

IUCC launches 25th Anniversary Celebration on Feb. 28



Pastor Paul Tellstrom welcomed the audience to the panel discussion



Former IUCC member Jim Lehman and former IUCC Moderator Barbara Luckett Currie

If we lead, others will follow ... but we have to lead.” So said former Irvine Mayor Larry Agran in response to a question during IUCC’s kickoff panel discussion on February 28 entitled “Becoming Open and Affirming: The IUCC Story.” The panel was our inaugural event to celebrate 25 years as an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation.

Mayor Agran congratulated IUCC for being ONA at a time when the community desperately needed it. “In the late 1980’s, I was the city’s first directly elected mayor when it was overwhelmingly white, mainstream, and conservative,” he said. “The AIDS crisis was at its worst. The whole idea of open and affirming was an uphill struggle. The City established a Human Rights Committee to explore the rights of those who were gay and lesbian. That committee produced an Irvine Human Rights Ordinance that expanded federal protections for race, color, creed, and national origin to include disabled people and people who were gay or lesbian; it banned discrimination against them with regard to housing and employment.”

Unfortunately, that ordinance was not well received by some in the community. “It lit the fuse for a counter campaign – Measure N – an initiative that cut out all references to sexual orientation being protected,” he said. “It was a vicious, mean-spirited campaign that cut the heart out of our human



Pastor Sarah Halverson-Cano, Pastor of Fairview Community Church, voted for us to become ONA



Former Irvine Mayor Larry Agran spoke about the city’s history surrounding gay and lesbian rights



Former IUCC Moderator Barbara Luckett Currie described our ONA history

Photos courtesy of Dawn Price & Tricia Aynes

“ONA launch” article continued on page 14



It's been a great month in the Ministry for Young People! Our new staff members Ashley (youth leader) and Tiffany (Sunday School teacher) are settling in well, and we are very grateful for the gifts they bring to our community. They are usually on the patio during coffee hour if you want to find them to say hello!

Here are some highlights from our month:

- We had kids at both of our Pilgrim Pines winter camps. Those who went enjoyed their time with other UCC kids in Southern CA.
- The MYP hosted coffee hour on February 21 and had a great time serving the church members coffee & treats!
- The youth group enjoyed a sleepover at the church and a trampoline outing!
- The Young Adults continue to meet and eat! Lunch every second and fourth Sundays and the first Tuesday of the month for dinner & discussion.

Upcoming Events:

- We have about 12-15 kids who are interested in going to summer camp, which is great! If you'd like to sponsoring a kid, please let me know: sarah@iucc.org.
- Vacation Bible School will be at the end of June. Stay tuned for dates and registration information.

We are grateful of the congregation's support of our MYP programming and look forward to an exciting summer!

In God's Peace,

Sarah



From the Pastor's Desk

the Rev. Dr. Paul Tellström



The solemn season of Lent puts me in a reflective mood. I've been slowly reading Marilynne Robinson's new book of essays, *The Givenness of Things*, a generous gift from my friend and colleague Ken Wyant, and I recently dared to pick up Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* and finish it from a time when I just got busy and put it down (actually, I confess that I found the truths about mass incarceration and racism too hard to bear and put it down "for a moment" –that lasted several months).

Hearing about the six members of the Ku Klux Klan arriving in Pearson Park in Anaheim, so close to "the Happiest Place on Earth" seemed not only discordant, but from another era. A handful of the protestors that arrived were violent, and what happened there should never have taken place. A picture being worth a thousand words, the sight of an American flag on a pole being used by a Klansman to pierce the side of a protestor on the ground in such a way as to make a life-threatening wound said everything in tableau about the twisted values of this racist group that felt empowered to surface in public.



I have become involved with CLUE "Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice" (OK, it isn't the best acronym). Along with several other organizers, a counter demonstration was put together for Monday (2/29) at the same spot

the KKK chose. Sarah and I drove up and met some IUCC people there, and by the time we marched with a full police escort to City Hall, we numbered about 300. It was a very good showing on short notice.

However, a muscled young white man standing shirtless along the route showed off his tattoos to everyone who passed. On his back, it read, "White Supremacy." On his chest was emblazoned a KKK emblem.

At City Hall, the clergy were asked to lift up prayers. Standing above us, a handful of counter protestors shouted and yelled constantly until we all sang together to drown them out.

Why would the Klan plan a rally on Saturday? Why would a young man feel empowered to show his KKK affiliation in front of 300 people marching against what he stood for? I am betting that the sense of empowerment has come from Donald Trump on the heels of his endorsement by David Duke and his refusal to disavow him immediately, and these are but two examples of the kinds of danger we can expect from such an intemperate man. I watched nine African-Americans get removed from one of his rallies the other day, and they weren't protestors. They were simply black.

