

May 2023 | www.iucc.org | Join us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)!

OPEN AND AFFIRMING · JUST PEACE · GLOBAL MISSION · CREATION JUSTICE/GREEN FAITH

Invitation to the IUCC Spring Congregational Meeting



Dear Friends,

Please join us on Sunday, May 21, for our **ANNUAL SPRING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**. Highlights of this meeting will include: **Ratification of the 2023-2024 Leadership Slate; Written Reports from Ministry & Committee Chairs; Diversity & Inclusion Bylaw Amendment and Treasurer's Report.**

By a majority vote of both the Administration and the Ministries Boards, this meeting will be held via Zoom. Information on Zoom participation will be provided in an e-blast a few days before the scheduled meeting.

What: Annual Spring Congregational Meeting

When: Sunday, May 21, 2021, at 12:30 p.m. (sign-ins open at noon)

Where: Via Zoom

Please note that only corporate members may vote at congregational meetings, and we need a quorum of such members to conduct the business of the church. It is very important that you attend!

Our bylaws require that when a congregational meeting is held electronically, we must also schedule an information forum prior the meeting. Here's the informaton on the forum:

What: Information Forum

When: Wednesday, May 10, at 6 p.m.

Where: Via Zoom

These regular congregational meetings are important to the life of our beloved church. Your participation matters, and we look forward to seeing your smiling faces!

In hope and optimism,

Tricia Aynes

Moderator

Our first-ever Drag Queen Bingo event on April 28 was a sold-out smash hit and sooo much fun! We owe a huge debt of gratitude to all the volunteers who decorated, cooked, served us delicious food, baked pastries, and cleaned up afterwards. Thank you!



Photos from Youth Sunday on May 30

Photos courtesy of Lauren Louie, Daniel Blackburn, and Tricia Aynes



Mollie welcomed everyone to the Youth Sunday service



We helped lead the service!



We imagined a new loving and justice-filled world together



Eric and Eliza shared their wisdom through story and poetry!



Showing how all the people of the world can live in harmony



Greeting the congregation after the service



Thank you Pastor Craig for leading the stories and helping us make Youth Sunday possible!



It was a glorious Easter morning at IUCC!



Read with Royalty on April 22 was co-sponsored by IUCC and the Orange County Equality Coalition



Oh No!
404 Error!



Have you had a chance to look at our website (iucc.org) lately? If not, check it out. We are on a more popular platform, which will allow for us redesigning the website in ways not possible before! According to Google Analytics, our old website had 1,094 pages while our new website has only 68 pages. This means that many URLs you have that are more than 3 weeks old could be bad. Please take time to check ALL your iucc related links and make sure they go to the correct location. If not, please email talktome@iucc.org and give us the bad URL, and where you want it to go and with a few clicks, it will be so (as long as the desired page exists).

Also, if you look at the new platform, you will notice that some things look great and other things feel, well, like they can use a refresh. That is because you are correct! So far, 95% of the website is copy/pasted directly from the old website and just to a new platform. We need creative minds to envision what page(s) should look like, or new pages to generate. We also need content. If you have material or images you feel might be useful, we will take that. Finally, we need people to learn how to update the platform. The new platform is designed to be used by people who know nothing about coding. If you want to try out a new skill, you just need a laptop/desktop and general understanding of how to use them. For questions or interest, talk to me (talktome@iucc.org).

Alex Ingal, Co-Chair of Communications Ministry

This fun and low-key event drew an audience of children and their parents and grandparents to hear Queen Electra read from five books. Wearing a bouffant wig and clad in a lime green jumpsuit with loads of sparkling jewelry, the queen dazzled with her style.

Thanks to our partners from OCEC, there was plenty of security just in case of trouble. Fortunately, there were no worries on that score, and the event went on without a hitch.

We are really pleased with how well it went, and we hope to do it again in the future! - *Tricia Aynes*

From the Senior Pastor

by the Rev. Dr. Sarah Halverson-Cano, Senior Pastor



One of my favorite churchy songs to sing this time of year is “Every Morning is Easter morning” - it’s not quite a hymn and it isn’t really contemporary, so I don’t know how to categorize it, other than to say “churchy.” But I always find myself singing it in the weeks after Easter Sunday.

