

Irvine United Congregational Church
Report of the Building Task Force
January, 2012

- Members of the Building Task Force who developed this report include Keith Boyum, chair; Lindy Garber; David Karsten; Dale Lang; Susie Lang; Eugene Price; Jim Raver; Doreen Smith; Michael Spindle; and Pastor Paul Tellström.

Background. Anticipating growth, reacting to growth, and seeking still more growth for IUCC led to the formation of a Long Range Planning Task Force for the congregation, which reported in January 2011. The report from that group is available on the IUCC web site, by clicking [here](#). At the January 2011 annual meeting, a motion was adopted by the congregation to receive the report, and to commend it for implementation by the congregational leadership.

Several consequential recommendations were included in that report. A general guide to future staff hiring was part of that. Specific directions for program growth were named.

And the long range plan asked that a Building Task Force be formed, to develop the specifics of a building plan for IUCC. The Long Range Planning Task Force envisioned building and space expansion to serve staff and programs, accommodating our growth. However, the Long Range Planning group specifically provided that they saw no need to expand the sanctuary. IUCC presently has one moderately full service on Sunday mornings, and can surely accommodate growth in worship attendance at services and hours other than at 11 AM.

A Building Task Force. In fact, a Building Task Force was named by Moderator Keith Boyum in the spring of 2011, and set to work. IUCC's Building Task Force initially reported to the congregation at the May 2011 annual meeting, ensuring that the congregation was aware of the planning that was then underway.

Building plans follow growth in numbers, and growth in activities, and growth in staff. Therefore, this report continues below with a general discussion of "Growth and Plans."

Growth and Plans.

Growth in the congregation, in numbers, in programs, and in staff was already evident and underway when reviewed by the Long Range Planning Task Force. In further assessing growth and plans, therefore, the Building Task Force set to work in a well-developed context. In this report, we turn first to some review of that growth.

People join particular congregations for many reasons. Some who affiliate with us want simply to join the nearest United Church of Christ congregation. Others agree with IUCC's progressive Christianity. Still others find that our Open and Affirming posture is welcome, or that our Just Peace commitment is attractive. Some choose IUCC because we are nearby, because friends have affiliated, because they like the preacher, or the way we do Sunday services, or want to sing in a strong choir.

Programs, and Program Vitality. However the mention of the choir takes us to another reason for growth, and crucially for continuance in membership. That is the programs we mount at IUCC. Programs can sustain us individually, as persons; and programs can provide for expression of Christian values. Of course, many programs do both, as where people develop friendships in a context of congregational activities. A lack of programs to sustain and enrich members usually marks

Programs take leaders. In fact, IUCC is rich in talented volunteers, and has taken steps to bolster our paid staff.

- The most visible and remarkable change was the addition of an Associate Pastor about two years ago.


We have additionally

- ❖ identified a talented youth leader, and widened both activities and numbers of youth who spend high-quality time with each other;
- ❖ engaged young adults with programs that begin (but do not end) with *Bread for the Journey*;
- ❖ added interns to the Chancel Choir, which at the same time boasts a membership much larger than five or so years ago;
- ❖ re-oriented our Adult Programs leadership, and bolstered that suite of programs.

Volunteer leaders have emerged for

- our new Stephen Ministry;
- a Friendly Visitor program;
- Comma groups (IUCC's small groups program);
- our relationship with Family Promise;
- programs of direct service, like those we celebrated on November 6th;

-- and **many** additional active ministries.

 We are present in our community, and in all of our lives, in rich ways not found in our shared circles just a few years ago.

All of these programs, whether led by staff or by volunteers, sustain us as persons, as Christians, as small groups, and as a congregation. Without them, we would be less-engaged with IUCC, more apt to drift away, likelier to find a different congregation where sharing, sustenance, and vital engagement were in fact offered.

