

June 2017

www.iucc.org

Editor: Tricia Aynes

IUCC's amazing Walk the Walkers Team raised \$10,678 for AIDS Walk on May 6th!

Many thanks to those who participated and those who contributed!



Photos courtesy of Felicity Figueroa & Nancy Dreckman



Moderator's Column

by Renae Boyum

At the recent Congregational meeting, the members of IUCC approved a Long Range Plan which will serve as guidance and direction from 2017-2022. If you haven't had the opportunity to read it, click on

[this link](#) and see what the hopes and dreams are for this faith community for the next five years.

Rather than describing the basics of this plan myself, I thought it would be better to get information from the chair of the Long Range Planning Committee - Keith Boyum. So I asked six **questions**. Keith answered four of them: I handled two of them myself. Here they are:

1. Why should IUCC – or any organization -- have a long range plan?

Most broadly, it's a way to shape the future, intentionally. Plans are grounded on the observation that change is inevitable, and profound in our era. In fourteenth century Europe, the next five years were going to be just like that last five, and nobody would have thought to make a long range plan. But that is surely not our reality. In a long range plan, we seek to understand changes that now surround us, and to anticipate the nature and trajectory of changes in the foreseeable future. And then, of course, we seek to react to those changes by naming goals.

2. How is planning for a church different than other planning processes?

Well, in form, it is not different. In business, in higher education, and in other realms, one conceptually does the same set of things. They include (a) revisiting and understanding organizational mission and vision; (b) undertaking a "360 degree" review of the organization and its environment; (c) deriving from that review some interim conclusions about organizational strengths and weaknesses, and environmental opportunities and threats; and then (d) naming some goals that build on strengths, shore up weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, and defend against threats. Different missions and visions, of course, make a congregational plan different from plans for a university or a business.

3. What are the highlights of the plan?

In our "General Findings" (pp. 4-5 of the report), we say first that

- *This is an optimistic report: IUCC is strong and poised to build on strengths that include our size,*

demographics, finances, and leadership, which arise in a context of real opportunities for growth in size and significance.

- *We go on to say that our report emphasizes goals for appealing to the community, and not incidentally for attracting new members. Goal III includes the largest number of objectives and strategies focused on Community and Communication.*
- *Thirdly, the plan includes goals focused on the health of the organization. These include maintaining the strength of the Child Care Center, making known our reassuring projections for IUCC's financial future, and building plans for leadership development in the face of foreseeable turnover.*
- *There are other things as well. We call for a Worship Refreshment Task Force, and we encourage IUCC to maintain and nourish programs that create intimacy, build community, and meet the needs of our members and friends.*

I have two more questions that seem to be squarely in the Moderator's bailiwick. Here they are:

4. What happens next? The football is now in the hands of the congregational leadership. The elected lay leadership, together with staff, will review the plan at the July leadership retreat, and set some priorities. Among other things, the leadership will determine, on at least an interim basis:

- **Timing:** Which among the six goals and objectives should receive immediate attention, and which should be addressed six or twelve or more months downstream?
- **Approaches:** Do the strategies make sense? What other strategies should be considered?

5. How will the plan be implemented? The plan is now in the hands of the congregational leadership. What we do, and how, and when, is up to our leaders, in communication with congregation's members and friends. The good news is that the plan gives us a useful road map for a future that holds great promise and potential.

Thanks to Keith, and the other members of the Long Range Planning Task Force - Jessie Billings, Steve Goetz, Cindy O'Dell, Greg Woolfson, and Pastor Paul. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that this plan presents and I look forward to sharing the next steps with you!

In faith and community,

Renae



Adult Education

by the Rev. Steve Swope

There will be a lot going on this summer, though not always in the usual ways. Let's explore these new possibilities together, and discover some fresh ways to share our progressive, inclusive faith!

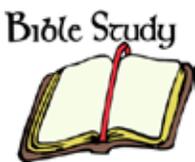


UCC General Synod

A special **Adult Forum** will follow the 11:00 worship service on Sunday, June 4. I'll outline the upcoming UCC General Synod meeting (June 30-July 4): what is it? what happens there? what difference does it make? And we'll have a chance to hold a "mock Synod" discussion on some of the issues that will be addressed – one of which, inclusive Scouting, was initiated by Matt Mirmak and supported by our own congregation!



