



Irvington Presbyterian Church

Fremont, CA

July 2014

Sundays

Bible Study 9:00 a.m.

Worship 10:15 a.m.

(Nursery and Children
Sunday School During
Service)

Irvington Chinese Presby-
terian Service: 10:15 a.m.

Greetings

Dear Friends,

It's hard to imagine three months have passed since I started here as your pastor. Most of my time so far has been spent studying and reading you like a fascinating novel. Thank you for welcoming me in and sharing your lives with me.

What I've discovered is a church that deeply cares about many things. It is a church with a variety of theological, political and social positions. Some care passionately about the plight of the homeless. Others are equally passionate about the rights of the homosexual. Others are very concerned about the care of the elderly. Others are passionate about the care of missionaries. A few care passionately about the souls of children at Hirsch Elementary. But what's consistent is not so much a passion as it is a concern about the future viability of our church.

I'm not so concerned about our future as I am about our purpose. God forms churches to make new disciples of Jesus Christ. I think we clearly have at least pieces of Christ's compassion for helping people in all walks of life and that's part of God's purpose for a church. Jesus healed people but that wasn't his primary job. They still had sick people in their midst. Jesus fed hungry people but that also wasn't his primary purpose. He said the poor we'll always have among us. Jesus' primary concern and purpose was to deal with the eternal soul of those he encountered.

What would you do if someone asked you how they could be right with God? What would you say to them? That's my concern. Stay tuned.

Pastor Larry

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Missions – The Heart of the Church

Understanding Faith Promise Giving

(Part 1 of a Series)

Faith Promise Giving is more than just a method of raising money for Missions. It is a Faith Commitment and Faith is central to the Christian life. In the next few months, the Missions Team will explain Faith Promise Giving, its importance and what it means to each of us as practicing Christians.

We will cover:

- Practical application
- Why Faith Promise is important
- How Faith Promise differs from your IPC General Giving
- How Faith Promise works – Scriptural basis
- How to Fulfill Your Faith Promise commitment
- How to Make a Faith Promise

Practical Application

IPC's Mission funds are generated through Faith Promise Giving. In simple terms this means that Missions is not allocated a percentage of the overall Church Budget, but raises finances separately.

Why Faith Promise is important

Missions giving is one way in which each of us, at IPC, fulfills our role in the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20). Christ's command is to "make disciples of all nations". Some of us are called to be Missionaries, witnessing for Christ around the world (some to unreached peoples in difficult places). Those of us not called into the Missions field witness for Christ here at home and provide a support role to those in the field through prayer and finances.

The IPC Missions Team encourages each of us to:

- pray for both the Missionaries in the field and the local mission outreaches we support and
- support IPC Missions financially through Faith Promise Giving to the Missions General Fund.

It is the responsibility of the Missions Team to keep the congregation informed and educated about IPC's mission program and be good stewards of the money received. That money is used for both worldwide missionary support and local mission outreach projects. Details can be found in a brochure in the Narthex, or ask any Mission Team member for more information.

How Faith Promise for Missions Differs from your IPC General Giving

Your General Giving is your pledge of financial support to IPC from your known sources of income (i.e. from your personal budget). It is your tithe (Mal 3:10).

Faith Promise goes beyond that. It is just what it says it is: a promise, made in faith, between an individual and God. That promise, after prayerful consideration, is based on what the giver believes God wants him or her to give to Missions in furtherance of God's Kingdom around the world. It relies on the giver's faith of God's unlimited resources to provide the means to fulfill the promise. It is, therefore, a faith commitment not from known sources of income alone.

This is where we trust God to "enable" us to fulfill our Faith Promise commitment. More about this, (and how & why each of us should participate) next time.....

