

# CHRONICLER

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

www.evangelicalucc-cape.org

April 2009

## Spring Reflections

As I write this the tuck pointing of the church building is almost complete. Soon we will also have a new roof. Thanks to the generosity of Lillian Kies and the hard work of the church council, we have done what we can to ensure that this congregation has a beautiful and safe facility for many years to come. With God's help that facility will continue to be the home of a vital Christian congregation long after all of us here today have returned to our maker.

As a pastor, I receive countless promotions for books, training programs, and seminars on church growth. All offer tried and true formulas for filling the pews. Most of the advice is quite reasonable and is based on accepted management and marketing approaches. However, for some reason, the idea of investing the time and energy of this congregation in these programs just leaves me cold. A business-like approach to church growth may make sense for some congregations, in some places, at some times. It must work some of the time, or churches would not continue to buy the books, attend the seminars, spend countless hours studying census data for selected local zip codes, and formulate and reformulate mission and purpose statements.

These can be effective tools, but they may not be what is needed to face today's challenges. For our congregation, one of these challenges is that we belong to a rapidly shrinking denomination. The United Church of Christ (UCC), like the other mainline denominations, has been losing churches and members for many years. This year the UCC denomination is going through the down-

sizing process that other denominations had to go through years ago. Our regional and national bodies are being reorganized and streamlined. Staff positions are being eliminated and publications are shifting to Internet-only formats. We will probably never again see the UCC funding national ad campaigns like "God is Still Speaking." As a national organization, the UCC will probably

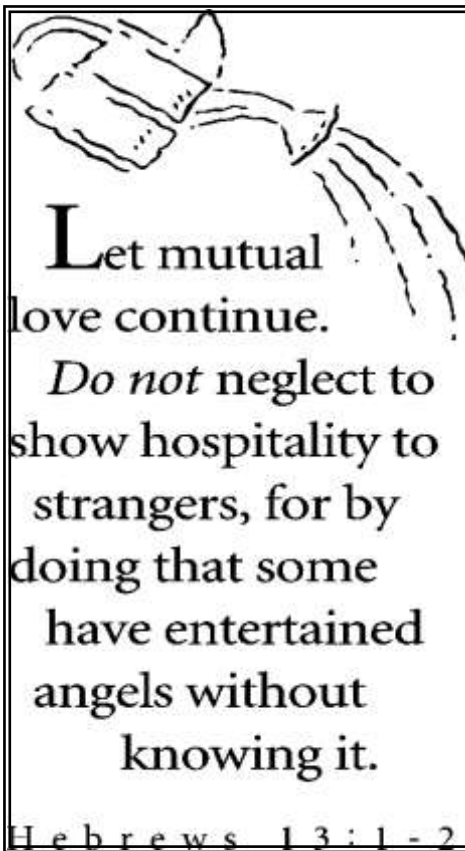
be less and less visible in the coming years. The national attention received by the UCC around Obama's speech at the General Synod and Reverend Jeremiah Wright's sermons may be the UCC's last hurrah on the national stage.

In my personal opinion, the only sensible response to the UCC's financial bankruptcy is for the UCC to go back its original purpose as stated in the basis of union of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church:

*The name of the Church formed by this union shall be UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. This name expresses a fact: it stands for the accomplished union of two church bodies each of which has arisen from a similar union of two church bodies. It also expresses a hope: that in time*

*soon to come, by further union between this Church and other bodies, there shall arise a more inclusive United Church.*

As a denomination, the UCC needs to become a "uniting church." As we just read in John's Gospel, "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." Maintaining a distinct UCC identity has become an end in itself. This has become a trap, a way of separating our-



## Continued From Page 1

selves from the Body of Christ. Our denomination should have one mission only: to facilitate the union of more and more Christian churches into a single Body of Christ. The idea that UCC churches are better than other churches has to be given up. Instead of a denomination, we need a network of churches that share a common heritage and a common goal: union. The UCC will have fulfilled its historic purpose when it becomes a strand in a much larger tapestry of a truly uniting church.

