



**Hillcrest Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ**

Ministers.....*All Members of Hillcrest Church*  
Interim Pastor.....*Rev. Dr. Loletta M. Barrett*  
Director of Youth Ministry.....*Sally Schacht*  
Director of Children's Ministry.....*K.C. Coonis*  
Director of Music.....*Debbie Carter*  
Organist/Pianist.....*Colleen Keith*  
Country Day School Director.....*Joan Edgerton*  
Country Day School Director.....*Danielle Darlow*  
Moderator.....*Diana Ford*  
Vice-Moderator.....*Gail Stier*  
Church Secretary.....*Howard McCoy*  
Treasurer & Financial Secretary.....*Laurie Gjoraas*

# HILLCREST

## "HILITES"

### "REVERENDLY" SPEAKING

*June 21, 2009*

WOW! That's all I really have to say this month. (But I will go on, because I get space for a whole article.) Wow! I have been given the incredible privilege and blessing of six weeks here at Hillcrest to start getting to know you. Do you know what a treasure you have here?

I am not talking about the beautiful meditation garden and patio, or the incredible view. I am not talking about the wonderful sacred space in the sanctuary or the great resource of Barwick Hall. I am not talking about the truly amazing Country Day School and After School program. And it is not about all the things that you have done here from Arts Festivals to trips to Alaska, swimming with whales, worship and mission projects.

And I did not have to go hunting for the treasure or ask where to find it. People volunteered it. Each Sunday when I stand and greet people as they leave the sanctuary I am given a piece of it. Each person that I have talked to on the phone gives me some of it. Each time we have met in the hall or in Tai Chi or at lunch or dinner, I receive pieces of it. This treasure is beautiful, amazing, wonderful, incredible. It is absolutely great. And you are all very aware of it and share it freely, and when you

do you glow!

And just what is this treasure you ask? It is you. There is blessing of incalculable worth here and it is you. None of you seem to realize it about yourselves, but everyone around you knows it and, as my southern friend would say, "They're all braggin' on you!" What a joy to be in a church where the gossip, (or "sharing the 'news'") about each other sounds like this- "Did you know that he/she is an incredible \_\_\_\_" (fill in the blank with -dancer, singer, musician, artist, speaker, organizer, leader, listener, cook, athlete, gardener, seamstress, writer, poet, photographer, teacher, storyteller...etc!) or "She/he has a wonderful \_\_\_\_." (smile/sense of humor/way of making you feel welcome), or "He/she is very good at \_\_\_\_." (fixing things, working with children, accounting).

Now I know that churches can be a little like families, and families can forget to express appreciation and sometimes seem to take their members for granted. They don't often say it, so I will. Each of you need to know, your family here at Hillcrest is very PROUD of you! Again I say, your family is very proud of you!

And so I say as we are blessed with this time together: "I always thank God for you... For you have been enriched in every way— you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. (I Cor. 1:4-11) And I encourage each of you. No one lights a lamp and hides it... they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone." (Matt 5:15, Luke 8:16, 11:33) Let your light shine here at Hillcrest so that together we can reveal Jesus Christ in our midst to each other and the world!  
Peace, Loletta

## SCNCUCC ANNUAL MEETING

A tour of our SCNC UCC Ministries. On Thursday I acted as chauffeur for a tour of non-traditional ministries in our Conference. We started with educational settings in Claremont with Disciples Seminary Foundation, a partnership we have with our friends in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). DSF provides pastoral and social support and book scholarships to UCC students at Claremont School of Theology. They also provide educational opportunities for clergy and laypersons. Our second stop was Claremont School of Theology where yours truly spent almost 10 years. Their new emphasis as a school is to broaden their perspective from a Christian (United Methodist) seminary to a university that educates spiritual leaders who are conversant in and able to network with people of all faiths toward a peaceful community and world.

The second half of our day focused on intentional communities. Pilgrim Place, originally a retirement community for persons who have been church workers; pastors, missionaries, educators, has now expanded their community to include retirees from non-profit organizations. A plethora of educational, musical, art, craft, social justice, health and physical activities are coordinated by the residents who themselves embody wholeness. They stage a Pilgrim Place Festival in November with demonstrations and art, craft, drama, food, books, plants and other items from all over the world. The proceeds of the Festival provide funds for residents who have extraordinary medical expenses or whose pension funds have been exhausted. (No Pilgrim Place resident is ever evicted!) I highly recommend and would be happy to escort a group to the Festival!