As always, your Mission Team is here to help you and answer questions:

Mary Ellen McKowen – Chair
Peggy Handono
Bonnie Nichols

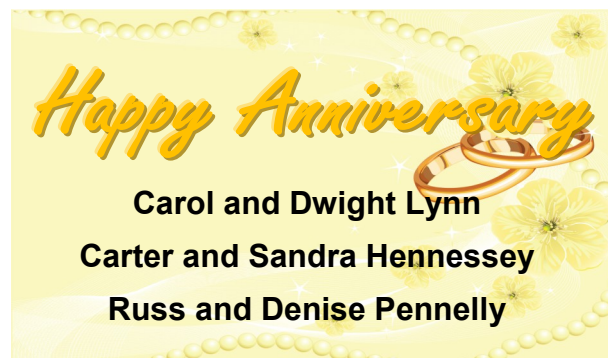
Teresa Oliver
Sonali Patelia
Jenni Pellot

Have you checked out the IPC FACEBOOK page? If not, please check us out today. There are some great pictures and videos of the various Sunday services and fellowship gatherings. In addition, it is a great way to keep up with the upcoming events at IPC. LIKE us on our FACEBOOK page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Irvington-Presbyterian-Church/116256295065982>

Share events, make comments, keep in touch with friends





Doris Calabrese went to be with her Lord Saturday evening, June 21st. Please pray for the family of Doris as they grieve their loss. Memorial service date to be announced.

Congregation Happenings Highlights for July

3rd - Worship Committee
 Church Office Closed
 4th - Independence Day (Church Office Closed)
 8th - TCFBP Steering Committee
 10th - SIS
 10th - Mission Team Meeting
 11th - Evangelism Committee
 12th - Fun Singles - Roaring Camp Railroad

13th - Couples Fellowship - Fiddler on the Roof
 14th - 19th: Pastor on Leave (So. Cal)
 15th - Deacons Meeting
 15th - IPC Ladies Out to Lunch
 20th - CE Committee
 24th - Session Meeting

Mondays: Women's Bible Study - on summer break until September - see below.
Home Bible Study - 2nd & 4th Monday at Mary Ellen McKowen's Home - on summer break

Wednesdays: Band Practice

Fridays: Band Practice

Sundays: Journey Into Faith

Bible Studies

Women's Bible Study - Taking a summer break starting in June. In September they will continue their study in "Jesus in The Psalms". If you would like to join, please check with Carol Lynn to see about a study book.

Home Bible Study - 2nd & 4th Monday Bible Classes at Mary Ellen's house. Contact Mary Ellen McKowen for additional details. On summer break.

RECENT DECISIONS BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RESPONSE BY PASTOR LARRY

Recently I shared my response at worship to two decisions made at the recent General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA). For those of you not familiar with our church's form of government, our General Assembly meets every two years for a week. It consists of elected commissioners who are teaching elders (ministers) and lay people from each of the presbyteries. At General Assembly commissioners discuss and vote on policies that govern our individual churches.

This year GA commissioners granted teaching elders permission to perform same sex marriage ceremonies and redefined our official definition of marriage as being between two persons rather than between a man and a woman. This broader view of marriage will have to be voted on and approved by a majority of the presbyteries (geographic districts) in the next year before it's formally adopted and printed in our Book of Order.

The PCUSA practices something called "Freedom of Conscience" which allows for a freedom for its members to not agree with the official position of the church in non essential areas. An essential area would be belief in God the Father and Jesus as Savior, etc. but in the matter of marriage and the ordination of officers, it is up to the local church to decide.

I believe this is one of the strengths of the PCUSA. My understanding of marriage in the Bible is that it is meant to be between a man and a woman. But even if the majority of the presbyteries vote to approve this new wider definition of marriage in the next year, my freedom of conscience will not be violated. At the same time those in same gender relationships will not have their freedom of conscience violated as well. In the end we're all then free to focus on the primary purpose of making new disciples for Jesus Christ.

In worship I said that my position on this matter should not come as a surprise to anyone who voted to call me as pastor at IPC because I thought I was clear about the matter in my statement of faith I distributed. It has since been pointed out to me that my statement wasn't as clear as I was in worship in June. What I was referring to was my statement in February that included these words: *"Certain members are called by God to serve the church as elders, deacons and pastors who are to live in fidelity in marriage or chastity in singleness"* When that statement was a part of our Book of Order same sex marriages were not legal. My bigger concern has not been with the homosexual community per se but with the unfaithfulness of both the homosexual and heterosexual communities. So I wasn't as clear on paper about same sex marriages or the ordination of those in same sex marriages. My apologies to anyone who voted for me to be the next pastor of IPC without knowing where I stood on this matter. If I could roll the clock back I would have been much clearer in February.

