Our IUCC Picnic on Sept. 15 drew about 100 fun-loving people!

Photos by Tricia Aynes
I’ve watched our music program grow over the past seven years, and now I think we are at a point where not one more person could fit in the choir loft without someone spilling over onto the chancel floor.

The choral apprentice program continues to bring us bright new faces with great talents. Have you met Natasha and Zachary yet?

While this program that is intended to bless us with rich talent while nurturing upcoming church musicians for the greater church has been running for many years now, we will be having the equivalent experience on the pastoral side for the first time ever this year.

For whatever reasons, IUCC has never had the experience of nurturing a pastoral intern. This year, we will. Matt Redman (pictured at left) is a third year seminarian at Fuller Theological Seminary. He is a fairly new member, having joined with his partner, Chris Goodrich, not too long ago. Matt comes from a large Methodist church in Texas, where he did a lot of the technology support work in worship services and on the web. Matt is going to be helping us in a redesign of our web page, and in other areas as well.

Although Matt is a student at the more conservative Fuller Seminary, he feels more in-line with who we are. Along with Laura Kemp, our second-year seminarian, he will be pursuing ordination in the UCC. He and Laura are representing us at our upcoming Southern Association meeting.

I had four interns in my eight years at Mt. Hollywood. Each one brought unique insights and different gifts to the congregation. Matt will enrich us this year as well. His goal is to be an Associate Pastor, so you will be seeing him taking on the worship duties of an Associate at both services, leaving during second service to work with our Sunday school, and returning to take part in Communion on the first Sunday. He will also be learning practical aspects of ministry in all areas. Look for him this weekend, as we celebrate World Communion Sunday and receive our Neighbors in Need gifts. You will meet him with me at the door after service.

October will be one busy month with something happening every Sunday, and weddings in between. Congratulations to Randy and Ken on their union a couple of weeks ago. Long-time members Bill and Eric will tie the knot this weekend. Jean and Patty are getting married on the 26th. Marilyn and Lee Keslerwest are having a celebration after church at coffee hour on October 18 to mark the official adoption of Nate into the family. Michael and David will be celebrating their anniversary in Paris. It is a month of celebrations.

The Mission and Service Faire is this Sunday, and later in the month on the 27th, you can join me after the Trunk or Treat in the parking lot, for another Crop Walk. In fact, you can register online to walk or to sponsor.

There is so much positive energy going on with the kids, youth and young adults programs right now, that my only frustration is how long it is taking to find the perfect Adult-Ed director. I am so grateful to Carol Ballesty and her Adult Education committee, and to the Rev. Jerry Stinson for the Adult Sunday School program that has been so well attended. Once the right “fit” is found, we will be adding extra programs, and that missing Bible study will return!

We were able to bring Sister Simone Campbell to the church in September, and I could sense a real connection between us all, particularly at the beautiful luncheon our youth and Hospitality Committee put on. Afterwards, I took her out to Laguna Beach to walk and talk a bit, and she shared some of the excitement she was experiencing with regard to the expanded work she felt God was calling her to do as a result of the exposure that Nuns on the Bus had been given (even if some of it was in the notoriety of the Vatican disapproval of her order). She is so comfortable in her own skin, and so present to every person she meets. I hope you got a bit of that energy from her when she was here. Thank you, Bil Aulenbach, for starting the discussion with her about coming to IUCC.

Now…who’s next? What Adult Sunday school offering would you like to see next? And, if you had a choice of a speaker to visit us in 2014, who would it be? Let me have your ideas—because next year is right around the corner and it is time to get started!

See You in Church—
Pastor Paul
September was an exciting month for the Ministry for Young People. With many of our programs kicking off, I have noticed a great energy around the church! I am so excited to see our staff, families, volunteers and our young people excited about all of the possibilities.

Here are some highlights and upcoming events:

**Youth**
Annie continues to do a great job with our youth. We are splitting up the junior and senior high youth groups at least a few times a month both in Sunday School as well as in Youth Group. This will give the different age groups more intentional time to share with one another and grow as a group. This month the youth participated in the all-church workday and the Irvine Global Village. They were also very helpful in serving at the Nuns on the Bus luncheon (see photo above with Sister Simone, staff, and youth). The youth are preparing for Youth Sunday, which will happen on October 20th.

