return, the time spent in reflection and study will benefit and enrich our ministry at CA House, allow us to more fully understand the dynamics and potential of the Multifaith Living Community and the total ministry of CA House, and increase our ability to disseminate our own learnings and model for the enrichment of other campus ministries and student communities. Peace and love to you all, and I look forward to engage with you and sharing about my experience when I return in the fall.

"We experience *encuentro* - a Spanish word that means more than just to encounter. It means to accompany one another, to see the fullness of each other, and to take in one another's being and reality"

- UCC Justice LED Guide



On Monday nights, a light dinner is served before Christian worship at CA House.

Completing Life in Community

BY MEREDITH JACKSON,
COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

The world isn't always friendly to community. The world labels us as individual numbers, as separate social profiles, as a barcoded identification card. But scripture tells us that we each possess our own gifts, and that those gifts can only be genuinely seen and appreciated when in community with others.

Romans 12:4 says, "In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around" (The Message). As people of Christ, we each get our gifts from the life of the whole. We each derive meaning in our life from the lives of others, and when we are together in community we are able to see who we are supposed to be. We are not full, we cannot be in *encuentro* and we will not lead complete lives without each other.

Jerry Maguire may have said it best, "We live in a cynical world. A cynical world. And we work in a business of tough competitors. I love you. You... complete me." In today's world, facing poverty, disease and famine, we need to look to each other to know that there can be a better future. While some people may want to go hide alone in a cave, Jerry Maguire and Paul's letter to the Romans remind us that we are not complete without each other. Even at UC Davis, when faced with hate crimes, budget cuts, and high stress situations, we are reminded by our faith to look to each

other and know that together we can stand united and speak truth to power for a different tomorrow. It is when we are united, when we are in community, that we live as Christ did, challenging the status quo and making impossible dreams come true.

In times of trial we challenge the world's adamant individualism and begin to see how we as individuals are, in fact, a part of a larger body, and a larger movement. We each have an important role to play and together we will create change. CA House is home to this community. We provide a place and a sense different from the rest of the world. We are a community

"In times of trial we challenge the world's adamant individualism and begin to see how we as individuals are, in fact, a part of a larger body, and a larger movement."

of gifted individuals, each seeing our best selves reflected in the lives and gifts of others. At CA House, we know that we complete each other, and we present hope in a darkened world. We are the light on Russell Blvd, and we will not hide our light, our passion, or our ministry. We will be *encuentro*, and we invite the world to join us.



Haiku Expressions of God

(composed by students at a multifaith program on the religious significance of poetry.)

reach outside myself
a burning ocean of love
within all along

- Lindsay

life force great unknown
stirring minds to contemplate
beyond what is real

- Rebecca

source of light and love
in you, in me, in between
indescribable

- Ashley

through faith and doubting
a steadfast relationship
single loving heart

- Jen

CA House Welcomes Sabbatical Campus Minister



BY TED ADAMS,
SABBATICAL CAMPUS MINISTER

I am writing this article for the newsletter only 10 days into my six-month sojourn as the sabbatical campus minister at CA House. I'm experiencing several first impressions I'd like to share with you.

The first of these is the sense of excitement and joy I feel to once again be involved with students in their vibrant universe of daily encounters—with each other, with new and divergent ideas, with lifestyles and faith traditions that differ from their own backgrounds, and within themselves as they define and redefine who they are as young adults on their life journeys. After nine years of enjoying the slower paced life of an active retiree and grandparent, it is a rare opportunity for me to be seeing the world again through the eyes and experiences of those who will be the leaders and citizens shaping our nation and the global community in the next generation.

The second of my impressions is the challenge that I feel as I assume leadership of the CA House ministry. That challenge is twofold: first, the age difference between today's students and me, and second, the "big shoes" I am trying to fill in Kristin's absence. On the first point, a half-century has passed since I was a university student and almost a decade since I retired from Student Affairs at UC Davis. The question I asked myself is "Am I or can I be 'relevant' to the students and the issues they are grappling with today?" It is probably too early to tell, but so far in the encounter across generations I find our students to be open, gracious and accepting of my efforts to connect with them.

As for the second challenge, I realized when I agreed to be the sabbatical minister that replacing Kristin for six months was a tall order. As a recent CA House Board member, I know of her accomplishments. Over the past decade she has led CA House to new heights of ministry and outreach to the campus and the wider Davis community. She is also recognized by national campus ministry colleagues as one of the pioneers in successfully addressing the reality of religious pluralism in America through the creation of the Multifaith Living Community. I also know that daily she faced constant requests to be involved in matters that extended beyond the regular programs and ministry of CA House. So how does one who ended his first career as a campus minister 28 years ago now manage to take on this responsibility? That is where my third and final impression fits in.

The third of my impressions is that I am incredibly blessed to be working with and supported by a wonderful and hard-working staff. Brett, Meredith, Karamjit, Jen and Aman-deep have welcomed me warmly and made the transition proceed very smoothly. Each one of them demonstrates competent leadership in their assigned areas of responsibility, and they work very well together as a team. When I combine the staff's support and expertise with the strong and active support I am getting from the CA House Board, I am confident that all will be well for this sabbatical sojourn. So, as students, staff and board members, let us accompany and value each other as we proceed through the daily life of our community together!



Relay for Life

What are you doing this Saturday night? Spending 24 hours walking around Aggie Stadium?

That's what members of our Relay for Life team will be doing April 10-11. Relay for Life is an event in support of the American Cancer Society. The event is designed to raise awareness about cancer and fundraise for the Society's many programs. The relay is 24 hours in length, representing that cancer never sleeps. The CA House Multifaith Living Community team is one of the top fundraisers for the event, and will walk in shifts, spending the night on the track in support of this important cause.

