Any day now ... and we know it has been coming ... Pastor Elizabeth will be stepping away from her duties as our Associate Pastor and assuming the duties and joys of being a new mother. Her maternity leave has been worked out, and we will not expect to see or hear from her in any official way for (at least) three months. Of course, we will want to know how things are going, and to get to meet the new Castleman-Griswold family member, but in terms of continuing with our programs, especially the Ministry for Young People ... it is going to be up to us.

So, IUCC, I need your help!

- We will need volunteers for Sunday school—especially during this busy time in the church year. There is an opening right now for you to participate and help lead a class.
- Erika wants to plan for youth events, so invite your young people to be a part of what’s going on!

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.
• Jerrod and Meredith Anderson are volunteering to be lead people for “Bread for the Journey.” Reach out to our new 20's-30’s folks and invite them to join in!

• There will be extra (limited) dedicated staff support during this time, but we are calling on you to come together as you have in the past to support what IUCC has deemed to be “the most important area of ministry”—our young people. Ready?

You may have noticed an extra emphasis on Mission during February. We hosted our missionary from Japan, Jeffrey Mensendieck, and our leader in Global Mission work from our national setting, Jan Aerie. As a bonus, Jan’s husband, UCC minister Cliff Aerie, added some jazz sax to our music, led that day by Dr. Laura Harrison.

Our recent emphasis on leading up to becoming an officially designated Global Mission Church came just as we received a special “thanks” from the UCC for being the number two UCC church out of over 5600 churches in per-capita giving to One Great Hour of Sharing. For years, IUCC has stood in the forefront of support for our mission at home and in the world. Later in this issue, you will read more about this [see p. 15 – ed.], but I bring it up here, first, because I am proud of it, and second, it shows that there is a real desire on the part of many people in our midst to focus on our mission, whether here at home through Family Promise, in the work we are doing in the U.S. for disaster relief and in the work we do all around the world.

In February, I wanted to accommodate our mission program while making sure Elizabeth got to share the pulpit time with me before she went on leave. Then, I needed to make a family trip back east. So, the answer to the question some have asked is this: “No, I have not given up preaching for Lent.”

My sermon on March 3 (the “Afterlife”) was specially-developed to support our Comma Groups (which are encouraged to discuss the afterlife this month). I will also be in the pulpit on each of the four succeeding Sundays in March.

Don’t forget—we have a special Maundy Thursday service on March 28 at 7:00. This will be the closing “bookend” to our series on comparative religion that began after our Ash Wednesday service. These have been well attended—and
we will be hearing (in order) about the Sikh, Muslim and Buddhist faith traditions each of the next three Wednesdays.

Then—Easter! Duplicate services with special music! Easter-egg hunts and lilies! Always one of the most uplifting days in the church calendar, and IUCC does it well.

So, I hope to see you through March and beyond. While I am at it, it isn’t too early to invite you to come to General Synod in Long Beach this year. This is about as close as our bi-yearly synod will come to us. You can read more about it here:

See you in church!
Pastor Paul

From the Associate Pastor

Our Bread for the Journey discussion group for young adults in their 20s and 30s has recently been working our way through a Lenten devotional book put out by the UCC StillSpeaking Writers’ Group. Their motto is “Hearing God where you live (and other surprising places).” (I do have extra copies of this book if you’d like one.) The title of the devotional is Spring Cleaning and takes its inspiration from a quote from Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, “If the broad light of day could be let in upon [people’s] actions, it would purify them as the sun disinfects." To hearken back to the old-fashioned spring cleaning practice of throwing open the windows and hanging it all out on the line, the idea is to let some fresh air do the cleaning for our hearts and souls as well this Lent. The notion is to rely on God’s gifts “to urge us to open our windows and honestly reflect, truly repent.” The book has sparked many a good conversation amongst our group, so I wanted to share a bit with the wider congregation as well.

The book has an entry for each day that starts off with a scriptural quote, leads into a Lenten-based reflection on the passage, then closes in prayer. The entry for February 23 begins, “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you, say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” –Jesus in Matthew 23:37-39
The author for that day, the Rev. Molly Baskette, writes about her experience living in “an urban oasis filled with wannabe farmers.” She has noticed many of her neighbors’ yards sprouting coops as they take on raising chickens. She explains that these urban chickens are, more than anything, prone to attack by housecats. “It’s no wonder Jesus likened himself to a mother hen when making it absolutely clear just how tenderly he felt toward us,” she muses. But she goes on to ask whether perhaps God might ever feel frustrated that instead of docile sheep who know how to follow a strong leader, or chicks who love to seek the comfort and protection of their mother, “most of us humans have turned out to be bunch of cats, impossible to herd. Stubbornly going our own way. Lazy and imperious as all get out. And occasionally making death-defying dashes across the highway, for no explicable reason. Not to mention what we do to the chicks.”

