

July 2015
www.iucc.org
Editor: Tricia Aynes

Images from UCC General Synod June 26-30 in Ohio



The UCC General Synod celebrates the recent Supreme Court ruling granting marriage equality!



Sarah, Annie, and Tricia



Photos courtesy of Sarah Fiske-Phillips, Paul Tellström & Matthew Redrich



Pastor Paul with Priscilla Bizer, our UCC Consultant



The very dignified SCNCUCC General Synod Delegation

From the Pastor's Desk

the Rev. Dr. Paul Tellström



General Synod is over, and five of us from IUCC are just now back and getting ready for Sunday. Matthew and I were delegates on the floor, and Sarah, Tricia and Annie were participants in the full experience of Synod. We all got a lot out of the event as we learned more about how our wider church is at work and what resources are out there for us in the local church.

I invite you to go to www.ucc.org and look at the General Synod pages as well as the UCC in the News and Events pages. In fact, you can read about a resolution that passed calling for boycotts and divestment from companies that profit from Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands in this issue (see following page). It will send a message to Palestinians that there are people of faith in the United States who stand with them and recognize the injustices that they have suffered, and that their plight will not go unnoticed.

There will be quite a ripple effect from this resolution. If you Google "UCC" + "divestment" you will find all kinds of opinions depending on the news sources (including the New York Times)—some congratulating us on our bold witness, and other Jewish sources claiming we are an anti-Semitic denomination. This is a "heads up," that we have entered the territory our Presbyterian brothers and sisters walked into several years ago when they voted on a similar resolution. In many places, their churches lost relationships with synagogues over their denomination's stand on this issue. Criticism of Israel is not taken lightly.

There was another, much harsher resolution calling on the UCC to recognize the actions of Israel against the Palestinians as Apartheid. You can read the text of that here: <http://uccfiles.com/pdf/12-CALLING-ON-THE-UNITED-CHURCH-OF-CHRIST-TO-RECOGNIZE.pdf>

I brought this one up at our Conference delegates' breakfast meeting on the day the vote was being taken, as Sarah Halverson, Elizabeth Griswold and others of us had been having discussions about the "rabbis in our lives" and their feelings on the subject the day before. Sarah had been receiving e-mails from one of our local rabbis expressing concerns about the effect this might have on their relationship. Our

Conference Minister, Felix Villanueva, challenged us to speak up against the resolution. That is what I am doing in the photo you see of me on the big screen on the cover. I told the story of how our sister congregation was a synagogue and of how important maintaining that friendship with the congregation and the rabbi was to us. Sarah Halverson was about to make her own plea when a motion came from the floor calling for the vote. The resolution failed to gather the 2/3 majority it needed.

One resolution is going to cause great difficulty for inter-faith relationships. Two such resolutions would be poisonous. In any case, I know that many people are very happy that the UCC has taken this stand for boycotts and divestment. With it comes a price, and we will have to be able to articulate the reasons for this stand to friends who will feel wounded by this decision and even betrayed, though that is not the intent.

Coming Up:

I'll see you at the Pastor's Potluck on Monday night, July 6! All are welcome, and there is an emphasis on being kid-friendly. It will be after the first day of VBS—Vacation Bible School, so the activities can keep on rolling.

On July 26, there will be a Sunday dedicated to learning more about our prison system: "Incarceration and Reentry: The Church as Neighbor." We will lift up the topic in worship and preach on it, and then after church there will be a forum that will be open to the public. This will be led by David Gist from Bread for the Journey and will feature special guests.

Yours,

Pastor Paul

UCC Synod Votes to Boycott & Divest from Companies Profiting from Israel's Occupation

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Press Release dated June 30, 2015

The United Church of Christ Palestine-Israel Network (UCC PIN) is pleased to announce that today the plenary of the 30th General Synod taking place in Cleveland passed Resolution #4, calling for boycotts and divestment from companies that profit from Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands.

