IUCC’s Capital Campaign concluded its active phase on June 26 in a celebration filled with gratitude.

IUCC’s Capital Campaign concluded its active phase on June 26 with a visit from our UCC Conference Minister, the Rev. Felix Villanueva, who joined us in recognizing the congregation for undertaking this transformative project. Campaign leaders donned colorful aprons to serve a delicious cake between services.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the hard-working members of the Capital Campaign Team (many of whom are featured in the surrounding photos): Anne Rosse (Chair), Mark Allen, Keith Boyum, Linda Hagni, Tommie Kozlov, Bill Lawrence, Chris Redrich, Matthew Redrich, Pastor Paul, and Pat Sauter. They did an outstanding job!

_Photos by Anne Rosse & Tricia Aynes_
Joy was mixed with shock and sorrow on June 12 when IUCC celebrated its 25th anniversary of being ONA while trying to process the news of the Orlando shooting.

IUCC members were just hearing the terrible news of a mass shooting at a gay nightclub in Orlando on the morning we were celebrating our 25th Anniversary of being an ONA congregation. As always, Pastor Paul found just the right words to comfort and sustain us, both that Sunday and the following one, with his moving sermon message of “Love always wins.”

Photos from top left: Pastor Emeritus Fred Plumer, former Interim Pastor Steve Swope (now Adult Program Director), and current Pastor Paul Tellström at the anniversary celebration; same three with plaque inscribed with Pastor Fred’s name; members place flowers around our peace pole to honor those killed; a rainbow scarf was added to the flowers at the growing memorial; and special ONA guests sit with Pastor Paul and Susan Sherman at the reception following the anniversary service.
Remembering Orlando

Stanley Almodovar III, 23 years old  
Amanda Alvear, 25 years old  
Oscar A. Aracena-Montero, 26 years old  
Rodolfó Ayala-Ayala, 33 years old  
Antonio Davon Brown, 29 years old  
Darryl Roman Burt II, 29 years old  
Angel L. Candelario-Padro, 28 years old  
Juan Chevez-Martinez, 25 years old  
Luis Daniel Conde, 39 years old  
Cory James Connell, 21 years old  
Tevin Eugene Crosby, 25 years old  
Deonka Deidra Drayton, 32 years old  
Simon Adrian Carrillo Fernandez, 31 years old  
Leroy Valentin Fernandez, 25 years old  
Mercedez Marisol Flores, 26 years old  
Peter O. Gonzalez-Cruz, 22 years old  
Juan Ramon Guerrero, 22 years old  
Paul Terrell Henry, 41 years old  
Frank Hernandez, 27 years old  
Miguel Angel Honorato, 30 years old  
Javier Jorge-Reyes, 40 years old  
Jason Benjamin Josaphat, 19 years old  
Eddie Jamoldroy Justice, 30 years old  
Anthony Luis Laureanodisla, 25 years old  
Christopher Andrew Leinonen, 32 years old  
Alejandro Barrios Martinez, 21 years old  
Brenda Lee Marquez McCool, 49 years old  
Gilberto Ramon Silva Menendez, 25 years old  
Kimberly Morris, 37 years old  
Akyra Monet Murray, 18 years old  
Luis Omar Ocasio-Capo, 20 years old  
Geraldo A. Ortiz-Jimenez, 25 years old  
Eric Ivan Ortiz-Rivera, 36 years old  
Joel Rayon Paniagua, 32 years old  
Jean Carlos Mendez Perez, 35 years old  
Enrique L. Rios, Jr., 25 years old  
Jean C. Nives Rodriguez, 27 years old  
Xavier Emmanuel Serrano Rosado, 35 years old  
Christopher Joseph Sanfeliz, 24 years old  
Yilmay Rodriguez Solivan, 24 years old  
Edward Sotomayor Jr., 34 years old  
Shane Evan Tomlinson, 33 years old  
Martin Benitez Torres, 33 years old

When I arrived at IUCC for our 25th Anniversary Celebration of being an ONA church, I was quite “up.” Here was a chance to celebrate the church with Fred and Charron Plumer, together with quite a few people who put a lot of work into the day. The sanctuary was packed. There was great music throughout and a celebratory lunch to follow.

I learned just 20 minutes before the music was to start that there had been the worst mass shooting in our country’s history only hours before we were going to celebrate. Not only that, these were LGBT people and their friends and relatives who were targeted, and this was a hate crime as well as a crime against humanity.

Our service that morning needed to be exactly what it was, standing in direct opposition to the tragedy at Pulse Nightclub. Afterwards, I learned from a number of you that it was so important to have a service in celebration of our Open and Affirming status to go to after waking to the news from Orlando. The emotion in the room was palpable.

As for me, I confess that for the next couple of days, I was numb. I needed time before I could make it to a vigil with others, and I couldn’t find words to express how I was feeling. How many random and awful killings of people will we continue to hear about? This morning, we all woke to the news of yet another act of terror in Bangladesh, and who knows where it may strike next.