And she closes with the prayer,

Holy Mother, a cat can’t change her spots. Or can she? Remind me daily that you love me, and there is always a warm, safe place near your heart for me, no matter where I have been and who I have eaten. Amen.”

It’s a wonderful reminder that we are always called to change our ways, but we are always welcomed back into love and tenderness no matter what anyway.

In another take on that same biblical passage from Matthew, the Rev. Rachel G. Hackenberg published the following poem as part of the daily Lenten poetry series on February 16 on her blog:

O Jesus, Brooding Hen,
I long for the naïveté of a chick
who sees the nest as its whole world and
the hen’s wing as a sure defense against the fox.
But I have imagined the threatening fox
into mythical proportions that even
a nery hen cannot restrain.

How I have limited you, O Loving Christ, in power & mystery!

O Jesus, you would
nurture my roots and strengthen me
to bear fruit to your glory, but I cannot stand
the smell of Manure so I satisfy myself with stunted growth. 
I have limited and rejected you, I confess.

You invite me 
to dip my toes into ocean foam 
and to allow the undertow’s rhythm to reorient my perspective, but I much prefer dry land to the vast Ocean. 
I have turned away from you, I know.

You encourage saying, “This way,” and delight my soul with possibilities, but I see that the Door is narrow and have I told you how good the food is around here?
I have preferred extra pounds to svelte faith.

Ah Brooding Hen, Sweet Manure! 
O Vast Ocean, Narrow Door! 
Expand my sense of you. 
Deepen the mystery of my faith. 
Amen.

What a gift it is to easily access and experience this divine artwork in our midst and to reflect upon holy writings both scriptural and contemporary. To do such reflection in church community is all the more holy.

In that vein, I also wanted to share a couple links here to some more good resources for fully experiencing Lent. This is an ideal time to take on some spiritual practices together, as an individual or as a family.  

[Click on the links below – ed.] 

A Lenten e-calendar with good practice ideas
An article about the season by a minister friend of mine

The opportunities to more fully embrace ourselves, our God, and our spiritual journey truly abound in this holy season of Lent. May you find them as well within our congregation with the Lenten interfaith series each Wednesday evening, the upcoming Maundy Thursday service on March 28, and each week in worship, choir, Comma Groups, knitting groups, Sunday School, Youth Group, and more!

This will be the last newsletter article I wrote for a while, as my own Lenten journey brings me into motherhood and I begin my Maternity Leave of 12 weeks. I have every confidence that those who come forward to cover duties in my absence will do so with grace and aplomb. And I’m very thankful for that.
Please see the Rev. Ken Wyant regarding children and youth Sunday School and Meredith and Jerrod Anderson regarding young adult programming.

And please also remember that we may always take refuge in the sheltering wings of our God. She may want to peck at us chicks at times, with our constantly chirping and wandering; but she will also always welcome us home to her bosom. We just need to know when to keep silent, find comfort, and take rest. To paraphrase God, in a final quote from the Rev. Hackenberg's blog, “Hush. It’s my turn.”

Amen,
Pastor Elizabeth

**Youth Group Report**  
*By Erika Sanders*

Hello IUCC Youth and Parents!

I hope you are all doing well. Although the Sunday School turnout was small during the month of February, there were several new faces. It is exciting to see how news about youth programming at IUCC is spreading in the greater Orange County community!

I know the schedule for youth programming was a little thrown off while I was away in India, but I am happy to let you all know that we have returned to the usual schedule of Sunday school for Middle and High School students during the 11 o'clock service and a youth group activity every Sunday from 12:30pm-2:30pm. If you have recommendations or suggestions for Sunday school topics or youth activities you would like to see offered during the next couple months, feel free to email me at sande128@mail.chapman.edu. I always love hearing more ideas!

**Upcoming Youth Activities:**

**March 9th:** IUCC Game Night

**March 10th:** Youth Group lunch and discussion

**March 17th:** Beach Clean-up and Picnic after church
Looking Ahead:

April 27-28: Partner overnight with Redlands IUCC youth group as part of the 30 Hour Famine

Peace,

Erika

Adult Education:
Upcoming Opportunities

We plan to host Jesus Seminar on the Road April 26 and 27. The speakers will be Joe Bessler and Steve Patterson. The program will be based on David Galston's newest book: Embracing the Human Jesus.

