The Newsletter
For August!

**Important:**
If you, or someone you know, wishes to receive this *News & Notes* but cannot access the Internet, please do either of the following: [a] let the church office know at (949) 733-0220, and we can mail a printed copy; or [b] just pick up a printed copy in the narthex on a Sunday morning.

**From the Pastor’s Desk …**

On Sabbatical!

Watch for an article upon Pastor Tellström’s return.

**From the Associate Pastor**

Sometimes you overhear the most amazing things! For some of us, Plumer Hall is truly a holy place—a place of enlightenment, learning, fellowship, and sacredness.

Especially those who were part of IUCC when the congregation worshipped in the small dome may share these sentiments. Others of us find the structure to be too bulky and not conducive to small group meetings, the ceiling too high and the space unworkable for eco-friendly heating and cooling, or the environment somewhat cold and distant.
But I say it’s not the structure (or even the location of it) that counts. It’s the people! And if you listen closely, people are having amazing conversations in our fellowship hall these days—conversations full of hope, joy, and love for our church.

So in that vein, I offer you the first edition of Overheard in Plumer Hall. Only time will tell if there will be future editions. And if you’re wondering, yes, these comments all came from the under-30 set in our congregation.

- Game Nights are great! I got my job through a connection I made at Game Night.
- I love Pilgrim Pines. If I could live there 24/7, I would.
- I really like the Bible!
- I had had a really hard week. I felt like screaming at my co-workers. And I thought, ‘I’m really looking forward to going to church. Wow, I’m really looking forward to going to church…’
- I have learned so much. I am so grateful to this church for offering me this opportunity!

I know that sometimes in the midst of planning events, or running from one thing to the next, or attending meetings that may drag on and on, we can forget what a place of love and inspiration we inhabit. I’m grateful to IUCC members for reminding me of that, and I hope this little list has been a helpful reminder to you too.

Looking forward into the month of August, we realize we have a lot going on and a lot to grateful for in our church community too. We’ll get to hear sermons from church members and retired clergy members:

George Johnson (August 5) and Ken Wyant (August 19).

Our kids will learn the value of interfaith education as we focus in Sunday School on:

- **Buddhism** on August 12 (led by IUCC member Diane Rust),
- **Islam** on August 19 (led by local activist Nadia Hassan), and
- **Judaism** on August 26 (led by my husband Seth Castleman).

Then in September we’ll get back into our regular curriculum after holding our annual Sunday School Kick-Off and Registration Fair. Please let me know if you are interested in teaching our amazing young ones this upcoming fall quarter.
On **Wednesday, August 8**, our church will get together for a **Pastors Potluck**, to which young families are especially invited. And afterwards we’ll hear a presentation from Nadia Hassan, which will align well with our interfaith Sunday School unit. She will cover the benefits of introducing interfaith understanding and dialogue with children and the best ways to promote tolerance from an early age. Ms. Hassan founded the [Villa Park Peace Coalition](#) in response to events in March of last year when a Villa Park councilwoman made remarks about “pure, unadulterated evil” during a demonstration at an Islamic charity event. Childcare will be provided, or children can stay and listen.

Our church will also be well represented at [OC Pride](#) on **August 11**, which is in a new location on the streets of Santa Ana this year.

And then we’ll have another opportunity to serve with [Family Promise](#) and share dinner with our homeless neighbors at Church of the Foothills the **week of August 19**.

Please join in for any or all of these wonderful upcoming activities. Give your heart over to the goodness that is flowing in our midst. Then don’t be surprised if you read one of your own quotes in an upcoming newsletter! The spirit is catching…

In God’s love and peace,
Pastor Elizabeth

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IUCC will have a booth at this year’s [OC PRIDE](#) celebration in downtown Santa Ana. The event will take place on Saturday, August 11, from noon until 10pm. All booths will be located on 4th St. between Broadway and Ross. A variety of performers will appear on the Main Stage and there will also be a Dance Tent. Families are invited to the Kids Club, where children will enjoy a “Pirate Carnival” with arts & crafts, games of skill, face painting, balloon animals, a bounce house and a treasure hunt.

More information is available [here](#).

Please join us for a day of music, friends and fun!
Hi Everyone,

The youth group has many exciting events scheduled for August. Our Sunday school theme for this month is **interfaith awareness**. We will spend one week each focusing on **Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism**. I am in the process of organizing some interfaith youth events, which will hopefully include attending a Shabbat service and a joint activity with a Muslim youth group. In addition to this exciting series, we will continue to have youth group every Sunday following the 11am service. (The exception to this is August 12th when we will have Sunday school but no youth group due to participating in the Pride Festival on Saturday Aug. 11th.)