As the church, do we eventually become so numb by each event that we slowly reduce our response to a mention in a Sunday prayer, or can we always find a way to theologize and then act from our faith? The answer for me is the latter, but it becomes harder when faced with multiple tragedies.

This past week, we lost a lovely lady—Dru Price. It was a heart-felt and well-attended service last Saturday, and her family went home feeling that Dru was lifted up and honored by the many stories that were told. One of the things Dru did was to write the words, “Play this at my funeral” on the sheet music for, “Let There Be Peace on Earth.” What a living meditation that became as we all stood and sang it together, prompted by such foresight.

While writing a eulogy for her, I came across this quote about faith by Brené Brown: “I thought faith would say, ‘I’ll take away the pain and discomfort,’ but what it ended up saying was, ‘I’ll sit with you in it.’”

The longer I am here, the more I see our mission in Irvine as an alternative voice to the hatred and bigotry that pulls us apart. We can continue to be a presence that invites, challenges, takes a stand, and sometimes simply sits with each other when tragedy strikes.

I could see through visiting with Fred and Charron just how much work and love they put into building this church. The work is not done, however—there is another chapter coming, and we are a community in the process of letting our next chapter unfold. Thank you for being this particular loving and warm community at this particular time.
Comma Group sign-ups continue

The Comma is a UCC symbol emphasizing the ongoing discovery of our Still-Speaking God. IUCC will again be offering Comma Groups this fall, and we invite you to seriously consider participating.

The purpose of Comma Groups at IUCC is to help people connect to other church members in a meaningful way, and have deep conversations about topics that are important to members and to our church in general.

Comma Groups are 8-10 people who meet once a month from October through April. Groups often meet in homes over a meal, but they have also gathered around a restaurant table or at church. The important thing is getting together and sharing our lives and thoughts honestly and openly, so our relationships may grow with our growing church.

This year’s groups will explore what it means to be a Creation Justice Church, following our congregation’s vote to engage in that process for the next year. Prepared resources and discussion starters will be available, and each group will be led by a trained, experienced facilitator.

Comma Group sign-ups will continue through August. We’re planning at least one child-friendly group. Please see Steve Swope on the patio after worship, or contact him at steve@iucc.org. And if you’re interested in being a group leader, let Steve know right away!

Adult Sunday School in July

During July, the Sunday morning adult classes (8:45 & 10:00) will be discussing Islam and Islam-ophobia, utilizing a new video resource from Living the Questions titled “The Jesus Fatwah: Love Your (Muslim) Neighbor as Yourself.” Seventeen Islamic and Christian scholars discuss what Muslims really believe, how they live out their faith, and how we all can build better relationships across faith lines.

Rev. Bil Aulenbach will lead the discussions, bringing personal perspective as well. A participant guide can be downloaded from Living the Questions at: http://www.livingthequestions.com/xcart/files/dvd/jesus%20fatwah/TJF%20Reader.pdf.

Save The Date!
2nd Annual Faith & Works Conference

Faith & Works will again be held in September, on Friday the 23rd and Saturday the 24th. Our keynote speaker will be Justin Lee, founder and director of the Gay Christian Network (www.gaychristian.net) and author of “Torn: Rescuing the Gospel from the Gays-vs.-Christians Debate.” We will also show the movie “Wish Me Away,” the story of country singer Chely Wright’s coming-out.
New Adult Education Class!

Phyllis Tickle suggests that Christianity has experienced a major shift every 500 years. The last major overhaul was in October of 1517, when Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the cathedral door. Is it time for another Reformation, and a new set of guiding ideas that reflect a progressive approach to Christianity? Please join us!

You are invited to help us develop a NEW group of Progressive Christian THESES to tack on to the doors of Plumer Hall. Last done by Martin Luther in October 1517. Please join us!! See details below.

IUCC ADULT EDUCATION PRESENTS........

CHARTING THE 21st CENTURY REFORMATION

Led by Fr. Bil Aulenbach Using Bishop Spong information

5 WEDNESDAYS Choose 9:30 to 11 a.m. or 7:15 to 8:45 p.m.

LOTS OF DISCUSSIONS MATERIALS PROVIDED

August 3 Is the church broken? Where is God? Who is Jesus?
August 10 Do you have OS? Can a “virgin” have a baby? What about miracles?
August 17 Is it Atonement or At-one-ment? Resurrection - physical? Or a metaphor? How did Jesus ascend?
August 24 Did Jesus have an ethical system? Can one pray to No One Up There?
August 31 Is there anything after this life? Can I judge others? Prejudice

AND WE’LL TAKE A PEEK AT BIL’S NEW BOOK,

“CRAMMING for the FINALS”

Questions? bilaulenbach@yahoo.com or (949) 240-2933

________________________________________ (cut or tear) ____________________________________________

Name(s)________________________________________Ph:_________________

Which session? 9:30 - 11a.m._____ or 7:15-8:45 p.m._____

Email:______________________________________________

Give to Bil or Anne or Steve Swope or put in offering plate
Our Midweek Salon guest speaker on June 29 was Keith Boyum, who spoke about “My life and hard times in California higher education.” The tongue-in-cheek title was a great introduction to a presentation filled with wit and interesting information.