For many people who grew up during the Civil Rights era believing that great strides had been made that would continue forward, the feeling that we have moved backwards in recent years in outbreaks of violence, income inequality, mass incarceration and voter suppression is disheartening. We need to come together to assure that we are led by healing, wise and thoughtful people. And we may need to be ready to attend some rallies and marches in the season to come.

* * * * *

The United Church of Christ is celebrating Amistad Sunday on March 13. The Amistad was a slave ship that was blown off course, full of slaves, and landed in New England. Congregationalists worked hard to free the slaves on board, even hiring former president John Quincy Adams as legal counsel. This cemented our role in history as abolitionists. I told this story eight or nine years ago, and it is time to do it again.

After church will be our second ONA forum, where you can meet the Rev. Bill Johnson. Bill is a piece of living history—the first gay man to ever be ordained into Christian ministry—anywhere, in 1972! Our forum is called ONA Firsts. On to Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter—always beautiful services at the church. A growing number of people have discovered our different Maundy Thursday service where we bring the service into the middle of the room and we set the chairs in a big rectangle facing each other. It is probably the most different service we have at IUCC, so if you haven't been a part of it, come and experience the intimacy of it with the choir so close to us. As for our big Easter service, enough people are now splitting between First and Second Service that you need not worry about parking—there should be enough at each service.

See You in Church,
Pastor Paul

Moderator's Column

by Renae Boyum



I'm a member of the Assistance League of Irvine and I stopped by their Thrift Shop to drop off some items for donation to the store.

While I was there, I saw a sign announcing a special upcoming shopping event. "Step into Spring" was the invitation for the event. I like that phrase, and I think it's a great way to think about the season of spring and where we are at IUCC!

I grew up in rural Minnesota and spring was a fleeting, elusive (to say the least) season. There was sunshine, rain, snow, ice - sometimes all in one day! Just when one thought that spring had arrived, a snowstorm would arrive and dash those hopes. There was many an Easter morning when I would wake up to cold, and perhaps snowy weather. That meant that my new spring jacket (lovingly made by my Mom) and my new spring bonnet would have to wait for another day. Then there were the lovely days filled with trees budding, grass greening, and flowers blooming - it was truly wonderful to be alive on those glorious days.

In California, with our lovely weather, we don't exactly step into spring. Oh, yes, there might be rain - wouldn't that be wonderful! - but we don't seem to have the wild swings of weather. Our spring days may seem like a continuation of our other days, but there are indeed trees budding and flowers blooming and longer days. My sister and her family visited us from New Hampshire recently and they absolutely reveled in the warm, sunny days. Back in New Hampshire there was snow, rain, and ice, but here they were able to enjoy some gorgeous California weather.

Here at IUCC, we are deep in the season of Lent - a quiet time of spiritual reflection. Soon, the events of Holy Week - Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday - will be here. The worship services on Palm Sunday (March 20) and Maundy Thursday (March 24) also offer a time to join together for a time of reflection and renewal both individually and collectively. For me these two services are an important part of my faith journey and I hope you will plan to attend one or both of them.

Then on Easter Sunday, March 27, we will indeed "Step into Spring" and together we will experience a joyful, spirit-filled time. The sanctuary will be full of Easter lilies and the choir will surround us with beautiful music. There will be only

a few empty chairs and we will arrive wearing our "spring" finery and there might even be a few spring bonnets! As a faith community, we will share in the joy and knowledge that love lives and that hope is alive!

The Easter message of renewal and vitality strikes a strong chord within me personally and as a leader of IUCC. We are poised on the beginning of a great endeavor - the capital campaign - and the sense of energy, vitality, and renewal that the campaign brings will be remarkable. It will be our way of "stepping into spring." I hope you will join me in supporting our capital campaign and in celebrating spring!

In faith and community,

Renae

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday
March 20



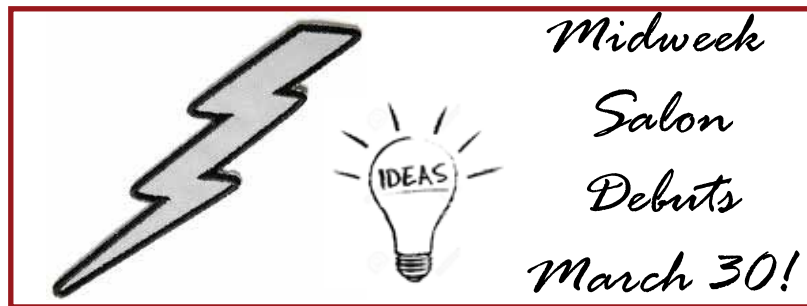
Maundy Thursday Service
7 p.m. on March 24



Easter Sunday Services
9:30 and 11 a.m. on March 27



NEW! Midweek Salon is Coming Soon!