*Ev’ry morning is Easter morning
from now on!
Ev’ry day’s resurrection day,
the past is over and gone!*

*Goodbye guilt, goodbye fear, good riddance!
Hello God, Hello sun!
I am one of the Easter People!
My new life has begun!*

-Richard Avery & Donald Marsh

One of the verses talks about being surrounded by bad news all the time, and certainly we can relate, but living as Easter people reminds us there is good news to be heard; good news to share! And as we reflected on Easter Sunday, we are called to see the emptiness, bear witness to the darkness, but called to live in the light and share that light with the world. So that’s our task: to live as Easter people acting with love and shining light in dark and empty places. And as my favorite song reminds us, we’re Easter people all the time, because every day is resurrection day!

That said, reflecting back on Easter Sunday brings a smile to my face! It was such a glorious day with the music from our chancel choir, the lilies filling the sanctuary with their sweet scent reminding us we are alive and blooming, and the flowered cross transformed from death to life by our own hands! Jenna McCarty created a truly remarkable and transformational piece of art from the contributions of thoughtful reflection and intention made by each of you as we contemplated each of the Four Agreements, in the culmination of our Lenten series, “A Covenant of the Heart.” She explained her process on Easter Sunday and the artwork remains on display in the sanctuary. The delicious brunch featuring our mad- to-order crepes made the day extra special! There were so many reasons to celebrate but I found it particularly powerful to see all

of you, all of us, living as the resurrected body of Christ holding the tension of the hard and painful along with the joy and celebration as we sang our Alleluias together! The Easter season continues until we arrive at Pentecost which we’ll celebrate on the final Sunday of the month, May 28th. Join us as we mark the day with “Pancakes on Pentecost” brought to us by the Membership Ministry in connection with Hospitality. Don’t forget the color of the holy day is red!

I’ve been so proud of our church and the way we continue to live out our ministry as an Open and Affirming Congregation. Last month we held both “Read with Royalty” and “Broadway Bingo” featuring local drag queens. Each event was so special and fun in its own way. It was heartwarming to see so many children and their families come out for the story time. There were lots of our own IUCC families and lots of community members that joined us. It was a really special day! Broadway Bingo was not just a fun-raiser, but also a fundraiser! It was a sold-out event that truly delivered in fun, delighting us in the hilarious performances as well as the competitive bingo rounds! It was great to see so many new faces along with our usual suspects enjoying a great evening together! Since it was our first time, there was a lot to learn, but it met and even exceeded its goal and brought in over \$1000 to our general budget. Many thanks to our Diversity and Inclusion Ministry for both events and especially to Pastor Craig and Pat Sauter and their team for doing the heavy lifting that transformed Plumer Hall for our very first drag queen bingo night!

April was an exciting month with 5 Sundays: Palm Sunday, Easter, Earth day and youth Sunday and a focus on our Stephen Ministry. Each day was special and unique in its own right! I was particularly excited to have Liz Savage, president of the Orange County Beekeepers Association present to share about local bees and urban beekeeping and teach us all about those hard working bees and their female-led communities. Youth Sunday featured our kids in a really adorable and cute puppet show which affirmed and illustrated our official United Church of Christ designations. The youth always delight and open us up to the Spirit among us. I hope you felt inspired learning about our Stephen Ministry and may consider a relationship with one or even becoming one! What a month filled with ministry! And on top of all that we received two

Pastor's article continued from Page 6

new members into our ministry: Rachel Humphreys and Setayesh Karimi!

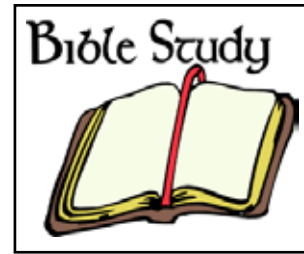
As we head into May we have a lot to look forward to as we celebrate Mother's Day, hold our annual meeting and celebrate new leadership, and of course, celebrate Pentecost! I'm looking forward to hosting an orientation into Progressive Christianity for those who are newer to our church or who are interested in an introduction to find out what Progressive Christianity is all about. There will be three sessions via zoom on Wednesday nights at 7pm: May 17, 24, and 31st.