"As disciples of Jesus, we hear and seek to heed his call to be peacemakers, responding to violence with nonviolence and extending love to all," said Rev. John Deckenback, Conference Minister of the Central Atlantic Conference of the UCC, which submitted the resolution to the synod. "It is in that spirit of love for both Israelis and Palestinians, and a desire to support Palestinians in their nonviolent struggle for freedom, that the United Church of Christ has passed this resolution."

"In approving this resolution, the UCC has demonstrated its commitment to justice and equality," said Rev. Mitri Raheb, a Christian Palestinian and Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, who travelled to Cleveland for the synod. "For Palestinians living under occupation or facing systematic discrimination as citizens of Israel, enduring the destruction of their homes and businesses, the theft of their land for settlements, and living under blockade and siege in Gaza, this action sends a strong signal that they are not alone, and that there are churches who still dare to speak truth to power and stand with the oppressed."

The vote, which was 508 in favor, 124 against, with 38 abstentions, was the culmination of a process that began

in 2005, to end the Church's complicity in Israel's nearly half-century-old occupation and other abuses of Palestinian human rights. It also comes as a response to the Christian Palestinian community's call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions, as embodied in the Kairos Palestine document, which seeks to achieve Palestinian freedom and rights using peaceful means, inspired by the US Civil Rights and South African anti-Apartheid movements.

In passing Resolution #4, the UCC is following in the footsteps of sister mainline churches like the Presbyterian Church (USA), which passed a similar resolution last year divesting from Israel's occupation, and the United Methodists, who voted to boycott products made in Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and whose pension board divested from G4S, a prison service company, due in part to its dealings with the Israeli military.

UCC PIN expresses its gratitude to Synod delegates, who faithfully carried out their duties in a thoughtful and responsible manner, giving the proposal the careful deliberations it deserved. UCC PIN also expresses its gratitude to our many allies, including those in the Jewish and Palestinian communities, for their indispensable and cherished support.

UCC PIN hopes that this modest initiative will help encourage the Israeli government to end the occupation, and looks forward to working in covenantal relationship with the UCC Pension Boards and the UCC Funds to implement this resolution moving forward.

Families Forward Opportunity

New Members - June 21, 2015

FAMILIES FORWARD ANNUAL BACK TO SCHOOL & FOOD DRIVE

SUNDAY * JUNE 28 - SUNDAY * JULY 26

The Mission & Service Ministry will be collecting school supplies and food for Families Forward until July 26. Marked bins will be in the narthex.

Needed school items are: backpacks; college ruled paper; zippered pencil cases; binders; pencil boxes; folders, scissors; erasers; colored pencils; highlighters; pens; markers; glue sticks; rulers; and spiral notebooks.

Needed food items are: beans (kidney, black, pinto); canned chicken, fish, & beef; peanut butter; cereal; spaghetti sauce; hearty canned soups & chowders; plain rice (brown preferred); chili, stews; canned fruit; canned vegetables; canned tomato products; pasta (dried); crackers, healthy snacks; fruit juice, boxed juices; baby food & baby formula; diapers (medium/large) & wipes; and toilet paper, paper towels, and tissues.



Eddie and Christina Padilla with son Diego

*Is faith a thing of the past
in the 21st century?*

You're invited to join the conversation at
The Irvine UCC Fall Conference featuring

Rachel Held Evans
and a special message from UCC General
Minister nominee Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

September 11 & 12, 2015



more info at iucc.org/conference

iucc Irvine United
Congregational Church

Stewardship Moment:

“Angels of the Past”

As active, caring members of IUCC we all know that the many activities and programs of our church depend upon continued funding through Stewardship. There are several facets of Stewardship:

- The Annual Stewardship Campaign - to fund daily operations
- The Capital Campaign - to fund new construction
- Planned Giving - gifts of cash, equity, or property often deferred to a later date and often designated for a specific purpose.

One aspect of Planned Giving is an Estate Gift or Will. Several past members of IUCC have named their church in their wills. Two examples are Marge Lester and Carol Drumm. **Marge Lester** was a retired minister who was interested in social justice issues. She joined IUCC because of our many activities regarding social justice. She was also an active leader of the local CROP Walk. Marge named IUCC in her will and upon her death IUCC received an Estate Gift of \$29,260. She designated these funds to be used for altar renovation and debt reduction.