**Young Adults**
Bread For the Journey enjoyed a talk from Bil Aulenbach this month about prison ministry. The weekly discussions have been meaningful and thoughtful and the group is tackling social, political and theological issues (see photo of group at bottom of left column). In October we will focus on climate change among other things.

**Children and Young Families**
Sunday School is up and running! Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, Sunday School has taken off. Now, all we need is for families to start attending consistently. We have had low numbers, and I would really like to see them increase.

We have introduced two new types of Sunday School: 1) Choir Sunday School: John St. Marie comes to teach the kids about music and singing together (see photo of John and kids above). 2) Intergenerational Sunday School: The junior and senior high youth group teaches the younger kids a lesson and does a project with them. Each of these will happen once a month, and the other weeks will be standard Sunday School. We look forward to many families making Sunday School a priority in the coming year.

Thank you, as always, to our volunteers, staff, and church members, who are making the next year look like it will be a great one at IUCC.

~ Sarah
“We’ll leave the light on for you.”

While this is, indeed, the slogan of a rather well known motel chain, it also represents how I feel about IUCC. We are such a vibrant community, with an open and welcoming heart -- a place that proclaims God is still speaking and offers abundant and radical hospitality to all those seeking a church home. We turn the light on so folks can find their way to us, and we leave it on as a sign of our concern and hospitality toward each other.

Jesus teaches us to live a generous life, to grow intentionally in our welcome by breaking down barriers, creating and sustaining a community of compassion and care. As we approach this year’s Stewardship Campaign, I ask you join with others in your church family to make sure that we continue to leave the light on.

While your Stewardship pledge certainly helps pay the electric bill, it also enables the following: choral voices to be raised in praise; worship thoughtfully prepared and prayerfully led that speaks to our intellectual, emotional, and spiritual lives; justice-seeking where now there is oppression; complacency challenged by thoughtful speakers like Sister Simone; progressive Christian values shared with a generation coming of age in often divisive times; and the countless other ways that we seek to engage in meaningful ways with each other and our broader community.

I asked church leaders to reflect on what Stewardship means to them. Renae Boyum shared that “Thinking about Stewardship makes me always think about how much faith matters in giving. We are a church -- we are a community of faith that gathers together to care and support each other and to offer that care and support to the community and world around us. That makes being a church special and different than other organizations that we contribute to -- faith (in whatever form it takes) is what binds us together and lets us do great things and even things that seem impossible.” Amen.

Jen Mirmak observed that it would be really unfortunate if IUCC didn’t “provide youth programming that challenges our young people to grapple with the difficult questions; didn't offer them a variety of opportunities to learn and grow spiritually and mentally, while giving them not only opportunities to be of service to our community and our world, but teaches them why this service and leadership is so crucial in our complex and changing society.” Amen.

Jesus spoke more about money than any other topic in the Bible, so we can't be afraid to talk about it either. We will need your help and your pledges. This year, we’ve taken a new approach to our budget process. With the thoughtful input of Ministry Chairs, your leadership team crafted an “aspirational” budget that reflects IUCC’s vision for 2014. The resulting Stewardship goal is ambitious -- $431,000 and, if we can't meet it, that vision will have to be scaled back. But, in a tremendous demonstration of commitment, 100% of IUCC Leadership has already pledged their financial support, kicking off this season of giving in unanimous solidarity.

Won't you join us by prayerfully considering your pledge and make a financial gift that shares in this vision and honors the importance of IUCC’s place in your life? We left the light on for you; please help us leave the light on for others.

As always, I invite you to share your thoughts. You can catch me on the patio, pull me aside at one of our terrific events, send me an email or give me a call. I look forward to hearing from you.

~ Anne
At our Spring Congregational Meeting, IUCC approved a new “Safe and Healthy Church Community Policy,” with the purpose of protecting the physical and emotional safety and well-being of all members of the church community.