We next visited Myra House, a green community. Built on commitment to spiritual, environmental, and physical, health and wholeness, the house and the individuals who live in community strive to coexist with the planet and each other in peace. The well insulated walls and solar panels of the house look out upon the gardens, ponds and waterfalls, mountains, labyrinth, chickens and compost operations. Myra House provides both simple living for 12 residents as well as a retreat center for individuals and small groups. Both meals and chapel time leadership is shared among the community.

Our final visit was to Peppermint Ridge in Corona which many of you are familiar with because of our ongoing relationship with them through our mission giving. This intentional community includes group housing for developmentally disabled adults in several group facilities that look like large houses, as well as several actual houses in the nearby neighborhoods. The residents shared a BBQ with us and gave us tours of their houses and rooms, the exercise room, the activity areas, the pool and the garden. Some of the residents work on campus and some work in the community. They have a choir that travels and we just might get lucky enough to have them come here soon.

Not on our tour, but well worth the visit are Pilgrim Pines - our camp and conference center. Summer camp is about to get into full swing, but unfortunately this year they did not receive a grant from the LA Times. The camp relies on this grant to ensure that kids of all ages from various parts of Southern California can have the camp experience, regardless of their ability to pay. (A week at camp is approximately \$380). If you have a heart for camp-campership, donations would be gratefully accepted.

Also recommended is a trip to the Romero Center in San Ysidro, CA. San Ysidro is the southernmost community of San Diego on the border with Mexico. The Romero Center is named for our former SCNC UCC Conference Minister Dan Romero in honor of his service to the national UCC and our Conference and his ongoing work in the area of immigration. (in addition to being a minister he is also an attorney!) The Center provides information and experience with the issues of immigration and life along the border between our country and Mexico.

## ADULT STUDY GROUP

A new adult study group has formed. The first meeting was this past Wednesday evening from 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. This group will combine bible study and adult Sunday school. There will be two sessions each week and you may choose the one most convenient for you. They will be Mondays from 10:30 to noon starting on July 6. Then starting June 25, Thursday, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. We will be following the lectionary. The lectionary theme for next week is "Healing Powers" with the focus on The Gospel According to Mark 5:21-43; 2 Samuel 1:1 & 17-27; Psalm 130; Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15, 2:23-24; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15. Bring your Bible if you have one.

## MEMORIAL PLAQUE

If you wish to have the name of a loved one added to the Memorial Plaque in the Memorial Garden, please call the church office, (562) 947-3755, with the full name, year of birth and death. The bronze plaques are 8" x 1" and cost about \$96, at least for the last one we got.

## WHAT DOES LOVE MEAN?

A group of professional people posed this question to a group of 4 to 8 year-olds. The answers they got were broader and deeper than anyone could have imagined. See if you agree. Some of these are so beautiful!

When my grandma got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandpa does it for her now all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love.

~ Rebecca - 8

When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouths. ~ Billy - 4

Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other. ~ Kari - 5

Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your French Fries without making them give you any of theirs. ~ Chrissy - 6

Love is when my mommy makes coffee for my daddy and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK. ~ Danny - 7

Love is when mommy gives daddy the best piece of chicken. ~ Cindy - 8

If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate. ~ Nikka - 6

Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, and then he wears it everyday. ~ Noelle - 7

Love is what makes you smile when you're tired. ~ Terri - 4

(Editor's Note: Thank you Bob Treser, and there will be more next time, space permitting.)

## THE BATHTUB TEST

During a visit to the mental asylum, a visitor asked the Director what the criterion was, which defined whether or not a patient should be institutionalized. "Well," said the Director, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub." "Oh, I understand," said the visitor. "A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup." "No," said the Director, "a normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?"

(Editor's Note: This came from my son in Texas. I hope that Alice Jensen & Randy Brunk would find it amusing.)

## GIVING & RECEIVING THANKS

Dear Hillcrest Friends,

The Jensen family would like to thank all those who sent cards, expressed their sympathy and kind words for Mom. And of course, all of you who took the time to attend the memorial service on a holiday weekend. It meant a lot to all of us and was very appreciated during this difficult time. A special thanks to Sally for the countless hours she spent with Mom and our family during her last week with us. Not to mention, the beautiful message she gave at the service. She's an Angel and Hillcrest is blessed to have such a kind soul. God bless you Sally!

