

CHRONICLER

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

www.evangelicalucc-cape.org

NOVEMBER 2009

Is It Lawful For A Man To Divorce His Wife? ~ Part 1

Mark 10:2-12 Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" "What did Moses command you?" he replied. They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. 6 "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

Dr. Deborah Krause, Academic Dean and Professor of New Testament at Eden Seminary is a frequent advocate for Same Sex Marriage. Dr. Krause is a Presbyterian pastor and she has testified at church trials of Presbyterian pastors who have conducted same-sex marriages. According to press reports, she has claimed that same sex marriage does not violate Scripture and in fact falls well within the scope of Reformed interpretation of the Bible. Dr. Krause is a progressive theologian and is an articulate and well-informed advocate for the progressive position. I know this because I have attended Sunday school classes taught by her!

Dr. Krause makes many arguments for same-sex marriage. It does not appear that Dr. Krause denies that the Bible clearly is against same-sex marriage and homosexual relationships in general. However, she argues that Biblical statements that oppose same-sex marriage are related to specific circumstances that are no longer relevant: for example unlike the Old

Testament Patriarchs, we do not view women as the property of their fathers who through marriage become property of their husbands. Similarly, our church is not in a struggle to maintain a Christian identity in opposition to Pagan cults that included homosexual activity as part of their religious rituals.

The argument is that we can continue to identify ourselves as Christians despite the fact that we follow fewer and fewer Biblical commandments. Dr. Krause claims that since we se-

lectively follow Old Testament Law—choosing to follow “thou shall not kill” but ignoring prohibitions on eating pork and shellfish, we therefore could choose to ignore Old Testament teaching on marriage.

I personally find these arguments to be misleading because they lump together two very different kinds of commandments found in the first five books of the Bible—the Pentateuch or Books of Moses. Although we do not follow the ritual Law of the Old Testament, most Christians accept the moral Law of the Old Testament, including the Ten Commandments. The Pentateuch is traditionally the *torah* or teaching of Moses, and this teaching is much more than a list of laws. The *torah* is a gift of



Continued From Page 1

God to his people through the prophet Moses. The torah lays out the covenants between God and human beings—with Noah, Abraham, and Moses. The torah gives Israel a distinct identity as God's chosen people. The Law is intended to do more than simply regulate the life of the community. The Law gives Israel a religious and moral identity that sets Israel apart from the Gentiles.

As noted above, we can divide the Law into ritual Law [also called ceremonial or priestly Law] and moral Law [also called civil Law]. Ritual Law frequently deal with purity [cleanliness] and impurity [uncleanliness]. It concerns circumcision, diet, dress, skin diseases, the handling of dead bodies, the duties of priests, and various washings and sacrifices. As St. Paul makes abundantly clear in his letters, this portion of the law does not apply to Gentiles. Moral Law moves beyond religious activities to deal with right and wrong behavior towards God and human beings in daily life. One commentator describes it as *"a pragmatic, empirical approach to the day-to-day living of Israel, as a people and as individuals, living by God's will"* [Anchor Bible, Matthew]. The most famous portion of this law is the Ten Commandments. There are also many other moral laws in the Pentateuch including those related to rape, assault, contracts, property, slavery, and sexual morality. It is noteworthy that the moral Law is designed to distinguish Israel from the surrounding nations. God held Israel to a higher standard compared to its neighbors.

The moral Law is what Jesus was speaking about when he stated that he came to fulfill the law, not to abolish it. When referring to the Law, Jesus was definitely speaking about the 10 commandments. He was also speaking about the other moral laws in the Torah that were consistent with the two great commandments: to love God and love the neighbor. Jesus focuses on God's purposes behind the Torah to extend the moral Law. Jesus did not hesitate to violate the ritual aspects of the Law—for example by healing on the Sabbath. However, when it came to the moral aspects of the Law, he goes beyond the letter of the Torah to create a high standard based on God's purposes

in establishing the Law. Jesus never gave permission to weaken the moral side of the Law. Jesus held his followers to a higher standard than the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.

This brings us to Jesus' teaching on divorce. My reading of the Old Testament is that divorce was a way in which men exercised their power over women. If a rich man was not satisfied with his wife for whatever reason—infertility seems the most likely complaint—he might keep her as little more than a domestic servant and obtain another wife. If a man were unwilling or unable to keep an unwanted wife, he would divorce her. The prospects for a divorced woman were grim. Unless she could remarry or be accepted back at her family or origin, she might be forced into servitude, prostitution, or simply starve to death. The requirement to provide a certificate of divorce was an attempt to soften the blow of divorce for women by increasing the chance that a divorced woman could remarry. However, divorce remained a privilege only granted to man and it was a weapon used against women. Jesus puts this very simply in today's Gospel reading: "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law."

It is notable that Jesus attributed this law to Moses rather than to God. Traditionally all of the laws and regulations in the Book of Deuteronomy were viewed as having been given to Moses by God. Yet Jesus quite deliberately emphasizes the origin of this law with the human Moses rather than with God. Jesus then takes us back to the book of Genesis where it is God, not man who creates and defines marriage. This brings us to a crucial question: was marriage a human creation, created and defined by human beings to meet certain needs or was marriage created by God as an integral part of human nature? Jesus begins his teaching by quoting Genesis 1:28-27.