I am excited to report that our youth group is actively participating in our church’s exploration of becoming a Global Missions church. **Global Ministries** provides many wonderful opportunities for young people to experience hands-on mission and gain a more global perspective of world issues. Be sure to keep your eyes open for the flyers our youth group will be distributing on the first Sunday of every month. Distributing these flyers is beneficial in two ways. First, it provides the youth with an opportunity to be directly involved in our church’s discussion of becoming a Global Missions church. Second, this will serve as a youth group fundraiser. The money raised will be used to finance future youth mission trips.

We also have several **service opportunities** this month. Please **RSVP** if you are interested in attending:

1) On **August 11th** the youth will help run the church booth at the **OC Pride Festival** in Santa Ana. We are scheduled to oversee the booth from 4pm-6pm.

2) On **August 23** we are volunteering with **Family Promise**. We’ll gather at church to start cooking dinner at 3:30pm.

3) On **August 29** we have the opportunity to spend the night at the **Catholic Worker House in East Los Angeles**, participate in a worship service, and work at their soup kitchen on skid row. Pastor Elizabeth and I will chaperone this trip. We will **leave IUCC at 3:30pm** on the 29th and return by 2pm on the 30th.

If you would like to participate in a service project or have any questions, please let me know.

Peace,
Erika
GLOBAL MISSION IN ACTION HERE AT IUCC

Reflections on the Hostotipaquillo Mission Trip

Alaina Haynes

My name is Alaina Haynes and I am a newly confirmed member at IUCC as well an active participant in the youth group. I have been blessed to have travelled to Oakland, Guatemala and most recently to Mexico on mission trips.

Mexico was another amazing experience for me: it was a chance to see a new culture and a new part of the world. Our church took a group of seven (three teens, three young adults and Pastor Elizabeth) to Hostotipaquillo, Mexico, two hours west of Guadalajara. We left in late June and spent about six days at a Catholic Worker house in Hosto.

The mission part of the trip consisted of building a road, serving and playing with children, and distributing food to a family in need.

This Catholic Worker has a huge back yard in which they grow most of the vegetables they eat. It was a new experience plowing the earth and picking the food you make meals with. We learned how to make traditional Mexican meals and picked up some Spanish words and phrases along the way.

Beto, a friend of this Catholic Worker, owns a ranch about twenty minutes outside town on the top of a very large hill. However, when there are heavy rains or flash flooding, his path is washed away for days. We needed to build him a real road with concrete so the water would run off of it. We sorted rocks by size and when the concrete mixer stopped working, we needed to mix it manually with shovels and buckets of water.

Four of Beto’s seven children were there helping, even the little seven year old. In the heat and humidity of a summer day in Mexico, the work became tiring pretty quickly but we kept going. I had some experience mixing concrete from my time in Guatemala so I worked along with the men doing that. Seeing me bringing buckets of water and sand surprised Beto who always tried to take them from me. My strength surprised him, and it was nice show him how much I wanted to help, and that not all American teens are weaklings!
When half the road was done we walked up the seemingly endless hill to Beto’s small house for lunch. I took the lead up the hill while I tried to remember the last time I’d done this kind of hiking in such humidity. But when I was almost to the top I turned around and saw the absolutely exquisite view of the mountains and greenery that seemed to stretch forever. I think it was in that moment the real Mexico clicked. We hear so much biased criticism and see horrors on TV, but when I looked at the view from the ranch and at all the great people we had met I knew that this was the real Mexico and I wish more people could have that experience too.

Making meals for the children and playing with them at a nearby park was so much fun. I speak extremely little Spanish but I was able to get by and enjoy my time. After the twenty minutes spent assuring the girls that I am fifteen and not twenty four, I felt as a group we were able to make connections. One thing Sarah always told us was that it’s not always how many sandwiches you make, but what ties you create.

We definitely did both on this trip, and getting rid of that “us” and “them” mentality is very important. When we gave supplies to a family in need, it was sure an adventure just getting down there in the back of an old pickup going down a bumpy winding mountain road which of course had no paving or rail guards. Having a fear of automobiles, this was quite terrifying for me, but I think in that time God was laughing at me, because when I looked around and saw the Sierras and the clouds and went on for miles, the beauty was almost tangible. I still think you could look at it forever and never get tired of such a sight.