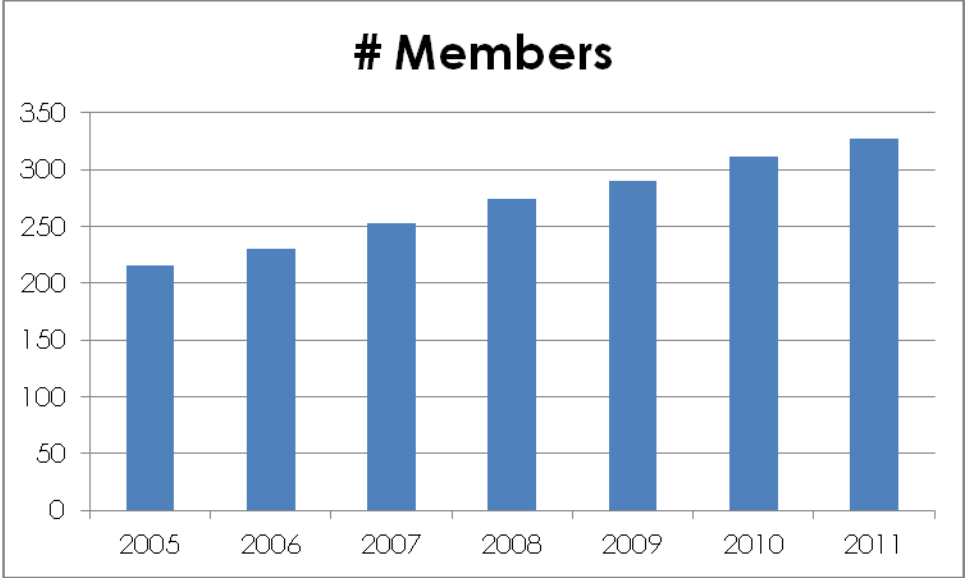
However, **with** such programs (and more programs to come): we have grown in numbers, and we have grown in the intensity of our relationships with each other and with IUCC. Many testify that they have also grown in personal fulfillment and Christian purpose.

In fact, our growth in programs has been a little dizzying for some long-time members. Once, it would seem, the suitable engagement / response to IUCC congregational offerings is not what it once was. Then, it was to try to take in everything, as a way of seeing friends, as a way of showing support. However, now, in our grown-larger context, a suitable engagement / response to congregational offerings may very well be different. It may be to choose a suitable number of activities and events from a smorgasbord that has grown large and attractive, while taking care to ensure that at least some persons within our large group are also within the small group whom we regularly meet, greet, and spend "program time" with. (Just there lies the importance for IUCC's future that our congregational leaders have seen in the still-new Comma Groups. They are places to engage on a basic, very personal, level.)

Growth in Numbers. IUCC has also grown in number of members. Pastor Tellström reports that 201 new members have joined IUCC since he arrived five and a half years ago. That is a little more than 33 per year (though of course, some have left us for various reasons). Another useful statistic is, simply, membership. With a few weeks still to go in 2011, our membership was 322. At the end of the

year in 2005, the comparable number was 216. That represents growth of a bit more than 49% in the period.

➤ Please see the chart below. We are "half-again" larger in size!



A Specific Plan for the Near Term.

The Building Task Force recommends, and in October 2011 the Administrative Board concurred in, a three-part Phase One for creating space to house our growing programs and staff.

In a **Phase One-A**, we recommend **a review and update of IUCC's Conditional Use Permit (C.U.P.)**, the essential basis on which the city of Irvine allows us our use of this site. The new C.U.P. will give us permission now not only to install an additional building (described below), but also to replace existing buildings (described below as Phases Two and Three). The key advantage is that we won't have to seek city permission when the time comes for taking action on phases two and three of our building program. The needed permission will already be in hand.

In a **Phase One-B**, we recommend **the purchase and placement of a permanent, high-quality modular building on the rear northwest corner of our parking lot.** (This is shown in yellow in the accompanying drawing.) The current child care center includes three classrooms and a kitchen, plus modest administrative space for the child care center. The vision for the new modular structure is for appropriate child care administrative space, four classrooms, and no kitchen – children in our care would bring their own lunches, as is common practice in most child care centers.

The envisioned 4,000 square feet building would extend our outreach and service to the community through our child care program. The space would also get vigorous use by the congregation at times when not used for child care, such as weekday evenings and particularly on weekends (such as for Sunday School). Note that the child care center makes substantial financial contributions to the congregation, in recognition of using the space for its operations, and in defraying shared costs.

In a **Phase One-C**, we recommend using modest funds to **renovate and re-purpose the current temporary building** (the *Atwood Building*) that now houses our child care center and church administration. We would create staff space, probably including space for an assistant to the Administrator; enhanced pastoral offices; reception space; office work space for photocopy and other machines and activities; and meeting room space for the congregation, including meetings on Sundays and educational space on Sundays and other days.

