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Photo by Deborah Streeter

Clockwise from upper left: Sound man extraordinaire Wade Hobson; Conference Minister Mary Susan Gast, Moderator Tauoa Head and Vice Moderator Kyle Lovett kept things lively and welcoming; Shirley Miller and Yvette Flunder celebrated their 25th anniversary during the Open and Affirming Dinner; from United Japanese Church, Clovis came Cosh Ng and Rev. Keith Inouye; New NCNC Board Vice President Roy Mosley with outgoing President Faith Burgess; colorful banners filled Merrill Hall; Sponge Bob felt welcomed by the UCC and at home next to the sea; Renato Herico and an NCNC lei maker enjoyed Annual Meeting.

**Words**

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feeling very good.," Rev. Paul and Jan Chaffee, St. John's UCC, San Francisco, former editors of *The Pacific*.

"One could not help but feel appreciation for all the energy the youth and adults put into preparing and performing the dance programs. Our hearts were warmed and we wanted to give — repeatedly," Rev. Esther Riley, Community UCC, Fairfax.

"The weekend was an opportunity to feel good about being part of the UCC. It is one thing to be our congregation with our mission and our work in our community, but there is something very significant about being part of a covenantal fellowship much larger than ourselves. There is a measure of strength and credibility and wholeness that we could have no other way," Rev. Steve Shephard, Interim Minister, First Congregational, Murphys.

"My cup runneth over with appreciation for the beautiful landscape of Asilomar. Infectious enthusiasm abounded! I felt privileged and proud to be associated with the UCC in general and our church in particular," Carolyn Mitchell, Community UCC, La Selva Beach.

"There is a candle in every soul, some brightly burning, some dark and cold. There is a spirit, who brings a fire, ignites a candle and makes a home. So carry your candle, run to the darkness, seek out the lone, the tired and worn. Hold out your candle, for all to see it. Take your candle, and go light your world. . .," NCNC choir anthem, words and music by Chris Rice.

"This resolution on environmental stewardship promotes radical hospitality, justice for all. It is a vote for the dispossessed who

can't stand against the power of greed," Betsy Bikle, Community UCC, Mill Valley

"My heart welled so many times, as I was a part of something greater than myself, and part of a community steeped in love and justice. I surely planted my feet down proudly with this motley crew. In the church by the sea, on moonlit night, with the howling wind making crashing waves, so radical was God's presence and love at this gathering," Theresa Freeman, Plymouth UCC, Oakland.

"We need to challenge our inner bouncer, the force within us that denies hospitality to some," Rev. Gerry Paulson, New Faith Community, Auburn (referring to the "bouncer" UCC TV ad.)

"To be a multicultural, multiethnic conference, we must cherish racial and cultural distinctiveness," Multicultural Multiethnic Transformation Team report.

"Radical hospitality changes both the host (the church) and the guest (the visitor.) After the tsunami, for just a moment, we were all right-thinking people. We said to one another, "I need you to survive." Rev. Yvette Flunder, City of Refuge, San Francisco.

**Annual Meeting**

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Asilomar, Sponge Bob expressed his thanks for being welcomed into the UCC. "Whoever and wherever I am on my faith journey, I know I am welcome here in the NCNC. I especially like the tide pools of Asilomar and plan to return often. Look for me in worship. I am the bright yellow square sponge with the wry smile. Please continue to extend your hospitality to me and my friends."



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