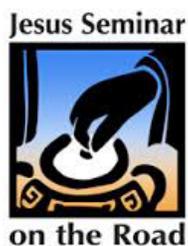
Adult Sunday School will experiment with a single weekly class this summer, at 10:00 a.m. Glenna Matthews and I will lead five weeks of study (starting June 11) on the common history and connections between Congregationalism and Unitarianism. Glenna recently received an honorary doctorate from the Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley!



Tuesday Bible Study continues to explore—not without trepidation—the book of Revelation. Ken Wyant is our trusty guide. Join this lively group each week at 4:00 p.m., then adjourn to Square One Pizza for a more informal conversation!



Comma Group sign-ups will begin later this summer, but we're already looking into ideas for the study resource. Have a suggestion? Let me know!



We've scheduled a **Jesus Seminar on the Road** event for October 6-7. Registration is now open at <https://www.westarinstitute.org/upcoming-events-calendar/irvine-2017/>. (Student discount and scholarship information will be available later.) See next page for more information on the program itself.

Art Opportunities!!

Two arts-related events are coming up, as well. First, guest artist and art educator **Priscilla Roggenkamp** will be here on Sunday, June 11, to introduce a summer-long collaborative art project. This will be a three-piece painting representing our summer exploration of the arts, and you can be part of creating it! Join her after 11:00 worship on June 11 to hear her concepts for the project, provide essential input, and begin actually making art!

Priscilla is a tenured art professor at Ashland (Ohio) University and creates alone and collaboratively at Studio 214 in Alliance, Ohio. Her work has been chosen for numerous juried exhibits throughout the Midwest and beyond, and with studio partner Keith McMahan, she participated in the Yitzhak Project in Western Galilee, Israel, a cultural exchange culminating in the creation of an art piece there. In addition, she has developed interdisciplinary materials incorporating art and artistic concepts into the teaching of other subjects. Priscilla is also part of Rock Salt and Nails, an Ohio-based folk trio. She and her brother Steve Swope will be providing worship music for June 11.

Another visual-arts opportunity will happen on Saturday, July 8. Laguna Beach artist and art educator **Chris Sullivan** will lead a workshop for youth and adults on Beginning Watercolor Painting, from 9:00-11:30 a.m. Materials will be provided, and you will leave with a finished work of art! Participation is limited to 15, so sign up right away at www.iucc.org/register. If enough people are interested, there could be an additional session that afternoon.

I'm excited to share this incredible and creative summer with you!



Ancient Christian Texts Inspiring New Spiritual Practices

October 6-7, 2017

Irvine United Congregational Church

In 1945, a collection of early Christian texts was discovered at Nag Hammadi, Egypt. Many were written at the same time as the more familiar texts of the New Testament, but ultimately were excluded from it. As scholarship makes these ancient texts increasingly accessible to the public, they are inspiring new art, music, spiritual practices and more. In this *Jesus Seminar on the Road*, Celene Lillie and Natalie Renee Perkins will introduce *The Gospel of Mary* and *Thunder: Perfect Mind* both in their ancient context and creative, modern expressions.



Celene Lillie (Ph.D. Union Theological Seminary) is the Director of the Tanho Center and on the pastoral staff at Boulder First United Methodist Church in Colorado. She is the author of *The Rape of Eve: The Transformation of Roman Ideology in Three Early Christian Retellings of Genesis* (2017).



Natalie Renee Perkins (M.Div., Union Theological Seminary) is a writer, lecturer, preacher, chaplain, and composer who intertwines early Christian material with contemporary society through a social justice lens. She has performed professionally with cruise lines, national tours, symphony orchestras, and the USO.

Info and photos from <https://www.westarinstitute.org>

Building Project Update

by Anne Rosse, Chair of Building Task Force



Over the last several years, IUCC has been talking about and planning for renovations to our aging campus. Soon, we will come together as a congregation and decide about breaking ground on Phase 1a of IUCC Master Plan. This first phase will add much-needed meeting rooms, outdoor fellowship spaces, and staff/administrative offices.