Here are some “takes” on that book, from the Westar Institute’s web site.

Embracing the Human Jesus is a sincere effort to think anew about Christianity and Christian practice on the foundation of a purely human Jesus. Against the inevitable criticism that such a Jesus undermines the historic faith of the church, David Galston finds a human Jesus who inspires a new era of honesty in the practice of Christianity. The book expresses the awareness held by many scholars that the historical Jesus was an end-time prophet not well suited to the contemporary world. Galston counters that, by pointing out that whether taking the apocalyptic or non-apocalyptic view, virtually all scholars see Jesus as a participant in the Jewish wisdom tradition. On this often marginalized foundation, Galston proposes that the trajectory of the ancient wisdom of Jesus can be grasped in the contemporary world and can find life in the thinking and practices of a new church. The book combines both academic theory and basic Christian experience to offer a simple model that will help communities take the historical Jesus to church.
"Smuggling Jesus into Christianity will be hard but exciting work, and David Galston is a clear and lively guide who knows just how much is at stake." — Don Cupitt, University of Cambridge UK

"This book shows why the historical Jesus will change the church that embraces him." — Robert J. Miller, Juniata College

"A thought-provoking study of the historical Jesus that not only demonstrates a wide acquaintance with the relevant literature but also manifests much original thought.”
— Lloyd Geering, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ

Dr. Bessler is Robert Travis Peake Associate Professor of Theology at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is currently on sabbatical, writing Jesus: A Scandalous Theology in which he develops the contours of a theology that takes the historical Jesus seriously.

Dr. Patterson specializes in the study of the historical Jesus, Christian origins, and the Gospel of Thomas, an early Christian gospel not found in the New Testament. Most recently he has written about the theological significance of the newest phase in the quest for the historical Jesus.
Save the date—Saturday–Sunday, May 4–5—and plan to join IUCC women at Pilgrim Pines for this year’s annual retreat, “Engaging Our Gifts: Co-creating with God.”

Retreat leader Rev. Penelope Mann is planning an exciting weekend of learning, reflection, fellowship, and fun as we explore and celebrate the unique gifts God has given us.

As we use our gifts, we collaborate with God in co-creation. Penelope will guide us in exploring how we manifest our gifts, how the creative expression of our gifts may become blocked, and how we can re-engage and re-energize God’s spirit within and in how we express our unique gifts. Through time together and time alone in the beautiful mountains, this retreat is sure to deepen our engagement with God as we strengthen our ties with each other.

Watch for more detailed information and registration forms soon! Cost is $100, which includes meals, lodging, and materials. Some scholarships are available.

The retreat is organized by the Women’s Fellowship with assistance from Ken Wyant, interim Director of Adult Programs.
Help Spread the News about IUCC’s Early Childhood Center!

Do you know families who need a quality care and education experience for their young children?

The IUCC Early Childhood Center values your referrals and plans an open house for prospective children and their families from 10 to 4 on Saturday, April 20.

The Center offers a full-day, year-round program perfect for working parents. Here are just three among the many positive features of IUCC’s center that you can mention to your friends and neighbors:

- Affordable, flexible 2-, 3-, and 5-day programs
- Small classes and low teacher-to-student ratio
- Multicultural environment respectful of family differences

For more information about the open house, call the center at 949-733-0228.

Fundraising Success!

Thanks to all who made the Silent Auction at the Winter Party a success. We raised $3,774.50 from sales and donations.

We want to thank all of you who donated items -- and those of you who purchased them. Good Job!! Thank you all!

Janet Emery and Susie Lang
Co-Chairs, Fund Development
February has been a very important month for informing the church family about the importance of Global Mission in the life of IUCC.

- **Erika Sanders** has just returned from a 6 week trip to India doing missionary work there. [See her report, below. –ed.]
- **The Rev. Jeff Mensendiek**, missionary from Japan, has spent time with our congregation sharing his ministry in Japan. Randy Romaine and Ken Matsuyama put on a fantastic Japanese lunch in honor of our guest.
- **Ken Matsuyama** has returned from Japan devoting many weeks to important missionary work in the area of the nuclear disaster.
- We have presented a 6’ by 9 feet’ display panel in Plumer Hall showing our local and international GM projects. *(Stop by and see all the reaching out this church family does!)*
- **The Rev. Jan Aerie**, Executive with Global Ministries (GM), came for a weekend and spent time with the IUCC GM Committee discussing the work of the UCC Global Ministry which is doing some 270 different projects in 78 different countries. She preached at both services and then, after a delicious Chinese lunch, shared some more insights into GM, followed by a Q & A session from some 50 attendees. It was a rich opportunity for IUCC and we shall persevere on developing a strong GM foundation here.