### ----- God Teach Me to Fly

Life is the greatest gift one can receive  
This is one thing that I truly believe  
It is a journey that we have no map for  
All we know is, at the end it leads to  
heaven's door  
Love and friendship is our compass  
We all need them to overcome the obstacles  
we want to surpass  
The path maybe bumpy and miles and miles  
long  
Just to get through we have to stay strong  
We also have to know we do not always have  
to be tough  
There will be those days when life gets rough  
That is when God is there to always lean on  
and give us might  
We just need to remember we are always in  
his sight  
But with the bad come the good  
And good always outshines just like it should  
I am young and have much to learn  
With the years come the wisdom I will earn  
After the darkness there is always a sun  
That is the time that the new day has begun  
We are all here, we all have different reasons  
To watch the world change with it's coming and

going seasons  
With many years there are countless stories  
acquired  
After a long life people get tired  
When all they have to do and all they have to  
say  
Has been said and squared away  
God looks down from the great blue sky  
And says, I think I'm going to teach them to fly

(Editor's Note: The above poem was written  
by *Amy Jensen* for her grandmother's  
memorial service.)

## ----- OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY

We are sad to report that *Randy Brunk* died  
on June 9, 2009. *Randy* was 82 and a long  
time very active member of Hillcrest. There  
was a wonderful memorial service for her  
yesterday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, in the sanctuary at 11:00  
a.m. followed by a reception in Barwick Hall.  
The sanctuary was full of her friends and  
there were pictures and videos of some of her  
activities over the years. We will all miss  
*Randy* very much. She brought so much  
happiness to everyone who came into contact  
with her. Again, our deepest sympathy to her  
family, including 15 grandchildren and 8  
great grandchildren.

## ----- DEADLINE

The next **Hi-Lites** deadline is Sunday,  
July 19, 2009. Now "Nuff said!"  
**ANNUAL MEETING WORSHIP**  
Incredible! Uplifting! Inspiring! Both *Gail* and  
*Diana* can vouch for the worship on Saturday and  
it was just as wonderful on Friday. The opening

worship had a skit based on the UCC as a drive-through. Potential congregants in Southern California drove up in various cars and ordered their favorite worship, type of congregation, and requests for programs. It was a hilarious, but poignant display of the variety of people and the needs they have which we are called to welcome and serve in our church.

Music was introduced from a new songbook being published by the UCC with songs that are both fun and meaningful to sing in worship and other gatherings. I also gathered up an art and theology resource for worship by Charles McCollough, a candidate for our Art Festival. Mr. McCollough's sculpture portrays Biblical themes, in particular the story of Jesus, and interpretations of the Parables of Jesus, in a way our congregation and community will appreciate. We will be sharing some of his work with you soon.

The overall theme was journey and change. The question we were asked to consider was what do we need to be able to let go of in order to follow God's leading for our conference. Rev. Sharon Graff from Redlands UCC helped us to begin to ask the question with a meditation on her journey as a woman and a pastor and the things that she let go of in order to follow her call to serve.

John Cobb, Jr., an imminent Process Theologian, challenged us to see the UCC as the first of all the denominations to have made it through a period of remorse and repentance. He said we have dealt with issues that other denominations are still struggling with (ecumenism and interfaith relationships, women in leadership, gay clergy and marriage) and are now poised to take leadership. He challenged us to take the leadership needed and pull together all faith communities on the global environmental crisis.

John McCullough from Church World Service showed us the dire need being created around the world by the environmental crisis, the potential for global disaster, and the work that we have done and can do in our relationship with and leadership in CWS. Again, the "least of these" are hungry, thirsty, naked and alone and we are called to respond as we would to Jesus. The UCC is a large supporter of CWS through Our Churches Wider Mission offerings. In addition, a parade of school kits was part of our Annual Gathering Offering. Our original conference goal was 500 kits and we met and doubled it!

