



**Irvington Presbyterian Church**

**Fremont, CA**

**March, 2017**

**Sundays**

*Bible study 8:45 a.m.*

*Worship 10:00 a.m.*

*(Nursery and Children Sunday School During Service)*

Dear Friends,

God has sent us a great season of rain, replenishing life to our soil after many years of drought. The approach of Daylight Savings Time on March 12, signal longer days and shorter nights. The unique weather in the Bay Area makes these longer days more enjoyable. I am looking forward to the change in time which also brings many questions to mind.

Do you ever wonder when the sun goes down in the evening, will it come back up again? When the last leaf falls from the trees in early winter, will it be replaced? When sunshine is replaced by wind and rain, will the warmth of the sun ever return? When the rivers and reservoirs run dry, will they be full again? When joy disappears from our soul, will it ever return?

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Daylight Savings Time reminds me that life is seasonal. While for a season life can be difficult, the Bible promises that this too will pass. Similarly, when everything is going well for us; rather than wishing it was better, we need to realize that this period of time is also seasonal. Let us enjoy it for everything it is worth.



Because of God's graciousness, the people of Israel were delivered from slavery in Egypt. Instead of celebrating a joyous season, they spent their time complaining about the difficulties of their journey and being tired of His provisions. We all know too well, the result of their complaining. They spent the next forty years circling in the wilderness instead of entering into God's promised land.

God promises: *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven."* Ecclesiastes 3:1. I give thanks to God for the times we get to spend together as a church. No season lasts forever, so let us enjoy our time together now. Whether we are sitting in worship, having coffee in the Social Hall, making Valentines for orphaned children in Brazil, learning about our Sikh and Hindu neighbors, meeting during the week in Life Groups, or going out to eat, let us take full advantage of God's grace. Let us give thanks for His blessing us with a joyful season.

*Pastor Larry*



# MUSIC MINISTRY



On February 19, IPC welcomed Derek Post as our new Worship Director at IPC. He is a Bay Area Native and a graduate of Valley Christian High School. His first two and a half years of college was spent studying Music in Worship at Biola University in Southern California. He then transferred to the Los Angeles College of Music, where he studied Guitar Performance and graduated with a Bachelor of Music. The Guitar is one of the most popular instruments in history but is also one of the hardest instruments to master. At LACM, Derek was able to master a challenging combination of harmony, reading, rhythm playing, soloing, and accompaniment skill, along with access to a wide range of stylistic vocabulary. These skills later helped him in leading worship music.

Derek has been playing guitar and singing for over 12 years. He started leading worship bands since he was a freshman in high school. While he was studying at Los Angeles College of Music, Derek led worship at Community Baptist Church of Norwalk, a city in Los Angeles County. Here he helped the congregation transition from traditional worship to a blended, more contemporary worship style. After graduating from college, Derek returned to the Bay Area, accepting a position as Worship Leader at True Hope Community Church, Campbell, CA before coming to IPC.

Melissa Beals has accompanied Derek in leading our congregation in song. Pastor Larry recently announced the exciting news that this Christian couple had become engaged. Congratulations on your engagement Derek and Melissa! Welcome to our church family.



Derek states: "My heart for leading worship comes from a joy in seeing God's people join together, singing the praises of our Heavenly Father, reminding us that we worship a God who is greater than us. For me, praise music is a reminder that the life we are given is meant to be lived, serving and glorifying our Creator. Worship through music allows me to connect with God by outwardly expressing praise. At the same time, God uses music to call us into a deeper relationship with Him. *<sup>1</sup>Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. <sup>2</sup>Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. <sup>3</sup>Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy". Psalm 33.*

I thank all at IPC for warmly welcoming Mellie and me to our new church home. We greatly appreciate your love, encouragement and patience as we fulfill our purpose to help create meaningful worship for all. We are looking forward to being fully involved in all the activities planned for the Easter season."

At the Congregational Meeting on February 26, the question was asked: "Now that we have a band, how do members and non members become part of the contemporary band? Derek would like the congregation to know that anyone who can enhance the music, songs or band and wants to serve in this ministry, can contact him through the church office. He looks forward to working with you and appreciates the time and talents you volunteer in this ministry.

