An Easter Sunday filled with light and love!
Ten years ago, this congregation made a very wise choice in calling the Rev. Paul Tellström. With his deft touch, tact, and gentleness of spirit, he has guided from within our midst with great care and sensitivity. He makes time for anyone who needs him, and his quiet kindness and thoughtful nature keep this congregation on an even keel.

He fosters a safe and loving environment where people are accepted and encouraged to be themselves. We are fortunate to have a pastor who listens and observes and doesn't try to control others. Those qualities have kept IUCC healthy and viable as a congregational church.

We will be celebrating this important 10th anniversary on Sunday, April 24. Please join us for either the early or late service and plan to attend a celebratory toast at 10:45 a.m. (between the two services) on the patio.

~Tricia Aynes, Editor
My message this month will be brief and to the point. It is about gratitude.

I began serving this congregation as your pastor ten years ago this month. I am grateful to this congregation for the love and support you have given me over these years, as well as the trust you have placed in me. I hope you know how much I love this congregation—you are a kind, thoughtful and loving group of people.

IUCC has been blessed with an abundance of good leadership over the years and the same is true today. I have seen people step up and give their best over and over, always with the desire to serve their church as well as possible. There has been so much forward momentum as so many talents worked together to make things happen.

Every day I get to work with a talented and supportive staff, and for that I am truly grateful. These are people who put their greatest efforts into everything they do, and they rise to each challenge with grace and humor. I love to find myself in their company.

I have seen wonderful things transpire at IUCC. There have been new people who have found us, just as we have also lost some of the great saints of the church along the way. I’ve heard it said of pastors that you know you belong when you stop saying, “you,” and start saying, “we.” After a time, we begin to lose a little of our professional distance, find ourselves caught up in the emotion of it all, and realize just how much we are affected by every loss as we lead a memorial service, and how moved and happy we are at each wedding. On Christmas Eve, the darkness is pierced by the light of candles shining on the faces of people we know, drawn together by hope and love. In the bright fluorescent light of hospitals and nursing homes, we share less hopeful news with our people sometimes simply by being a non-anxious presence.

I have experienced all of these things with you, and it has been a tremendous privilege. There are more exciting things ahead for IUCC, and Carl and I are onboard to continue to share some more time with you.

IUCC is now about the work of seeing if we might do something bold and forward thinking. I am here to be a part of sharing with you as we put the enthusiasm of these last few years into the tangible means of providing a much-needed expansion for us, as well as leaving a legacy for another generation as we build this new building, the first of three phases.

I had no idea when I began my call here that ten years later Carl and I would be deciding on the gift we are committed to giving for this project. The decision was not difficult.

We are both grateful to IUCC. We feel embraced and loved as we are. It would never have occurred to either of us that some eight years in, there would be such a wedding to a packed house with such a sense of joy in the room—when the doors opened in the back, it felt like perfume. The openness of this congregation is something that needs to be experienced by more and more people. A Progressive Christian church in Irvine is something well worth making into a more significant presence. We will give to that kind of vision. I know others will as well.

To mark this tenth anniversary, Carl and I thank you for the many kindnesses we have received and the relationships we have created.

Blessings,
Pastor Paul
Sanctuary is a word with various meanings: a nature reserve; the room inside a church or synagogue where religious services are held; a place of refuge, safety, retreat.

IUCC is indeed a sanctuary. Most Sundays, as part of the prayers of the people, Pastor Paul begins by saying “this is a safe place.” That idea resonated with me in a new way as I heard the Rev. Sarah Halverson Cano speak at our first forum to commemorate/celebrate the 25th anniversary of our becoming an Open and Affirming (ONA) church. She spoke of how, after we became an ONA church in June of 1991, we became a sanctuary for people dying of AIDS. As she said, they came to our church to die, often having been turned away from other congregations with indifference, with hesitance, sometimes with open antagonism. IUCC offered a pathway to die with dignity in a place of safety and refuge. What a powerful mission for a congregation!