I hope this month brings you the joy of spring, as we continue to blossom along our journeys celebrating every day as resurrection day!

With you along the journey,
Pastor Sarah



- 5/28 Jeffrey Gaskill
- 5/24 Sarah Gilliland
- 5/23 Dave Hodges
- 5/23 Connie Jones
- 5/07 Pam Kamps
- 5/02 Nathaniel KeslerWest
- 5/25 Jeannie Lee
- 5/31 Terry LePage
- 5/23 Christian Murdy
- 5/19 Cindy O'Dell
- 5/15 Dale Ramirez
- 5/29 Mark Rychnovsky
- 5/26 Scott Rychnovsky
- 5/05 Ron Steiner



Tuesday Bible Study

Bible Study meets every Tuesday from 4-5:30 p.m. in the Peace Room. We also include those who attend virtually by Zoom. Discussions are lively and fun. Led by the Rev. Ken Wyant, we like to explore a variety of viewpoints and interpretations. Beginners and drop-ins are welcome. All faith traditions are welcome! We value questions more than absolutes.

Our current topic is the Book of Acts. How did the early followers of Jesus establish Christianity as a church?



The Easter Stories

Based on the book *Resurrecting Easter* by John Dominic Crossan, this series is ongoing. It's a highly visual class with images from Eastern and Western Christianity of the resurrection through the early centuries of the Christian movement. What better way to honor Lent as we journey towards Easter 2023. As is the practice, a portion of the video will play first before being followed by discussion. All are welcome no matter where you may be on your faith journey.

11:00 a.m. Sundays in the Peace Room.

Please contact Craig Repp with any questions at: craigrepp@gmail.com

From the Moderator

by *Tricia Aynes*



Happy Spring! It's been glorious to see all the flowers beginning to bloom and hear the sweet birdsong. I enjoy this time of year when the cool and warm days take turns, so we don't really know what to expect.

It has been an honor and a privilege to be your Moderator for the past three years. Thank you for trusting me with this leadership position and giving me room to learn and grow. Even though I will not be "re-upping," I plan to continue serving in other capacities.

Spring Congregational Meeting

I hope you're all planning to attend the Spring Congregational Meeting on May 21 at 12:30 p.m. Per a unanimous vote of both boards, it will be held via Zoom (we'll provide you with the log-in information in e-blasts the week before the meeting). One of the main items of business will be to present you with a proposed slate of leaders created by the Nominating Committee (the Moderator, the Ministries Board Chair, the Admin Board Chair, the Senior Pastor, and the Membership Chair). We have been working very diligently to find well qualified and willing candidates to fill leadership spots for the July 2023 – June 2024 term. You will see some new names as well as some old favorites. I am so thankful to those who were willing to continue as leaders as well as those who were willing to say YES to taking on a new position!

Four hard-working leaders were "termed out" this year (meaning they served five terms in their respective roles). Please be sure to thank **Daniel Blackburn** (Chair of Admin Board), **Felicity Figueroa** (Chair of Ministries Board), **Steve Goetz** (Chair of Mission & Service Ministry) and **Pat Sauter** (Chair of Music Ministry) for their many years of faithful service!

Government Grants

As you know, we received a \$21,000 grant from the California State Nonprofit Security Grant Program. We've been using this money to enhance security around our premises in the following ways: adding outdoor security cameras, installing interior door locks, tinting interior windows, converting outdoor lighting to day/night control, purchasing hand-held two way radios, and upgrading exterior door locks.

More recently, our preschool has received conditional approval for a \$35,000 grant that will cover a new HVAC system, additional security upgrades, air purifiers, and a generator.