My heart felt desire and calling is to make disciples of Jesus Christ regardless of their views on marriage. But for me to ordain someone as an officer in the church who is in a homosexual relationship would be a violation of my understanding of Scripture in that matter. The PCUSA protects my freedom of conscience and anyone who has a similar view. I appreciate that.

On another controversial decision made at GA commissioners voted to divest of the denomination's investments in Caterpillar tractors, Hewlett Packard and Motorola because those companies have been helping Israel demolish Palestinian homes in east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip and providing surveillance equipment to spy on the Palestinians. General Assembly, apparently based on reports from Palestinian Christians, believe that Israel is a terrorist aggressor in this area and the denomination condemns all forms of terrorist aggression wherever it is. But we need to be clear, contrary to rumors; the PCUSA supports the existence of the two nations of Israel and Palestine co-existing. The best I can tell, GA wants its investments to make the world a more peaceful place and supporting the expansion of Israel into Palestine using its present methods would be a violation of their moral conscience.

I have to say on this matter I am not very informed. If you've done or will do some extensive reading and research on the matter I am open to learning what you find. I am just a fellow sojourner trying to navigate my way through a very complicated world being as consistent as I know how to be. It's not easy. Thanks for your patience.

UPCOMING EVENTS

F. U. N. SINGLES

The date for the Roaring Camp Railroad trip in Felton has been changed. The new date is July 12th. We will leave the church parking lot by 9:00am. Make reservations ahead by paying the minimum cost of \$5.00 to Jean Landrum ASAP. Call Jean at 510-656-1963. Bring your own picnic lunch.

IPC LADIES LUNCH

The next IPC Ladies Out to Lunch is tentatively scheduled for 15 July. Please check the Sunday Bulletin for information as to the location and time of the lunch. Information was not available when the Cornerstone was published.

COUPLES GROUP

The Couples Group at IPC is planning an afternoon out on **Sunday, July 13th at 2:30 pm.**

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Newark Memorial High School, Stage 1 Theater

39375 Cedar Blvd, Newark, CA

Price: Senior (62+): \$24 each (including processing fee)

Group Rate: \$22 each (including processing fee)

Please RSVP to Mary Lou Craig, 510-396-3053 ASAP so she can purchase the tickets. She will need a check for \$22 per person so she can reserve the proper amount of tickets.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR SAVE THE DATE!!!

You will want to definitely mark your calendar and save this date! The **IPC Annual Picnic** will be held on **Saturday, 9 August**. Plans are still being made, but this year's picnic will definitely be one you will not want to miss! Bring you family and your neighbors and join us for all the fun and fellowship.

SHOP AMAZON FOR HOPE



HOPE UNLIMITED FOR CHILDREN
MONTHLY UPDATE

You can now support the children of Hope Unlimited by shopping on Amazon! Each time you shop on AmazonSmile, a special section of Amazon.com, 0.5% of the price of your purchase goes to the charitable organization of your choice. AmazonSmile has all of the same products, prices, and service as Amazon.com plus the opportunity to help our kids! Start today by choosing "Hope Unlimited for Children" as your charity of choice at smile.amazon.com.

Charge to the Congregation

By Randy Young

June 8 2014

First, I want to thank Larry Thorson for the privilege of participating in his installation as pastor of Irvington Presbyterian Church. It is an honor and one I so appreciate. Second, I want to thank you, the members of Irvington, for all the love and support you have given me through the years. There is a very special place in my heart for you.

You have been blessed for 10 years with the pastoral care and leadership of Michael Boyland. And in this past interim period you have been blessed by many pastors who have invested a part of their lives in you: Cully Anderson, Bill Beatty, Ed Blake, Jeff Hutcheson, Mary Naegeli and myself to identify a few. Praise God for His many gracious gifts to you in the past year.