Because AIDS is often open to treatment today, and because we are joined by some other congregations who offer community to people who cope with rejection, we can too-easily overlook a continuing truth: IUCC is still a sanctuary - a safe place, a refuge - for those looking for a place of acceptance, of unconditional love, of searching, of inclusion. A place where heart and mind can come together and both be highly valued. A place where questions are encouraged and our answers can be different. We continue to be a special place of worship and, when required, a place of refuge.

Leading us for the past ten years, in this our safe place, has been our pastor, Paul Tellström. A decade ago, the search committee was looking for a pastor who would continue to lead us, as Fred Plumer had done, with a sense of social justice and a pursuit of being intentional about “serving the least among us.” The committee was looking for someone who could share the vision of Jesus in our lives through powerful, challenging sermons. It was clear that Paul had those gifts.

Time and time again, I hear how members and visitors highly value Paul’s sermons. He has an incredible ability to weave a picture with words and to make us feel as if we were present at that place and time. His sermons comfort us, challenge us, renew our faith, bring a sense of community, and encompass the love of Jesus. His caring words delivered in a measured, empathetic way are the best part of worship for me.

Those caring ways are expressed in so many other avenues: at meetings, in one-on-one conversations, in gatherings with our young people, in greeting visitors, in visiting those who are ill or in need, in working with the staff and lay leaders, and in being a good listener and friend.

We will be celebrating Pastor Paul’s 10th anniversary on April 24. Join us for either the 9:30 or 11:00 worship service AND for a celebratory toast at 10:45 a.m. (between the two services) on the patio. Paul has been a blessing in the life of IUCC. I hope you can be there on April 24 to say thank you in person!

In faith and community,

Renae
On March 13, IUCC hosted its second Open & Affirming (ONA) 25th Anniversary event, which featured the Rev. Paul Tellström and the Rev. William R. Johnson, the first openly gay person to be ordained by any Christian church. Pastor Paul talked about his own personal experiences of needing an ONA church in New York City as a young man during the early days of the AIDS crisis, and later of the difficulty of getting ordained as a minister as a gay man in a homophobic church association.

Johnson spoke of his decades-long story going back to 1972 when he and an ally founded the UCC Gay Caucus, which made its debut at a UCC General Synod. He became the primary advocate for adoption of UCC social policy resolutions around lesbian/gay acceptance. In 1978, at the request of Dr. William Sloan Coffin, Senior Minister of the historic Riverside Church in New York City, he planned two educational forums about homosexuality and the concerns of lesbian/gay people. The forums gave birth to Maranatha: Riversiders for Lesbian/Gay Concerns.

“I had taken the initiative with Bill Coffin because I knew the spiritual needs of our community could best be addressed in local churches … but people had to feel truly welcomed and affirmed,” he reported. “None of us involved in founding Maranatha knew we were nurturing the ONA commitment Riverside would make a few years later.

“At the Massachusetts Conference, a group of lesbian coalition members began talking about the next General Synod .... Around a kitchen table, they wrote a resolution calling on all UCC congregations to declare themselves Open and Affirming,” he continued. “Poignant, often painful, personal stories had been shared in various setting of the church and at Synod. The power of personal story telling was invaluable.”

In 1985, the General Synod overwhelmingly adopted the resolution. An ONA committee was formed, and Johnson says it “envisioned, wrote, and produced a wealth of affordable ONA resources, many of which are probably owned by your church.” The ONA resources were designed to help churches face issues directly, and they emphasized study and dialog within the local church. They offered an answer to the oft-heard objection, “Why do we have to do this?” The response was, “Welcome means very little unless it is experienced and felt as genuine. They reminded UCC members that gays and lesbians had learned from painful experience that a vague welcome usually didn’t include them or their families.”

Some churches went above and beyond. In 1992, IUCC’s own Susan Sherman and Jay Libby, with support from then Pastor Fred Plumer, produced a film documenting the ONA process at three churches: IUCC, First Congregational in Long Beach, and Pilgrim Congregational in Carlsbad. The nearly hour-long film, entitled “Open and Affirming: A Journey of Faith” was widely distributed throughout the UCC and helped many churches understand the process and procedure of becoming ONA.