Committee Involvement

I've enjoyed working with various committees in an ex-officio capacity. It's been a pleasure to collaborate with the Fund Development Committee to help create strategies to enhance stewardship and launch a planned giving program. My work with the Child Care Committee has included helping with holiday programs, promotions, and brainstorming ways to increase enrollment. I've been excited to work with the Membership Committee to help develop new ways to welcome, recruit, and involve new members in the life of the congregation.

Recent Drag Queen Events

Our fun and low-key "Reading with Royalty" event on April 22 drew an audience of children and their parents and grandparents to hear Drag Queen Electra read from five books. Wearing a glamorous bouffant wig and clad in a lime green jumpsuit with loads of sparkling jewelry, the queen dazzled with her poise and style. Thanks to our partners from OCEC, there was plenty of security just in case of trouble. Fortunately, there were no worries on that score, and the event went on without a hitch.

On Friday, April 28, Jim and I had a blast attending IUCC's "Broadway Bingo," a fund-raising event hosted by Cucu Chanel and her Drag Queen Divas. It was the most fun I've ever had at church! Our first-ever Drag Queen Bingo event was a sold-out smash hit and so much fun! We owe a huge debt of gratitude to all the volunteers who decorated, cooked, served us delicious food, baked pastries, and cleaned up afterwards. Thank you!

In Summary

IUCC continues to face its challenges with optimism and courage. I have confidence that the generous-spirited members of our congregation will continue to work together in faith and optimism!

Tricia

D & I invites you to attend our video discussion about gender fluidity and pronouns

New D & I Book Study

by Lesli Mitchell, Co-Chair of D & I Ministry

Please join us May 28th from 1:00-2:30 pm for our D&I discussion about gender fluidity and pronouns. We will watch videos on this subject and then discuss.

Lesli Mitchell is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: My Meeting

Time: May 28, 2023 01:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Every month on the Fourth Sun, 12 occurrence(s)

May 28, 2023 01:00 PM

Jun 25, 2023 01:00 PM

Jul 23, 2023 01:00 PM

Aug 27, 2023 01:00 PM

Sep 24, 2023 01:00 PM

Oct 22, 2023 01:00 PM

Nov 26, 2023 01:00 PM

Dec 24, 2023 01:00 PM

Jan 28, 2024 01:00 PM

Feb 25, 2024 01:00 PM

Mar 24, 2024 01:00 PM

Apr 28, 2024 01:00 PM

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Monthly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZErf-yqjgp-G93Nge1dPflf_C7L3QB6s8QN/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGtqDMvGNyWsxIORpwMBIqgZ-rxiHZeifoOshjgUiRjZC_wCcEVHu-FOMo7D

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85685283319>

Meeting ID: 856 8528 3319

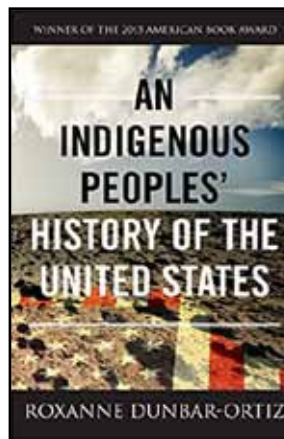
One tap mobile

+16699009128,,85685283319# US (San Jose)

+16694449171,,85685283319# US

Meeting ID: 856 8528 3319

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/ke-FIAHoBZz>



We are excited to continue our IUCC Book Study Tuesdays from 9-10:15 a.m. and we'd love for you to join us! We are reading An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, which won the American Book Award in 2015. We began our study on March 21st and we will continue as follows: On May 2nd, we will be covering Chapter 8 and 9; On May 9th, we will cover Chapters 10 and 11; and we will finish with the conclusion on Tuesday May 16th. You do not need to have attended any of the earlier meetings/discussions in order to participate in future discussions.

We look forward to reading, learning and discussing together!

Here is the link to the book:

<https://www.amazon.com/Indigenous-Peoples-History-ReVisioning-American/dp/0807057835>

We'll share a Zoom link with those who are interested in participating.