Sunday, April 14, after the 2nd service, will be our Global Mission Faire, emphasizing IUCC’s local, national and international mission and ministry work. It will start with a free lunch presenting international foods prepared by members of IUCC

*(If you would like to add a dish of your specialty, please email or call me (Bil Aulenbach). The more the merrier!)*

followed by a panel of missionaries from South Africa, Swaziland, Japan and India who will share their individual work as well as the power of reaching out to the hurting world. We shall end the gathering with a share from the Rev. Mike Holland (UCC Church of the Foothills, Tustin) who has not only been personally involved in many projects but has had his life transformed because of his involvement with GM.
On May 19, at our Spring Congregational meeting, the church family will vote on becoming one of four congregations in this conference awarded the outstanding distinction of being a UCC Global Mission congregation. (There are only 70+ churches in the whole UCC denomination who have been awarded this title.)

What a fantastic church family! I really appreciate the tremendous cooperation from so many members of IUCC who have supported the beginning stages of Global Missions...and we're only starting. To quote Dr. Phil: "This (GM) will be a changing day (time) in your life (and the life of IUCC)."

Bil Aulenbach

Global Missions:

Connecting with Jesus at the Piyali Learning Center

By Erika Sanders

Over my winter break, I had the privilege of spending 6 weeks in India. I spent the first three weeks traveling around tourist sites with my family, Sarah Fiske-Phillips, who is the former IUCC youth director, and her brother, Jacob. I spent the second half of my trip volunteering at a school for girls in the village of Piyali, an hour outside of Kolkata.

My first impressions of India were exhaustion, sensory overload, and discomfort. I remember being painfully aware that no matter what I did, I would never be able to blend in. Not only was my blonde hair a sharp contrast to the sea of dark hair around me, I was also at least a head taller than most people, making me a blonde haired giant, easily identifiable from any point on the street. Over time however, I developed a high tolerance for crowds, noise, traffic, and brilliant colors. As things became more familiar, I found myself enjoying the sights and sounds of bustling India.

Outings that exhausted me at the beginning of my trip started to feel routine. Even boarding the early morning commuter train, originally an exhilarating, anxiety-inducing event, became a "normal" part of my day. Being in India and having to adjust to situations that were unlike anything I was familiar with made me realize that I was capable of adapting to new situations. In fact, I was not only adapting, I was also enjoying the sense of accomplishment I felt after trying
new things.

A typical day in Piyali began at 7:30am when I took the metro to the train station to meet the rest of the teachers for our morning commute to the village. Once we got to school, the teachers ate breakfast together and discussed important school events and the challenges they faced in their classrooms. These breakfast meetings often reminded me of the community we form when we gather for communion. These incredible women came together to share a meal while discussing how to best benefit their students. I was impressed by the tremendous amount of love these teachers had for their students and by their willingness to come alongside their students to help them succeed regardless of the personal challenges they may be experiencing. I was also impressed to learn that by becoming teachers instead of housewives, many of these teachers were violating social and cultural norms, which in some cases subjected them to harsh criticism and ostracism from their families. I choose to believe that this sort of selflessness, driven by a deep compassion for others, regardless of whether or not it is socially acceptable, reflects the commandment Jesus gave to his disciples when he told them to love one another.

Prior to my trip to India I hadn’t grasped the depth of the way Jesus called his followers to love people. It is a love that surpasses judgment, convenience, and at times physical comfort. It no longer mattered if I was cold or hungry because everyone else was too. For a few weeks of my life, concern for my own comfort became irrelevant because I was so absorbed in experiencing life alongside the students and teachers at the Piyali Learning Center. I think this was one of the greatest blessings of my trip to India. The time I spent interacting with students, learning their stories, and sharing in their daily lives taught me how little I needed to feel happy and fulfilled in my life. I realized that in the grand scheme of things, most of what I spend my time and money on don’t actually matter. What does matter is building relationships and communities based on love.