“The ministries of ONA churches caused the UCC to realize it was uniquely positioned to spread the message of extravagant welcome,” Johnson explained. “As he tells it, one night Ron Buford, then a gay UCC national staff person, awoke from a sound sleep with an idea …. It was simple: God is still speaking! In 2004, Ron unveiled an identity and marketing campaign to let others know that anyone could find a spiritual home in the UCC, be nurtured and strengthened in their faith, and be blessed to share with others their God-given gifts and talents.”

Still later, the effect of the ONA movement was felt in the fight for marriage equality. Johnson reported that in 2005, “The UCC became the first mainline denomination to call for full equality and marriage rights for lesbian and gay couples. There is no doubt the near unanimous vote was an expression of the ONA commitment that had grown throughout the church.”

“At the beginning of this year, 26% of all UCC congregations -1,300 congregations – had made an ONA commitment,” he explained. “But the ONA coalition is not settling - it wants all 5,000 UCC churches to be ONA.”

IUCC looks forward to more such events as our 25th Anniversary Celebration continues!

~Tricia Aynes
IUCC is delighted to welcome Pastor Steve Swope as our new Director of Adult Program Ministry! Long-time members will remember him as IUCC’s interim minister from 2004-2006, after Pastor Fred Plumer’s departure and before Pastor Paul’s arrival.

At the invitation of Pastor Paul and the IUCC Adult Education Ministry, Steve recently volunteered to lead a Lenten series of Adult Sunday School classes here. He brought a wealth of knowledge and insight to the exploration of modern experiences of “Sabbath” in response to the demands of contemporary society.

Steve is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and has been an ordained UCC minister for over thirty years, serving in Ohio, Kentucky, California - and most recently in Columbia, Missouri, from 2010-2015.

During his intentional internship time with the Southern California-Nevada Conference, UCC (2000-2010), Steve led six congregations through significant transition and expanded each congregation’s programs including teaching ministries.

Steve will be working here 20 hours a week. As part of a ministry team, his responsibilities will include: developing, implementing, and leading programs to attract and engage adults: planning and promoting weekly programs for adult education and special activities that lift up the congregation's progressive vision and mission; and working with staff and leaders to promote congregational growth and retention.

Steve and his wife Mary live in Rancho Santa Margarita. We are delighted that their memories of IUCC were fond enough to bring them back to us!

Dawn Price and her husband Jerry joined IUCC in 2012. She is Executive Director of Friendship Shelter, Inc. Its goal is to end homelessness, one person at a time, in southern Orange County. Toward that end, Friendship Shelter has recently added nearly 60 units of Permanent Supportive Housing in Southern Orange County, with about 20 additional units set to become available in late 2016/early 2017.

Dawn has spent most of her 33 year career serving human services and educational organizations that help disadvantaged individuals. Prior to joining FSI, she served Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, Planned Parenthood of Greater Iowa, and Drake University in various management and fundraising capacities. She holds an MA in Mass Communications from Drake University and a BA in English from Carthage College, as well as a certificate in non-profit leadership from Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management.

WHAT IS MIDWEEK SALON?
Midweek Salon is an exciting new series from the Adult Programs Ministry that will be held monthly on select Wednesday evenings. Based on a TED Talk model, each Salon 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 to address topics that are fascinating, intriguing and thought-provoking (but preferably not religious, political, or partisan).

Take the Survey!
We’d like to know what topics might intrigue you! Please go to the Survey Monkey link and answer the easy questions: https://da.surveymonkey.com/r/IUCC-Salon
IUCC’s Midweek Salon series was off to a great start on March 30 with the fascinating Carl Whidden as our guest speaker. 35 people were on hand to hear Carl, a classically trained actor, talk about his craft and offer some insightful anecdotes and observations.

49 years ago, he was in a play and decided to become an actor. “You have to be born with talent – something God gives you or doesn’t – but it can be shaped, coached, and trained,” he said. “How do you shape talent? You need to be with people who understand and can instill discipline in you. In addition to our day classes, we were exposed to great playwrights six days a week from 7 to 11 every night. The first year, I played characters from Don Quixote to Lord Byron and back again.” Even after all that time and work, returning for another year wasn’t a sure thing, though. “All our teachers had to say ‘yes’ for us to be asked back the next year,” he added.