The boy who met us at the property was young - around eleven. He showed us all the chickens they had in cages for cock fighting. And just like in my experiences in Guatemala I thought immediately of what people spend so much money on here in America. This boy and his siblings live in poverty and will frequently miss school. They have to arrange cock fights to have enough money to get by. In contrast, kids up here worry about prom and cut class for kicks.

Each experience opens a new mindset and a fresh outlook on the lives of others and how you can step back and look at your own life. My travels to both Guatemala and Mexico have done that for me, because although I’m still not a perfectly selfless person, I think more of others and the big picture, and how my decisions are fueled by need or want.

The value of a dollar is certainly something you learn from travelling to these countries, but I think even more than that its how God is inside of everyone. I have met people in
severe poverty but they still have strength and this undying faith in God that He will get them through anything. I admire this faith more than anything because if I was in their position the last thing I’d do was have faith in God. I don’t want people getting the wrong idea of me, because I pride myself on having never been the stereotypical Orange County girl who is too busy at the mall to care about others. I’ve always been well educated about international and national poverty and have been a part of charities and try not to be overly focused on my own desires, but actually being in another country and seeing it and breathing face to face is different. Because it’s real. Having these experiences early in life have left marks on my heart and I love being able to share stories with others.

➢ I support the aims of Global Mission because through such a commitment, we can create opportunities like these that benefit all people.

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, September 23, 2012

KICKOFF GLOBAL MISSION LUNCH, 12:30pm in Plummer Hall.
All sorts of wonderful things are going to happen that day starting with our Youth serving a delicious lunch.
Stay tuned for details.
For more information call Bil Aulenbach (949) 240-2933

From the Moderator

Cindy O’Dell

It may be summer (and if you’re lucky, time for vacations and relaxing), but that doesn’t mean that there isn’t plenty going on at IUCC, including for those who serve on the ministry and administrative board, the building task force and other leadership committees.

As we head toward fall, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved, from helping plan our annual picnic in September to volunteering for two new task force committees that I’ll be organizing this fall -- one to take a thorough look at our current technology both in the hardware sense (sound systems, etc.) and software sense (any database experts out there?); and another task force to take a look at ways to take a complete look at our 9 a.m. service
to see what works for those who attend now and what would attract others to attend more regularly.

Both committees will be expected to come up with concrete short-term and long-term proposals and then hand those off to the appropriate ministry or ministries for approval, budgeting and execution. If you're interested in participating or have ideas about what should be considered, please let me know.

Of course, our building options continue to be of paramount importance to your leadership, and we're doing our best to keep you informed about a variety of developments without causing too much anxiety in the process. Gathering information does take time, so we appreciate your patience as we continue to explore the options before us. And I welcome your input at all times.

Cindy O'Dell,
Moderator

Stephen Ministry is a one-to-one ministry by trained, caring church members. These caring individuals are members of Irvine United Congregational Church who have gone through fifty hours of training to provide high quality Christian care to individuals experiencing a crisis or a challenge such as divorce, grief, loss of a job, hospitalization, relocation, or loneliness. Stephen Ministers are each assigned to a care receiver and meet with that care receiver for about an hour a week. This care relationship remains in effect for as long as the care receiver has need.

The Stephen Ministers of Irvine United Congregational Church are available to listen to you, encourage you and pray with you. This ministry provides a safe, trusting and confidential atmosphere for those in need.

The IUCC Stephen Ministry will begin training for another group of Stephen Ministers in September. If you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister or would like more information, look for the Stephen Ministry Table on the patio after services in the month of August. Or contact the Chair of the Stephen Ministry, Dave Schofield at (949) 300-1216.
Comma Groups:
IUCC's Distinctive Small Groups Program

Best experience I’ve had in Church!  
Great bonding.  
Nice people, good group, good experience.

These are some reactions to last year’s Comma Groups from the year-end evaluations. About 100 members participated last year. We expect even more participants this year.

Comma Groups include 6-8 members meeting once a month for spiritual growth and fellowship. Discussion starters and background information are provided to leaders in advance. The best results from Comma Groups are the close personal relationships that develop as people talk about their own experiences in a confidential setting.

Tough Questions is the theme for this year. How do you feel about:
- Who is Jesus?
- What is prayer?
- Does the Bible shape your faith and practice?
- How do I live a Christian life in this time and place?

The pastoral staff will use the “tough question” of the month in worship on the first Sunday of each month.

Most groups will meet in member homes. At least one group will meet during the day. Another group will have child care available so families can take part.