This new policy is being implemented in important ways:

- Background screenings are being conducted for new hires per policy guidelines.
- Responsibility for ensuring compliance with the policy has been written into the new job descriptions for our Adult Education Ministry Director, Ministry for Young People Director, and Sunday School Coordinator positions.
- Sunday School volunteers and staff members are being educated about its guidelines.

In addition, a new team has been formed to administer this policy and respond to any Safe Church-related concerns. Anyone wanting to report an issue or seek counsel on a Safe Church-related matter can confidentially contact a member of the IUCC Coordinating Council:

- Paul Tellström, Lead Pastor
- Anne Rosse, Moderator
- Martha Selby, Admin Board Chair
- Pat Sauter, Ministries Board Chair

The Coordinating Council will address the concern and seek additional expertise as needed to handle the matter in an appropriate manner, per the policy’s guidelines. If you have any questions or would like additional information, you can find a copy of the Safe Church policy on the IUCC website or please see any member of the Coordinating Council.

IUCC’s yearly Stewardship Campaign supports the church’s needs, funding new and ongoing programs that strengthen our church community while enhancing our ability to build meaningful connections beyond our church walls. Some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s) about Stewardship are posed and answered below, with thanks to United Church of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, for the source materials.

I give every Sunday during worship -- why pledge?  
Pledging (or estimating your giving) allows your church community to plan for our common life. There will always be opportunities for spontaneous, spirit-led, and heartfelt giving; however, estimating your giving for the year allows the church to plan the extent of its mission and ministry - can we do what we have been called by God to do? Pledges become a touchstone either indicating we can go ahead or we need to rethink what we are doing. As Jesus said, “Who among you would begin to build a tower and not determine the cost?”

How do I pledge?  
In the fall, members and those who regularly attend worship services will receive a pledge card through the mail. Pledge cards will be available at church, too. A pledge also can be made online at iucc.org. We ask that pledges be completed no later than December 1. You may pledge to give a set amount every week or month, or you may determine an annual amount that you estimate you will give, in a pattern to be decided by you.

Is there an amount that I am supposed to pledge?  
In a healthy household, every member participates as they are able. This can be your guide to giving. Or, another way to think about your giving is to determine a percentage of your income that your feel you are able to share with IUCC for its common life and ministry. As time goes on, you may want to be challenged to grow in giving by increasing that percentage.
Some of Our October Events

All of the following events will be held in Plumer Hall –

MISSION & SERVICE MEETING AND FAIRE
SUNDAY * OCTOBER 6 * 12:15 p.m.
Mission & Service invites everyone to a faire showcasing the different projects of this ministry: Family Promise, Visiting Immigrants in Detention, the CROP (Hunger) Walk, Isaiah House/Catholic Worker, AIDS Walk, Families Forward/Big Sunday and Global Missions. Join us to see how you can get involved. For further information, contact Felicity Figueroa at felicitynf@aol.com or 949-733-0850.

VISITING IMMIGRANTS IN DETENTION ORIENTATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY * OCTOBER 9 * 7:00 p.m.
Friends of Orange County Detainees is composed of volunteers who visit immigrants confined at the James Musick Facility in Irvine, the Santa Ana Jail, and the Theo Lacy Facility in Orange. Under the auspices of our Mission & Service Ministry, IUCC is recruiting volunteers to participate in this program. Our purpose is humanitarian. Many detainees have no visitors and are thrilled when we come to just talk and listen. We welcome you to come and learn more. For further information, contact Tricia Aynes at 714-651-6285 or tricia_aynes@yahoo.com.

JOSH RUEBNER EVENT
SATURDAY * OCTOBER 12 * 1:00 p.m.
A presentation and discussion with the author of “Shattered Hopes,” a critique of our failure to broker Israeli-Palestinian peace.

SEEKERS
TUESDAY * OCTOBER 15 * 9:30 a.m.
Join the women of IUCC for their monthly morning study and discussion group. All women of the church and their guests are welcome. Coffee and morning treats are waiting. Contact Pat Sauter at psauter@flashnet.com.