At one point, Carl had the opportunity to audition for the great Felix Knight, a famous stage and screen actor/singer who was teaching all of Broadway at the time. He was nervous because Knight was notorious for not accepting new students. “I sang for him, and he said, ‘Hmm. Good. Yes.’ Later, Knight explained, ‘You did one thing I try and try to teach students – you closed a tone naturally, you let the breath support the voice.’”

Carl was lucky enough to become one of Felix’s regular students, and singing became a big part of his background and training. Felix was a tough taskmaster, though. He’d encourage students to keep trying until they got it right, then say, “Now that you’ve done it properly, you’re not allowed to go back [and do it wrong].” Carl said that Felix was the greatest teacher he ever had.

Much of Carl’s training involved the classics. “If you are trained to play the classics, you can play anything,” he said. “Those actors who are capable of playing comedy can play tragedy, but the opposite is not true. There’s a rhythm to comedy. Comedy and tragedy are very close in scale – it just depends on your point of view.”

Carl and Paul had the same agent and were often up for the same roles. Carl did a lot of stage work in New York before the two moved to California in 1985. Once here, Carl was fortunate to continue acting with regional repertory companies.

His advice to new actors is to always know all your lines and music before reporting to the first rehearsal, even if you’re doing multiple plays. “It’s daunting, but I’ve never found learning lines difficult,” he says. “I need to be in a completely quiet room with the script for at least an hour a day.”

When asked about the biggest surprise he experienced on stage, Carl laughed at the memory. “I was acting in Arsenic and Old Lace, and I was supposed to open a window seat and discover a dead body. I was having problems acting shocked enough for the take. When I opened the window seat one night, the actor inside was stark naked!” He didn’t have to try to act very surprised that night!

Carl’s said his best advice came from the great Jack Lemon: “Learn everything you can about everything you can. The more you know, the more you will be able to play – you can pull from that library of knowledge.” Another good piece of advice is: “If you want to call forth emotion, relax.”

It can be challenging to perform the same role in the same play for a long run. When that happens, Carl suggests, “Present the play as if it’s for the first time, even if it’s eight days a week! Instill new objectives to make it real and effective. Find another source to allow it to be organic.”

The audience can make a huge difference to an actor. “The effect of a good audience is to give you energy – to energize you and make you better. It informs you and sharpens you.”

IUCC was very fortunate to have Carl as our first Midweek Salon speaker (thanks, Carl!), and we look forward to hearing from more exciting people in our church family in the months ahead!
On Easter, the new rendering for IUCC’s Master Plan – Phase I was unveiled (see above). For the first time, we can start to visualize the campus enhancements that will take place during the first phase.

Shown from the perspective of Plumer Hall, this image looks across the proposed fellowship space, with ample bench seating beneath canopy shade trees so that everyone, no matter what age or physical condition, can enjoy the fellowship of others. A new coffee corner, near the sanctuary entrance, will enhance and ease coffee hour hosting. The enlarged narthex connects directly to the new administrative building, with a welcoming lobby, staff offices, volunteer work space (with carrels to plug in a laptop, organize for a meeting, or prep for a service or advocacy project), private pastoral counseling space and four configurable meeting rooms (with a total capacity of 100). The image below is an artist’s rendering of the welcoming new church frontage along Alton Parkway.

To view more images and to learn more about the Embracing the Future campaign that IUCC has launched to fund Phase I, please click to the “Campaign” tab at iucc.org/documents.

With the Embracing the Future campaign, IUCC has undertaken a capital campaign to fund the first phase of IUCC’s Master Plan. Each of us is asked to prayerfully consider how we will support this effort with as generous a gift as possible, payable over three years. Most of us will be making this financial commitment using accumulated assets, not the funds we need for day-to-day living.

In addition to outright gifts of cash, there are many ways to make a generous pledge. Please join us for a “Ways to Give” forum to learn about some of the options, including: gifts of securities, converting jewelry or artwork, IRA assets, IRA charitable transfers, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, and irrevocable bequests.