One of the guiding principles of the MLC is social justice, and we believe strongly that, as people of faith, we have an important role to play in community events such as Relay for Life. If you would like to support our team, or learn more about the event, please visit http://main.acsevents.org/goto/mlc_cahouse.

Reflections on the Multifaith Living Community at CA House

BY KARAMJIT DHALIWAL,
STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBER



I believe everything happens for a reason. In 2008, there was reason I was drawn to attend the Inter-faith Banquet where I learned about the Multifaith Living Community at CA House. At the time, I had no idea that I would be spending my last two years as an undergrad living at CA House, being part of one of the most fulfilling and rewarding of communities.

As a Sikh, being part of a community is very important. Our Gurus have encouraged us to have family-oriented lives while keeping God (Waheguru) within our minds and hearts at all times. Our Gurus preached that it is much easier to go alone into the wilderness to meditate and be in tune with God. It is harder, however, and more rewarding, to live within a family, a community, and still be able to keep God in our minds at all times. Sikhs, therefore, are encouraged to live normal, full lives, while recognizing God in each and every individual and appreciating each person for their presence.

Moreover, the Sikh Gurus placed utmost importance on Sat Sangat, or the company of the holy. Many people are known by the type of company or community we associate with. We are often the result of our environment. By being part of Sat Sangat, a Sikh experiences harmony and internal bliss. According to Gurbani, the Sikh Scriptures, Sat Sangat is not found by chance, but by good fortune.

Living as a part of the Multifaith Living Community, I have experienced a type of Sat Sangat—a type of community that has allowed me to flourish and become stronger and proud of my faith. Through this community, I have witnessed the work of God multiple times. Often when people walk into the CA House, the first thing they are hit with is the 70 year old smell of the house. However, for me, the smell is rather warming and comforting, since it reminds me how truly extraordinary CA House is.

What is remarkable about CA House is that under this seventy-year old roof, Christians hold their weekly Monday night worship. Under the same roof, Sikhs pray every Tuesday and Thursday nights from the Holy Scripture of Dhan Dhan Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Under this same blessed roof, Buddhists and other adherents of meditation come together to meditate every Tuesday morning. Every Wednesday night, Jewish, Sikh, Buddhist, Catholic, Christian, and even agnostic students come together to eat dinner and share their faith experiences.

If multiple faiths coming together under the same roof to pray and affirm each other is not a work of God, then I don't know what would be. I believe CA House to be one of the most extraordinary places in the world. Coming into this house, I feel a particular type of satisfaction, a type of fullness. I feel understanding. I feel peace.



Hoorin, Pavandeep, Amandeep, Amrit, Karamjit, Gurpreet, and Ravneet hang out in the CA House kitchen.

Transition Programs

As part of our outreach, a team of students from CA House has been leading programs in the freshman dorms that help students transition into college life and learn new ways to effectively relate to their peers. Each year, UC Davis Resident Advisors are required to arrange informal education events in the dorms, and this year CA House was invited to lead a discussion that focuses on the role of faith in student life.

The program has opened students to conversations about personal faith, assumptions about others, and how students of faith can continue to be true to themselves. "The thing I love most about floor programming is the ability to provide people with a safe space to be themselves," says Jonathon Assouline, a student leader in the program. Other CA House team leaders include Karamjit Dhaliwal, Junia Chou, and Adam Proveaux. In spring quarter the group will lead three more discussions in the dorms, and will continue its work in the fall.



CA House residents and participants gratefully receive their finals care packages from Beth Flory and members of Davis United Methodist Church.

Interfaith Vigil for Peace and Healing

Continuing to stand as an interfaith leader in the Davis community, CA House hosted an interfaith vigil for peace and healing in response to the recent hate crimes and ongoing budget concerns in the UC system. The vigil, sponsored by CA House, Hillel, the Unitarian Universalists, and the Belfry, gave the faith community the opportunity to stand together and call for healing and productive action moving forward. Students were given space to voice their concerns and prayers, and a reading was offered from the Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr's Letter from Birmingham Jail, highlighting the statement that, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Throughout March, the Davis campus witnessed acts of hate and anti-Semitism as swastikas were found painted on campus and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center was vandalized with messages of hate. Many CA House students were affected by these acts, and felt as though the resulting anger and resentment was not helping the campus move forward towards productive change. CA House remains committed to pursuing non-violence and positive dialogue about how we can make our campus a safe space for all. Working with our faith partners on projects such as the interfaith vigil is one way in which CA House is leading the movement for change.



Ashley Symons, Rosemary Costello, and Emily Pickens-Jones sing at Monday Christian worship at CA House.

Taizé Service Organized by CA House

Taizé is an ecumenical monastery in France and is most well known for their worship, incorporating repeating prayers and chants, most commonly known as "the songs of Taizé". Founded by Brother Roger in 1940, the community focuses on the values of love and reconciliation for Christians worldwide, emphasizing ministry with and to youth and young adults. A popular pilgrimage for young people during summer and Easter seasons, Taizé hosts up to 5000 people at the monastery, where they engage in prayer, Bible study, and service to the community.

This spring, CA House students are taking leadership in a new project to offer Taizé worship to the Davis community. Students, inspired by time spent in the Taizé community, thought that Christians in Davis needed the opportunity to gather for this form of worship. **Davis Taizé worship begins on Friday, April 9th, at 7:00 pm at Davis Community Church, 412 C Street, and will be offered monthly throughout the year.**



The Taizé Chapel in Taizé France



Members of Davis faith, LGBT, and university communities meet at CA House for the interfaith vigil.



Multifaith Living Community residents, CA House participants and staff on the labyrinth at Davis United Methodist Church.



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You're Invited to the
**CA House
Picnic Day**

**Crepe
Breakfast!**

Saturday, April 17
9-11am
at CA House,
433 Russell