ALL CHURCH GAME NIGHT
SATURDAY * OCTOBER 19 * 6:30 p.m.
Bring your favorite board-game and a side dish to share. Fellowship will provide pizza and cold drinks. Everyone is welcome. For details contact Brian at tedybearcub72@gmail.com.

CROP WALK * SUNDAY * OCTOBER 27 * 1:00 p.m.
(see next page for details)
Crop Walk

Crop Walk 2013
25th Annual Newport/Irvine/Mesa CROP Interfaith - Hunger Walk
OCTOBER 27, 2013

Where: Our Lady Queen of Angels School, across from Corona del Mar High School. A 7k walk (4.2 miles) around the beautiful Newport Beach Back Bay. A shorter 4k (2.4 miles) walk will also be available.

When: 1 PM, Sunday, October 27, 2013 (Walk leaves at 1:30)

Purpose of the Walk: This is a fund-raising event to help fight hunger and homelessness both locally and internationally. It’s a wonderful opportunity for religious groups from all faith traditions, businesses, schools and other secular groups to walk together towards this common goal.

You can donate directly to the Newport Beach CROP Hunger Walk by going to: www.crophungerwalk.org/newportbeachca

For more information contact:
Felicity Figueroa, Chair, IUCC Mission & Service
IUCC Walking Team Captain - 949-733-0850 - felicitynf@aol.com

Steve Goetz, Chair, Newport Mesa Irvine CROP Walk
949-436-1946 - sgoetz53@gmail.com

Looking Ahead ...

The November Ministries Board meeting has been rescheduled to November 4 (instead of the 11th) because of Veterans Day, which is a staff and national holiday.

Women's Fellowship will meet November 6 at 6:30 in Plumer Hall. We will be preparing for the upcoming holiday cooking season by sharing our favorite kitchen gadgets and tricks, sort of a “cook's show and tell.” There will be an opportunity drawing to help defray the cost of the evening. Sign ups on the patio or online or see Pat Sauter with questions.

Our Advent Workshop will be on December 1st! The whole family can make holiday decorations at any or all of our many craft stations in Plumer Hall. Come and enjoy the fun!

Our Choir Concert is set for December 8th. The choir works hard to practice special music for this annual event, and they always get rave reviews. Don't miss it!
What exactly is a Stephen Minister?

People often ask, “What exactly is a Stephen Minister?” One way to put it is that Stephen Ministers are the After People. Stephen Ministers are there:

. . . after the phone call you hoped you'd never get.
. . . after the divorce papers are served and the bottom falls out of your life.
. . . after the funeral, when everyone has left and the emotions you’ve held at bay come crashing in on you.
. . . after the doctor says, “I’m sorry, but there's nothing more we can do.”
. . . after the nursing home director shakes your hand and says, “Welcome to your new home.”
. . . after the last child honks the horn, waves, and drives away—and the house suddenly seems empty.
. . . after the gavel goes down, the handcuffs go on, and your loved one is led away.
. . . after the baby arrives, demanding more of you than you ever dreamed possible.
. . . after you find a pink slip with your final paycheck.
. . . after your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

Stephen Ministers are the “After People.” They are ready to come alongside you and provide comfort and support for as long after as needed.  ~ from www.stephenministries.org

Our IUCC Stephen Ministers are here to help. To request a Stephen Minister, contact Pastor Paul at the church office or Dave Schofield at (949) 218-9680.

October Birthdays

Jean Arce
Bil Aulenbach
Judy Bateman
Renae Boyum
Lauren Dobbert
Kristjana Gailiun
Laurie Gaskill
Skip Gaskill
Lois Johnson
Steven King

Roger Laule
Don Mansell
Melanie McDonald
Brian Osborne
Brian Pearcy
Penny Portillo
Becky Roach
David Schofield

David Smith
Michelle Stover
Jayna Tisdale
Craig Tyri
Dale Vaughan
Connie Weir
Heidi Willcox
Torrey Willcox
Glenda Wyant
Comma Groups are small, informal gatherings for fellowship, discussion, and exploration of spirituality. By now, everyone who wanted to participate has been assigned to a group and is preparing to meet for the first time!