**Ways to Give**
Sunday, April 17, 12:15 pm - Plumer Hall
Tuesday, April 19, 2:30 pm - Plumer Hall

For more information, please contact Tommie Kozlov or Anne Rosse.
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 embracing the 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 have been hard at work, creating materials and events designed to inform, excite and energize this congregation. The Capital Campaign Team is: Anne Rosse (chair), Pastor Paul, Mark Allen, Keith Boyum, Linda Haghi, Tommie Kozlov, Bill Lawrence, Chris Redrich and Pat Sauter. Michael Spindle is working closely and sovaluably with us as well. And, IUCC is benefitting tremen-
dously from the wise and experienced counsel of our consultant, the Rev. Priscilla Bizer, Capital Fundraising Executive, UCC’s Capital Campaign Services. She visits IUCC approximately every 3-4 weeks throughout the campaign and is in constant contact with us. During a recent visit, Priscilla referred to this group as a “dream team.” I couldn’t agree more! We are truly blessed by how this stellar and talented group is serving our beloved church.

In April, a group of dedicated volunteers is joining Keith in starting to visit with IUCC households and leaders, inviting them to join us as early campaign supporters. Our goal is to reach at least 60% of our campaign total by early May. In May, the campaign will move into its more public phase as we begin to invite all IUCC members and friends to join us in pledging to the campaign.

In addition to outright gifts of cash, there are many ways to make a generous pledge. Please join us in April for a “Ways to Give” forum to learn about some of the options, including: gifts of securities, converting jewelry or artwork, IRA assets, IRA charitable transfers, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, and irrevocable bequests.

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, for embracing the future!

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.
Dear Readers,

Spring is a lovely season on this Earth. My garden is in bloom, and my neighbor’s succulents are ablaze. It’s a time to plant, and it’s a time to see the snow on the mountains, the beach at sunset, and the desert flowers.

I am delighted to learn that GreenFaith will be celebrating Earth Day throughout April. The GreenFaith Team has many events planned for IUCC. We love the Earth and our Church family because we all want to be stewards of the Earth.

Spring is also a time of recollection. My niece reminded me of the very first Earth Day. She was at Woodrow Wilson High School. It had rained the night before, the sky was blue, and she could see the Earth for miles. The school assembly was created by the students to honor Earth Day. They were budding environmentalists.

The Earth gives us many gifts. I pray that Mother Earth remains strong and beautiful - forever young and always wise.

Love,
Miss Lily

For the Earth, Vivian Johnson, and your GREEN team
(Howard Emery, Judy Curry, Nancy Dreckman, Eileen Vincent, and Carol Goetz)
Another glorious Holy Week has come and passed with great flourish. This year’s Maundy Thursday service featured Todd Thompson on recorder as a special treat, and it is always wonderful to have the brass join us on Easter morning. The Easter story causes me to feel incredibly grateful. I feel truly blessed to be a part of this church, and most importantly the Music Ministry. I never tire of saying what a privilege it is to be a part of the Chancel Choir and provide music every week for the congregation, particularly on a special week like Holy Week.

Easter has come and gone, and Spring is upon us. I love this time of year because of the occasional rain and the sprouting of new growth. Our Chancel Choir continues to grow with the addition of our new choral intern, Brianna Finnell. She came to us on recommendation from her classmate at UCI, our very own Angelica Rowell. Brianna is singing in the 1st Soprano section, and we are so fortunate to have her with us. Here is an introduction to Brianna in her own words:

I was born in Palm Springs and I lived in the Coachella Valley my entire life. My parents were also born and raised in the desert. My parents are Christian and they felt it was important for my siblings and me to have strong faith.

I’ve been performing since I was 3 years old. I explored many creative outlets such as piano, clarinet, percussion, dance and other arts. Above all I always enjoyed singing, but never considered it as a career until I attended College of the Desert and met my voice professor Tim Bruneau. I soon realized that singing was my true passion. I was very active in the music community in my hometown. I was an intern for the California Desert Chorale, played Cosette in Les Miserables, and won the McCallum Theatre Open Call Competition. I also was a cabaret artist at the Hyatt Palm Springs and various restaurants in the valley. I knew that was all temporary and unsustainable if I didn’t get my Bachelor’s degree.