Please reach out to Lesli Mitchell if you are interested in participating in any of the upcoming book studies. leslimitchellart@yahoo.com

Fund Development News

by Duane Vajgrt, Co-Chair of Fund Development



...ensuring our future

Dear fellow IUCC congregants,

Information with regard to the dates of the seminar have been updated since this article first appeared in last month's newsletter. **IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO STILL SIGN UP!**

As I hope you're all aware, we are in the process of building a Legacy Circle at IUCC, a program to help ensure the financial viability of IUCC and its multiple missions well into the future. The Legacy Circle would be part of your estate planning. Consequently, the IUCC Fund Development Committee strongly encourages you to take advantage of a free six session seminar series provided by a not-for-profit called It's Your Money And Estate (www.IYME.org). This not-for-profit is endorsed by many charitable sponsors, including the American Heart Association, Chapman University, CHOC Hospital, the Pacific symphony, Susan G. Komen, and others.

Already having IUCC named in our trust, I haven't personally attended this seminar series, but two different couple friends of mine have taken the seminar series and enthusiastically endorse it as being extremely valuable and helpful. In fact, they both engaged with recommended representatives from the seminar in assisting them to develop their wills, trust and estate planning.

As mentioned, the seminar is free and consists of six sessions which began in April with both Zoom sessions and in-

person seminar series. The two different series offered are "It's Your Money!" and "It's Your Estate." "It's Your Estate" would be more pertinent to estate planning and the Legacy Circle, though both workshops are pertinent and informative. Four of the six sessions are still available throughout the month of May for both of the Zoom series, so there is still time to capture a significant portion of the pertinent information in the series. As many as five of the six sessions remain with regard to some of the in-person series, depending on the 9 different locations in Orange County.

This is the sort of thing that it is very easy to procrastinate about, especially with regard to establishing wills and trusts. For the sake of your family and loved ones, this is something we should all address much sooner than later. Please take advantage of this opportunity to educate yourself and be proactive about your future plans. Go to the website www.IYME.org for all the details and to sign up. If you are willing, we would love to hear back when you sign up and your assessment of the value of the seminar once completed. You can contact Duane Vajgrt at djvmd@icloud.com. Thank you.

Most sincerely,

The IUCC Fund Development Committee

Welcome



**Please Welcome
Julia Morrow - MYP's
new Youth Coordinator
for the summer**

MYP is pleased to announce Julia Morrow will be joining MYP as a Child and Youth Coordinator for the summer!

Julia was born and raised in Southern California and is currently living in Wheaton while completing her BA in Philosophy and Biblical and Theological Studies from Wheaton College. After graduating next spring, she is planning to pursue an MDiv and PhD in theology and politics, with the intention of becoming ordained. In her free time, Julia enjoys taking long walks in the Midwestern landscape, reading feminist theology, and essentially lives at her local library. She works in communications at an ELCA church in Illinois, and also does a lot of work at the intersection of Christianity and social justice; her affiliations include the Trevor Project, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and the Women's Ordination Conference.

You are more than welcome to introduce yourself to Julia! She may be an introvert (an INFP and 1 w2, for the MBTI/Enneagram folks), but she loves talking to people and has confirmed firsthand that she would most definitely love to meet you. Julia is excited to be joining the team at IUCC and is looking forward to becoming a part of such a vibrant, loving community.

MYP Refreshed Webpages

MYP has TWO new webpages! Come visit our Community page for events & info - <https://iucc.org/myp> and share our Visitors page - <https://iucc.org/youth>

Upcoming Events

Ministries Fair - June 4th after both services
MYP Bowling Time - June 4th likely at 1pm
Pilgrim Pines Camp - July pilgrimpinescamp.org

**Save the Date!
June 11 is our Joint Choir
Concert with Church of the
Foothills**



Save the Date! Please plan to attend our upcoming June 11th Joint Choir Concert at 7:00 p.m. at Church of the Foothills. A choir of 45-50 voices will sing Rutter's Gloria, accompanied by organ and other instruments. There will be other anthems on the program sung by soloists and each choir participating. There are no ticket sales, but a free will offering will be split by the two churches.

In Loving Memory

KELLY CARSE MORIN

05/08/66 - /4/24/2023

Please join us in celebrating her life.