If approved, we anticipate breaking ground this Fall. In fact, wouldn't it be wonderful to welcome Pastor Paul back from his sabbatical on September 10 with a ceremonial groundbreaking, complete with cake, champagne, hard hats and shovels? With a speedy 6-month build, we should be occupying the new building by Spring 2018.

Please make your plans to join us for a Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, July 16, when we decide about taking this next step on IUCC's journey. Before that meeting, we will share all of the information we have with you. You'll know what the Building Task Force (BTF) knows. You'll know what we can and can't afford to do and what our options are. Via the newsletter, bulletin, forum and the meeting itself, we will make sure that your questions are answered before we decide, as a congregation, about breaking ground.

At the Special Congregational Meeting, we anticipate having three key pieces in place:

- Permits: The City of Irvine will have issued or be ready to issue the necessary building permits.
- Construction budget: We'll have a construction budget that has been validated by a competitive subcontractor bid process.
- Loan approval: We'll have preliminary loan approval.

Regarding permits, the BTF continues to work closely with our design team, which includes: domusstudio architecture (our architects) and Wieland Corp. (our contractor). IUCC's permit application was submitted in mid-February to the City. We started hearing back in late March and have been in discussions since then. Revised plans were submitted in late April and we expect at least one more round of comments/response before the City issues permits.

In terms of the construction budget, the bid process is underway and we expect to have it wrapped up by mid-June.

Recently, the Administration Board approved submission of our loan application to two different UCC lenders, Cornerstone and Church Building & Loan Fund. That way, we can go with the lender that gives us the most advantageous terms.

One of the things that the BTF has taken most seriously throughout this process -- we represent you and we need to be good financial stewards for IUCC. This project has an extremely tight budget so we have needed to be especially mindful.

Our contractor did a preliminary project estimate and, unfortunately, it came in higher than expected. For example, we found out that the proposed Coffee Corner would cost \$719 per square foot, compared to \$377 for the meeting rooms. At junctures like this, the committee would ask itself -- is this something that IUCC can live without initially, something that we could come back to? So, the BTF made the difficult decision to defer the Coffee Corner to another time.

We know that there is a beauty to the plans we have -- a flexibility to them - allowing IUCC to build what we can afford, what matters most to us, what aligns with our priorities and what reflects our green faith commitment. Those "enhancements" that we can't take on right now can be added when we can afford them. To meet our Coffee Hour needs, there are a number of low-cost mobile coffee carts that we could use instead.

IUCC is blessed by a dedicated team working on behalf of the congregation. They are: Mark Allen, Keith Boyum, Cindy O'Dell, Jim Raver, Anne Rosse (chair), Pat Sauter, Michael Spindle and Pastor Paul. As well, we are thankful for Alyssa Cornett's Structural Engineering expertise and Heidi Willcox's expert financial management.

Be sure to mark your calendars for July 9 (Building Project Forum) and July 16 (Special Congregational Meeting) -- see you then!

Capital Campaign Update

by Anne Rosse

A year ago, this month, IUCC was wrapping up our capital campaign to fund Phase 1a of the Master Plan. We knew this much-needed campus expansion would help IUCC become an even more significant beacon of Progressive Christianity, strengthening our bonds with each other and with our community. To date, we've already received more than 50% of funds pledged. Thank you, thank you, thank you, IUCC, for your generosity in embracing our future!

Every pledge payment and new gift brings us closer to being able to break ground. We hope to have a ceremonial groundbreaking on September 10 and, at that time, we'll be thanking everyone for their generous campaign gifts, announcing room namings in the new building, and publishing campaign dedications.

If you haven't joined your church family in supporting this project, we invite you to make a generous gift today. You can make a real difference in helping to bridge our \$75,000 shortfall.