What is it?

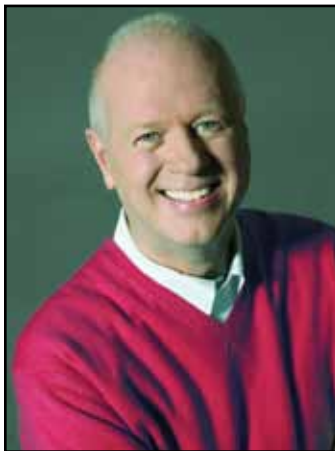
The Adult Programs Ministry is launching an exciting new series called “Midweek Salon” that will be held monthly on select Wednesday evenings. We envision a TED Talk model that will feature a lively, knowledgeable speaker followed by a stimulating, interactive discussion and an opportunity for attendees to exchange ideas. The speakers will be chosen from among our own IUCC members who will address topics that are fascinating, intriguing and thought-provoking (but preferably not religious, political, or partisan).

We’d like your input

We have already planned the first two programs, but would like to know what other topics might intrigue you! Your input will help guide us in future planning.

Take the Survey

Please go to the Survey Monkey link (<https://da.surveymonkey.com/r/IUCC-Salon>) and answer the questions. It’s easy and fun. We look forward to seeing your responses!



Wednesday, March 30, 7 p.m.

Featured Speaker: Carl Whidden

Topic: “What it means to be a performer”

Many members of our congregation will remember Carl’s one-man tour-de-force production of “A Christmas Carol” from December 2013, when he portrayed 32 discrete characters, each with their own unique personality and accent. Carl is a well-known stage actor and singer who maintains a long-time real estate business in Pasadena. Of course, he is best known at IUCC as the husband of our own Pastor Paul! His experiences as a performer are sure to be insightful and fascinating. Join us as Carl kicks off the first Midweek Salon!

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Wednesday, April 27, 7 p.m.

Featured Speaker: Marie Trout

Topic: “The silent generation and the many paradoxes they faced”

A native of Denmark, Marie went to college and studied literature and religion at Aarhus University. She ran a successful advertising sales company for several years. She married Walter Trout, a blues-rock musician, and took over management of his career in 1992. In June of 2015, she finished her PhD degree with the Wisdom School of Graduate Studies. Marie is a gifted writer and looks forward to the release of her first book in the spring of 2016.

Capital Campaign Planning Update

by Anne Rosse, Capital Campaign Chair

On January 31, recognizing the limitations of our current campus, this congregation took an important step forward in faith to undertake a \$1.5-2 million capital campaign to fund Phase I of the IUCC Master Plan. Congratulations, IUCC! Through this campaign, we are investing in IUCC's future, moving one step closer to a campus that supports our commitment to nurturing tomorrow's leaders and following Christ's teachings to love and care for our neighbors, be good stewards of our environment and live in peace.

Your campaign leaders are hard at work, creating materials and events designed to inform, excite and energize this congregation. IUCC is truly blessed by how this stellar and talented group is serving our beloved church. This month, we are pleased to unveil the campaign theme, "Embracing the Future," and you can read more about it in the accompanying article.

Here, at IUCC, we don't put a period where God has placed a comma. We know that our future is still unfolding – and we embrace that future! The UCC comma proclaims that while our faith is 2000 years old, our thinking is not. We believe that God is still speaking and that this community needs our voice, welcoming all to find peace, joy and acceptance.

Designed with green practices in mind, the IUCC Master Plan reflects our shared vision for the future in three flex-

ible phases. We are currently focused on Phase I. It will begin to transform this campus in important and enabling ways. An administrative building will be built immediately adjacent and connected to the current Sanctuary with a welcoming lobby, staff offices, volunteer work space, private pastoral counseling accommodations, and four configurable meeting rooms (with a total capacity of 100 people). Phase I will also include an expanded Narthex with a new "coffee corner" and entrance. A beautiful frontage to Alton Parkway will signal our extravagant welcome, as will the enhanced patio.

In the coming months, we look forward to sharing more about this campaign, from a beautiful Phase I rendering to informative forums to compelling campaign videos and speakers.

In closing, all of the progress we've made to date – developing and getting approved the IUCC Master Plan and now stepping forth in faith to fundraise for Phase I - would not have been possible without the commitment and investment that this church is making in IUCC's future and legacy. So, thank you, IUCC! And, thank you for all you do to make IUCC an active and vibrant faith community, concerned and committed to improving the human condition both locally and throughout the world.