## SESSION NEWS & NOTES - Mustapha Baksh

On February 21, your new Session Team held its second monthly meeting of the year. We began with prayer. The Team prayed for the Lord's guidance as we continue to work together for His glory. Pastor Larry then took us through a reading and discussion of Acts 1:12-26.

The Personnel committee reported that an offer of employment was extended to Derek Post to fill the position of Worship Leader. Derek accepted and started on February 19.

Pastor Larry reported that Life Groups for Lent will be based on the "Son of God". This will be a five week program with three meetings each week. Ash Wednesday service was scheduled in the McKowen Room on March 1, beginning at 7pm. This month, Pastor visited and gave communion to nine members who were unable to attend service. Pastor Larry is almost finished with the new Registration and Prayer Request Card that will be used in the beginning of March. Session unanimously agreed to reimburse Pastor Larry for the loss of his computer, camera and other personal items that were taken when his office was vandalized.

After discussions at the Deacon and Session Meeting on January 22, Session members agreed to serve coffee and snacks in the Social Hall after worship, on Communion Sundays. This will allow the Deacons to fully participate in communion. A suggestion to make Deacons and Elders more visible at Worship services, resulted in the wearing of name badges.

Session held a special meeting on February 12, to confirm Mei Chang and Bob Frey as new members by reaffirmation.

Finance Ministry reported that donations and rental income were evenly matched until leases were renegotiated last September. Leases now lead in income. Based on input from our attorney who is handling our tax exempt status, we now expect a faster resolution for our status and pending tax refund from the County of Alameda.

Mission Ministry reported that over 200 Valentine Cards for the Hope Unlimited "Girls of Brazil" were prepared by members and families after worship service on February 19. An outreach event to our neighbors, Sikhs and Hindus, is planned for March 19 with Pastor Wilson Koppula being seminar presenter.

The Tri City Breakfast program has served 2,845 meals and 1,946 guests in January 2017, a 21% and 17% increase respectively over the same time last year. In May of this year, TCFB will have served the community for 20 years.

**This year's Per Capita amount is \$36 per member.** This amount goes to help pay for the operations of the Presbyterian Church USA, at our national level (General Assembly), the regional level (Synod of the Pacific) and the area level (Presbytery of San Francisco). It would be most appreciated if you would make a contribution in the amount shown for each member of your family. Please mark your check or giving envelope "Per Capita" and place in the collection plate. Thank you.



# DEACONS' CORNER

## The Ministry of Compassion and Service - Mary Lou Craig

In keeping with the Deacons' annual tradition of celebrating the resurrection of Christ, Easter lilies to decorate the sanctuary on April 16, will be available for purchase. You may sign up with the Deacons during the social hour beginning March 26. Glorify the season by giving a lily in memory of a loved one or as a tribute. After the Easter morning service, you may take your lily to enjoy at home or plant outdoors.



Deacons and Parishioners recently spent several hours providing care and comfort to a church member during a visit to the Emergency Room at Washington Hospital. The member is now recuperating at the home of a relative. Thanks be to God for good friends willing to help those in need!

## Medical Equipment and Supplies

IPC maintains a limited supply of medical equipment and some supplies including walkers, wheel chairs, shower seats, hand exercisers, stool height extenders, portable toilet commodes, crutches, canes and adult briefs. These are available for members and their families.

If you need to use any of these items, please contact:

**Deacon Joe Di Maggio @ 651 - 1323 or**

**Deacon Moderator Mary Lou Craig @ 656 - 4388**



At IPC, Deacons serve as Christ's hands and feet in our Church community as they nurture members of the congregation. If you are a member of our church, you are in a parish and have a Deacon. What do Deacons do?

They help keep you connected to our church family. Your Deacon will contact you by letter, email, or phone several times a year to check in with you. They provide ongoing care and nurture members of the congregation according to individual needs and the Deacon's own gifts for the ministry of compassion. They are a bridge between the Pastor and the Parish they serve. Deacons schedule and attend monthly meetings for planning, training and coordinating the needs of the congregation.