The Conference itself is in a place of turmoil and transition. Although the self-study and search process are progressing toward the selection of a new Conference Minister (perhaps a year from now), the Conference purse is empty. The finances of the conference have been dependent upon the sale of property donated or churches that have closed their doors. These funds have been used for the start of several new churches and ongoing programs of the Conference. At this point, there is one remaining property to be sold with the potential proceeds keeping operations going for another year or two.

The Board has made the decision to begin downsizing operations to live within the available funds. Six part time staff were laid off this year, (including yours truly), the Interim Associate Conference Minister has gone to part time (she is now also filling in as the Acting Director of Pilgrim Pines), and the youth and young adult coordinator position was reduced. Future budget projections indicate that the previous model of 2 conference ministers will need to be reduced to 1 in January.

There was a vote taken to adopt the budget with a \$1 increase in annual dues to \$12, although it was admitted that this is estimated to generate only \$7,500. Not all churches pay dues, and not all churches give to OCWM (Our Churches Wider Mission) and the amounts usually donated will not fund

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conference operations. Therefore the Board has now established a financial development committee to brainstorm options for raising funds. If there is anyone in the congregation interested in working with this committee, they will gladly accept members. The good news is that we celebrated the fact that since 2002, 19 churches have been started, resurrected, or have decided to affiliate with the UCC in Southern California! Only 6 of these churches have received funds from the conference. Of the 19: 3 have been resurrected on the site of other churches, 7 are churches seeking to affiliate with the UCC and 10 are new churches. Of the 19: 8 are Spanish speaking, 3 serve the GLBT community, 1 is Samoan speaking, 4 are English speaking, 1 is Marshallese, 1 is African American and 1 is Filipino speaking.

Our other business conducted included election of various officers and commissioning of our delegates for General Synod meeting June 26-30 in Michigan. We need to hold our delegates and the whole Synod in prayers as they discern the future of our Church, including the election of our new President/General Minister.

#### **BEING PART OF THE FAMILY**

Part of the responsibility and joy of being part of a family is attending family events. We are part of the UCC Family! Our congregational polity allows and requires both Pastors and delegates from each church. So you are invited and needed at these events! Pastor Loletta will be going, so you even have a ride! Upcoming UCC/Southern California Nevada Conference/Eastern Association events:

Ecclesiastical Council for Emily McGaughy First Congregational Church, Riverside June 28, 2:00

Ordination of Lenny Anderson, First Congregational Church, Santa Ana July 12, 4:00

Eastern Association meeting in November – to be announced

Annual Gathering will be held June 11-12, 2010, location to be determined.

#### **SCNCUCC ENEWS**

Do you receive the Southern California Nevada Conference Electronic News issued monthly? If

you have access to the internet, you can automatically receive it by contacting the conference or by going to the conference website <http://scncucc.org/> and clicking on newsletter. There you will find information on upcoming events, the conference minister search, job opportunities, mission opportunities, and resources for church programs. For those of you who do not have access, we will try to post information and add some of it to the bulletin and newsletter, as appropriate.

#### **THE INTERM TIME Or From Change to Transition to Transformation**

The Interim Time is a process that allows a congregation to explore its history, decision making, denominational and other relationships, core identity, and vision for the future before the congregation authorizes the search for a new pastor. It allows time for the members to explore new perspectives and possibilities for pastoral leadership. Change is a complicated and often difficult situation for individuals and a congregation. When change is approached in a respectful and caring manner, it becomes a more gentle transition, and can then lead to transformation.

I . Settling In- This is a time of getting to know the Interim Pastor and working to discern areas of concern, joy, and work that will be shared over the interim period. Our most critical task is to explore significant ways to connect the pastor with members, and members with each other, as we create a safe space of emotional contact to allow relationships to grow. Healthy and strong communication skills are our best tool.

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#### **KOINONIA/COUNCILMEETING**

The next Koinonia/Council meeting is Tuesday, August 11, 2009. Dinner is at 6:00 p.m. in Barwick Hall. The business meeting begins at 6:45 p.m. All church members and friends are encouraged to attend the August meeting. There is no meeting in July.

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#### **TAI CHI ANYONE?**

The Tai Chi class is weekly on Monday morning at 9:30 a.m. in the patio area. Tai Chi is designed for anyone wishing to gain flexibility and balance, while learning a short form of shadow boxing. All ages and abilities are welcome - no experience is necessary! This is an open class and is FREE.