Commissioning of the Capital Campaign Team

On February 14, 2016, IUCC formally commissioned the members of the Capital Campaign Team. Pictured above L to R are: Pastor Paul, Priscilla Bizer (our UCC consultant), Anne Rosse (Capital Campaign Chair), Keith Boyum (Plumer Endowment Chair), Bill Lawrence (Fund Development Chair), and Pat Sauter (Hospitality Chair). The following Team members are not pictured: Mark Allen, Linda Haghi, Tommie Kozlov, Chris Redrich, and Matthew Redrich.



Embracing IUCC's Future

Capital Campaign Team

“Our 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.”

When your campaign leaders came together to discuss a theme for the capital campaign, we were inspired by these powerful words from Renae and Keith Boyum. We recognized that this campaign is about honoring our legacy and embracing a shared vision (the Master Plan) to become the church we are intended to be.

The Capital Campaign Team is pleased to introduce our new campaign theme and logo (shown above).

It represents both the path that brought us here and a future that is still unfolding. We recognize that the community needs our voice, welcoming all to find peace, joy, and acceptance. We embrace the future just as we embrace all those who walk through our doors, declaring that “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” And, if this logo seems familiar, we invite you to lift your eyes to IUCC’s iconic stained glass window.

Our gratitude to the talented team of Matthew and Chris Redrich for their leadership in developing this logo.

Capital Campaign Team

by Anne Rosse

Congratulations, IUCC, for stepping forth in faith to undertake a capital campaign. A strong group of dedicated folks have stepped up to lead this campaign effort. Please join me in recognizing and thanking the following individuals on the Capital Campaign Team (CCT):

Pastor Paul
Mark Allen
Keith Boyum
Linda Haghi
Tommie Kozlov
Bill Lawrence
Chris Redrich
Matthew Redrich
Pat Sauter

IUCC is tremendously blessed by the wise and experienced counsel of our campaign consultant, the Rev. Priscilla Bizer, Capital Fundraising Executive, UCC’s Capital Campaign Services. Church Administrator Michael Spindle is providing invaluable assistance.

For this campaign to be successful, we are going to need lots of help. Please contact any CCT member to learn how you can help with upcoming campaign activities. From baking cookies to stuffing envelopes to lending your professional expertise – there are roles to match everyone’s talents, interests and time commitments.



Music Ministry

by Joni Baker



Lent is a busy time in the life of the church, and the Chancel Choir is not exempt. We are currently preparing for the services of Holy Week: Palm Sunday on March 20, Maundy Thursday on March 24, and Easter Sunday on March 27. It is a privilege to be an important part of these special services

where we remember Jesus's ministry which culminated in his death. Marcus Borg related some of his thoughts on the death and resurrection of Jesus in an interview with Dr. Rachael Kohn:

"I think his death does matter. It's not because it's payment, but because it was the result of his passionate desire to transform the world...passionate about a world of justice...and he was an advocate of peace... and both of those commitments challenged the religious and political authorities of his day, so they killed him. The death of Jesus matters greatly both as an archetype of personal transformation as well as a revelation of God's passion for a different kind of world...The resurrection of Jesus is most powerfully understood as a parable. The central meanings would be that the tomb couldn't hold him. He's still around, he's still loose in the world, he's still recruiting for the kingdom of God. Easter also means that Jesus continues to be a figure of the present."

In the midst of preparation for Holy Week, the choir has also begun rehearsing for our annual June concert. The theme of the concert is love. We will be performing "Romancero Gitano" by Mario Castlnuovo-Tedesco, with poetry by Federico Garcia Lorca. It is a multi-movement choral work accompanied by classical guitar. The entire work is sung in Spanish. We will also be singing some pieces in French, and even a few in English, too.

As I have said before, it is not too late to join us. The choir rehearses Thursday evenings from 7:15 – 9:00. Through music, we have the opportunity to express the love of both God and humankind. Please join us in this ministry.

GreenFaith Team

Committed to Environmental Justice

Miss Lily's Green Tips

by Miss Lily

The Gift of Water



Dear Friends,

After an unseasonably warm February, the surprise rainfall was a delightful blessing. Wonderful are the gifts from God and Mother Nature.

The gift of water is one of my favorite things on the Earth. I love the ocean, the creeks, and the rain puddles. I enjoy making coffee with it and drinking fresh, ice-cold water. I am grateful for the ways water nourishes the flowers in my garden.

Water is something we all need to treasure. As Stewards of the Earth, we need to use our water wisely; recycling it as often and as much as we can. Every rain drop counts.