Desirable characteristics for a Deacon include sound judgment, compassion, warm sympathies, good listening skills, prayerfulness, and faithfulness. This is a very rewarding role if you enjoy getting to know members and providing services that make them feel more connected to the church.

If you or someone you know would like to serve in this capacity, contact your Nominating Committee.

OR make your confidential recommendation to:

[clerk@irvingtonpres.org](mailto:clerk@irvingtonpres.org)

# MISSIONS: THE HEART OF THE CHURCH

## George and Esther Manoukian - Child Evangelism Fellowship

*"Whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water...he shall by no means lose his reward". Matthew 10:42.*

We praise the Lord for His grace and wisdom for establishing the work of Child Evangelism in Armenia since 1991. We are deeply thankful for the Irvington Presbyterian Church; and for their strong support in the past two decades. You steadfastly support our vision that every child in Armenia hears about Jesus, the Savior of the world. Please keep praying.

Last year, CEF (Child Evangelism Fellowship) reached over 24,200 children and teenagers with the Good News. More than 15,000 kids hear a clear message each week, through 68 Good News Clubs. CEF extends a training program to Sunday school teachers in churches and provides them with textbooks. Churches are filled with children who love to sing and talk about Jesus! Teacher-Training is one of the foundations of CEF, so it continues all year round.

In the last decade we had two Children's Ministries Training Schools in Armenia. The Lord gave us 46 graduates, well equipped and committed. Of these we have 12 full-time staff who continue the work with great joy and are thankful for your support and God's protection.

In the picture above, you see the children at camp. Moreover, of the 1648 children who attended 28 Vacation Bible Schools, 767 youth committed their lives to Christ.



The Lord has a plan for every nation. During the past 25 years, the Lord has brought into fruition His plan for the salvation of the children in Armenia. He has provided, over and above, all that we asked for. Please pray for the Good News and for God to give Club teachers renewed strength to effectively teach the Word of God. Also, pray that the children will continue to grow in their faith.

This has been a team effort with God at the helm. You are a vital part of God's team and we praise God for you. THANK YOU!

*George and Esther Manoukian are of Armenian heritage and originally from Lebanon. They minister to children and teachers in Armenia. They are affiliated with the Child Evangelism Fellowship organization and hold dear to their hearts, the introduction of children to the message of Christ. The Manoukians write newsletters to churches and believers in the US requesting prayer and financial support and sharing the CEF work being done in Armenia. They also regularly meet with a group of 10 prayer partners to present and pray for the requests that come from the children and workers in Armenia. IPC, through [Faith Promise Giving](#) has been part of this fruitful ministry for 20 years.*

# FAMILY MINISTRY UPDATE - Stephanie Yamada

*"My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. . . Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures." Proverbs 2: 1, 4*



Last month held mystery and adventure for our families. On February 12, IPC's young families embarked on a cryptogram treasure hunt after church. Our children looked for clues in the cemetery to decipher a code, and uncovered a series of leads to find hidden treasure. They discovered that God's word is the ultimate treasure! Many thanks to Lynnette Ariathurai and Carol Lynn for providing lunch for our families, and our Christian Equipping team for helping to serve.



## Palm Sunday Event

We are looking forward to a big event at 11:30 on April 9, Palm Sunday, for children and parents. At "The Great Surprise," families will discover in surprising ways – and maybe for the first time - that Jesus is alive! Every station will point directly to Jesus, focusing on this ultimate Easter truth. Invite your families, your friends and neighbors to this exciting event. Kids and their families will experience hands-on fun with a variety of surprising activities.



Volunteer to welcome guests and assist teachers at the different stations. Be a part of this exciting event.

Contact Stephanie Yamada at [children@irvingtonpres.org](mailto:children@irvingtonpres.org)

# ACTIVITIES UPDATE

## Life Groups - "SON OF GOD"

Join us during Lent for "Son of God". This is a five week series in Life Groups where we focus on the question Jesus asked "Who do you say I am?"

Groups meet beginning March 7 and continue through April 6.