My favorite part of the day was teaching conversational English to the Class IX students. Although Class IX is roughly the equivalent of 9th grade, my students were between the ages of 16-21 because their village didn’t have a school until they were 7 or 8 years old. Being able to talk with these young women about what life was like for them and to hear how passionate they were about their education, families, and village was inspiring. In spite of all the hardship they had experienced (all came from extremely poor households and had been subject to some degree of abuse) they remained optimistic and determined to create a better life for themselves and their village. When I asked them why ed-
ucation was so important they told me, "education is the most important thing for us... we have ambitions... we want to be teachers and doctors so that one day we can help the other poor people in our village." I am so grateful for the time I was able to spend with these amazing young women. On several occasions I was moved to tears when a student would say to me "Didi (which means 'sister' in Bengali), we are just so happy that you are here with us... You always smile so beautifully... Our lives are so simple but you are choosing to be here with us so we are thankful..." How could I not give all of myself and everything I had to these girls?

A final thing that struck me about life in India was the strong sense of family and community that permeated all levels of life. The importance of family connections in Indian culture is reinforced by calling adults "Auntie" or "Uncle." In this way, a strong value of respecting one's elders is established in addition to a sense that all adults can play an important role in raising children.

Even business transactions were largely based on communal relationships. Numerous times, a cab driver would attempt to sell me a room at their brother's / father's / uncle's hotel while driving me home. It seemed like everyone in India knew someone in every service industry! For example, when looking for a tailor, I took fabric to a woman who turned out to be my landlord's mother's father's aunt! My landlord, his mother, and the other tenant living in our flat took a special interest in looking out for me and making sure I enjoyed my time in India while also staying safe. If they knew I was coming home late, they would walk outside to meet me or call one of the other teachers to make sure I was alright. In the evenings, we would keep each other company and I would try to explain what my life was like in California. It is amazing to me that I was able to develop this sort of family connection with people whose language (Bengali) I could not speak.

Every day in India held several moving, beautiful, and often heart-breaking stories of hope, love, and determination, far more than can be contained by this brief article. I hope that through telling these stories and the lessons I learned I am able to share with you a piece of what I experienced. I have been told by some people that I light up when talking about India because I enjoy talking about it so much, so please if you would like to hear more about my trip, don't hesitate to ask!
One Great Hour of Sharing is the offering that is taken once a year by our UCC churches, as well as in many other Protestant denominations.

This year, the offering will be received on **Sunday, March 10**.

**In 2012, IUCC gave $9,370** to One Great Hour of Sharing.

- You heard our missionary, Jeffrey Mensendieck, speak in church on February 10 about how your offering helped his work in Japan after the tsunami.
- Jan Aerie, who leads our UCC Global Ministries from Cleveland, thanked us in worship on February 24 for the help we have been able to give.

You can read about how your offering from 2012 was used throughout the year [here](#).

And -- here’s something to be really proud of. IUCC came in SECOND out of all of our UCC churches in per-capita giving in 2012. Susan Sanders, who heads our OGHS ministry in Cleveland, sent us this personalized message of thanks. **[Click Here.](#)**

Thank you, IUCC!
Sometimes love comes knocking at the door;
Not to judge, but to just be there through the thin times;
Not to heal, but to allow God to heal;
Not to be the answer, but to be a conduit;
Not to have the words, when God fills the silent room;
Sometimes love comes through and from a Stephen Minister.

Are you being called?

STEVEN MINISTRY IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD WOMEN AND MEN

The IUCC Stephen Ministry is in need of Ministers for its program. Through this ministry God will bring forth new life and renewed faith in both your care receiver and in you as a Stephen Minister. Below are some quotes from Stephen Ministers:

_We all like to say we listen, but very few people actually stop what they’re doing, focus their attention, and take the time to really listen to the other person. Stephen Ministry has helped me become the kind of listener I’ve always wanted to be._
_Angela_

_Without a doubt, serving as a Stephen Minister has been the most rewarding, growth-producing, meaningful thing I have ever done! It’s an honor to be able to serve God in this way._
_Don_

_Being a Stephen Minister is much bigger and better than just helping other people. It becomes part of you—it changes you for the better. My faith is stronger. I’ve learned to listen, care, pray aloud, and be more assertive. I love it! With God’s help I’ll continue to grow through this wonderful ministry._
_Doris_
WHAT IS STEPHEN MINISTRY?

Stephen Ministry is a way for congregations to provide high-quality care and outreach to hurting people in the congregation and community.

Stephen Ministers are congregation members who go through 50 hours of Christian caregiving training. Each Stephen Minister is then matched with a hurting person and meets with that person weekly to listen, care, pray, and encourage. Caring relationships last for as long as the need persists.

Stephen Ministers care for those dealing with grief, divorce, job loss, hospitalization, financial struggles, loneliness, convalescence, terminal illness, and other life difficulties.