Keith grew up in a small village in North Dakota, the son of a politically active father who was “treasurer of just about everything.” His dad owned and operated a grain elevator, and he led by example by being very involved in the community. His dad made things happen, including leading the village board to build a new fire station and city hall.

Keith was expected to attend college and he did, graduating from the University of North Dakota and then taking a master’s degree and a doctorate from the University of Minnesota.

At a 1971 political science convention, Keith met a man who was involved with Cal State Fullerton and had a job opening that fit Keith’s interests like a glove. In 1972, Keith moved to Southern California to work at the university and begin a lifetime career as a professor of political science. For freshmen and general education students, he focused on “habits of thought.” He encouraged critical thinking and told students, “There are those who govern and those who don’t. You’re in the second group. How do you feel about that?”

He tried to show students that “You create knowledge: it does not fall from the sky fully-formed. Rather, you depend on structures of understanding that are in your own head – and you can evaluate those structures. He told them that “Politics is not merely the struggle between political parties in Washington - politics is the means by which people contest and determine values – it is ubiquitous and inescapable.”

Keith really believes in higher education and is concerned about the success of students of today. He showed a series of slides to demonstrate disparities that are worrying. “Today’s young adults underperform – in terms of degree attainment -- what the U.S. was doing 25 years ago,” he said, and that’s a big challenge for higher education. “We must do better because the nation needs these students for social health, civic health, and economic health.”

When asked about how much incarceration affects minority students’ ability to succeed in college, Keith remarked that “State governments educate, medicate, and incarcerate. All the rest is chump change. These are the areas where states put their resources.” And thus what we spend on prisons is not available for higher education.

In addition to being a professor, Keith has authored, co-authored or edited five books and has served as an Associate Vice President at Cal State Fullerton, and as an Associate Vice Chancellor in the Chancellor’s Office (where he oversaw academic affairs). He is currently working as Special Assistant for Strategic Academic Initiatives at Cal State University, Dominguez Hills.

He says people are always asking if he misses teaching. “Of course I miss it,” he said. “But it’s like leaving Paris. Paris is a beautiful city. But I went from Paris to Rome in becoming an administrator: Rome is the city of governance [and he continued to do work he enjoyed].”

Midweek Salon is a new program offered by IUCC’s Adult Education Ministry. This was our third event, which follows successful presentations by Carl Whidden on “What it means to be a performer” and Dawn Price on “Ending Homelessness.” Based on a TED Talk model, each Salon features a lively, knowledgeable speaker followed by a stimulating, interactive discussion and an opportunity for attendees to exchange ideas.

Midweek Salon is taking a break in July and will resume in August or September.

~ Tricia Aynes
When I began writing my moderator's column, I chose as my closing the words *in faith and community.* After a year of being a moderator, I think that this closing is even more fitting. It has been a year of joys, challenges, meetings (lots of meetings), and of working with our incredible lay leaders and with our gifted staff. I have treasured the many hours planning and meeting with Pastor Paul. However, the most memorable and rewarding part of this first year has been planning, commemorating, and celebrating some key milestones in the life of IUCC. We have been building *faith and community.*

We began this journey of faith and community on January 31st with an 89% positive vote to move forward with a capital campaign for Phase 1 of our building plan. If you were here that day, I’m sure you will remember the sense of purpose and commitment that was palpable here, in our sanctuary.

In February we held two well-attended forums to describe the history and context of our becoming an *Open and Affirming* (ONA) congregation. We welcomed those “who were present at the creation” of ONA - Larry Agran, Barbara Luckett Curie, Jim Lehmann, and Sarah Halverson-Cano. At the second forum we heard of the challenges for gay clergy from our own Pastor Paul and from the Reverend Bill Johnson.

In April, we had a joyous celebration for our beloved pastor, mentor, guide, and friend, Pastor Paul. It was a day of music, a video, and the giving of gifts bestowed on Paul by a grateful and loving congregation.

On a memorable Sunday in June, we had one service where we remembered our journey to become an Open and Affirming Congregation. The Reverend Fred Plumer spoke from the pulpit that day. Those of us who knew Fred, and those of who met him for the first time that Sunday, are truly grateful for the legacy he gave us. With an incredible video, we celebrated the past and were reminded by Pastor Paul that there is still much to be done by this ONA congregation.

Also in June, we celebrated another milestone with the completion of the *Embracing the Future Capital Campaign* for Phase 1 of our building program. While we still have not quite reached our goal, there is much to laud and applaud including the incredible gifts of the Capital Campaign Team, led by its chair Anne Rosse - and the raising of more monies than any other time in the history of IUCC.