Yours,

Miss Lily

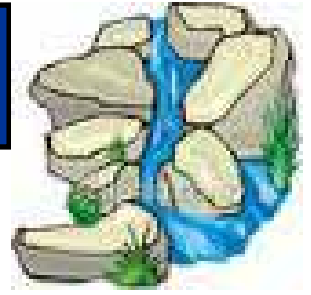
P.S. Miss Vivian of Greenfaith requests that I write a note to church-goers to please use a coffee cup from home at the IUCC coffee hour. It will save trees--and money.





Water Conservation: Honoring a Sacred Gift

by Terry LePage



Water is life...

And we take it for granted. Ancient civilizations in the American Southwest were extinguished for lack of water; around the

world people still suffer and die for lack of potable water. Yet we waste hundreds, even thousands, of gallons of high quality drinking water down our drains each month. And old habits die hard.

Water Justice

I feel so frustrated hearing of commercial farming operations digging 1200-foot-deep wells that suck prehistoric water, leaving shorter wells dry. Some small Central Valley towns truck in all their water, and smaller farms lacking capital for deep wells are getting abandoned like those ancient Southwestern Pueblos.

Many farmers already conserve, but how can we promote water fairness and responsibility for all? Can it happen without political action? Shall we write Jerry Brown a letter?

Embarrassing Emerald Excess

Irvine proudly touts both its emerald green parks and parkways, and its excellent water treatment facilities. Recycled wastewater (100% safe) from the latter allows copious irrigation of the former.

But this comes at a price. Wastewater that is recycled neither flushes the Back Bay nor percolates into the ground to recharge the water table. Have you seen the ghostly white tree skeletons on the south side of Campus Drive between UCI and the airport? They died because the water table is at least 22 feet lower than it used to be.

And Irvine's lush parkways set an unrealistic standard. Watering to excess is expected; homeowners associations may even ticket those who err on the side of dry. Some political action needed here too?

Those of us with yards can act now. I am not asking you to landscape with cacti only. Nor do you need to tear out all your present landscaping. Rather, tolerate a bit of summer brown, as people do in wetter regions where few lawns are watered. Dial down your sprinklers and see what happens. Replace those plants that can't hack it with plants that work in our climate. And remember that watering deeply (say, nine minutes in three-minute increments, once every five or seven days) is more water-efficient than watering briefly and frequently.

Gadgets and Capital Investments

Surely there's a techie fix, right?

The gadget, the app, the capital improvement. This is not required.

But if you are replacing a washing machine or dishwasher anyway, make water savings part of your shopping list.

The one 'appliance' worth replacing outright is your toilet. If that porcelain bowl is used frequently and is not marked "1.6 GPF" (gallons per flush) or lower, replacing it will bring big savings. (If you want 'good flush', I highly recommend Kohler Classic 1.28 GPF toilets, for around \$200.) Water Pic low-flow shower heads give great showers for little water too.

Does your kitchen sink run forever till the water gets hot? Do you use it many times a day? You may want to install a small under-sink electric water heater. I love mine, and have not noticed an increase in my electric bill.

Sprinkler systems offer astounding arrays of gadgetry. Understanding yours, setting it to minimum usage, and keeping it in good repair is the best water saving you can do. Educate yourself about hydro-zoning and consider MP Rotator sprinkler heads. Beware of drip irrigation: while efficient, it is fragile, and plant death is often the first sign of malfunction.

And if tech is not your thing, remember all those simple tricks for water savings like washing full loads of laundry and stoppering the sink!

A Water Prayer

In honor of World Water Day, March 22, are you willing to take up one new habit of water conservation? Perhaps practice it as a form of prayer: of thanksgiving for the goodness of our blue earth, and of petition, to protect the gift of life that is water.

Online Resources

Practical water saving information (including rebate information) can be found at: www.bewaterwise.com and www.irwd.com/save-water-money. Check out: canativegarden.blogspot.com, my native garden blog, including: Turf Terminators Beware, Dial it Down, and Summer Dry Natives.

~Terry LePage for the GreenFaith Team
(Vivian Johnson, Judy Curry, Nancy Dreckman,
Howard Emery, Carol Getz, and Eileen Vincent)

Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Ministry would like to welcome and introduce you to our two new leaders in the Stephen Ministry program here at IUCC. Janet Johnson (on left in photo below) and Cheryl Trobiani (on right) both came into the program having received a caring Stephen Minister during a difficult time in their lives and are now ready to give that type of caring relationship back to the IUCC family/community.