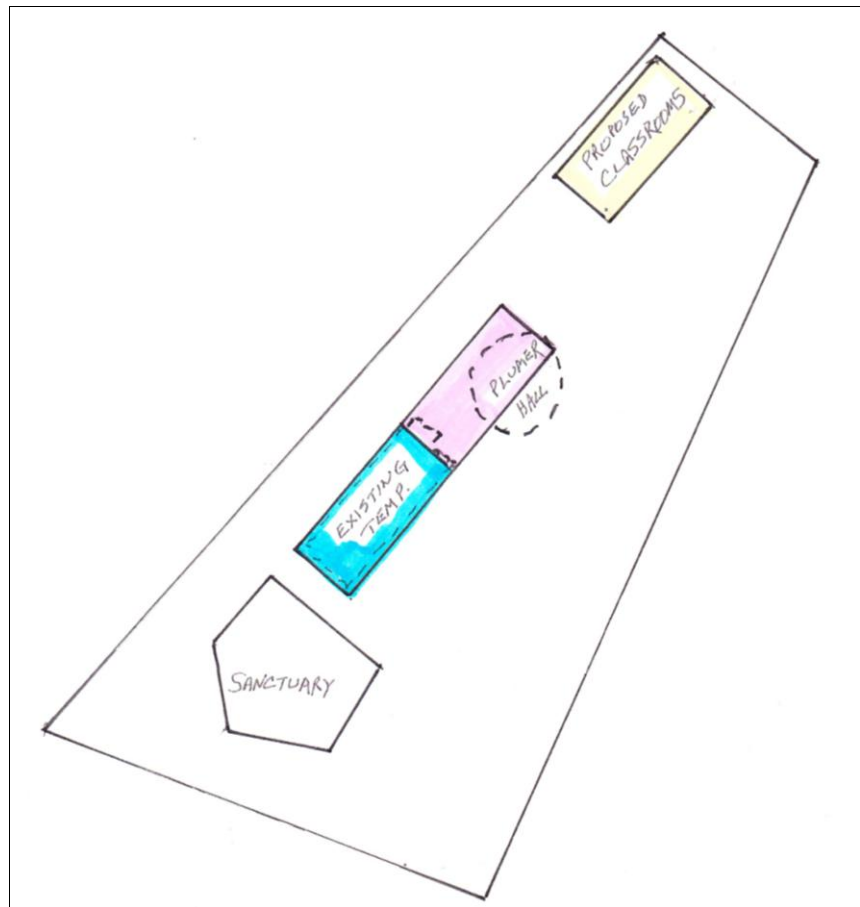
In all, between a refurbished Atwood Building and weekend / evening use of the new modular building, the Building Task Force believes we will be able to accommodate the programs and staff that have been added in the last two years or so, and that we envision for the future.

A Comprehensive Phased Plan for the Future.

The Building Task Force and the Administrative Board recognize that the Atwood Building has a limited future usefulness (unlike the proposed new high-quality modular building, which has a life span comparable to “stick-built” buildings). Therefore, in a **Phase Two**, we envision a replacement of the Atwood Building with a two-story high-quality modular building, to provide approximately 8,000 sq. feet of space.

This will be part of the permission sought in the C.U.P. update with the city, but will be undertaken several years from now, when further growth in programs, staff, and membership lead the congregation to authorize this new building. (This building is show in blue in the accompanying drawing, and as indicated, it will occupy the site now used for the Atwood Building.)

When will we undertake this? Well, time (and growth) will tell – but it could be eight or ten years from now.



Phase Three of the proposed building program envisions replacing Plumer Hall with a high-quality, two story social hall and kitchen. The approximately 6,000 square feet would accommodate many social activities, together with education, worship, meetings, and other purposes broadly similar to those for which we now use the existing Plumer Hall. This is shown in red on the accompanying drawing. Again, we would seek permission via the city's Conditional Use Permit process now, in order that when the time comes for a new Plumer Hall we will already have the city's consent to emplace it.

The Way Forward.

This all takes congregational consent, and congregational support. We recommend seeking this in stages.

First, at the January 15, 2012 congregational meeting we recommend that the congregation consider a motion to approve this phased plan in concept, and to approve the specific expenditure of \$7,000 to support a Financial Feasibility Study, to be developed by a staff member of the United Church of Christ Capital Campaign Services Division. The central question for such a Study is whether IUCC is prepared for a capital campaign for over-and-above giving across a suitable time period (of perhaps three years) to undertake Phase One of the building plan. More specifically, such a study will include

1. An analysis of IUCC's financial and giving records;
2. Conversations with clergy and lay leaders about a proposed capital campaign;
3. Individual interviews of at least 45 minutes each with prospective major gift donors, church leaders and members;
4. A Financial Feasibility Study Preliminary Report to be presented verbally on the final day of interviewing to a group of leaders that IUCC will designate; and
5. A complete written report to be mailed to IUCC within fifteen days following the Financial Feasibility Study interviews.

If the consultant adopts the opinion that IUCC is ready to conduct a successful fund-raising campaign, the final report will additionally include:

6. Recommendations for a fund-raising goal;
7. Recommendations for selection and enlistment of campaign leaders; and
8. Recommendations for the fund-raising campaign's organization and schedule.