I also believe that for the local congregation, the emphasis should not be on competition for the most desirable demographic segment. If all churches pursue the Holy Grail of young families with children, most will fail. Being part of a uniting church means more, not less diversity in worship and programs, but most of all, it means not pretending that we are the only church in town. Instead, we should seek out every opportunity to participate in community-wide programs like the FISH Pantry and Love INC. We should enthusiastically support the programs of the Downtown Council of Churches including the Good Friday Crosswalk, Sunrise Service, Community Thanksgiving Service, and Blue Sky Church. Our missions, like the Jamaican Christian Medical Mission, should welcome churches and individuals of all backgrounds. I believe that a major component of our congregation's identity should be the churches humble and spirit-filled support of ecumenical ministries and missions. Would it be so bad if we were known as the congregation that does whatever it can to help any Christian in need, regardless of who **“owns” the program?**

Our identity should not be that of a church that is better than everyone else because it is more inclusive and politically correct. Instead, our identity should be that of a humble congregation that stays true to its traditional values and pattern of worship, while unreservedly welcoming anyone who shares those values and can connect to God through that pattern of wor-

**ship. We are a church of “extravagant welcome.”**

However, we also know that being part of a uniting church does not mean we pretend to be all things to all people. Some Christians will not be comfortable with our values or our form of worship. Praise God that they can find a church home in another congregation. Being part of a uniting church does not mean giving up our identity as a unique congregation. What it means is giving up the pride in historic and denominational distinctions that no longer serve any purpose in spreading the Gospel.

There is one Christ and one Body. It is time for all congregations to stop just giving the unity of the Church lip service while living and dying in our denominational cubbyholes. Today's crisis, like any crisis is an opportunity. We have this chance to renounce our sinful pride in the things that separate us from other Christians. We have a chance to be a uniting church and join with other Christians to spread the Gospel and serve those in need of help. As a congregation, we have a beautiful building at 33 S. Ellis St. that was given to us by God through our ancestors in faith to provide a sound starting point for our ministry. In today's world, we need our beautiful refuge now more than ever. We need our history and traditions to give us the strength that comes from being deeply rooted in our faith. However, that refuge has one true purpose: to be a **“launching pad” for a congregation that again and again reaches out to other Christians in ministry and mission. Someday our building and congregation will go “the way of all flesh.” Yet everything good we do here will live forever in God's Kingdom. Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:58, “Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”**

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Dan



# What's Going On?

## Mary-Martha Circle



The Mary Martha Circle will meet on Thursday, April 2nd at 1:30 PM. Jo Daume will present Devotions. Ramona Brinkopf and Barbara Oberbeck are the hostesses. All ladies of the church are invited to attend.

## Friendship Circle

The Friendship Circle will meet on Tuesday, April 14th at 7:00 PM. Joyce Treadwell will present the devotions. Hostesses for the evening will be Jo Daume and Joyce Treadwell. All ladies of the church are invited to attend.



## Sunrise Service



The Easter Sunrise Service will take place at the Overlook Bridge, 6:30 AM. In case of rain, please move to the Baptist Student Center Chapel, 909 Normal Ave., located next to Kent Library on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University.

## Union of Concerned Christians

The Union of Concerned Christians plan to carpool to **Charleston, MO to enjoy God's beauty** during the Dogwood—Azalea Tour on Sunday, April 19th. Our plan is to leave the church at 1:30 PM. Please join us.



## Christians Uniting at the Cross

There are the young and the old.  
 Some with strollers, some with canes.  
 Hispanic families, white families, black families.  
 Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Non-Denominational & Unchurched.  
**All invited to downtown Cape Girardeau on Friday to celebrate Jesus Christ's sacrifice.**



Friday, April 10th  
 Assemble at Noon

Walk 12:15—2:00 PM  
**Gather on the steps of Old St. Vincent's Church**  
 Everyone is invited!

Walk — Listen — Remember — Pray  
 Worship — Meditate — Sing — Bless

Sponsored by the  
 Downtown Council of Churches

## Memorials



With Deepest Sympathy

### Memorial Fund

In Memory of Bob Wachter  
S.G. & Grace Coy  
Gary & Clodine Metje  
Martha Strickler

In Memory of Andora Peetz  
Helen Owens  
Gary & Clodine Metje  
Ruth Brindly

In Memory of Lawrence Maevers  
Dan & Betty Vogel

### Memorial-General Fund

In Memory of Andora Peetz  
Ramona Brinkopf

### Scholarship Fund

In Memory of Bob Wachter  
Paul & Marilyn Propst

In Honor of Bonnie Wilkening  
Friendship Circle

## Thanks To You

Being confined to my house this long is a new **experience for me. It is a lonesome time since I've** always been able to attend church activities and go out to eat, etc! I truly do appreciate the prayers, cards, and visits from my church family. Pray For My Patience as I continue to make progress. I miss you!