Here are their stories:

“I was the primary caregiver for my mother, who had dementia. There came a point when I found myself feeling frustrated, alone and in need of someone other than my family and friends to listen to my fears and doubts. The Stephen Ministry had recently been instituted at IUCC and I asked to be paired with a Stephen Minister. My Stephen Minister was exactly what I needed and for the next year and a half we met weekly. She listened, she was patient, she never judged, and she eased my burden. Several months after Mom died, a Stephen Ministry training class was being held for anyone who would like to become a Stephen Minister, and I knew this was a way I could give back to others who might need the kind of help that I had been given. The training classes opened my eyes to the care that had gone into preparing each Stephen Minister and I gained a greater appreciation for the Stephen Ministry.” (Janet Johnson, 2016)

“Sometimes you go through a very rough spot in your life – a time when you can’t see how to go forward, and things look very dark. This happened to me a few years back, and then I was really lucky to have the support of the most wonderful Stephen Minister. She listened and was there with me through that scary time, giving me strength to go on and to find my way. I learned so much from her about meditation, accepting painful things, and not giving up. Becoming a Stephen Minister felt like something I could do to keep the circle of support going in our community.” (Cheryl Trobiani, 2016)

During the training sessions, Dave Schofield and I saw that both Janet and Cheryl had not only experienced what the Stephen Ministry could offer, they would also be great additions to the leadership team and help move this ministry forward. As Janet states, “Brian suggested that I consider becoming a Stephen Leader and I am glad he did”. Cheryl also echoes that comment by stating, “I’m really happy to have had the chance to be trained as a Stephen Leader and to become part of the team that will help carry on the dedicated work of Dave, Brian and so many other Stephen Ministers.”

To become a Stephen Ministry Leader, one is required to attend a week-long training put on by the founders of the

Stephen Ministry program and recently commenced here in Anaheim, CA. Janet states, “The Stephen Leader Training was intense and inspiring instruction and made me realize how dedicated and hardworking are all the people who have been part of the Stephen Ministry program at IUCC.”

Both Janet and Cheryl not only have the biggest hearts for helping people,

they also understand the importance of the relationship that each minister can bring. In Romans 8:28, it says “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” We firmly believe the Janet and Cheryl not only love God and their IUCC family, but they also are called into the Stephen Ministry program.



Brian Percy-Schofield

Stephen Ministry Chair



Leadership Position Available

Leadership positions available for the 2016 CROP Hunger Walk. It will be held in October. If interested in learning more details about this event, please contact Steve Goetz at 949-436-1946 or sgoetz53@gmail.com



New Members from Feb. 21, 2016

L to R: Natasha Dahline, Beverly Deshler, and David Deshler
Photo by Tricia Aynes



3/20	Anne Aulenbach	3/24	Xin Li
3/11	Daniel Blackburn	3/10	Lauren Louie
3/29	Steve Bullington	3/26	Barbara Moss
3/27	David Carruthers	3/16	Jan Osborne
3/07	Rachel Dill	3/06	Dawn Price
3/10	Dylan Dobbert	3/07	Jerry Price
3/16	Anders Evensen	3/24	Tom Ruiz
3/11	Suzie Feick	3/11	Michael Trout
3/10	Lynette Herndon	3/06	Walter Trout
3/11	Panee Hsiang	3/25	Jordan Willcox
3/13	Cindy Katz	3/29	Nicholas Willcox

Mark Your Calendar



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

WED. * MAR. 2 * 6:30 p.m.

Our fellowship time will be spent making Easter baskets for the women at Isaiah House. Bring your favorite beverage and "hearty" hors d'oeuvres and join in the fun. For details, call Pat Sauter.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY OBSERVANCE

SUN. * MAR. 6 * **Between services**

The Seekers are sponsoring an informational table in honor of this holiday. Bring pictures of women you respect and admire.



ISAIAH HOUSE SHELTER

WED. * MAR. 9 *

Contact Steve Goetz for details and to RSVP: sgoetz53@gmail.com.



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LENTEN SERIES CONTINUES

Join Pastor Steve Swope for a fascinating study on the dual focus of enjoying the world as well as changing it, so we can plan our days faithfully.



OPEN & AFFIRMING FIRSTS

SUN. * MAR. 13 * 12:30 p.m.

Hear from the Rev. Dr. William R. Johnson, the first openly gay person to be ordained by any Christian church.



PLEASE HELP!

Everybody loves the coffee and snack time between services and after second service - it's a time to meet new friends, socialize, and have a bite to eat. We are very much in need of people to host this coffee hour, especially on Palm Sunday and Easter! Please contact Pat Sauter.

Great American Write-In is March 12



Come to the 31st Annual Great American Write-In on Saturday, March 12, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Delhi Community Center in Santa Ana! At this free event, 50 different organizations and advocacy groups – including the IUCC Advocates for Peace and Justice! – will be represented with information regarding some of today's most vital issues, including education, health care, human and civil rights and the environment. Attendees are invited to visit the various tables and then voice their opinions by writing letters to government and corporate decision-makers in the hopes of bringing about constructive change and proving once again that **THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD!** The Delhi Center is located at 505 E. Central Ave., Santa Ana, 92707. For further information, contact Felicity Figueroa at 949-733-0850 or visit www.womenfororangecounty.org.