Second, armed with the report, we recommend that either a special congregational meeting or the May 2012 regular annual meeting consider a motion to move forward. With the congregation's affirmative vote, we envision beginning a capital fund-raising, and moving forward with Phase One-A, the renewal of our Conditional Use Permit with the city of Irvine.

**APPENDIX: The Report Provided to the Administrative Board,
September – October, 2011**

The Building Task Force has reached the following items of consensus, and wishes to report to the Administrative Board, hoping that the Board will join in this consensus.	
Item / Element of Consensus	Notes and Comments
<p><u>Essential background.</u> In expectation of growth in membership and programs, the Long Range Planning Task Force Report (“the LR Report”) called for the establishment of a Building Task Force (“the TF”).</p>	
<p>1. Consistent with the LR Report, the TF focused on an increase in the space for the Child Care Center, and a substantial increase in space for staff and programs (meeting rooms, etc.).</p>	<p>NO plan to enlarge the sanctuary: we have a 9 a.m. service with much room to grow.</p> <p>Among other activities, we toured St. Paul Greek Orthodox education facilities; we estimated the cost of “stick” construction of a two story enlargement / replacement of the current temporary Atwood Bldg. at near \$8M; we estimated the cost of a 2-story modular at near \$4M.</p>
<p>The TF has been in touch with UCC Cornerstones building experts / fund, and has had preliminary conversations with a UCC fund-raising expert.</p>	<p>Early and preliminary guess: a 3-year building campaign might yield between \$1.3 and \$1.47 million. This “guess” can be refined for a flat \$7,000 fee paid to a UCC expert who would interview 30-45 IUCC members, in various age / stage of life / giving categories.</p>
<p>2. The TF believes that the cost of any new construction should be met entirely, or very substantially, from a 3-year building campaign.</p>	<p>The LR Report points to growth in programs, and associated growth in part-time staff, in about the next 5 years, taking up nearly all of any forecast increase in annual general fund giving. To take on a considerable new mortgage would squeeze out much program growth and staff support for programs.</p>
<p>3. The TF believes that the child care center can add children / programs / staff to utilize four classrooms, an increase of 1 over the current 3.</p>	<p>Doreen Smith is our “go to” person on this; she and Keith Boyum discussed some of this as a subcommittee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Note that the Child Care Center is (a) a significant outreach to the community; (b) a financial contributor of \$39,000 / year, at present; (c) uses space across 5 days that in evenings and weekends can be used for church functions (education; meetings; other). <p>Making effective use on weekends of the four classrooms may entail a part-time hire to re-set the furniture, etc., on Friday evenings, and again on Sunday evenings. IUCC used this model in the years that University Synagogue shared our facilities.</p>

4.	<p>Given all of this, the TF believes that IUCC should purchase / install a one-story modular building comprising 4 classrooms and associated staff space / Director office, etc.</p>	<p>An effective plan can be to install this at the northwest edge of the property, abutting Woodbridge Association and the Water District. This would “cost” 24 parking spaces, but IUCC would remain within current city-mandated parking requirements, and would have to get used to using Woodbridge Assn. parking on Sundays, an agreement we have now.</p> <p>An implication may be eliminating the current child care hot lunch program, making our program like nearly all others in a “bring your own lunch” situation. Thus, we would not build a kitchen in the new building; we would discontinue hiring a cook.</p>
5.	<p>Using modest funds from the 3-year capital campaign, the TF believes IUCC should refurbish and re-purpose the current temporary Atwood Building.</p>	<p>We would create staff space, including an assistant to the Administrator; enhanced pastoral offices; reception space; office work space for photocopy and other machines and activities; meeting room space for the congregation, including meetings on Sundays and educational space on Sundays and other days.</p> <p>Paint, carpet, glass installations, furniture (some built in), storage -- but nothing structural to provoke a need to come up to new codes (which would be expensive).</p> <p>Ballpark total cost = \$45,000. Ballpark use of the temporary = 10 years.</p>
6.	<p>The TF wishes to seek preliminary cost estimates for the new modular / refurbishment of Atwood bldg.</p>	<p>To validate estimated costs, especially for the new modular building.</p>
7.	<p>A phase Two project would involve replacement of the current temporary Atwood Building with a two-story modular.</p>	<p>Estimated: 8,000 square feet.</p>

8.	A phase Three project would replace Plumer Hall with a two-story modular.	Estimated: 6,000 square feet.
9.	The TF proposes two congregational meetings to authorize moving ahead.	<p>One, an important item at the January annual meeting, to discuss and describe plans, and to authorize the \$7,000.</p> <p>Two, in April or May, to authorize the building fundraising campaign, and to authorize moving forward with the city on a new conditional use permit. Working on a new C.U.P. involves costs.</p> <p>The C.U.P. would envision the ultimate build-out, thus gaining city permission only once.</p>