So why do we commemorate/celebrate these milestones? I believe it is because we know the importance of *faith and community.*

Two quotes come to mind: The first is from a recent sermon of Pastor Paul’s, and it speaks of faith: *What we begin others will complete. The good is like the building of cathedrals. Only through faith can those who lay foundation stones hear bells ringing in unraised steeples.*

Faith makes a difference in the lives of each person here at IUCC. Faith makes a difference in this vibrant place. Faith is what compels us to be free to soar, to dare to dream, and to put those dreams into action.

The second quote speaks of community - *community is the ability to pass time with people just to build trust, just to be sure of each other. A community is not just something you have. It is something you do - and you have to do it all the time. When we gather together as a community we are doing just that - building trust, building the ability to be sure of each other. We are “doing” community. It’s not automatic: we must do it. So: let us continue to be a community. Let us continue to do community in all that we do.*

So with that, I look forward to a second year of being your moderator! And let me conclude as I began the year, by evoking:

*In faith and community,*

*Renae*
If you walked past Plumer Hall on Sunday June 26th right before first service, you probably saw a small group of Boy Scouts and Boy Scout leaders outside of Plumer Hall complete with backpacks, sleeping bags, water bottles, rope, and pioneering poles and wondered what was going on. What you saw was Troop 602 (sponsored by IUCC) getting ready to leave for the first summer camp in the troop's two year history.

After an early morning prayer and blessing by Pastor Paul, the Scouts loaded their gear, posed for a group photo, hugged their parents goodbye, and left for the Schoepe Scout Reservation at Lost Valley (aka as Lost Valley to Boy Scouts and Boy Scout leaders) where they would be camping for an entire week with other Boy Scout troops from across the state earning merit badges and having all kinds of fun in the outdoors. Lost Valley is owned by the Orange County Council and is located near Warner Springs in northern San Diego County.

In addition to meeting on Thursday nights at 7:00 p.m. in Plumer Hall, Troop 602 has been a very active outdoor troop participating in district and council wide events such as the annual Rancho San Joaquin District Camporee at Firestone Scout Reservation in April and the annual Orange County Council Scout O Rama in May. One of the highlights of the past few months is that the Scouts received two ribbons for Safety and Excellence from the Scout O Rama judges for their booth where they demonstrated how to make “Campfire Pies.” Rather than write an extensive article on each outing, I have decided to let the various pictures tell the story of Troop 602 (see following page).

For those of you that are new to our church, IUCC has been the sponsor of Boy Scout Troop 602 since its formation in 2014. Troop 602 is a Scout led troop where the Scouts plan the meetings and the outings. Troop 602 is an extension of the values of IUCC by being an inclusive, open and affirming troop for all youth and families. If you have a son between the ages of 11-17 years old and are looking for a Scout troop that honors the traditions of the Boy Scouts and is accepting of all youth and their families, please consider visiting and joining Troop 602. You can also visit Troop 602’s website at www.troop602.com.

There are some people in our congregation who have expressed concerns that the Boy Scouts are not “inclusive enough” because they are an all male youth group. In response to the concerns, I am looking for youth (between the ages of 14-20 or 13 if they have completed the 8th grade) and adults who are interested in forming a Venturing Crew this fall that would meet at IUCC. Venturing is the co-ed program of the Boy Scouts of America where the youth run and plan the meetings and outings for the crew. The purpose of Venturing is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults, with an emphasis in adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service.

If you are interested in having your son join Troop 602 or want to help start a new co-ed Venturing crew, please email me at irvineeaglescout1987@gmail.com or call me at 949-689-8854. You can also email our Scoutmaster, Ken Steinhart, at captken@netzero.net if you have any questions about Troop 602.

Thank you IUCC for your support of the Boy Scouts and Troop 602.

Yours in Scouting,

Matt Mirmak
Eagle Scout (1986)
Chartered Organization Representative, Troop 602

See more photos of the troop on next page!
IUCC-sponsored Boy Scout Troop 602

Photos courtesy of Ken Steinhart, Troop 602’s Scoutmaster
On June 26, our “Embracing the Future” campaign’s active phase ended. While we are falling short of our $1.5 million goal to fund Phase I construction, more than $1.2 million has been pledged so far – three times the amount of money that IUCC has ever raised before. Thank you, IUCC, for stepping up to pledge generously in support of this campaign!

So, now that the active phase is over, what happens next?

- Campaign books will remain open until July 15. If you have been procrastinating, please turn your pledge form in as soon as possible. If you have already pledged but feel like you can do a little more, please consider amending your pledge. For assistance, please contact capitalcampaign@iucc.org.

- To reach our $1.5 million goal, we need the entire IUCC family to come together. As each of us stretches to make a personally significant gift (payable over three years), we will discover a rich unity in our faith community that will be truly transformative.

- In late July, pledge confirmation letters will be sent out. These letters will include helpful information about the pledge payment timeline and next steps on our building project journey.