In the words of Keith and Renae Boyum: "Our IUCC campus is here for us because those who gathered here some decades ago envisioned, and provided for, the progressive community of faith that nourishes us today. We feel their touch. Our success is a fulfillment of their vision. Today we are proud to see IUCC stand proudly as a place of sanctuary, a place of social action, and a place above all where all are welcome. Join us in supporting this capital campaign that will advance what we are today, and will provide our legacy for the future!"

Because IUCC participated in the United Church of Christ's "Gifted Capital Campaign Services" program, 70% of the contract fees we paid are now being distributed for philanthropic purposes. That means that, along with supporting Our Churches Wider Mission, Family Promise and Pilgrim Pines are now each receiving a check for more than \$8000. What a wonderful way for us to support two entities that we hold close to our hearts!

Campaign pledges are payable over three years (through July 31, 2019). For those who can, we would deeply appreciate pledge completion as quickly as possible. Being able to collect most campaign pledges by the time construction of the new building is done (projected to be in Summer 2018) will help IUCC stay financially strong.

When submitting a paper or electronic check, please note "building" on the memo line. When submitting a check that includes both your annual offering ("stewardship") and campaign pledge ("building"), please also indicate the split on the memo line. These actions will make sure we are applying your gift correctly. For pledge payments that involve the transfer of stocks or securities, or if you are doing an IRA distribution, please contact the Church Office.

For questions, assistance with your pledge or to learn more about this exciting project, please contact capitalcampaign@iucc.org.



The "Free Range Baconators" Comma Group shares a moment.

Photo courtesy of Anne Rosse

Troop 602 News

Photos and article by Matt Mirmak



Troop 602 has been very active in the last few months. In April, the Scouts did a daytime 8 mile backpacking outing and helped with parking control for both Easter Sunday services at IUCC.

In May, Troop 602 participated in Scout O Rama at Oak Canyon Park where they made "Campfire Pies" for all of the attendees. Troop 602 won two awards for their booth at Scout O Rama for Excellence and Safety.

The biggest highlight this past month for Troop 602 was when two of their members were inducted into the Order of the Arrow (OA), Scouting's National Honor Society. First Class Scout Ben Steinhart and Scoutmaster Ken Steinhart are the first two Arrowmen in Troop 602's history. Ben was elected to the OA by his fellow Scouts and Mr. Steinhart was nominated by the troop committee. In order for a Scout (youth member) to be eligible for election, he must be a member in good standing, attain the rank of First Class, and have experienced 15 days and nights of camping with at least 6 days at a week long resident camp.



Troop 602 will be going to Schoepe Scout Reservation at Lost Valley from June 25-July 1 for their annual summer camp. It's never too late to join Troop 602 and see what the fun is all about. If your son is between the ages of 11-17 or is 10 years old and is going into 6th grade and wants to be a part of a fun outdoors based program (or wants to go to Lost Valley with us), come visit us on Thursday nights at 7:00 p.m. inside Plumer Hall.



Photos of Troop 626 at Memorial Day Ceremony at Bill Barber Park on May 29

Photo 1: Troop members with Irvine City Councilmember Melissa Fox, Irvine Community Services Commissioner Lauren Johnson, and Korean War veteran Stan Kay. *Photo 2:* Troop members with Irvine Councilmember Melissa Fox. *Photo 3:* Troop members with Irvine Mayor Don Wagner. *Photo 4:* Troop members with Congresswoman Mimi Walters and Irvine Councilmember Christina Shea. *Photo 5:* Troop members with members of the armed forces.

Photos courtesy of Matt Mirmak

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IUCC Music Ministry

by Joni Baker

Please consider joining the IUCC Chancel Choir on Sunday, June 11, at 7:00 p.m. for our Annual Spring Concert. We have been working on a diverse program of music exclusively

composed or arranged by women. It is a rare treat to experience an entire program created by women. We will also have some readings highlighting the composers. There is something for everyone in this collection of pieces with incredible variety of styles and moods: Australian aboriginal chant, playful, mournful yet hopeful, and comical to name a few. We are sure you will hear a new piece of music to love.