I transferred to UC Irvine as a vocal performance major. I will graduate in the spring of 2018. My ultimate goal is to be able to support myself through music. I would love to make it big, but God has his plans.

So far I really love the environment of IUCC. I love the music selection and the collaboration with instrumentalists. I especially love that IUCC is accepting of everyone, since we are all on our own unique spiritual journey.

I hope to gain more sacred repertoire, improve my sight reading skills, and make lots of connections while I’m an intern.

*     *     *     *     *     *     *     *     *     *

Brianna is a sweet, wonderful addition to the choir. If you haven’t already done so, please speak with her on a Sunday and get to know her. Thanks again to the congregation for supporting the choral intern program!

~ Joni Baker
Mark Your Calendar

ISAIAH HOUSE SHELTER  
WED. * APRIL 13 * afternoon  
Once a month, IUCC volunteers bring food to the homeless. Contact Steve Goetz for details.

WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP  
WED. * APRIL 6 * 6:30 p.m.  
Women’s Fellowship will meet in Plumer Hall at 6:30 p.m. on April 6. Talk to Pat Sauter about details.

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE UPDATE  
SUNDAY * APRIL 10 * 1:00 p.m.  
Join the Rev. Masashi Sato for a recovery update and future prospects of the areas affected by the great East Japan Earthquake. Questions? contact Randy or Ken for details.

MATTIEF'S ORDINATION  
SERVICE & RECEPTION  
SUNDAY * APRIL 10 * 3:30 p.m.  
Matthew Redrich’s service will be at 3:30 p.m., with reception following. Everyone from IUCC is invited to attend.

MATTHEW’S ORDINATION  
SERVICE & RECEPTION  
SUNDAY * APRIL 10 * 3:30 p.m.  
Matthew Redrich’s service will be at 3:30 p.m., with reception following. Everyone from IUCC is invited to attend.

ELIZABETH SCHILLER WOULD LOVE CARDS-  
Former long time IUCC member Elizabeth Schiller has moved to an Assisted Living Facility recently. She would like her friends from IUCC to have her new address and would love to hear from anyone who wants to send a card:  
Elizabeth Schiller  
190 Hillcrest Drive,  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360.

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.

COFFEE HOSTS  
Everybody loves the coffee and snack time between services and after second service. We are very much in need of people to host this coffee hour. Please contact Pat Sauter.

EARTH MONTH EVENT  
SUNDAY * APRIL 24 * 12:30 p.m.  
As part of Earth Month at IUCC, Professor Jay Famiglietti will speak on “The Epic California Drought and Groundwater Depletion as Viewed from Space.”

MIDWEEK SALON  
WED * APRIL 27 * 7 p.m.  

WEDNESDAYS IN MAY  
“Reading Amos in a Culture of Inequality” with George & Vivian Johnson starts May 4th. Choices: Mornings at 9:20 a.m. or Evenings at 7:15 p.m. A five week Bible Study and Prophetic Analysis that will inform, challenge and inspire. Registration forms are available on the information table on the patio.

COFFEE HOSTS  
Everybody loves the coffee and snack time between services and after second service. We are very much in need of people to host this coffee hour. Please contact Pat Sauter.

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Some Special Requests

12
Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study
to focus on the Gospel of John

On April 12 at 4:00 p.m. in Plumer Hall, we will move forward in our study of the New Testament in the order it was written (per Marcus Borg’s book *Evolution of the Word*) by examining the Gospel of John. Ken Wyant leads the study.

Traditionally, this book was thought to be written by John, The Beloved Disciple, as one of the earliest New Testament texts. Modern scholarship shows that it was written toward the end of the First Century, and it was almost certainly written by someone other than John.

Everyone is welcome at Bible Study whether you want to become a regular or just drop in for one session. Differences of opinion add spice to our conversation, so please bring your ideas and perceptions as we all seek a better understanding of the Bible and the context in which it was written.