It is human to make comparisons. We make comparisons all the time. In the music world we compare Frank Sinatra with Michael Jackson, Itzak Perlman with Yo Yo Ma, Luciano Pavarotti with Andrea Bocelli. And we watch American Idol and/or The Voice and compare talent. In politics we compare presidents, senators and governors. In sports, we in the Bay area compare the quarterback play of the SF 49ers: Joe Montana, Steve Young, Jeff Garcia, Alex Smith and Colin Kaepernick. And there will be moments when you might be tempted to compare your current pastor with other pastors you know. I want to plead with you that you don't do that. It doesn't serve the purposes of the kingdom of God. Neither will it be helpful to the life of your church. Accept Larry for who he is, the gifts he brings, the experience he has to lead and guide you into the next chapter

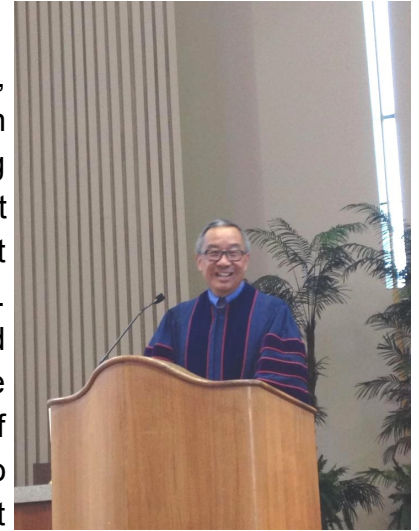
of Irvington PC.

It is important to remember at the forefront of your mind and deep in your heart something Peter wrote in his first letter. He makes an astounding declaration that you are a **holy nation** and a **royal priesthood**. (1 Peter 2:4-10) You are a minister in the church of Jesus Christ. This is your calling. This is who you are. This is who God made you to be. Larry is your pastor, but he is not the only minister in this church. Don't wait for him to do things for you. Take responsibility to meet the challenges you see. Don't rely upon him for your spiritual welfare. Take responsibility for your own spiritual welfare. When you see a need, don't intuitively think, "I'll tell Larry about this" or "I'll tell session to do something about this." Let your first thought be, "What is God asking me to do?" The strength of the church is not its pastor. The strength of the church is you, the members of the Irvington PC, being faithful to God at all times and in all places. Be the church not just on Sundays but between Sundays. Be the church not just here on this property but out in the world where you live life. God is constantly at work every place you live your life. Faith is about seeing the hand of God at work



in front of you. Faith is about partnering with God.

The great joy in being a follower of Jesus Christ is not what you get, though you get a lot – salvation, eternal life, brothers and sisters in Christ to name a few. The great joy of faith as a church is not in having a thousand members, a large staff, plentiful programs, a state-of-the-art campus or a large budget. The great joy of faith is not in having a great pastor or being served by a great pastor or learning from a great pastor. The great joy comes from being in partnership with God, watching God at work around you and using your spiritual gifts when opportunities are presented. It is my deepest desire that you experience the fullness of the life in Christ by living your faith on a day-by-day basis. I want you to come to worship on Sunday mornings with this sense that you can't wait to tell your brothers and sisters how you saw God at work this past week. I want this congregation to rejoice in those stories of God alive and at work in our world.



Some of you might be doubtful about this. Perhaps most of you have this thought that “we are a small church, we aren't able to bear witness to God in significant ways.” You have what I call a Gideon complex. When Israel was overrun by the Midianites who were plundering the country and stealing the harvest, Gideon was hiding in a wine press when an angel of the Lord came to tell him to lead Israel against their tormenters. Gideon promptly presented his credentials saying, “Why me? I am the smallest person in the smallest family in the smallest clan in the smallest tribe. It is not possible for me to do it.” As a small church, the temptation is to think, “We are a small church with few resources in a diminishing denomination in a culture that is growing in antipathy towards the church. No way.”

God answered Gideon and us saying, “I will be with you.” That's our trump card. God is with us. God is the highest card in the deck. If God is with us, who can stand up against us. Remember the end of the story. God reduced the army of Israel from 33,000 to 10,000 and finally down to 300. 300 people took out the Midianites who numbered in hoards – so many you couldn't count them.



Friends, God is with you. That's the reality. And when God is with us, amazing things can happen. Let me offer stories of 4 people as illustrations.

Sam Beler is a businessman in Walnut Creek. He has spent his life building senior housing. A few years ago his wife of 40 years died from pancreatic cancer. Feeling a bit lost and with a love for music, he began a music foundation to help schools with no music programs. God is leading him on an amazing journey. He created a jazz record label. He connected with a few world renown jazz musicians such as Jamie Davis, Lady Bianca, and Scotty Barnhart, current conductor of the Count Basie Orchestra. Sam took a group of jazz musicians to bring light and life to the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. And there they sang songs like “Glory, Glory Hallelujah,” “O Happy Day,”

“Mary, Did You Know,” and Jesus I Love Calling Your Name.”