While you are sitting in the audience at the concert, you might think, "Boy, I wonder what it would be like to sing in that fabulous group?" Well, wonder no longer! Come join us for "Choir Lite" beginning Sunday June 18th. We meet at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary and learn a simple anthem to sing that day. We get a nice little break between services and come back in for "round 2" as we call it. It's a great way to get involved, especially if you are not generally available for Thursday night rehearsals but want the opportunity to join us. I cannot stress this enough, all skill levels are welcomed. Please join us!

Women's Retreat May 5-7 at Pilgrim Pines



Photo courtesy of Cindy O'Dell

*The IUCC Chancel Choir, under the direction of
Dr. John St. Marie with Joshua Chandra on Piano, presents*



Sounding Joy

A Celebration of Women Composers

June 11th at 7pm

*Irvine United Congregational Church
4915 Alton Parkway • Irvine, CA 92604*

A freewill offering will be taken to benefit the IUCC General Fund



GreenFaith Team

Committed to Environmental Justice



What is Creation Justice?

by Vivian Johnson



Congratulations IUCC members! You voted on May 21st at the Annual Meeting to approve the Covenant that will be sent along with other documentation to the church headquarters of the UCC to apply for the designation of a “Creation Justice” church.

So, why the title “Creation Justice”? In the 1980s, churches of many denominations felt the urgent moral imperative to unite to heal and protect God’s

creation. Under the umbrella of the National Council of Churches USA, the organization *Creation Justice* was founded in 1983. That organization resides in Washington, DC. Later, when the UCC established the Ministry for Environmental Justice, they held a name contest across the UCC. The results indicated that the preferred name for congregations be “Creation Justice,” a spinoff from the National Council of Churches’ title. It is believed that the title best captures the spirit of the ministry.

Some people object to the word “creation” because of the term “creationism” used by those who question evolution. The UCC feels we should re-claim this Biblical word rather than abandon it. Brooks Berndt is the UCC minister for Environmental Justice, and is the person we consult on all such issues. He and a colleague addressed this title in the following excerpt from an article titled “What is Creation Justice and Why does it Rock?” (The Pollinator: UCC Environmental Justice Blog):

Using the term “creation” instead of “eco” or “environment” demonstrates our humble self-awareness that we are part of the created order our Creator constantly is at work with us to redeem and sustain. Using the term “justice” rather than “care” indicates our commitment to not only heal, tend, and restore God’s creation, but to ensure the protection of God’s planet and God’s people from exploitation, as well as provision for the remediation of the damage that has been done.

Thank you for your comments and questions at the Annual Meeting. We will take them into consideration. We were pleased to see your interest in environmental consciousness and social justice. Please join us in the coming months in making this covenant a reality.

Every day is EARTH day!

Vivian Elaine Johnson

for the GREENfaith team: *Judy Curry, Tony Dover, Nancy Dreckman, Howard Emery, Carol Getz, Eileen Vincent & Vivian Johnson, chair*)



Dear Readers,

June is a month of surprises. June is a month filled with flowers. It is both summer and spring.



Iris, my niece, likes to grow flowers. The blooms are bright. She likes to give bouquets as gifts for weddings, graduations, and anniversaries.

I like to grow flowers, too. I let them settle in the garden, uncut and unclaimed. They create their own design.



Please stop and smell the roses.

Love,
Miss Lily

News & Events



Pastor Paul is on sabbatical

While Pastor Paul is on sabbatical, Pastor Sarah Fiske-Phillips and the Rev. Steve Swope will be sharing pastoral and administrative responsibilities. They will both be in the church office on Mondays; Steve on

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and Sarah on Thursdays. In emergencies, you can reach them at 909-709-5919 (Sarah) or 949-575-0093 (Steve). They are also available by email at sarahfiskephillips@gmail.com or steve@iucc.org.

Please welcome these new members from May 7, 2017



Left to Right: Alessandra Martini, Stefania Forner, Steve Sprenger, Tiffany Wilding, Erin Burke (with their daughter Mira) and Arthur Ullrich

Photo courtesy of Paul Shirey

3rd Sunday Family Gatherings!

We invite all young families to meet on the playground at 10:30am each 3rd Sunday! Bring your snacks and meet other young families from both 1st & 2nd services!