We have made a habit of adjourning to a nearby restaurant to continue the discussion and fellowship.

IUCC Women’s Retreat -
Only 3 Sundays left to sign up!

IUCC Women’s Retreat
April 29 to May 1
Pilgrim Pines Camp

Women’s Retreat to focus on “finding the sacred in the ordinary”

Registration for the IUCC Women’s Retreat begins Sunday, April 3, during the coffee hours. Be sure to visit the registration table on the patio to sign up and ensure your place at this memorable weekend away at Pilgrim Pines.

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. You can also count on a choice of Saturday afternoon leisure activities, hardy meals, refreshing mountain air, love and laughter. Don’t miss it!

Registration is $140 for all or part of the weekend, and includes all meals from Friday night through Sunday morning. Some scholarships are available; if you need assistance, speak to a planning committee member (Lorraine Fox, Nancy Harris, Laura Long, JoAnne Mansell, or Pat Sauter).

Still Speaking Cinema

Do you love the movies? If so, we’ve got a club for you. The Still Speaking Cinema is a club for IUCC members (and their guests) who enjoy watching great films with their friends, then discussing those films over a danish and a hot cup of coffee. A new title will be offered to members of the club every month. You simply watch the film, then at the end of the month, we get together and talk about what each of us got out of the film. If there’s enough interest, we may arrange screenings at the church. If this sounds like something you’d be interested in, talk to Keith Dillon after church or call him at 714-522-5471.
Next month we'll begin talking about the third aspect of the “self,” having given attention to self-concept and self-esteem. This month I'm going to share some very wise thoughts about adult responsibilities in building self-esteem in children by two authors I admire. Why say something myself when I can share what others have said the following so eloquently.

Dr. Nathanial Branden: Parents/Adults can build self-esteem by:

1. **TREATING CHILDREN WITH RESPECT**
   We want children to expect and perceive that this kind of treatment is normal. We want them to understand that this respectful behavior is the best way to communicate with other people. Some children feel loved by their parents, but not respected. Children become frustrated when they're not taken seriously by adults. It confuses a child when they know their parent would die for them, but when they are not treated with courtesy and respect by the same people.

2. **LOOKING AT, AND LISTENING TO, CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE TALKING**
   Don’t cut children off, or finish sentences for them. Don’t unnecessarily correct them or do other work when they are speaking to you. They can sense your impatience or lack of interest. A child who is not allowed to have a voice in what happens to him/her will not feel entitled to his/her own views as an adult.

3. **TOUCHING YOUR CHILD**
   Long before a child can understand words, s/he understands touch. Declarations of love without touch are unconvincing and hollow. Hugging and kissing your child and holding his/her hand are very basic and important ways of expressing love, comfort, support and nurturing. Through touch we send sensory stimulation that helps the child's brain develop.

4. **INSPIRING RATHER THAN DEMANDING**
   Self-esteem cannot be “given”; it is always generated from within. But self-esteem can be inspired. Treating a child with love, respect and acceptance creates the context in which the best chance exists that the child is going to internalize your messages and generate a powerful sense of self from within. We want to remember that it is important to respect the child's need to struggle in the learning process. It is tempting to step in and tell a child the answer, or show them how to solve the problem. Part of the feeling of achievement that comes from learning is the sense of having tackled a problem and subdued it – of having won by virtue of your own efforts. Children need to learn the extent of their own abilities – that they can overcome problems in the world, even if it takes a certain amount of effort.

Dr. Robert Brooks: Fostering Self-Esteem and Resilience:

1. Learning to discover what is truly important.
2. Learning to be empathic and see the world through the eyes of another.
3. Recognizing differences in resilience, and the need for a “charismatic adult.”
4. Searching for “islands of competence”: focusing on strength and courage.
5. Setting realistic expectations and goals.
6. Accepting the individuality of each child.
7. Delegating responsibility: developing the act of contributing.
8. Providing opportunities to make choices and decisions, and learning how to solve problems: the importance of a sense of ownership.
10. Shifting from a crisis intervention to a crisis prevention approach.
11. Offering positive feedback and encouragement: Avoiding a “praise deficit.”