Sign-ups will be in August. Leader training will follow in September, and initial group meetings will be in October. There will be a concluding banquet in June.

See Ken Wyant for more information. You can also register by sending an email to ken@iucc.org A form will be sent directly to your e-mail address.

Don’t miss out!

This small group experience promises to connect you to the congregation in fulfilling ways, like never before.

Ken Wyant
A Few Words About Bon Vivant Dinners

**Bon Vivant dinners** are not small groups that persist for several weeks or several months (as Comma Groups do). Instead, Bon Vivant dinners are “one off” occasions, for people to come together, break bread, enjoy each others’ company, and get to know each other a little better. There is no “curriculum” for these social occasions.

We gather in small groups of 6 to 10 at someone’s house, usually. Everyone brings something to contribute to a shared meal. The host decides the theme and gives assignments, and the host does not even have to cook! After all, the host has the responsibility of having a clean house and taking care of the dishes.

Foods do not need to be fancy. Hamburgers on the grill are perfectly acceptable.

✍️ We’d love to welcome families, including families with small children.

The sign-up sheet should be out on the patio starting the first Sunday of the month. You can also let me know directly that you would like to participate: [LMLindy@cox.net](mailto:LMLindy@cox.net)

Join in! Get to know some people in the congregation!

Hoping to see you on the last Saturday of the month, August 25!

Lindy Garber
Fellowship Chair

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Irvine United Congregational Church
August Birthdays!

Mark Allen
Janet Bamper
Chantel Bermudez
Keith Boyum
Jo Cranston
Nancy Dreckman
Rogene Field
Lorraine Fox
Worth Giller
Jim Martin
Nitz Martin

Katherine Mirmak
Tom Moss
Eric Nelson
Don Owens
Noel Puga
Glenda Rynn
Alyssa Stanford
Helen Swanson
Dylan Trout
Dean Whitten
Kendra Williams
## IUCC FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

**Six Months Ended June 30, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net Income (Loss):</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Variance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>$11</td>
<td>($434)</td>
<td>$445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Center</td>
<td>11,018</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>10,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined net Income (Loss)</td>
<td>$11,029</td>
<td>$277</td>
<td>$10,752</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are doing well at the midyear point. As approved by the congregation, a 2% increase in salaries for pastoral, music, and office staff took effect on July 1, 2012. Our request for a reduction in the interest rate on our loan from UCC Cornerstone Fund to 5.75% has been approved. Beginning September 1, the monthly required payment will decrease by $777 (per month). The Administrative Board will decide how to allocate the savings for the last quarter of 2012. In 2013 and beyond, the savings will cumulate to $9,324 per year.

The Early Childhood Center continues to make a significant contribution to the overall results.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Guth  
Treasurer

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### Save the Date!

**Essential Estate Planning – September 30th**

The Administrative Board has decided to provide IUCC members and friends with an opportunity to engage in a discussion about estate planning. The initial information session will be on September 30th, following second service.
At the 12:30 p.m. activity, interested persons will be able to hear from Chadwick Bunch, Esq. (a partner with the Irvine-based law firm of Palmieri, Tyler, Weiner, Wilhelm & Waldron). In addition to practicing law in the areas of estate planning and administration, Mr. Bunch is a licensed CPA with an expertise in tax matters. He'll make a presentation for an hour or so, and will be available afterward for any personal consultations.

- There is no charge for attendance.
- Pre-registration is encouraged – just to make sensible planning possible. Watch for opportunities on the patio after services and in other modes.
- Nobody is required, nor particularly encouraged, to become a client of Mr. Bunch, though of course, people may make such a choice, at their complete discretion. Many other lawyers (and financial planners, etc.) offer services such as these.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** if any IUCC members or friends would like their own estate planning, investment, or similar services or products to be made “passively available” to seminar attendees, we will make that possible. We'll have an information table for business cards, brochures, flyers, contact information – but please do not expect to actively engage people in a sales or client acquisition approach. The “passive” part is that this will be distribution of information only.
  - Michael Spindle in the church office will coordinate this information distribution. If interested, contact him: michael@iucc.org
  - Deadline for this: Sunday, September 9th.