Carol Drumm was a long time IUCC member. In her early years, she was active in IUCC governance and on committees. Shortly after retiring she was diagnosed with leukemia, and her support networks were her friends at IUCC and her two toy poodles, Cody and Twiggy. Carol's connections to IUCC were very important to her and

she wanted to leave a legacy. Upon her passing, Carol left \$26,447 to IUCC.

These two “Angels of the Past” had a spirit, faith, and vision which served as an inspiration to us. If the activities and programs of IUCC are important to you, have you named IUCC in your Will or Estate Planning? For more information about Planned Giving, contact:

UCC Office of Philanthropy and Stewardship
700 Prospect Ave E
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100
Phone (800) 846-6822
Email: giving@ucc.org
Website: www.ucc.org/giving

~ Bill Lawrence, Fund Development Committee Chair

Concert on July 18



7:30 p.m.
Saturday,
July 18

This remarkable, Grammy Award-nominated choir consisting of over 40 young voices will perform a benefit concert in support of the IUCC General Fund.

The choir's recent highlights include appearances in Britten's War Requiem and Berlioz' Damnation of Faust with the Seattle Symphony. Last summer the Northwest Boychoir performed at the Eastern Music Festival Gala under the direction of Gerard Schwarz as part of their North Carolina Concert Tour.

The Choir closed the season with A Festival of Lessons & Carols at Benaroya Hall, presented by the Seattle Symphony. Performances this year include Bach's St. Matthew Passion and Orff's Carmina Burana with Seattle Symphony, a collaboration with Seattle chamber music presenter Simple Measures, and the opera Brundibár with Music of Remembrance.

A free will offering will be taken at the end of the concert, and their CD's will be available to purchase. We have been honored to have this organization perform for us twice in the past, and we look forward to hosting them again this July. Don't miss this event!

Will you help? The Fund Development Committee would greatly appreciate it if members could bring baked good for the reception following the concert. If folks could bring items to Plumer Hall anytime that Saturday, that would be great. Please notify Bill Lawrence if you can donate: walawrence@icloud.com

Editor's Note: Long-time newsletter contributor Lorraine Fox was unable to submit her usual column this month due to a bad fall. She is in recovery mode now. We miss her wise words and hope to have her back among us soon!

Coming This Month!



GANDHI BONHOEFFER KING Reclaiming the Prophetic Voice

Beginning July 12, 2015
5 Sundays - 9:45 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.
OR
5 Mondays - 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Light salad supper at 6 p.m.

Led by the Rev. George S. Johnson, DMin

To sign up, complete the class registration form and bring it to church on Sunday. Place the form in the New Forms Drop Box located in the narthex.

Topics to be discussed include:
Context: How are prophets raised up?
Holding to the truth in the midst of conflict
Resistance and Dissent, a prophet's calling
Sermon on the Mount ... their common text
Silence as consent and/or job security
Rethinking salvation ... Cheap grace
Non-violence and living with limits
Prophetic voices needed today
Who are the false prophets today
Finding Courage in community

Mark Your Calendar



PASTOR'S POTLUCK MONDAY * JULY 6 * 6:00 p.m. KID FRIENDLY!

* Join us on the back patio with your BBQ item and a potluck item to share! The grill will be hot and waiting for you. Please bring your own tableware. Soft drinks and condiments provided.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 6 - 10

Enrollment for Vacation Bible School has begun! Contact Tricia Abouabdo or Sarah Fiske-Phillips for details.



NO WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP EVENING IN JULY DUE TO HOLIDAY - it will resume Aug. 5.



ISAIAH HOUSE SHELTER WED. * JULY 8 * 3:30 p.m.

Once a month, IUCC volunteers serve meals to the homeless at Isaiah House in Santa Ana. Contact Steve Goetz for details and to RSVP: sgoetz53@gmail.com.



CHOIR LITE SUNDAYS * JUNE 14-JULY 12 * 10:15 a.m.

Calling all singers! If you love to sing, sign up for Choir Lite - no weekday commitment, just show up on Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m.