The Stephen Ministry will begin our next Training Classes in April. We are looking for interested members of the Church to become Stephen Ministers.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT STEPHEN MINISTRY, CONTACT:

Dave Schofield, Chair of the Stephen Ministry
Dschofield1@att.net or (949) 300-1216
(all inquiries are confidential).

The UCC General Synod 29 will be held in Long Beach, June 28 - July 2, 2013. Everyone - everyone is welcome!
All the great things our denomination does and offers are laid out - call it a UCC buffet!

- Curious about our leaders? See them in action.
- Need inspiration for your church’s activities? Synod is the place!
- Come explore the exhibit hall. The UCC Press brings loads of books and other materials.
- Do you want to know more about UCC Missions? Worship resources? All these, and many more, are presented.

You’ll need more than one visit, the hall’s so full of people and ideas!

As for people - we're all in this together. So many interesting UCCers to make friends with! Each day you can also hear both well-known and emerging writers, performers, media figures and musical groups. You can ask questions and, as always, hearings and discussions are presented with respect for everyone’s opinions.

The final event of Synod is Sunday Afternoon Worship! Scheduled in the afternoon so we can all come after church, this is a marvelous sacred event. Come and be one of the several thousand people at our ever-open table! Think of your voice joining the sound of all that singing, too! This is when we praise God and stand together as the body of the United Church of Christ.

So make your plans! Come to Synod 29! If you give four hours of volunteer time (there are lots of ways to serve), you get free registration. If you prefer to just come, one-day registration is $75 and three-day, $175.

COME to Synod 29! Learn, think, sing, and worship – be part of the UCC together!

Hallelujah!

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**Needed:**

More amazing volunteers
to teach Sunday School

Work with a team, use a prepared curriculum, serve our youngest congregants, and learn a lot in the process!

**RSVP:** Church office
New Members  February 10, 2013

Colin Austin is from Edmonton, Alberta and was baptized in the United Church of Canada. He is an Information Technology Manager, and worked on various applications that directly supported the Space Shuttle Program through NASA.

He is married to Firouzeh, and they have four children; Maya, Kiana, Yasmine & Naseem. They are an interfaith Christian/Muslim/Zoroastrian family. Kiana and Maya were baptized here in 2010, and attend our preschool.

Adele Bloom was born and raised in Los Angeles. She is a retired High School Principal, and also worked as a Guidance Counselor. Adele comes to us from the Founders Church of Religious Science, as does her husband, Austin.

Austin Brazille is from Beaumont Texas, and was baptized in the Baptist church in Houston, though he and Adele were active in Religious Science here in California. He is a retired teacher. Both Austin and Adele have a great interest in music and the arts. They have been visiting IUCC for some time now.

Doug Kitchen was born and raised in San Diego. He is an ordained Presbyterian minister, and works as marriage and family therapist. Doug lives in Anaheim, and his partner, Ron, visits with us as well. He comes to us from the Riverside UCC.
Carly Maris is from Auburn, California and comes from a United Church of Christ congregation there. She is a PhD student in classical Philology at UCI. Carly is a part of our Bread for the Journey group, and her fiancé, Dan, also visits with us.

Jan Osborne is from Chicago; specifically, she was born in a Checker cab in Chicago. She is a retired Aerospace Tech Writer & Proposal Manager, and continues to work today in the area of financial planning. She is a lifelong member of the UCC, and is transferring her membership here today from the Neighborhood Church in Laguna Beach with her husband, Brian.

Brian Osborne is from Bristol, England, where he was affiliated with the Church of England. He is retired from Mattel, where he was a Mechanical Engineer and holds a patent on one of their Barbie Doll products. Along with Jan, he was active at our Manhattan Beach Community Church, and later, the Neighborhood Church.

Dawn Price was born and raised in Racine, Wisconsin. She grew up in the Lutheran tradition, but has been UCC for over twenty years. Dawn was drawn to sing in our choir on Sunday mornings. She is the Executive Director of Friendship Shelter, which provides services for the homeless.