Families Forward Back to School Drive

Sunday, June 11

Collection barrels will be in the narthex. Most needed items are:

backpacks, pencil boxes, folders, binders, pens, erasers, rulers, highlighters, crayons college-ruled paper, glue sticks, and washable markers.



6/14	Jennifer Blackburn	6/30	Sylvia McDonald
6/29	Jake Campbell	6/21	Lester Ricks
6/10	Rianne Campbell	6/10	Cara Ruiz
6/19	Howard Emery	6/19	Joan Thompson
6/17	Stefania Forner	6/15	Cheryl Trobiani
6/12	Melissa Gaskill	6/06	Jonathan Trout
6/10	Reefa Hanenberger	6/17	Emily Wetherby
6/03	Joe Hengel	6/26	Lesley Wheland
6/12	Cliff Kenny	6/08	Carl Whidden
6/08	June Kenny	6/09	Greg Woolfson
6/16	Judy Lucas	6/09	Ken Wyant
6/06	Rachel McCallum	6/02	William Zane
6/18	Sara McComb		

PASTOR'S POTLUCKS

Bring something to grill, a side or dessert to share, and join us on the playground for food & fellowship.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Tuesday, June 13th
Thursday, July 13th
Wednesday, August 16th

Powerful Parenting

Dr. Lorraine Fox

Respecting the vulnerability of the self



Last month we talked about the “barriers” to offering feedback, in recognition that the process is often mutually uncomfortable, for both the person giving the feedback and the person receiving it. This month we’re going to assume you’ve acknowledged the ways we can excuse ourselves from giving needed feedback and have decided that, in the interest of the person we care

about and our relationship with them, we have decided to go ahead and have, what my Partner and I used to call “Courageous Conversations,” knowing the risks involved for both people.

Whether it is a child, a friend, a spouse, or a colleague at work, we want to show respect for their feelings by preparing to give the feedback in a way that is as kind as possible, even though it will not necessarily be received that way. It is not kind to provide feedback about another person’s behavior that bothers us just because it is true. **“A truth that’s told with bad intent beats all the lies you can invent”** said William Blake. The “why” of the feedback is more important than the “what.” We want to be sure the feedback is meant for the good of the other person, and for our relationship with them, and not just to “vent” about something that bothers us.

One of the most important ways to respect the feelings of the person who will be receiving the feedback, as well as to respect the power of such “courageous conversations,” is to carefully **prepare** for the conversation. We don’t want it to be off the cuff and carelessly stated. Our caring for them will be revealed by the amount of time and discipline we put into our feedback. What words will we use, and what words will we avoid, based on past experience? What will be a good time, and a good place, to have the conversation? Should we do it privately, or will it be helpful to have support from others?

Most of us who have sustained long, successful intimate relationships know how much “rehearsal” often goes into such into such interactions. We rehearse in bed, in the car, while walking – going over and over how we’ll start the conversation, what examples we’ll use, etc. This

rehearsal is a sign of love and respect. These conversations change the dynamics in a relationship, and go a long way toward building trust between parents and children, intimate partners, friends, and colleagues. We will learn to expect honest exchanges and openness about issues that are bothering us and coming between a relaxed and comfortable “togetherness.” We only give feedback when a relationship matters.

One of the most interesting and powerful aspects of an exchange of “feedback” is that it serves to make what is real, more real. This feature, by the way, is another “barrier” between people sometimes, as we can actually refrain from confirming what is real by not speaking it out loud. I know from my years of working with abused children and teens that very often when they tried to reveal the secret of their abuse they would whisper, or mumble, or cover their mouths with their hands. Sometimes they would refuse to speak at all and would only write it down. That is the power of saying out loud something that is both true and unsettling. Many couples go for years without being honest about something between them that is getting in the way of their trust and comfort in the relationship. The same can be true between parents and children, and then parents only hear about something profound from their children when the children are grown and out of the house. This is usually because the household did not operate without the honesty and openness of feedback between the people living there. This dynamic of acknowledging truth by speaking it verbally underlies the practice in meetings of alcoholics and addicts where **every time** they introduce themselves, day after day and year and year, they also say, out loud, what their addiction is. My name is ____ and I’m an alcoholic; my name is _____ and I’m an addict. It keeps it real and interferes with the tendency with denial. It is also the reason that people who are loved like to hear it. Saying “I love you” doesn’t change anything between people who love each other. But saying it out loud, and hearing it out loud, makes it somehow more real.