Schedule: Tuesday March 7, 14, 21, 28 and April 4 from 1 - 2:30 pm

Wednesday March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5 from 7 - 8:30 pm

Thursday March 9, 16, 23, 30 and April 6 from 7 - 8:30 pm

Call the Church Office to register.

## KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS, THE SIKHS



**Who are those Men with Turbans?** Sunday March 19, your Mission Ministry will sponsor a seminar to help us better understand and relate to non believers in our community. This seminar will be presented by the Rev. Wilson Koppula. Pastor Koppula is very involved in reaching out with the love of Christ to Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims in Central California.

The seminar begins immediately after worship. There is a \$7 charge. A hot Indian lunch is included. Please sign up with Jenni in the Social Hall or call the Church Office to confirm your attendance.

## Ladies out to Lunch

The "Ladies Out to Lunch" group will meet at the **Market Broiler Restaurant**:

**Date:** Thursday March 16

**Time:** 11:30 AM

**Location:** Pacific Commons - 43406 Christy St, Fremont

**Contact:** Gill Carson 510 657 4069 to confirm your reservation

## 8 Hours of Prayer - Darlene Neesham



Sincere thanks to all 26 members who participated in the eight Hours of Prayer on Saturday February 11, 2017. Individuals and couples prayed for our neighbors, our families, our city, our state and country. We lifted up our Pastor, our Session, our Deacons, our Missionaries and our Ministries. We prayed for church growth and for the health of our church. Every member and friend of the church was remembered in our prayers. Suggestions and comments are welcomed.

Contact Darlene Neesham: [wneesham@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wneesham@sbcglobal.net)

# WEEKDAYS AT IPC

The Church office is open Tuesday through Thursday each week from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM. If you would like to meet with Pastor Larry, you may schedule an appointment by calling the office.

## Highlights for March:

March 3 Church Alive Meeting at 7 PM	March 9 SIS Meeting at 4 PM
March 5,19 Parents Life Group at 11:15 AM	March 9 Missions Ministry Meeting at 5 PM
Tuesdays "Son of God" Life Group at 1 PM	March 13, 27 Home Bible Study at 7 PM
Wednesdays ROMEO breakfast at 8 AM	March 16 Ladies out to Lunch at 11:15 AM
Wednesdays "Son of God" Life Group at 7 PM	March 19 Sikh/Hindu Seminar at 11 AM
Thursdays "Son of God" Life Group at 7 PM	March 21 Session Meeting at 7 PM

## Church Directory

<b>Pastor:</b>	<b>Rev. Dr. Larry Thorson</b>	<b>Address: 4181 Irvington Avenue</b>
<b>Family Ministries Director :</b>	<b>Stephanie Yamada</b>	<b>P.O. Box 1336</b>
<b>Worship Leader:</b>	<b>Derek Post</b>	<b>Fremont, CA 94538</b>
<b>Bookkeeper:</b>	<b>Jeanette Ollison</b>	<b>Phone: (510) 657 3133</b>
<b>Office Manager:</b>	<b>Marissa Hughes</b>	<b>Fax: (510) 657 7040</b>
		<b>Email: <a href="mailto:info@irvingtonpres.org">info@irvingtonpres.org</a></b>



## Bible Studies

**Sunday Bible Study** - at 8:45 AM in the McKowen Room preceding worship. Join Elder Richard Craig as he leads the class in studying the Book of Revelation.

**Women's Bible Study** - Women meet Mondays in the McKowen Room at 9:30 AM. Contact Helen Jorgensen for details.

**Home Bible Study** - Regularly scheduled bi-weekly Bible Classes at Mary Ellen's house on March 13 and 27 at 7 PM. Studying the Gospel of Matthew. Contact Mary Ellen for details.



# CONGREGATION NEWS

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Nikhil (Bobby) Adhi	Dawn Lund
Sue Aquino	Nick McClure
Ken Ariathurai	Darlene Neesham
Jeanette Beland	Jim Putler
Doug Blizel	Bob Reavis
Kha Khuc	Lois Whitenack

## Welcome New Members

On February 26, Bob Frey and Mei Chang reaffirmed their faith and commitment to Christ by joining the IPC Family.