- Over the summer, a “working group” of dedicated members is looking at all the options for moving forward. Potential options may include: cost-savings through discussions with our architects; financing options (including bonds, loans and other instruments); debt management; fundraisers; and revenue-producing strategies. With thanks and appreciation to Mark Allen, Keith Boyum, Linda Haghi, Tommie Kozlov, Bill Lawrence, Chris Redrich, Pat Sauter and our wise consultant, the Rev. Priscilla Bizer. It has been a great privilege to work closely with them, witnessing first-hand their love for and dedication to serving this beloved church.

- On September 11, we will hold a Special Congregational Meeting so that this congregation can decide how we want to move forward. As with all major decisions, we will decide – as a congregation – the best path forward to becoming the church God is calling us to be.

- Prior to the September 11 Meeting, we will hold forums and distribute information via the bulletin, website and newsletter.

Meeting our $1.5 million goal by September 11 will help bring us an important step closer to construction planning. We hope you are called to do your part in bringing important new space to this aging church campus – space that will substantially improve our ability to live out our mission and ministry. Phase I will bring a new building connected to the Sanctuary with four much-needed meeting rooms, staff offices, pastoral counseling space, a welcoming lobby, and an enlarged narthex. And, you can be darn sure that the bathroom in the new building will not require a birth certificate to enter it. We’ll have a beautiful new patio, shaded by canopy trees that are fed by collected rain water, a convenient coffee corner and a beautiful frontage along Alton Parkway to signal our extravagant welcome to all. It will start to transform this church campus in very important ways.

In undertaking this ambitious campaign to fund Phase I, IUCC has been tremendously blessed by its leadership team and the volunteers who have stepped up to help with this complex endeavor. Please join me in thanking our very hardworking campaign leaders: Pastor Paul, Mark Allen, Keith Boyum, Linda Haghi, Tommie Kozlov, Bill Lawrence, Chris Redrich, Pat Sauter and our wise consultant, the Rev. Priscilla Bizer. It has been a great privilege to work closely with them, witnessing first-hand their love for and dedication to serving this beloved church.

Gratitude to IUCC Leaders for their stellar support of this campaign effort. Kudos and thanks to our fantastic campaign volunteers: Jeff Benedick, Jessie Billings, Renae Boyum, Nancy Dreckman, Cindy O’Dell, Randy Romine, Susan Sherman, Rob Thornton and Ken Wyant. Thanks to Michael Spindle. Finally, huge appreciation to Heidi Willcox for her diligence and care in supporting the campaign, especially pledge tracking.

IUCC is a church that believes that God is still speaking, that offers abundant and inclusive welcome, that wants to nurture tomorrow’s peacemakers, and that follows the teachings of Jesus Christ to love and care for our neighbors and planet. Thank you, IUCC, for embracing our future through this campaign!
According to the US Environmental Information Administration (EIA), the building sector consumes nearly half (47.6%) of all energy produced in the U.S. Buildings are responsible for nearly half of CO2 emissions. 74.9% of all electricity produced in the U.S. is used just to operate buildings.

The latest International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirms the necessity for immediate and sustained action on climate change, concluding that the time has arrived to preserve living conditions on earth. A key way to do that is to phase out CO2 emissions in the building sector by 2050. Through conservation efforts, we have already avoided building 30 power plants. California leads the way.

I have no credentials in the field of energy conservation but agreed to be our Capistrano League of Women Voters energy chair and contacted the Claremont League to find out about their involvement in CHERP, the Community Home Energy Retrofit Project. We invited Devon Hartman, a founding member, whose presentation clearly showed the impact of buildings on greenhouse gas emissions and the benefits to building owners and cities from energy efficient retrofits. It is exciting to note that other cities are CHERPing too. More about Devon and CHERP later.

At two future meetings we arranged for a group discount on home energy audits with the cost applicable to upgrades, and many have been completed. In our small home we installed attic and wall insulation and received over $1000 in rebates from utilities. This halved our utility bills and our home is definitely more comfortable. Sealing energy leaks results in cleaner indoor air and moderates temperature. Upgrades also reduce the number of solar panels needed. Efficient appliances, light bulbs, windows, water systems and electrical devices have all helped to level off demand. We toured new homes in Ladera Ranch with energy and water saving features. E rated homes have an increased value of about 6%. It is important to use a realtor certified to represent energy efficient homes. Older California homes built in the 80s or before, without recent remodeling permits, are not well sealed. An energy audit will reveal needed upgrades.

HERO, Home Energy Renovation Opportunity, is a financing program made possible by ACE, Property Assessed Clean Energy legislation, allowing government and business to partner and provide for energy efficiency improvements. Energy First is dedicated to improving the building envelope by designing educational resources for contractors and realtors.

The 2015 Department of Energy Solar Decathlon Competition at the Great Park educated students and the public about energy efficient products and design. College teams explained water and energy conservation features in homes they designed, built and operated for particular climates.