—Meta Siemers

February 1st the ASAP Youth Group collected 25 non-perishable items & raise \$188.00 for the Souper Bowl of Caring event. The ASAP group donated everything to our FISH food pantry.

Souper Bowl of Caring and FISH food pantry sent a Thank You note to the ASAP Youth Group. We would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way and helped us achieve this goal.

—In God's Love  
The ASAP Youth Group

I need to tell you at church how much I appreciate the notes and cards I've received from the membership. It seems to be a slow process before I'll be able to drive again. I've had the heavy brace removed and replaced with a light-weight one so things are progressing!

Now the other brace came off today—so things look better. I'm scheduled for therapy, but don't know how long that will be! You have made this ordeal easier to accept.

—Hugs  
Bonnie Wilkening

**A sincere Thank You for everyone's thoughts and prayers.** A special thank you to the folks who provided the bereavement dinner following Andora Peetz funeral.

—In Christian Love  
The Peetz Family



## Council Financial Report

Beginning Check Book	Balance 2-1-09	\$27,111.14
Deposits	February	\$3,911.00
	Interest	\$0.18
Total Deposits for January		\$3,911.18
Disbursements	February	\$8,777.05
Ending Check Book	Balance 2-27-09	\$22,245.27
Wachovia Securities/ A.G. Edwards {Memorial Fund}	Balance 3-1-09	\$12,835.54
	Interest	\$2.46
	Deposits	\$400.00
	Disbursements: 1/2 Memorial Plaque	\$670.00
Ending Balance	As of 2-27-09	\$12,568.00
Check Book Balance	As of 3-13-09	\$16,813.83

## Calendar Information

2009	April 5 <sup>th</sup>	April 12 <sup>th</sup>	April 19 <sup>th</sup>	April 26 <sup>th</sup>
DIACONATE	Kaye Lee	Gary Metje	Barbara Oberbeck	Rhonda Bolton
GREETERS	Bob & Velma Roloff	Michael Bodine	Kaye Lee	Barbara Oberbeck
LITURGISTS	Maxine Hale	Bill Bolton	Beverly Reece	Rhonda Bolton
COMMUNION PREP TEAM	Calvin & Verla Sailer Gary Metje	Calvin & Verla Sailer Gary Metje	-----	-----
USHERS	CAPTAIN- Michael Bodine Bill Bolton Rhonda Bolton Louis Geldmacher Maxine Hale Kaye Lee Gary Metje Barbara Oberbeck Helen Owens Tammy Popp Calvin & Verla Sailer Rebecca Schild Tom Schild Brian Stahlman Bonnie Wilkening	CAPTAIN- GORDON WALTON Rhonda Bolton Barbara Oberbeck Van Sander	CAPTAIN- PAUL PROPST Bill Bolton Jeff Sneathen Alvin Spencer	CAPTAIN- RANDY COY Michael Bodine Bob Roloff Lori Siebert

## Prayer List & Friends at Home

### Prayer List

In case of hospitalization or surgery please notify our church office. When being admitted to a hospital be sure to tell them that you are affiliated with this congregation. \* indicates a new request. *Please note: after six months names will be removed from the prayer list, unless an update is made to the church office.*

Joyce Abernathy; 10-08  
 Leo Amelunke; 11-08  
 Marilyn Amelunke; 11-08  
 \*Jerry Baker; 03-09  
 Ruby Bock; 01-09  
 \*Michael Bodine; 03-09  
 Loyd Bollinger  
 Ian Bolton; 10-08  
 \*Rhonda Bolton, 03-09  
 Darlene Dow; 01-09  
 Lexi Edwards; 11-08  
 Aleene Ellinger—**R. Bolton's Grandma**; 10-08  
 Dean & Carolena Galloway; 11-08  
 Joan Hope  
 Ernie & Ida Mae Jordan; 11-08  
 Wavis Jordan; 03-09  
 Anita MacDonald; 09-08  
 Frank, Jr & Ame Maevers; 09-08  
 Frank Maevers, Sr.; 03-09  
 Dana McClard; 12-08  
 David Metcalfe; 02-09  
 Ester Nussbaum  
 Andora Peetz Family; 01-09  
 Travis Rister—Iraq; 09-08  
 Bob & Nora Lee Seabaugh; 09-08  
 Meta Siemers; 03-09  
 \*Jeff Strickert; 04-09  
 Bonnie Wilkening; 01-09