And so, when we prepare to say something unsettling, out loud, we do so after we have put the time, care, respect and love into constructing the exchange as gently as we can. We’ve discussed the “conditions” for having the exchange. Next month we’ll outline the steps of preparation that will help us feel grounded while we have the conversation and witness the response.

PC @ IUCC: A Progressive Christian with a PC approach to doing Church

by Bil Aulenbach, retired Episcopal priest

I want to thank the many people who attended my book launching. I really appreciate your support. In the process of writing this book, this church family has been there every step of the way and it is very much appreciated. The first group, called my Focus Group, included John Emerson, Susan Sayer, Don Mansell, Shirley Lorenz and Anne Aulenbach. They put in many hours of reading and offered great ideas and suggestions. We met three times and then I rewrote much of the book. Last December, I turned it over to my editor who said, "I really like your book, but it's 350 pages. Now cut it in half." Yipes! But we did just that. It is now 140 pages and my Annie says it's a fast, easy read!

Then I needed some testimonials for the cover of the book and my PR materials. My editor asked me for 50 names because, she said, from her long experience only 30% of those asked will finally write something. I gave her the list and some 90% of the IUCC family replied. Unheard of, said my editor, but that's the kind of church family we have. My readers will see IUCC names in the book and all throughout the PR materials. They'll also see much praise for our church because from my perspective IUCC is doing so many things the church of the future needs to do. This is truly a unique congregation!

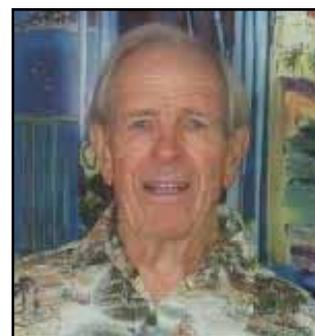
Have you seen the brochure entitled, "**Summer 2017 at IUCC**"? Annie and I find it very exciting! This is some of what the church of the future needs to do: Hold hands with "the arts." It also needs to "Hold hands with science." I have often felt that IUCC is the ideal place to start these trends. Why? Because it is "Open and Affirming" which not only includes "people" but also is O & A to science, to Biblical interpretation, Progressive Christianity and the arts.

I feel very privileged that the summer staff is allowing me to present a 4-week workshop on "The Historical Jesus." There will be a morning session from **9:30 to 11 a.m.** for the day timers and then a repeat evening session from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on **Wednesdays**: August 9, 16, 23 and 30.

It's interesting that in the New Testament and the 18 new "gospels" found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi Library, there is a great deal about what Jesus said as well as some of his actions, but there is very little about the personhood of Jesus. This workshop tries to fill in some of those details with all sorts of extraneous materials. This all is from the perspective of Progressive Christianity.

Everyone is invited to attend, and there are no class fees or books to buy. It is designed to be informative and provocative. Registration will begin in late June.

P.S. There are special prices for my book for IUCC family and friends: 1 book, \$13; 2 books \$25; 3 books, \$30, This includes sales tax and will be available through July 2017 at this price.



peace love joy hope

Bil



The Eight Points of Progressive Christianity

By calling ourselves Progressive Christians, we mean we are Christians who...

1. Believe that following the path and the teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life;
2. Affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of the many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom in our spiritual journey;
3. Seek community that is inclusive of ALL people, including but not limited to: * Conventional Christians and questioning skeptics, * Believers and agnostics, * Women and men, * Those of all sexual orientations and gender identities, * Those of all classes and abilities;
4. Know that the way we behave towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe;
5. Find grace in the search for understanding and believe there is more value in questioning than in absolutes;
6. Strive for peace and justice among all people;
7. Strive to protect and restore the integrity of our Earth;
8. Commit to a path of life-long learning, compassion and selfless love.