**What is the Board's motivation?**

Well, for one thing, the UCC Capital Campaign consultant (Rev. Priscilla Bizer) reported to the Administrative Board that IUCC was missing an opportunity to forward its mission through being named as a beneficiary in its members' wills and trusts. (As near as we can tell, only one or two members of the congregation have named IUCC as a beneficiary in their trust or will.) So there will be an opportunity to discuss the mechanics of how to include either Irvine United Congregational Church, or the United Church of Christ denomination, in a will or trust. Nobody will be pressured to do that – but the information will be available. As the congregation matures, we (or our children) can look forward to some help from people who have ensured through a bequest that their progressive and Christian values will be supported across many years ahead.

For another thing – polls and surveys consistently find that Americans agree that they should make plans for the future – their own; their families’; their communities’. At the same time, the same polls and surveys report that Americans have – in large numbers – done little or nothing to actually develop and ensure those plans.
In a poll undertaken about a year ago for ABC News, findings to support those propositions were reported. Americans who were surveyed said that they:

- Are planning and preparing for life as they get older: 72%
- Have “done a great deal” of such planning: 35%
- Have planned and prepared for retirement, and/or for a possible loss of job: 52%
- Parents who have prepared for college expenses: 45%
- Have life insurance: 74%
- Have a will: 50%
- Have a living will or health care proxy: 42%

If you are one of the roughly half of Americans who have done little or nothing to prepare for life’s inevitable outcome, or if you are one of the roughly two-thirds of Americans who need to do more, then this free seminar is for you.

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**PRESCHOOL RATE DISCOUNT FOR IUCC FAMILIES**

In celebration of our 26th year of providing child care to the Irvine community, the Irvine United Congregational Church *Early Childhood Center* announces a discount in tuition to IUCC families.

- A $300 rebate per child will be given after two months’ attendance to IUCC members.
- Sibling discounts are also recognized.

Our Early Childhood Center offers full day classes for 2, 3 or 5 days per week. Tuition includes breakfast, lunch and snacks. Potty training and extra-curricular dance and sport activities are available.

Preschool hours are 7 am to 6 pm. See our website [here](#) for further details.

We currently have openings for all classes for children ages 2 to pre-K. Call our Director Irma Rosales at 714-733-0228 for a tour TODAY!
Last month we talked about a third strategy for reducing risks of bullying by introducing the notion of “operating rules” and how they influence the way children respond to a wide variety of situations. Your homework was to think about the spoken and unspoken “rules” you learned while growing up, as well as those you now operate under in your own household.

For the purposes of thinking about operating rules that have particular application to bullying we’ll consider only a few.

1. **How are children taught to handle angry feelings?** There are three rules that would cause a problem with getting caught up in bullying. **First** – how are children allowed to “get mad”: that is, what can they say, what kind of language can they use; what kind of behavior (storming around, fuming, allowing their emotions to start running away with them)?

   **Second**– what kind of behavior are they allowed to “get away with” because they are mad. Can they throw things? Hit things? Spit? Bang their heads? Break things? **Third** – are they allowed to blame other people for their feelings? That is, are they allowed to make an excuse for their behavior by saying that it’s someone else’s fault for “making them mad”? Is this what parent’s do when they are upset with their children? Is this what parent’s do when they are upset with each other? If so, we have all the makings of a school-yard brawl, with one young person feeling angry and then hurling insults and threats at another, followed by hitting and kicking and spitting. At the conclusion of the bullying event, if adults are following these “rules”, one youngster will be asked what he or she did to make the other mad – thus buying into the “blaming for feelings” rule. This response will almost assure that the young person being picked on will never report it again, since they might be held responsible. The other conclusion is that the bully will feel justified and will not understand why they can’t do at school / church / baseball what they do at home! Parents begin to put the rules about anger in place soon after children can walk.

2. **What are the “rules” about telling the truth?** Are children told not to lie and then corrected when they say something that “isn’t nice”? Unhappily, we are not able to follow the two rules about truth we were given by our mothers – who told us not to lie,
and then told us that “if we didn’t have something nice to say we shouldn’t say anything at all”. The truth is not always “nice”. If children think they are going to be corrected for saying unkind things about others they will start keeping their negative experiences to themselves. Also, if unpleasant truth is kept from children, such as parents not admitting they’re unhappy with other, they will learn that being “phony” is preferred to being honest. They will then think that to be approved of they have to make believe they are getting along with everyone, even though things might be very tense or hurtful between them and one of their peers.

3. What are the rules about “snitching”? Are they criticized every time they say something about brother or sister? While we don’t want whiny children who complain about each other all the time, we also don’t want children who put up with getting hurt because they don’t want to get yelled at for “telling”.

Are any of your “rules” setting your children up for trouble?
News & Notes
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