Burl Cain is the warden of that prison at Angola, the largest maximum security prison in America with 6300 prisoners, about 75% with life sentences. It is over 18,000 acres, bigger than the island of Manhattan. He was named warden in 1995 when it was a terrible place with a horrible history. Cain, a deeply committed Christian, began the work of transformation. Two new chapels have been built. He created a Bible college. Some of the graduates have become Malachi dads who are father figures to new inmates, many whom never had a father (mentor). Many of the graduates have become missionaries, transferring to other Louisiana State prisons to assist chaplains. Men are grateful for the opportunity to be treated with dignity and respect. The atmosphere of the prison has changed. All it took was one person being faithful to what God put in front of him.

Dr. Ben Carson recently retired from medicine. He was the speaker at the 2013 National Prayer Breakfast. His mother with a third grade education married when she was 13-years-old to a terrible man who turned out to be a bigamist. Carson grew up a very angry child and a terrible student. When he got in trouble, he would blame everyone but himself. His mother would ask him, “Do you have a brain?” When he answered, “Yes,” she would respond, “Then you could have thought your way out of it.” His mother limited TV watching, didn’t allow them to go outside to play until homework was finished and forced him to read 2 library books a week and give her written reports. She would look over the reports, marking them with a pen even though she didn’t know how to read. He eventually learned to love reading and learning. He became the Director of the Pediatric Surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital at the age of 33. He is known for his work separating conjoined twins, and the work of surgeons around the world are grateful for his medical breakthroughs.

It is unlikely that you will have such a profound influence, but that isn’t why you do things. As a believer in Jesus Christ, we are asked to do the right thing. We are given opportunities to be faithful to what God puts in front of us – whatever that might be, whenever it presents itself.

The last illustration is a young man named Jon Meis. On Thursday May 5, 2014, a non-student, lone gunman with a documented history of mental illness, began shooting at Seattle Pacific University. When he stopped to reload, Meis, a school security monitor, jumped him, pepper sprayed him and with other students pinned him to the ground until authorities arrived. Meis, who describes himself as quiet and private, is a remarkable young man who was in the right place at the right time and did the right thing. He didn’t go looking for this. He responded to what was in front of him.

In a great testimony of his character, the kind of person he is, he has refused all interviews and simply released a statement (<http://www.kirotv.com/news/news/spu-shooting-hero-jon-meis-releases-statement/ngG9x/>). In it he deflects attention away from himself and towards the tragedy of lost life, how the lives of many have been indelibly changed.

Let me encourage you to be faithful to what God puts in front of you day-by-day. If you will do that, you will experience the joy that comes when you see God at work around you and at times through you. Irvington PC will be a blessing to countless people and this church will be blessed beyond measure. Amen.



Peter Bade. Ron Fong, Larry Thorson, Lynette Ariathurai, Brook Mantia, Mary Starkel



Martha Thorson
Larry Thorson



Ron Fong, Garret Yamada,
Martha Thorson, Larry Thorson
Karen Meeris,
Randy McGrady-Beach



IPC Local

TRI-CITY FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday breakfast is provided to anyone who needs it. This ministry has provided welcome nourishment to the homeless and others since 1997. In its 16 years over 250,000 meals have been served by an all volunteer staff. It is operated with donated food and monetary donations and grants from individuals and businesses in the local community.

Over 32,000 meals were served in 2012 and 2013 saw an increase of 9.9% more guests and 6.8% more meals than in 2012.

RANCHO SANTA MARTA

Rancho Santa Marta is a non-denominational Evangelical Christian ministry for Mexican children located on a 450 acre ranch about sixty miles south of Ensenada, in Baja California. The ministry offers a home for abandoned children, a school for children with learning disabilities and a boarding facility for children who come from nearby farms and communities to attend the school. For more information about Rancho Santa Marta, visit www.ranchosantamarta.org.

TRI-CITY VOLUNTEERS

This is our local mission effort to help the needy in our community. Tri-City Volunteers, Inc. is a local agency where neighbors help neighbors in the communities of Fremont, Newark and Union City. This program is unique in south county because Tri-City is the only organization that assists with food, clothing, household items, housing, and shelter referrals all within one agency. Meal-A-Month is IPC's way to provide a complete meal for a family of five or a monetary donation. IPC has designated the second Sunday of each month as Meal-A-Month Sunday.