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#### **ANGELS' BASEBALL**

Join Hillcrest families on Friday evening, July 24, 2009, at Angel Stadium of Anaheim to see the Angels play the Minnesota Twins. Tickets are limited to the first 25 purchasers. Tickets have been purchased for Section 403. The price is just \$17 per ticket. Contact *Gloria Karam* at (714) 992-1473 to obtain your tickets.

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#### **SCHOOL KITS**

Thank you to all those who made the bags and/or provided items to go in them. We were able to mail off 53! We have 21 left to finish with plenty of sharpeners and rulers for those kits. The churches in our conference together provided more than 1,000 school kits!

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#### **NEW TITLE**

In the last issue of Hi-Lites, I asked for suggestions for a title for the pastor's article on page 1. Well, *Denise Martin* of Country Day School came up with 3 suggestions. Although we didn't use any of those specifically, they were close enough for her to get credit. However, no prize just credit.

## **THE HILLCREST BOOK CLUB**

The Hillcrest Book Club meets the third Thursday of the month. The next meeting is Thursday, July 16, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room. They have an informal discussion of recent fiction and non-fiction books, but occasionally they do an older classic. Criteria include availability of a particular book.

The book chosen for the July meeting is "**The Sparrow**" by *Mary Doria Russell*. This is the first novel by science fiction author Ms. Russell. It won the Arthur C. Clarke Award, James Tiptree, Jr. Award, Kurd-Laßwitz-Preis and the British Science Fiction Association Award. It was followed by a sequel, "**Children of God**," in 1998. The title refers to Matthew 10:29-31, which relates that not even a sparrow falls to the earth without God's knowing of it.

The novel begins in the year 2019, when the SETI program, at the Arecibo Observatory, picks up radio broadcasts of music from the vicinity of Alpha Centauri. The first expedition to Rakhat, the world that is sending the music, is organized by the Jesuit order. Only one of the crew, Father Emilio Sandoz, survives to return to Earth, and he is damaged physically and psychologically. The story is told in framed flashback, with chapters alternating between the story of the expedition and the story of Sandoz' interrogation by the Jesuit order's inquest, set up in 2059 to find the truth. Sandoz' return has sparked great controversy – not just because the Jesuits sent the mission independent of United Nations oversight, but also because the mission ended disastrously. Sandoz returned to Earth, his friends gone and his faith in God shattered. Due to relativistic effect, decades had passed while he had been gone, during which popular outrage at the UN's initial and highly out-of-context report on the mission, and especially Sandoz's role in the tragedy, had left the Society shattered and nearly extinct.

Newcomers are always very welcome.

VI. Commitment to New Future, Leadership and Clergy – When the above interim tasks are complete, then preparation for new pastoral leadership can be undertaken. The call and transition to a new clergy leader will then be made with full knowledge of the expectations and perspective of the congregation, the vision God has provided for the future, and the skills and abilities needed in a new pastor. Commitment to a new future together can then be made with joy and without reservation.

#### **MISSION AND MINISTRIES TRAINING EVENT**

An opportunity to learn about our Global Ministries, prepare for upcoming mission travel events, and prepare to share the good news. Did you know that the UCC and Disciples of Christ are joint participants in partnering with churches in other countries to serve? Come learn all about it and prepare for future mission opportunities. Saturday, October 31, 2009, 8:30-4:30 at Disciples Seminary Foundation – 300 W. Foothill, Claremont, CA 91711. The cost is \$10 and includes lunch and lots of materials! Registration form is available at

[http://scnucucc.org/email\\_news\\_calendar/documents/MinistriesAndMissionInterpretersTraining.pdf](http://scnucucc.org/email_news_calendar/documents/MinistriesAndMissionInterpretersTraining.pdf)

#### **MESSAGE FROM KOINONIA #4**

As Hillcrest Church is a member of the United Church of Christ (UCC), each member church is asked to pay annual per capita dues. The budget of Hillcrest has been financially unable to pay for these dues for several years. So the Council has decided to ask each member to pay his/her dues of \$11.00 per member to the southern California-Nevada Conference UCC. The conference has been very helpful to us in the past year. Their assistance has included helping us through the of changing pastors and securing Interim Pastor Loletta Barrett. And they will continue to guide and support our Pastoral Search Committee in its quest to find a minister. **Envelopes are available in the pews for your checks. However if you are unable to come to church, you may send them to the church. Make them out to Hillcrest Church and in the memo portion, put "Conference Dues." Thank you!**