The Claremont story: in 2013, Claremont celebrated energy efficient upgrades on 1% of all residential housing. Devon invited me to a celebration when they reached the 6% mark. Usually, I don't experience great excitement when I mention energy conservation. It was a pleasing surprise to find a community collaboration of service, church, college, business, and government organizations coming together to share this important milestone. Residents of retrofitted homes stood to be recognized as did the labor force trained by local contractors. Speakers at local, state and federal levels heaped praise on this amazing endeavor. We are fortunate to have a president and governor that have pushed legislation and funding for mitigating causes of global warming and climate change.

Claremont was selected as one of 50 U.S. cities competing for a $5 million prize as part of the Georgetown University Energy Prize competition. Goal: To create a unique and effective community-wide plan to reduce energy use. Beginning in January 2017, Claremont will be judged on its overall reduction of energy consumption per capita.

Devon Hartman is retired after 35 years in architecture and construction and has garnered over 50 awards. He is an expert in sustainable building practices and the reduction of fossil fuel use in buildings. He is a founding member of Efficiency First and CHERP, and founder and project coordinator of Pilgrim Place Energy Efficient Project. We recorded his presentation, which illustrates the many ways homes waste energy.

EnergyUpgradeCa.Org, Sustainable Claremont, info@cherp.net (Community Home Energy Retrofit Project), Pilgrim Place Energy Efficiency Project, energyfirstca.org, devon@hartmanenergystrategies.com, claremontenergychallenge.net ~Sandy Exelby

Green Team: Judy Curry, Nancy Dreckman, Howard Emery, Carol Getz, Eileen Vincent, and Vivian Johnson
Dear Readers,

Yesterday my niece opened her pantry door and discovered that it was filled with plastic bags instead of goodies. “They have taken over my life,” she confided to me. As a good Auntie, I told her to recycle the bags now. Our work began.

As for me, I take cloth grocery bags to the market. They are pretty. They are easier to carry. They reduce waste. I bought her two bags to help her begin the transition. She keeps them in her hybrid car.

Be kind to the Earth, dear readers. It loves us. The Earth gives us the lazy days of summer. Enjoy.

Love,

Miss Lily

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

Ah, coffee hour snacks!

They’re yummy, they’re colorful, and they provide a wonderful backdrop of warmth and welcome to our patio after services. Happy IUCC people gather around the snack tables to visit, catch up with friends, and meet interesting new people. It’s our guilty pleasure, and we love it! Besides, snacks eaten at church have no calories, right??

Our coffee hour snacks are provided by volunteers. Won’t you add your name to the list of volunteers? Sign up sheets are on the patio on Sunday mornings. If each of us committed to one Sunday each year, our calendar - and our tummies - would be full. Thank you!

We love to share our IUCC family story with others, and so you’ll see a lot of photos and videos being taken and shared in many ways. If you don’t want your image used in our story telling, please turn in a Media Opt Out form, which is available through our church office by calling us at 949-733-0220 or by e-mailing us at iucc@iucc.org. Thank you!
Vacation Bible School at IUCC was tons of fun!

Photos courtesy of Sarah Fiske-Phillips
Based on the beliefs of Dorothy Day, founder of Catholic Worker, Isaiah House is a place of hospitality where the homeless, hungry, and forsaken can always find a place of welcome. Leah and Dwight Smith have tried to live up to Day’s counsel as the administrators of Isaiah House, making it a true community for the 25 or so homeless women who call it their safe haven.

Isaiah House has been on the radar of the Mission and Service Committee since 2001 and several of IUCC’s members have been working there over the years. For the past two years, a group of IUCC volunteers have volunteered to develop and prepare a regular healthy meal for the “guests” on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. It has been a very concrete way to honor the commitment that Mission and Service has made to the problem of homelessness in Orange County. One of our volunteers, Tom Ingraham once said, “You know, serving them meals is really secondary to just sharing a meal while talking to them like they’re our next-door neighbors.” He’s right.

Family Promise and Families Forward are two other programs that the M & S Committee supports.

If you are interested in helping at Isaiah House or just getting additional information, contact Steve Goetz (sgoetz53@gmail.com) or Felicity Figueroa.

If anyone ever wondered why IUCC needed to become an Open and Affirming church, the question was answered the day we celebrated our 25th ONA anniversary. Orlando happened. Bam – a sucker punch to the gut just as we awoke to a day that was supposed to be happy and upbeat. We soldiered on with the party, but we did so through tears and sorrow. Our joy was tempered by the harsh reality that there is still much work to be done before our LGBT brothers and sisters are truly free of the discrimination that continues to cause such pain and inequality.

Make no mistake, it was a hate crime – perhaps an act of terrorism as well – but at its core a vicious hate crime: a violent act directed at a specific class of people with the intent to strike fear in the hearts of all members of the victimized class (and often successful in doing so). But the funny thing about Orlando was that in the aftermath of the tragedy, LGBT people faced their fear with strength and defiance. Together with their many allies, they turned grief into action and found comfort and solidarity in community.