Mei Chang and Bob Frey

## Annual Congregation Meeting

The Annual Congregation Meeting was held on Sunday February 26, in the Social Hall with 43 IPC members in attendance. Everyone was treated to a pot luck lunch. Thanks to all who brought delicious dishes to share; and to Elder Alexis DiMaggio for planning and hosting the event.

**The meeting opened** in prayer by Moderator Pastor Larry.

**The 2016 Annual Report** was accepted. The Clerk shared highlights and thanked all who submitted reports.

**Corporate Officers elected for 2017** were Pat Jeffries, President; Lynnette Ariathurai, Secretary and Kathy Jeffries, Treasurer.

**Nominating Committee** members elected from the congregation at large were: Helen Jorgensen, Mary Ellen McKowen and Nibin Geevarghese.

**Reaffirm the terms of the call for Pastor.** The congregation unanimously reaffirmed the terms of the call for Pastor Larry.

**Summary of Questions and Answers:** (For a more detailed list of Q & A, contact the Clerk)

**Q:** What is the status of our tax exempt status and refund of taxes paid to County of Alameda?

**A:** Our attorney indicated that we expect a resolution soon, based on a recent court case.

**Q:** Deficit for 2017 is about 50% of giving. Will increase spending bring new people to the church?

**A:** The deficit is a result of new programs and staff that are geared to growing the congregation.

**Q:** Can members and non members become part of the new contemporary band?

**A:** Anyone who can enhance the music, singing and instruments contact Derek Post.

**Q:** What are the plans for Easter?

**A:** There is a new web site to attract people, a special Palm Sunday outreach event and an enhanced Easter Sunday Worship followed by an Easter Egg Hunt. Details to follow .

**Meeting adjourned** and was closed in prayer by Pastor Larry.

# KNOWING YOUR CONGREGATION

**Shannon Sandy** is proud to be a native Californian and has been worshipping at IPC for the



past three years. He is confident that there are Christians in this world who loves him. These facts cannot compare to what the sparkle in his eyes and the enthusiasm in his voice say when he talks about Jesus Christ. He loves the Lord and he loves all of God's creations!

Shannon was born in Oakland, lived most of his life in Fremont and has found his purpose in our evolving diverse community. He is thankful that God has guided him to IPC and especially thankful to be in Elder Richard Craig's Sunday morning Bible Study. There he has learned that "God loves all of his children regardless of appearance or status in this life. My heart is beautiful and I have learned to trust the Lord to take care of all of my problems in his own time. Elder Richard has made me feel accepted and loved. I enjoy helping when he asks me to do work around the church. He shows me how I can serve my Lord." Shannon and his Mom attended Centerville Presbyterian Church where he was baptized many years ago.

An only child from his mom's second marriage, Shannon spent most of his life at his parents' home near Lake Elizabeth in Fremont. He graduated from Kennedy High School and attended Ohlone College "long enough to get into trouble." He took a varied approach to his career path. He worked as a mechanic for a few years, an ironworker for ten years and a truck driver for 15 years. After his Mom and Dad passed away, his family's home was sold by the seven stepchildren from his mother's previous marriage. Shannon likes to travel and bought a camper in hopes of crisscrossing the country. He developed health problems and found himself unable to continue any of his three careers. Even though he is unable to make the adventurous trips he had planned, he is grateful to have the shelter of the camper and the mobility it provides to do his errands and travel back and forth finding sustenance and encouragement from the benevolence programs in and around Fremont. He is a frequent guest at the breakfast program and is always available to help the staff when requested. One of his favorite pastimes is looking at Western movies. His favorite actor is John Wayne and his favorite of John Wayne's movies is "Sons of Katie Elder." He also likes to repair discarded tools and finds great joy in making them useful again.

At IPC, Shannon finds a family who loves him. We are awed by his amazing ability to overcome adversity and maintain a positive outlook. Whenever there is work to be done, during church-wide clean up or repairs or putting up decorations for the holidays, Shannon can always be counted on to help. Having to share close quarters does not deter Shannon from sharing his camper with his friend David who accompanies him to Bible Study and worship on Sundays.