Saturday 20 May at 10:00 AM

Irvine United Congregational Church

4915 Alton Parkway, Irvine



Ministry with Young People

Captions and photos provided by Lauren Louie



Palm Sunday:

We learned about symbols of Holy Week and asked how bunnies, chicks, and chocolate covered eggs entered the scene. We made peep towers and learned about Jesus as a celebrity with palms and walking a catwalk - many of us as famous cats!



Easter Lesson:

"I saw something" - youths whisper to the next person in line about the tomb



Easter Scavenger Hunt: Puzzling out clues and racing around IUCC!



Easter Bunny Pastor Craig - our last clue - tried to make a run for it!



For April, we used our senses (don't peek in the bags!) for the Apostle Thomas lesson and upcycled to learn about Earth Day and our Four Designations!



Practicing for Youth Sunday, when the youth will lead our services! The kids will present IUCC's Four Designations through puppets and songs. Older youth will share their wisdom through story and poetry. Special thanks to Creative Director Pastor Craig!



This Saturday is the 35th Annual Great American Write-In, a free event at which community members raise their voices by writing to legislators and other decision-makers to bring about positive change in health policies, the environment, peace, human and civil rights, and education! The IUCC Advocates will have a table there along with sixty other organizations and advocacy groups, so please join us to make your priorities heard! Saturday, May 6, from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the Delhi Center in Santa Ana. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/great-american-write-in-tickets-599236150457>

CELEBRATE
THE 35th ANNUAL
**GREAT AMERICAN
WRITE-IN**

Sponsored by
WOMEN FOR: ORANGE COUNTY

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2023
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

DELHI COMMUNITY CENTER
505 E. Central Ave., Santa Ana 92707



The Pen Is Mightier Than The Sword!

At the Write-In:

- **MEET** representatives of local and national advocacy groups!
- **LEARN** about today's vital issues!
- **RAISE YOUR VOICE** by **WRITING** to the decision-makers who can make a difference in health, the environment, peace, human and civil rights, education!

www.facebook.com/events/730007888591293/

For more information, please contact
Felicity Figueroa 949-733-0850 or felicitynf@aol.com

FREE ADMISSION! FREE PARKING!

Participating Organizations

*Americans United for Separation of Church & State
Amnesty International Irvine
Brady Orange County
California Coalition to End Child Marriage
California Work & Family Coalition
Childs-pace Foundation, Inc.
Church of the Foothills UCC & DOC - Faith in Action
Citizens' Climate Lobby
Climate Reality Project-OC Chapter
CLUE-Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice
Community Action Fund of Planned Parenthood of OSBC
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. OC Alumnae Chapter
Fairview for Affordable Housing
Friends Committee on National Legislation Advocacy Team
Global Hope 365
Habitat for Humanity of Orange County
HB Huddle
Heritage Museum of Orange County
Holy Angels Church
Housing is a Human Right OC
Humanist Association of OC
Iranian American Democrats of California
IUCC Advocates for Peace and Justice
League of Women Voters
LGBTQ Center OC
Los Amigos of Orange County
LULAC - Orange County, District #1
Military Families Speak Out
Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, O.C. Chapter
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Negro Women, Orange County Section
National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW)
National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC)
Newport Beach Women's Democratic Club
OC Equality Coalition (OCEC)
OC Human Relations
OC Interfaith Committee to Aid Farmworkers
OC Justice Fund
OC May Day Collective
OC National Organization for Women (NOW)
OC Peace Coalition
OC Rapid Response Network
OC Rights Collective - Palestinian Youth Movement
People's Budget OC
Progressive Democrats of America - People Demanding Action
Radiant Health Centers
StandUp for Kids
Transforming Justice OC
United Nations Association - USA, O.C. Chapter
Veterans for Peace - Orange County Chapter
Women for American Values and Ethics (WAVE)
Women's Rights Action Group of Tapestry, a UU Congregation
Zonta Club of Newport Harbor*

FREE REFRESHMENTS! FREE POSTAGE!