Kanwal Yodh Fund

Kanwal Yodh was a long time member of IUCC and attended first service. She also had a deep belief in charity. Every year, she sent a separate check above her pledge to Pastor Paul to put in his emergency fund to be used to help those who came to our doors in need.

At her memorial service, Pastor Paul told how he was able to get "Jonny," a man with limited capabilities, out of the rain and into a Motel 6, and how the mother with kids in the car was able to get a Ralphs card, and even how a man with no gas in his car got a fill-up with gas cards to get him home to the next state.

In an act of generosity, some friends of Kanwal came forward anonymously and seeded a "Kanwal Yodh Fund." This fund is open to anyone who would like to give in any amount at any time. It exists so that Pastor Paul can continue to help people who come to our doors during the week for assistance. These are the things we usually give: gas cards, Ralphs cards, and bus passes. Occasionally, we give donated gift cards.

If you would like to give to this fund, just write a check to IUCC and mark "KY Fund" in the memo line.

IUCC Women's Retreat April 29 - May 1

SAVE THE DATES
April 29 to May 1

**Women's Retreat to focus on
"finding the sacred in the
ordinary"**

Our daily lives are filled with "busy-ness" and an often disconcerting sense of disconnection. Many of us suffer from "continuous partial attention," never fully focusing on the magnificent gifts immediately in front of us. But what if we could bring greater meaning to our moments, infusing them with a feeling of "everyday holiness"?



Chantel Zimmerman, the facilitator of this year's IUCC Women's Retreat, "Finding the Sacred in the Ordinary: Meaning-making in Everyday Life," will lead us as we explore simple, yet deep practices to put us in touch with what has meaning and to find ways to make ordinary moments sacred. A Spiritual Director intern at Stillpoint Center for Christian Spirituality, Chantel specializes in spiritual, creative, mindfully nourishing events that include SoulCollage® and artist's way activities, coupled with laughter yoga, centering prayer, and other rich, contemplative practices. She is a member of Prince of Peace Episcopal Church in Woodland Hills where she leads labyrinth walks and Bridges to Contemplative Living.

The retreat will be held Friday, April 29 through Sunday, May 1 at Pilgrim Pines Camp. Registration will begin the middle of March. Watch for details!



Powerful Parenting

Dr. Lorraine Fox

MORE THOUGHTS ABOUT SELF ESTEEM

Over the past few months we have been dealing with the complexities of the “self.” There is a trinity to the self, and thus far we have talked about two parts of the self: self-concept, our ideas about who we think we are; and self-esteem, the feelings we have about ourselves, whether we like who we are, and whether we are happy with who we think we are. I hope you all did your homework from last month and sat together with your children to identify those skills and qualities we have that help us to feel good about ourselves, to value ourselves.

When children only talk about themselves in relation to others – “I’m better at this than you, or him or her,” or when they say “You think I’m bad, you should see so-and-so,” we are getting good information that work is needed on their self-esteem. Listening to young people trying to feel good about themselves by putting others down or pointing out what is wrong with others is a sure way to identify problems with self-esteem.

Generally speaking, when we identify problems with self-esteem, or feeling good about ourselves, and problems being proud of who we are, it is a sign that there are problems with self-concept. That is, some children/teens (and some adults) have problems feeling good about who they are because they have trouble having clear and accurate ideas about their strengths and limitations. They may be focusing too much on their weaknesses and challenges and not enough on what they do well, and what qualities they have that are likable. Or, they may have the misfortune of living with others who focus too much on their limitations – pointing them out over and over – and not focusing equally on their good qualities.

Children and teens who are constantly criticized never have good self-esteem because the feedback they get from others is not balanced. It is the job of parents, teachers, and others who interact with children to give them the truth of the human condition, which is that everyone has both strengths and limitations. No one is good at everything. No one knows everything. No one is always kind and non-selfish. What makes us valuable is knowing that humans are both good and not-so-good. People are talented in some areas, and not so talented in others. Everyone is kind and loving sometimes, and frustrated or angry and not so kind other times. One does not have to believe that we are always right, or always good, or always able, to have good self-esteem. We just have to believe that we are good enough, talented in some ways, knowledgeable about some things to feel “good enough” to be comfortable with ourselves. It is interesting to note that research has found that children who receive only praise

develop poor self-esteem, because they understand that they are not getting truthful information about themselves.

When your child or teen doesn’t do well at something, listen carefully to how they talk about their failure. Are they using their lack of success to give them false information about themselves, rather than seeing a failure as a challenge work on developing a skill or ability? In other words, no one does everything right, or well, and this does not make anyone a bad person. “I’m no good” is very different than “I didn’t do that very well.” Always remind your children, and maybe even yourself, that failure is an event, not a person. People have problems; people are not problems.