### Friends at Home

Ratliff Nursing Home  
 717 N. Sprigg Street  
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
 Polly Wilmsmeyer

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Fountainbleau Lodge  
 2001 N. Kingshighway  
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
 Alta Proffer

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Lutheran Home  
 2825 Bloomfield Road  
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63703

Dorothy Cole  
 Viola Geiser  
 Frank Maevers, Sr.  
 Leonard Moore  
 Esther Nussbaum

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Auburn Creek  
 2910 Beaver Creek Drive  
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Irene Orlando

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Home Bound  
 S. G. Coy  
 Mary Huckstep  
 Kenny Mehrle  
 Helen Owens



“With everlasting Love I will have compassion on you ...”  
 Isaiah 54 : 8

## North Dakota & Minnesota Flooding

Thousands of upper midwest residents have been forced from their homes as rivers continue to rise in what may become an historic flood as early as this weekend. The combination of heavy snow, an early melt and now more heavy snow and rain is responsible for the early Spring flooding. The combination is producing a runoff that may top the 1997 flood levels seen along the Red River that had set many of the current records.

As of today, there is a serious flooding issue along both the Red River and Missouri River in the Upper Midwest. In some places, river and over-land flooding has already occurred, and in other locations, current forecasts predict floods of record-breaking proportion.

United Church of Christ disaster response coordinators in the Northern Plains and **Minnesota Conferences, Lindy Holt and Bob Broeder are meeting daily with the states' Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)**. The VOADs in both North Dakota and Minnesota have been organizing volunteers locally to sandbag; to prepare communities where flooding will occur; and, to begin to look at immediate and long term response. Both coordinators are working with the wider community on behalf of the United Church of Christ.

The UCC church in Moorhead, MN is now being used as a shelter as people are evacuated from their homes. There have been no reports of damages to UCC church facilities at this time.

The United Church of Christ is seeking \$50,000 to respond to needs in both North Dakota and Minnesota. Funds will be used in the immediate response to assist communities as they begin to clean out homes:

*Did you know? -- \$7.98 will purchase one each: Tyvek coverall with hood and boot, chemical splash goggle, nitrile glove, and N95 respirator. This equipment will help to protect home owners and volunteers during clean up.*

*Did you know? -- the average recovery time for communities impacted by major flooding is 2 to 3 years?*

As long term recovery committees are able to address needs of person with no insurance or those who are underinsured, we will be seeking volunteer work groups to assist with repairing and rebuilding homes.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Pray for the people who live in communities affected by this flooding.
2. To help those affected by disasters you may, send gifts payable to your congregation marked for OGHS special fund Emergency USA: 2009 floods with the request they be sent through your Conference office on to Wider Church Ministries.

OR

3. Send gifts, made out to Wider Church Ministries and marked in the memo portion OGHS special fund Emergency USA: 2009 floods to UCC Financial Services; Wider Church Ministries; 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115.



Evangelical United Church of Christ  
 33 South Ellis Street  
 Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703-6201

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
 US Postage Paid  
 Permit NO. 320  
 Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703-6201

Pastor Daniel Johnson  
 Church Phone: 573-335-5611  
 Church e-mail: eucc-cape@sbcglobal.net  
 Church Web Site: evangelicalucc-cape.org

Church Times  
 Fellowship 9:00 AM  
**Children's Sunday School 9:30 AM**  
 Adult Bible Study 9:30 AM  
 Worship Service 10:35 AM

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUEST

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

5	Jacob Lindsay	2	Gordon & Andrea Walton
7	Ramona Brinkopf	17	Terry & Mindy Best
8	Bonnie Stahlman	21	Ernest & Ida Mae Jordan
9	Calvin Poinsett Van Sander	24	Dennis & Cheri Trickey
10	Larry Popp	29	Burnell & Elizabeth Turner
11	John Blattner	30	Todd & Vicky Lantz
15	Loyd Bollinger		
16	Mindy Best Irene Orlando		
20	Megan Lindsay		
25	Dawn Eicholz		
26	Ian Bolton Dustin Koch		

## Change of Address

Please make this change in your church directory.

Ramona Brinkopf  
 345 Rockport  
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