July Birthdays

7/31	Jean Dietrich	7/01	Christina Padilla
7/04	Eduardo Figueroa	7/05	Laura Rhodes
7/13	Lauren Fleming	7/18	Randy Romine
7/18	Randy Garber	7/25	Susan Sherman
7/03	Steve Goetz	7/13	Dennis Webster
7/11	August Lobato, Jr.	7/22	Kerin Wilson
7/05	Jonathan Lyman	7/28	Scott Zane
7/04	Laurie McComb		



NORTHWEST BOYS CHOIR CONCERT JULY 18 * 7:30 p.m.

Mark your calendar! See details on page 5.



SEEKERS FOR WOMEN
TUESDAY * JULY 21 * 9:30 a.m.
We meet on the 3rd Tuesday for friendship and spiritual growth and to share our experiences. Discussion is sparked by a video.

Moderator's Column

by Renae Boyum



Beginnings are powerful times - this was a lesson I learned acutely when I was a teacher. The beginning of the school year, the beginning of a class, the beginning of a new part of the class - all make a huge difference in the success of anything we do.

This month is a beginning for me as I take up the role of moderator. I am excited about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead of us and know that by working together we will enjoy the opportunities and embrace the challenges.

But first, a huge thank you to our outgoing moderator, Anne Rosse. Anne has been a leader who cares deeply, gives of her time and considerable talents beyond compare, and has made an incredible difference both behind the scenes (think policies, procedures, bylaws) and out front (think our new worship format schedule, revitalizing the Child Care Center). There are many more ways Anne has been an amazing moderator, but suffice it to say, she will be a very tough act to follow.

To quote James Stockdale*, "who am I, why am I here?" I grew up in rural Minnesota in a deeply Lutheran community. And not just any Lutheran community, but a Missouri Synod Lutheran one. I lived on a farm with my Mom and Dad and 3 brothers and 2 sisters. 5 of my siblings attended a Lutheran Parochial school. It was a one room school for grades 1-8 with about 50 students. All of us were related and most of us were first cousins. We studied Luther's Small Catechism and memorized Bible verses. When I was going into 6th grade, my parents decided we would no longer go to the parochial school but to the public school in town. You can imagine the consternation that decision caused for the extended family, all of whom had children still in the Lutheran school.

Fast forward - in September of 1969 I met Keith on a blind date. He was a graduate student at the University of Minnesota and I had just begun my teaching career in a suburb of Minneapolis. I discovered he was a Lutheran, too, but a different kind. I was fine with that and even though he was Norwegian (grins) I grew to love him and embrace even his bad jokes. We were married in June of 1971 and in the fall of 1972 moved to California. We really didn't have a church home till we moved to Irvine in 1980 and joined, of course,

a Lutheran church - Good Shepherd - here in Irvine. We loved that church - Keith was the President and spearheaded building campaigns and call committees. I served on the Church Council and chaired the Long Range Planning Task Force. Our children were baptized and confirmed there. So you can imagine the sorrow and pain when as the church became increasingly conservative and the music more "happy, clappy," we decided to look for a new church home.

In 1998 we joined the Irvine United Church of Christ. I have to admit that on the day we joined as we said the words of the joining ritual, tears ran down my cheeks. Being a Lutheran had been such an integral part of my childhood and early adult years that I truly felt I was losing part of my identity. We soon grew to love this church so much that a few years later I became the moderator of IUCC -- I think this was about 11 or 12 years ago, so many of you would not remember that fact.

While I was moderator, two things happened. After a long process involving much discussion, forums, and careful thinking, the congregation voted to change the name of our church to Irvine United Congregational Church. The second was that our long time pastor, Fred Plumer, decided to retire. I had an eventful tenure of office to say the least!

So, again to answer the James Stockdale* question, "why am I here?" Why did I decide to "re-up" for a second time as moderator? I believe in the power of Jesus acting in our lives. I believe that faith matters and that this church matters. I believe that a church that is proudly progressive and intentionally inclusive can make a powerful difference here in Irvine and in the greater community. I believe that I have a "calling" to serve this church at this time and place.