It can be challenging for adults to “frame” things for children and teens in such a way that it doesn’t undermine their self-esteem. Giving “unjust” punishment or discipline for a minor misbehavior doesn’t help children keep their failings in proportion. Expecting more than is reasonable for a child’s age or abilities undermines their self-esteem. Putting children in double binds – such as getting angry at them for telling something or angry at them for not telling – undermines their self-confidence in telling the truth. Being careless with our words when we are angry, and saying things to children/teens that are overly dramatic, or comparing them to other children, makes it hard for them to feel okay about themselves even when they do things that upset us. Blaming our own inability to meet a challenge on them, such as “what am I supposed to do about that,” and not accepting our own limitations as a mirror for them, gives them the idea that they are responsible for our own frustration or with our lack of problem-solving skills. Leaving children to face or fix things on their own, without giving necessary assistance, undermines their faith in their own abilities.

Our children’s ideas and feelings about themselves are in our hands. It is a daunting responsibility. We are made to study harder for a driving test than we are for parenting, when driving to the store takes 10 minutes and what we say and do with our children lasts a lifetime. Congratulations if you find yourself intimidated by the task of helping young people to become who they will be. It means you have an accurate perception of how overwhelming it is to realize the powerful influence each of us has on a young person’s life.

Because their ideas about themselves, as well as how they feel about themselves, will determine every choice our children make about their current and future relationships, and their current and future activities and life’s work, we will continue talking about this more next month.

rights ordinance. Sad to say, that initiative passed. It was heartbreaking."

Several years later, Gov. Pete Wilson signed off on state protections for the gay and lesbian community and things started to move forward. "We sought out as many community members as we could," Agran said. "Fred Plumer and this congregation were among the precious few who were out there and in the forefront to get the faith-based community involved."

The Rev. Barbara Luckett Currie, former IUCC Moderator, remembers when the church numbered only 15-20 people and met in an elementary school. She was part of the congregation that called Fred Plumer as pastor. When she heard about the national UCC passing a resolution encouraging churches to become ONA, she took note and began talking with Pastor Fred about ways in which the church could keep in tune with the resolution. Along with Jim Lehman and others, she presented the idea to the church council for approval. "We got a very large committee together, educated ourselves about the issue, and began scheduling speakers to talk to the congregation," she reported.

"Some people were reluctant to mix faith and politics: they thought the two didn't fit together. But they really fit together tongue and groove: if you walk in faith, you are called to act."

~ the Rev. Jim Lehman

The Rev. Jim Lehman added that "One of the things we decided from the beginning was to have a worship service at every informational session because it was an issue of faith, inclusivity, and respect. Affirmation is a positive thing because each person has a place in this family and needs to be honored and listened to. We had six specific sessions with speakers from all over. Some people were reluctant to mix faith and politics: they thought the two didn't fit together. But they really fit together tongue and groove: if you walk in faith, you are called to act. The day we voted, there was only one dissenting vote."

The Rev. Sarah Halverson-Cano, Pastor at Fairview Community Church in Costa Mesa, said that "Decades ago, my mother made a decision to bring her children to IUCC, and it changed the course of my life. In 1991, I became a member. I was in the second group of kids to be confirmed at IUCC. The first vote I took as a voting member was for us to become an ONA church. I am rooted in the soil of the people of this church. I was raised by this village."

The open and affirming discussion hit very close to home for her during an especially vulnerable time in her life. First her father died suddenly, then her beloved Sunday School teacher fell ill with AIDS. After the ONA vote, she said, "Dozens of people came here for sanctuary, and they came here to die. My Sunday school teacher died, and so did many others. Pastor Fred was doing a memorial service nearly every week. You need to know that this was a place to live out Jesus' call. What happened here because of the pivotal position this church took saved lives." Her emotional testimony had many in the group fighting tears.

Several members of the audience praised the work of Susan Sherman (pictured below), former Moderator of IUCC, for the ground-breaking ONA video she produced during our process. It has been widely shown to other congregations contemplating the process of becoming ONA and has broadened their understanding of why it is so important and necessary to take this visible and welcoming step.

Be sure to attend the next ONA Anniversary event on March 13 at 12:30 p.m., when we will hear from the Rev. Dr. William R. Johnson, the first openly gay person to be ordained by any Christian church, as he recalls being a part of the work to make Riverside Church in New York City the first ONA church.

~ Tricia Aynes



Susan Sherman, former Moderator of IUCC, answered questions at the forum. She produced a ground-breaking video about our ONA process.