In addition to Meal-A-Month, each year during the early part of December, the IPC congregation celebrates the birth of our Lord with a Birthday Party for Jesus. The congregation brings their unwrapped gifts which are donated during the Sunday morning worship service. The Mission Team delivers these items to Tri-City Volunteers for distribution to families in the local area.

IPC World Outreach



Interserve

Serving Unreached Peoples in Central Asia

David & Sara T



Child Evangelism Fellowship
Armenia & USA

George & Esther Manoukian



Pioneers

Richard & Wendy Yancy



Christar

Serving the Gujarati Indians in CA

Paul and Alice Ryon



The Navigators

US Hispanic Ministry

Jack & Joann Blanch



CAM International

Hispanic Ministry, AZ

Linda Miller



New Tribes Mission

Based in Lincoln NE,
travelling to South America



Larry & Valerie Bockus



Witnessing Ministries of Christ

India

Rev. Philip & Elizabeth Prasad

Ethiopia

Arssi Oromo People



Light of Hope -



NCEM

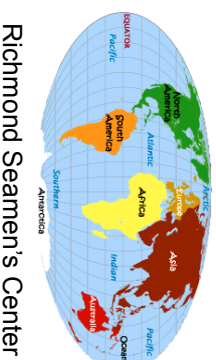
Saskatchewan, Canada

Tim & Ginny Gradin



Brazil

Philip and Corene Smith




Richmond Seamen's Center

Ships from around the world

coming to Richmond, CA

Markku Pelanne

JULY 2014

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 PRESBYTERY @ BERKELEY	2 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 6:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	3 7:00 PM WORSHIP COMMITTEE	4 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 	5
6 9:00 AM BIBLE STUDY 10:15 AM WORSHIP & CHILDREN'S CHURCH	7 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST	8 7:00 PM TOFBP STEERING COMMITTEE	9 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 6:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	10 4:00 PM SIS (SHE IS SAFE) 5:00 PM MISSIONS TEAM MEETING 7:00 PM EVANGELISM COMMITTEE MEETING	11 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 2:30 PM BAND PRACTICE 7:00 PM EVANGELISM COMMITTEE	12 900 AM F.U.N. SINGLES ROARING CAMP RR
13 9:00 AM BIBLE STUDY 10:15 AM WORSHIP & CHILDREN'S CHURCH 2:30 PM COUPLES FELLOWSHIP - FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	14 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST	15 TBD - LADIES OUT TO LUNCH 7:00 PM DEACONS MTG	16 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 6:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	17 11:30 AM LADIES OUT TO LUNCH	18 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 2:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	19
20 9:00 AM BIBLE STUDY 10:15 AM WORSHIP & CHILDREN'S CHURCH MISSION SUNDAY 12:00 PM CE MEETING	21 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST	22	23 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 6:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	24 7:00 PM SESSION MTG	25 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 2:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	26
27 9:00 AM BIBLE STUDY 10:15 AM WORSHIP & CHILDREN'S CHURCH	28 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST	29	30 7:00 AM FREE BREAKFAST 6:30 PM BAND PRACTICE	31		

IRVINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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P O BOX 1366
FREMONT CA 94538-0133

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Please note: July 27 is the deadline for the August issue.

All articles are to be emailed to nicholsb@earthlink.net

or mailed to:

Bonnie and Teresa at P. O. Box 48, Shingletown, CA 96088

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via email or phone at (530) 355-8685 or (510) 821-1072 (leave message and we will call you back).

The Cornerstone keeps current and past congregation members informed of all activities at IPC.

Pictures are always welcome.

Your timely submissions are appreciated!

Do you HAVE A COMPUTER?

If you answered yes, IPC has three exciting news items for you!

1. LIKE us on our FACEBOOK page:
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Irvington-Presbyterian-Church/116256295065982>
Share events, make comments, keep in touch with friends.
2. Visit our website at www.irvingtonpres.com. It is updated with all events and news. We will also be posting the Cornerstone to the website so you can read it there also.
3. If you have provided us with your email address, check your in-box for your electronic copy of the Cornerstone.