Shannon's favorite bible verse is from 1 Samuel 16:7: *"But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.'"*

# MY TESTIMONY

One of the most effective tools we have for sharing our faith is the story of how Jesus Christ gave us eternal life and how He has enriched our lives. The Apostle John wrote, "*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard*" (1 John. 1:3), testifying about his journey and relationship to Jesus Christ. In this, the fourth of a 6-part series, an IPC member shares this journey from his journal. The content is minimally edited.

"That was me. I saw all the dark things. I was constantly searching for the blackness in life. That was me! The mouth; What goes in the mouth is not vile, but what comes out of the mouth could be vile. Jesus goes on to explain that what goes into the mouth passes to the stomach and continues to elimination, but what comes out of the mouth comes out of the heart. Oh, the terrible things I've said. Terrible things said without thinking, said during anger, said without thought of conscience as Matthew 12:36-37 & Matthew 15:11,17&20 taught me. Just thinking bad things is the same as doing; and everlasting damnation is my reward. But Matthew has a beautiful way with words. He leads me to Jesus. Jesus shows me I can change. It's all so simple, just accept Him. Just live as He would live, spread His word by your actions in living. His yoke is light. He provides the abundant life, the beautiful life, life everlasting with Him. Oh, how beautiful it is! (Matthew 11:28-30).

Sunday, February 26, 1978, my first day of knowing Jesus. I'm not bubbling over with the Spirit, I'm just relieved of all pressures. How light I am! How free! How beautiful it is! Andy and Rita's prayers have been answered, they see the change, they know I've found Him. It's so beautiful.

The weekend must end. We enter the dining hall for the last time. A magnificent meal awaits. How delicious it is. One more word from the Goal Man. He's beautiful. With his help, my friend's help, my wife's understanding, I've found Jesus. I'm complete. Early Monday morning I have a dream. What a beautiful dream. I can see forever. All whiteness and light, and I'm there through eternity going on with Him forever. What a magnificent dream.

The radio alarm starts. A beautiful song is playing. The words run something like this: "I've been searching for so long and he's always been with me", and all this to a rock-type beat! I'm so happy to be alive. Life is wonderful. Oh, what will life bring me today? Ed's turn for car-pooling. It's still dark, dampness is all around. How beautiful. I can hardly contain the bubbling Spirit within me. I see things I've never taken time to notice. The green grass pushing out of pools of water, the wetness along the road; two ducks winging their way together; free pups, this way. Rain drops splattering onto the windshield; the massive man-made supports that hold the traffic signs over the middle of Highway 237. The large jet sliding through the mist looking for home. Such beauty!

Later at work, thinking of this change I've gone through, I realize that Jesus is everywhere. It doesn't matter which church. Church doesn't even matter. Only Jesus matters. If you know Him you love Him. Suddenly I realize I've got millions of friends throughout the world. Those who know Jesus know me, and I know them.

I try to explain to John what has happened. I'm sure he can sense a change. I'm so full of the Spirit, I'm probably overpowering him. Everything is so right. I want everyone to have this happiness. I tell him I know Jesus died on the cross for my sins, that I no longer have burdens from past sins. He counters with, "But you can't know, you weren't there." But I do know. I really can't explain it, but I do know. There is a Holy Spirit, He does enter your body, He does relieve you of sin. **HE LIVES!**"

# IRVINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

4181 Irvington Avenue

P.O. Box 1366

Fremont, CA 94538-0133

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***March 25 is the deadline for our April issue.***

All articles are to be delivered by email to: [cornerstoneeditors@gmail.com](mailto:cornerstoneeditors@gmail.com). Cornerstone is the medium to keep your current and past congregation members informed of all activities at IPC.

**Your timely submissions are important to everyone.**

## **Acknowledgements**

***We appreciate the time and dedication of all who submitted articles and provided information for the March issue.***

***This month's Cornerstone pictures were provided courtesy of: Stephanie Yamada, Derek Post and Mustapha Baksh.***

***You play a significant role as we work together in the name of Christ.***

***A special thanks to Shannon Sandy for sharing his story and to our fellow worshipper for sharing his testimony.***

***Kamroon and Mustapha Baksh***

***Editors***