Jerry Price grew up in Fort Worth, Texas. He comes from the Catholic tradition, but with Dawn, has been a member of the UCC for many years. Jerry is the Dean of Students at Chapman University. Dawn and Jerry have one adult son, Preston.
March Birthdays

Anne Aulenbach
Daniel Blackburn
Steve Bullington
David Carruthers
Rachel Dill
Dylan Dobbert
Anders Evensen
Suzie Feick
Lindy Garber

Panee Hsiang
Cindy Katz
Phyllis Larkin
Xin Li
Lauren Louie
Barbara Moss
Jan Osborne
Rev. Fred Plumer
Dawn Price

Jerry Price
Melissa Sokol
Kristen Thoreson
Michael Trout
Walter Trout
Jordan Willcox
Nicholas Willcox
Kristin Williams

All-Church Game Night
Saturday * March 9
6:00PM * Plumer Hall

All are invited to come enjoy an evening of food, fellowship, and games! Please bring your favorite game and a salad or dessert to share, and the Ministry for Young People will provide pizza. Co-sponsored by the Fellowship Ministry.
February Photos

Patio Scene

Missionary Jeff Mensendieck

Global Missions Leader Jan Aerie

Luncheon with Jan Aerie

Two After Church

Greetings, Pastor!

Two on the Patio

Photo Credits: Mark Fowler; Keith Boyum
The Courage to Think Differently

IUCC member, the Rev. George Johnson – and his many friends – are pleased to see the publication of his new book, written and edited by George. It is available through George, or it can be ordered at www.adventurepublications.net

The book comprises seven major sections:

- In a Culture of Irrelevant Religion and Idolatry;
- In a Culture of Exclusion and Thin Democracy;
- In a Culture of Biblical Certitudes and Ignorance;
- In a Culture of Individualism and Cheap Grace;
- In a Culture of Ecological Crisis and Greed;
- In a Culture of Silence and Job Insecurity;
- In a Culture of Empire and Civil Religion.

Some now own a signed copy! And here is a question: Now that George has published his book, is he going to want tenure?  [grin]

The newsletter for our UCC denominational conference is available by clicking here. Check it out to read, for just one example, The Bells of St. Mary’s and the Problem of Goodness, authored by our own Robinmarie McClement!
Volunteer Opportunity at IUCC
Family Promise--Coordinator Needed

IUCC needs a volunteer coordinator for our Family Promise work at our partner church, Church of the Foothills (Tustin). The coordinator is the main point of contact between IUCC and Family Promise.

This volunteer would make sure that we are covered for providing trained volunteers when a family in need of a home is staying at our sister church. This occurs just several times a year.

IUCC already has many volunteers who are already trained, and the coordinator can easily schedule training for new volunteers by referring them to Family Promise. The coordinator doesn’t conduct the training.

The coordinator also passes along communications between Family Promise and IUCC by getting out requests for support and making sure we have those communications available for our church newsletter or bulletin.

The logistics are not a strain, and the satisfaction of helping a family transition into a home and a new life is rewarding.

    Family Promise is our local mission work, and IUCC partners financially, in volunteerism, and through the exemplary work of our board member, Susan Allen.

If you can see yourself involved in a ministry that helps families on a one-to-one basis, would you please speak to me, Pastor Elizabeth, Susan Allen or Don and Iris Bjorklund?

You would be making a difference.

    Thank you,
    Pastor Paul
From the United Church of Christ Web Site . . .

Bill McKibben encourages UCC fight for environmental advocacy

Author and environmental activist Bill McKibben spent three days in jail last year after being arrested protesting the Keystone Pipeline, a project scientists say would signal "game over" for the climate. Three cells away was United Church of Christ Massachusetts Conference minister the Rev. Jim Antal. To McKibben, the involvement of Antal and the UCC in the nonviolent protest to stop what he calls "environmental catastrophe" is powerful and prophetic.

But even more than that, McKibben says, it's necessary. At a time when leading climate scientists are urgently stressing the need to take action on global warming before it's too late, the religious community can make its voice heard by coming together and taking a stand.

See more by clicking here.
UCC advocates disappointed by delay of Boy Scouts’ anti-gay policy revision

Under pressure from a coalition of concerned members, the Boy Scouts of America decided Wednesday to delay a decision on the revision of a 35-year-old policy that discriminates against LGBT members. The vote on a proposal to allow gay scouts and leaders into the organization has been postponed until the group’s annual meeting in May. The BSA, in a statement released this morning, indicates more time is needed to solicit feedback from troops and councils around the country.

United Church of Christ advocates are disappointed by this delay, and denomination leaders continue to call on members and congregations to urge the BSA to revise the discriminatory policy, while offering pastoral support to gay scouts, leaders and allies.

See more by clicking here.
A Vatican Spring?

By HANS KÜNG
Published: February 27, 2013

TÜBINGEN, Germany

THE Arab Spring has shaken a whole series of autocratic regimes. With the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, might not something like that be possible in the Roman Catholic Church as well — a Vatican Spring?