Our topic for October is “Worship & Spiritual Life.” Worship is often defined as an act of religious devotion (usually directed towards a deity), while spirituality is often defined as the search for the sacred or divine. Thus, we will be talking about how we define and access the divine. Discussion topics may include:

- Do you see God as transcendent (separate from and “above” us, unknowable and unfathomable) or immanent (present in all of creation, watching and caring over us)?
- Is there an aspect of God you relate to more in your understanding of your faith?
- What are your worship experiences prior to IUCC? How would you describe some of the similarities and differences?
- Why do we worship, and is worship different today than it used to be?
- What specific aspects of IUCC’s worship allow you to access the divine? Is there anything missing in our worship?
- Describe your feelings about the use of music and technology in worship – do they help or hinder how you access the divine? In what ways?
- At IUCC, our worship includes liturgy, scripture, music, prayer, sermon, sacraments, ritual elements, and news of the community. Are these all important to you, or are there parts that do not touch you?

We hope your life is brightened and enriched by your participation in an IUCC Comma Group!

Outreach Ministry Request

Do you have experience or expertise in marketing? Dawn Price, IUCC’s Outreach Chair, is looking to put together a short-term task force to explore ways to spread the word about IUCC. If you have an understanding of advertising, communications, web development, social media, press relations, or anything similar, please consider joining together with other IUCC leaders for 2-3 meetings in early 2014. Contact Dawn at dprice@friendshipshelter.org to volunteer.

Ken & Randy had a beach wedding ~ Congratulations to the happy couple!!
We can help children understand issues of sexuality by using the history they study in school about how social changes happen. All cultures develop at their own pace and frankly very unevenly around the world. I would like to say that our country helps to lead the way toward social justice, but I don't think that's true. The United States tends to march behind some and in front of others as far as extending the benefits of equality for its’ citizens.

Children will study in school how adults have always been challenged by issues of justice and seem to take them on one at a time. Children who are now exposed to *Modern Family* and *Glee* on television would be astounded to know how very recently gay people have come to be represented in a positive way in the media. Teenagers who saw Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal play gay cowboys, and Annette Bening and Julianne Moore play a lesbian couple, have no idea that straight actors playing gay parts is a radical step from the not too distant past when gay actors, such as Rock Hudson, only played straight parts. So you should tell them. It’s good to use things that happen in your home (television) and things they learn in school to help them grapple with the way things change and the pace at which they do.

No one thought much about having very young children work in factories rather than go to school right here in America. Now the American media rants about “third world” countries who use children to manufacture products we buy, but we did the same thing. Tell them. Slavery and the “owning” of humans by other humans was something that not just people, but many Christian people, were quite comfortable with - until God’s message of love and justice caused individuals and then groups to see that such a practice was totally unjust. Issues of racial equality, reparation, and striving toward justice are still in the news today as states make moves to do away with “affirmative action.”

Children will have studied how not only were people of color considered “less than,” but women - their mothers, aunts, and sisters - were considered “less than” and not allowed to vote. Gay rights and the fight for marriage equality are just the latest major social challenge involving sex, following the fight for marriage equality for inter-racial couples.

For reasons I’m always puzzled about, “society” has decided it has the right to say who can love whom, who can have sex with whom, and who can marry whom. Give your children the “context” with other similar issues, so they can have a better understanding of what they see and hear now, in the media, in school, and in church about the current controversies around sexual diversity.

In terms of getting along with adults and peers in other settings, it is also important for children to know that every time society/culture decides to make a change, people “split.” They disagree, and can become pretty ugly about it. Watch current relevant movies with them: *Lincoln; The Butler; Fruitvale Station*. While teaching about the rights of all people to love who they love, we also want to teach them that unfortunately this is a pretty new idea and friends, neighbors, and colleagues are not in harmony about changes regarding sexuality. Help them watch with interest the struggle between those wanting to hold on to past traditions, and those pushing for change.

As we continue to talk throughout the next year about issues of sexuality and how to help children and young people learn to accept and affirm sexual diversity, in themselves or others, it will be helpful for them to understand why these issues are difficult and divisive, as ALL issues of justice have been.