There were hundreds of candlelight vigils and rallies across the U.S. People marched in Pride parades carrying photos of the victims. Members of Congress staged a sit-in to encourage sensible gun legislation. Men Alive gave a wonderful concert at IUCC that concluded with a powerful dedication to the victims and a stirring rendition of “This is our fight song.” Our congregation scattered flowers around the Peace Pole in remembrance of those lost. Lesley Whelan created a sensitive, exquisite arrangement of 49 candles on our altar so we could mourn together.

In our own way, we are fighting back. We are fighting back with the most powerful weapon there is: love. Specifically, ONA churches are offering radical love and acceptance to all who are different and marginalized. By being ONA, we are standing in solidarity with the entire LGBT and allied community. We are in this together, one body and one spirit. We are all Orlando, and we are all grieving right now.

It is at times like these that communities can come together for real change. Yes, we can take comfort in our wonderful ONA church and its message of extravagant welcome. But Orlando has shown us that we cannot be complacent or rest on our laurels. There are still people who stigmatize and marginalize our LGBT brothers and sisters and seek to curtail hard-earned rights. The ONA effort must continue to grow and strengthen until God’s message of unconditional love is heard and understood by all.
Join the Child Care Committee - Serve IUCC!

Looking for a fun, meaningful way to serve IUCC? The Child Care Committee currently has two openings for congregational members. The committee provides oversight and support to the professional staff of the IUCC Early Childhood Center, and is a liaison between the ECC and the Administrative Board and the IUCC congregation. The ECC is a mission and social enterprise of the church, providing quality early care and education to the community and an income source to IUCC. The committee meets monthly at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday. Diverse skills and interests are needed: business management, nonprofit management, communications, technology, marketing, human resources, early education, and/or child development. Committee members enjoy the gratification of supporting a successful, vibrant program that represents IUCC’s vision and mission. Interested? Email co-chairs Laura Long (laura.a.long@cox.net) or Colin Austin (colinchat99@yahoo.com).

Join Choir Lite!

On behalf of the IUCC Chancel Choir, we want to thank you for your attendance at our Annual Spring Concert, All About Love. We feel privileged to have such a supportive congregation to receive our musical offerings. Thank you for your continued love and appreciation for the choir. We work diligently for months preparing music for each concert, and your response makes the hard work so worthwhile. We love to see your smiling faces and hear about your favorite parts of the concert. If you want to relive the evening, or were not able to attend, DVDs and Blu-ray discs are available for purchase, with proceeds going to the IUCC General Fund. See a member of the music ministry for more details.

Gershwin was onto something with the lyric, “Summertime, and the livin’ is easy.” That statement is true for the life of a choir member at IUCC. During this season of “Choir Lite” there are no Thursday night rehearsals - just simple and beautiful anthems to sing and the continued opportunity to inspire worship each Sunday. If you’ve ever wondered what it’s like to be in the choir, we invite you to join us. “Choir Lite” meets Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary and sings for both services. There is no obligation, you may sing as many or as few Sundays as you like. It’s a wonderful experience to sing in a choir.

If you have never done it, I offer a special word of encouragement from Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., who said, “A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.” I would submit that not only does your mind expand, but singing in the choir expands your heart and spirit as well.

Dear IUCC Family: We would like to thank Pastor Paul and the congregation for opening your arms and your hearts to us. IUCC was the first place we came to after arriving from Iran, and we immediately felt as if we had found a new home.

So many of you have helped us in so many ways, from giving our girls computers for school to putting up with our terrible English. We feel as though we belong here, and we love coming to the Sunday gatherings. We can’t say thank you enough.

Many blessings from our hearts,
Mano, Soo, Rano and Raj
MISSION & SERVICE COLLECTION

Families Forward exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, food, counseling, education, and other support services. Mission & Service will be sponsoring a Food Drive and Back to School Supplies Program. All items must be new; and, a detailed list is in the narthex. The two drives will be from June 17 - July 10.

SUMMER READING BOOK EXCHANGE

Bring a book! Take a book! This summer at IUCC, we will have a table of free books. Unclutter your bookshelf and donate a book. Find a book from the table for a leisurely read. The Book Exchange table will be at Church on Sundays in July and August.

BE OUR EYES & EARS

Often times IUCC members will hear of folks in our congregation who need some special attention. A church friend of yours may be dealing with an illness or other issues of which we may not be aware. Sometimes information about our members fails to make it to the church office in a time frame that gives us an opportunity to provide care or support. Our staff and our Congregational Care ministry want to respond to the needs of our members as quickly as possible, and we need your help in identifying needs that may slip past us. If you know of someone who may need a little extra TLC due to an illness or other personal issue, please send a quick email to iucc@iucc.org or call the church office and give us a heads-up.

WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP

WED. * JULY 6 * 6:30 p.m.
The women’s fellowship will meet to share summer salads and hear our own Kelly Garrity speak on a creative path towards healing. Kelly will help us discover that place where the science of the brain meets the poetry of the body. Participants can look forward to a facilitated Expressive Poetry experience focused on how we can develop “inner life skills” through connecting to our creative selves, attending to our spiritual and emotional needs from the inside out.

Kelly Garrity, MS, is currently practicing as a Marriage and Family Therapist Registered Intern in Newport Beach specializing in Expressive Arts Therapy for Women and families encountering loss or transition. She is also currently pursuing a credential as Certified Applied Poetry Facilitator under the supervision of Perie Longo, LMFT, PTR. As usual, sign ups are on the patio for what to bring. Direct any questions to Kelly or Pat Sauter.

CHOIR LITE

Join us for Choir LITE - no weekday commitment, just show up on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m., learn the anthem, and sing to your heart’s content at both services! You can leave after the children’s time in 2nd service. Join us!

7/01 Peyton Campbell  7/04 Laurie McComb
7/31 Jean Dietrich    7/01 Christina Padilla
7/04 Eduardo Figueroa 7/05 Laura Rhodes
7/13 Lauren Fleming  7/18 Randy Romine
7/03 Steve Goetz      7/25 Susan Sherman
7/05 Kathie Guth      7/28 Jane Smith
7/03 Donna Haehl      7/13 Dennis Webster
7/11 August Lobato, Jr. 7/22 Kerin Wilson
7/05 Jonathan Lyman  7/06 Emily Yu
7/28 Jeanne Maag      7/28 Scott Zane
As much as we would like to believe otherwise, the “truth” is hard to come by. It’s hard to point to all the reasons why this is so, but we know truth can make people very uncomfortable. While the Bible tells us that the truth will “set us free,” it does not say it will make us happy. In our social lives, we know that even though many people around us know what is “true” about us, they are more likely to say what is true, especially if it is unpleasant, to other people rather than to us.

Gossip, we know, is rather rampant in all circles, and is not always “false.” The problem with gossip is that telling the truth about us to the wrong people doesn’t give us the information we need to examine ourselves and see if we need or want to make corrections in our behavior. And “gossip” stems from what people learn in their families, not what they learn in school or at play. As a psychologist I am always free to “blame mothers” for things (ha), and in this case I will, although they are not alone, as fathers and grandmothers are as much to blame.

Without meaning to, adults involved in raising children often put children in “double binds” where whatever they do is going to be “wrong,” and this is often true when it comes to learning to tell the truth. Young children do not have “filters,” and they are inclined to say whatever they want to. Often what they say is “true,” but may be viewed as unkind, or obnoxious, or at least unwelcomed. So, very early children begin to be corrected when they say things that are true, but socially unacceptable. How many of you remember being told that “if you don’t have something nice to say, don’t say anything at all”? This is the beginning of a can of worms that can contaminate all relationships – friendships, work relationships, and intimate relationships. Because, as we know, the “truth” is not always “nice.”

A pattern then develops where people either lie, tell the truth when no one is around to monitor them, tell the truth to people who do not benefit from it, or just keep silent.

How many times have you noticed that someone is in a bad mood, or is clearly being bothered by something, yet when you ask them what’s wrong they say “nothing.” The minute you hear this you know it’s not true, but yet we often accept it anyway. “Just checking,” we say, and then we drop it. Unhappily, this can form the underpinning in relationships that become a lifelong pattern: we keep unpleasant truths to ourselves. All of the jokes you’ve heard about “does this dress make me look fat” give testimony to the stress created by patterns of deception – either overt, or through silence.

Gradually, unfortunately, this pattern of deception, however well intended, can undermine the foundation of relationships – between friends, between parents and children, between people we work with, and between couples. Too often couples have to go to “therapy” and pay someone else who will help them to say to each other what needs to be said, because they started too early to avoid uncomfortable and unpleasant exchanges. No relationship can stay healthy without occasional “courageous conversations” to keep the air clear by telling each other the truth, whether it “wrecks” your weekend or not.

This discussion is leading up to our consideration of the good and the bad news about adjusting self-awareness: the good news is that accurate information is a cure for inaccurate information, and can give us the information about ourselves we need to make corrections in both our thoughts and our behavior, when necessary. The bad news is that providing the accurate information, and receiving the accurate information, is often very stressful for both the giver and the receiver.

For Christians, we can see that this problem has been recorded since the beginning of written literature. In the story of Adam and Eve in the garden we have the “serpent” creating the dilemma we have been discussing. In many cultures the serpent is a symbol of wisdom because it sheds its skin and thus is “born again.” In the Genesis story, the serpent doesn’t lie, but tells the truth: Adam and Eve don’t die from eating the fruit. So how can we know ourselves when people don’t tell us what is really true? We’ll continue with taking the risk of telling the truth next time.