#### **ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM KOINONIA #4**

This summer, Heifer International will once again be exhibiting their Beyond Our Borders display at the **Orange County Fair from July 10 to August 2.** they will have new children's games and exhibits this year. They are looking for volunteers to staff the exhibit for shifts of 4 hours a day. Parking and admission are free, paid by Heifer. (Remember that the fair is closed Mondays and Tuesdays.) If you can help, they would be most appreciative. Please call Lindsay Duvall or Catherine Scott at (562) 431-4849 to schedule your preferred day and time. Openings can fill quickly, so contact them as soon as possible. Thank you.

**WE ARE CURRENTLY EDITING OUR MAILING LIST FOR HI-LITES.** If you are not currently active or have moved away and would like to continue receiving Hi-Lites, please contact the church office at (562) 937-3755.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE TO YOUR CHURCH**

**WORSHIP TEAM:** We are interested in forming a worship committee to help plan worship services. If you are interested, please contact *Pastor Loletta* at the church at (562) 947-3755.

**PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE:** If you are interested in information on the scope of the committee and submitting your name for approval, please contact *Diana Ford* at (562) 696-2166. The Committee will consist of nine and according to our by-laws must be approved by the members of Hillcrest Church. Currently six names have been submitted.

II. Exploring Our History- This is an opportunity to look at our past and celebrate the traditions and successes. It is also a time to review old expectations that were not met. Coming to terms with who

we were and no longer are is an important step in understanding how we have come to be who we are in this place and time. We will look at all the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, the healthy and the hurtful patterns. We will open our old baggage and sort out what we want to keep and what we want to let go. This is a time of celebrating, grieving, admitting mistakes, healing, building trust, and learning new healthy communication styles with the pastor and each other. It is a time to resolve misunderstandings and work toward closure of the past so that we can be open to step into the future together. Healthy and strong communication skills are our best tool. We will know that we are ready and it is time to leave this step as grief, discouragement, and low energy are replaced the higher energy of anticipation.

III. Examining the System Relationships - We begin now to enter a time of serious reflection on the nature of the church as a system and organization. We identify norms, habits, perspectives, and abilities of the church to work in a coherent effective fashion. We will look at where our operations and work together is inherently strong and where it is weak, the presence and place of, or the absence of conflict and the skills to handle it, the communication flow and bottle necks. Our goal is a realistic assessment of the status of the system and identification of the direction of change.

Our organization and decision making patterns will be examined to determine if we are organized for success. We will look at how we can be good stewards of our people and other resources: who are members are and what gifts they bring to share, how we can nurture growth of new leaders and support current leaders, how well we use our facilities and other material resources. Self empowerment of the members, and empowerment of the groups and whole church working together are significant keys to success. Healthy and strong communication skills are our best tool.

IV. Examining Other Relationships – After strengthening our internal connection and church community, we will look at our external relationships with others. Looking at our ties with our denomination and with other organizations in the greater community will help us to discern how our core beliefs can support and be supported by these relationships. Our self-identity as a church is enhanced as we interact, connect and share resources with the community around us. As we examine our relationships we will see how we are perceived by others, how our ministry to the world can draw church members and community partners, and how our mission can be enhanced by connecting with resources currently beyond our capacity. Creating healthy and strong communication with our partners is our best tool. Understanding who we are in the community will help us in identifying the pastoral leadership we need to accomplish a sense of joint ministry for the future.

V. Setting a Fresh Course - Clarifying our identity leads us to the question of what God requires of us for the future and creating a vision. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18) Through prayer and discussion we will vision and discern where God is calling us to go in the future: what is our responsibility to bring about the Beloved Community, what are our priorities, and what is our action plan? We need to answer the questions of purpose, direction, and what makes us unique what is our specific mission among all the community around us - what is our community area to serve - how are we reaching them? When we are at a crossroad, we must take time to fully explore options and potential outcomes before we make our decisions. Well-informed and deliberate decisions regarding our future course will help to identify the type of pastoral leadership we need.

(Continued past the calendar)