I am excited about the future and working with an incredible group of leaders. Dave Schofield (Chair of the Administrative Board) and Dawn Price (Chair of the Ministries Board) are wonderfully gifted, caring leaders, and I think the three of us will make a dynamic trio. I am excited about working closely with Pastor Paul and know that his powerful sermons, caring ways, and strong faith will continue to serve us well!

I look forward to talking with you on the patio, seeing you at events, being part of meetings, and sharing worship with you. Please feel free to contact me at renaeboyum@gmail.com. See you in church!

Yours in community and faith ~ *Renae*

*I'm sure the political "junkies" in the congregation will know the reference. Let me know if you know what it is?!

Building Plan Update

by Anne Rosse



In November 2013, the IUCC congregation began an important process related to planning for our future and legacy. At that time, the congregation unanimously approved the development of a Master Plan that envisioned new buildings and grounds with two key goals: (1) to create facilities to meet our church's current and future needs; and (2) to create a

church campus that reflects the church we strive to be – a beacon of Progressive Christianity for Orange County and beyond, dedicated to serving our neighbors and sharing our message of extravagant welcome, hospitality and love.

In June 2014, this congregation approved the Master Plan developed by the dedicated members of the Building Task Force and domusstudios architecture, a San Diego-based firm with extensive experience in designing religious and educational projects. The Master Plan provides for a phased build-out, with a new administrative building in Phase I, a new preschool/education building in Phase II, and a new fellowship hall in the final phase.

During the first phase, a new administrative building would be erected, attached to the current Sanctuary, with configurable meeting rooms, workspace for both staff and volunteers, and a reception area for greeting visitors. As well, a welcoming new church frontage, enhanced patio space for fellowship, and a new Sanctuary entrance would all be added in this initial phase. During the second phase, a new preschool/education building would be built, with a playground designed to promote cooperative and creative play – meeting the needs of both our preschool and church youngsters. In the final phase, a new fellowship hall with blended indoor/outdoor space, easily configurable/multi-use rooms, dedicated youth space and an industrial kitchen would be built. To review the Master Plan, please click to: <http://iucc.org/portal/documents/>.

In late June 2014, we submitted our Master Plan to the City of Irvine for a Modified Conditional Use Permit (CUP), the final step in our preparatory planning. Submitted a year ago, our plan continues to make slow but steady progress through the approval process and we are finally nearing the finish line!

The City is satisfied with the plan itself and it has received the endorsement of Woodbridge Village Association as well. All that remains is for the City to accept and approve the required Traffic Study. In April, our traffic engineers installed road tubes to survey our various driveways and local roads. We submitted those counts in May to the City for modeling analysis. Their analysis has been returned to us and is being compiled with the final report. We anticipate a few rounds of exchanging information between our traffic engineers and the City before the report is finally approved, with an approximate timeframe of one month. Once the report is approved, then we anticipate the whole project undergoing a final administrative review, with subsequent approval sometime later this summer. When that happens, we'll be sure to announce it promptly and look forward to a church-wide celebration of this milestone!

For the remainder of 2015, the focus will be on Capital Campaign-related education, with a visit from Priscilla Bizer (our UCC consultant) in late September. She will gather with church leaders, preach, hold forums and meet with as many people as possible to help us understand what a campaign would be like and how it would impact IUCC. Likely, we would ask the congregation in January 2016 (at the Winter Congregation Meeting) if they are ready to undertake a campaign to fund Phase I. If yes, the campaign could begin as early as February. If successful, we could be asking the congregation for its endorsement to move forward in May 2016. We've been advised that from the time we decide to move forward with building, it will be 6-9 months for planning/permitting/bidding and 18-24 months to occupancy (from the original decision date). So, conceivably, we could be looking at shovels in the ground in early 2017, best case scenario.

If you'd like more information about this project, please don't hesitate to contact me. Otherwise, please watch this space for future updates!



Coffee Hour Hosts Needed!

We need hosts for coffee hour during July and August. Please sign up on the patio. Thanks!