Of course, the system of the Catholic Church doesn’t resemble Tunisia or Egypt so much as an absolute monarchy like Saudi Arabia. In both places there are no genuine reforms, just minor concessions. In both, tradition is invoked to oppose reform. In Saudi Arabia tradition goes back only two centuries; in the case of the papacy, 20 centuries.

Yet is that tradition true? In fact, the church got along for a millennium without a monarchist-absolutist papacy of the kind we’re familiar with today.

(Read more by clicking on the link below.)

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/28/opinion/a-vatican-spring.html?hp&_r=0
The Adult Programs Ministry

Invites YOU to Join Us as we continue a 7 Week Series

“COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS”

March 6  Sikh  Orange County Sikh Temple
March 13  Islam  Alia Aboul-Nasr
March 20  Buddhism  Rev. Ken Nagata

March 27, Maundy Thursday  Starts in Church with the service. Then Plumer Hall for a forum: “The Power of The Resurrection”

All programs are on Wednesdays, 7:30pm to 9pm  Plumer Hall except Maundy Thursday: starts in the church at 7:30pm

Everyone is Welcomed
BULLYING Part 14: ADDRESSING THE DISTRESS OF STRESS

Aggressive and physically harmful behavior is sometimes the result of a person’s inability to manage internal stress successfully. This stress can be caused by external factors, such as unwanted changes, disappointments, tension in one’s living situation, and a host of other features of life that seem beyond one’s control. Stress can also be caused by internal factors such as insecurity, feeling overwhelmed, having learning challenges that make one feel inferior to others, etc. It is not possible to live a life without stress. It is possible to learn how to deal with stressful situations, and it is a parent’s responsibility to teach their children how to manage inevitable stress in ways that are both successful (effective) and safe for self and others.

Telling children and teenagers to “stay cool” or “stay calm” or “calm down” is not helpful. This advice is vague and leaves children wondering what they are supposed to do.

Instead of telling developing youngsters what to do, we want to tell them how they should do it! Tell them what you do to manage your own stress. Different people have different strategies, some more successful than others. When we learn what really works for us, we want to share our strategies with our children. We can also share strategies we’ve tried that haven’t worked so that when we see our children doing things that have not been successful for us we can give them some better tips.

What do you do when someone treats you in a harsh or aggressive way? How do you control your impulses when you feel like yelling, hitting, slamming, throwing, etc.? Becoming angry and upset is part of being human, and is nothing to be ashamed of or try to deny. Fortunately, another part of being human is having a brain that can be used to learn not only facts and figures but strategies for living well. Do you count to 10 before saying something you might regret? My mother was a “counter” and my brother and I always knew when we were in trouble when we heard her in our room counting to herself. I am not a counter. A strategy that works for one person might not work for another, so while it’s a good idea to share what we do to “calm down” we also want to
recognize that each person has to find what works for them. Do you adjust your breathing so you are taking nice even breaths and not hyperventilating or puffing up? Do you take a “time out” – get away from someone who is causing your blood pressure to rise in an attempt to avoid all of the negative energy? Sometimes this is a good idea. We tell our children to go to their room for a few minutes until we can both calm down. But it’s only a successful strategy if we then get back together and re-engage to solve the problem and not avoid the stress between us. Sometimes it’s not a good idea to “walk out”, so we can take a “time out” by agreeing that both of us will stop talking for a few minutes and just sit quietly to allow our systems to calm. Do you “talk to yourself”, remind yourself that you are getting upset unnecessarily, or that the person who is causing stress isn’t really worth all the upset? Self-talk is a very useful strategy, and can be taught to children. Do you pray and ask God for help so you don’t “blow it” and say or do something you’re going to regret? Why not? Sometimes we need the “Spirit” to blow through us to help us with our self-control. Do you listen to someone going on and on and start humming one of your favorite tunes in your head so you can hear the music rather than their words? Frankly, it doesn’t matter what you do, it only matters that you have found something to do and that it is successful for you, and something you can pass along.

Let your children know that being treated unkindly, being on the other side of nasty remarks, being threatened, causes the body to “stress out”. It is a natural response that is built into our brains. Let them also know that there are things we can do when we feel our body getting stressed that will help. Role play effective responses to stressful interactions so they will have “rehearsed” some things to say and do if they become involved in a bullying interaction. Practicing something in advance helps us to feel more confident and less flustered because we have a “plan”. Confident children are not fun to pick on. Children with a plan to stay calm are less likely to get hurt. You have your homework for this month. Address the distress with success!
News & Notes
Irvine United Congregational Church
4915 Alton Parkway
Irvine, CA 92604
www.iucc.org