"So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and



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over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Jesus appears to be making two basic points: [1] God created people in his image and [2] God created people as male and female. It may seem a bit strange, but part of God creating us in his image was creating us as male and female. In other words, if we were all male, all female, or some hybrid of the two, we would not be created in God's image. For human beings to be in God's image there had to be two kinds of human beings: the male and the female. Jesus then moves on Genesis 2. Genesis 1 gives us a big picture view of creation. Genesis 2:21- 25 focuses down on the details.

So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

This creation story says that although God created us male and female—we are different—we have a common origin, from Adam. Because male and female were separated from Adams' flesh, our nature includes a need to be united with our “better half.” It is this common origin and this need for union that is the basis of marriage, something intended for us by God. The teaching of Jesus has gone beyond the Law of Moses to the purpose of marriage as established by God. God's purpose in marriage is to create a spiritual reality in which there are no longer two persons, but a

single body. Since God creates this union, no human being should attempt to break it.

Jesus has shifted the discussion from divorce to marriage. In doing so, he has elevated marriage above its social function and moved the focus back to God's purpose. Jesus has once again raised the stakes and challenged us to do something that seems to be impossible: to bring two very different people into an unbreakable union. Yet this is what God made us for. Our sexuality is definitely part of this picture. Procreation—having children—is definitely part of this picture. However, there is something more: the physical and spiritual union of man and woman.

This does not mean that everyone should be married. We need to remember that Jesus never married and St. Paul never married. St. Paul is famous for seeing the unmarried state as preferable, especially for someone working to spread the Gospel. Remember 1 Corinthians 7:28b *“But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.”* Paul is also famous for saying in 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 *“Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”*

[To Be Continued in the December Chronicler.]

Your Friend in Christ,
—Pastor Dan

Bible Quotations are from Today's New International Version (TNIV) © Copyright 2001, 2005 by Biblica



Thanksgiving

WORSHIP SERVICE

Community Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, November 22nd @ 6:30 PM
“Downtown Council of Churches”

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1820 Perryville Road
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

What's Going On?

Mary-Martha Circle



Thursday, November 5th will be the next meeting of the Mary-Martha Circle. The meeting will start at 1:30 PM with Fern Schlimme giving our devotions. Hostesses for the afternoon will be Irene Amos and Fern Schlimme.

ASAP

Please join our youth on Sunday, November 22nd at 5:00 PM in the lower auditorium for the ASAP Gospel and Talent Show featuring Bob Dolle. Remember to sign up with Carolyn Best for the talent show.



The evening meal will be kettle cooked beef, mashed potatoes, and vegetables. If you would like to contribute to the meal, please bring one of your fabulous desserts. Thank You.

Have you sold all your tickets for the Raffle Drawing? Remember the quilt is the grand prize in the raffle drawing. But don't worry, if you aren't the winner of the quilt, there are additional items to be raffled off. It is sure to be an evening of fun, talent, and fellowship.



MO Mid-South Conference



John Whittman, MO Mid-South Conference President is scheduled to preach at St. John's UCC in Fruitland, MO on Sunday, November 22nd.

Friendship Circle

Put this date on your calendar, Tuesday, November 9th, 6:30 PM and come to the annual Friendship Circle Auction. It is sure to be a blast as "Dave the Auctioneer" will be the master of all things auction! So, gather your auction items, baked goods, etc. for our evening of fun and laughs. This is a wonderful way to have fun and make money to support ten various organizations in our community.

Members, remember to bring snacks. Everyone is invited to come and join in the evening events.



The Friendship Circle will be rolling dumplings on Tuesday, November 17th at 5:00 PM. Please come help roll dumplings, share in the fun and fellowship.

All Church Dinner & Program

The Union of Concerned Christians are sponsoring an all church fried chicken dinner on Sunday, November 15th. We will furnish the meat, bread, drink, etc. We plan to eat at 5:30 PM. Please bring a side dish and/or dessert to complement the fried chicken.



The Jamaican Christian Medical Mission Team will be our guest and provide the program that will follow the meal.

Decorating the Sanctuary



Saturday, November 28th at 9:30 AM, we will be decorating the Sanctuary and assembling the tree. Please join Lisa Spencer and the gang. We will have chili for lunch, then put the finishing touches on the sanctuary.

Safe House for Women, Inc.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Safe House for Women is to STOP domestic violence and HELP survivors of domestic abuse regain a sense of their strength, power, and future. [Adopted February 28, 2002]

We believe violence is a learned behavior that is preventable. We are committed to building awareness among community members about the epidemic of violence and engaging their support in finding solutions that are effective and sustainable.

Our priority goal is to stop domestic violence. To accomplish this goal, our agency will

1. Provide safe refuge, crisis intervention, professional counseling, court advocacy, and case management to women and children who have experienced domestic violence.
2. Increase awareness throughout the community we serve by providing health education related to violence prevention.
3. Advocate for social change and system reform on behalf of abused women and children so that they may live a life free of abuse.

3rd Anniversary Celebration

We will be celebrating the 3rd Anniversary of our Thrift Shop with a Craft Fair and Bake Sale on Saturday, November 14th. Our goal is to have plenty of homemade baked items on sale a part of our celebration. If you or a group you belong to would like to put on your baking aprons and be part of this project, please call Elizabeth Hileman in our Thrift Shop at 335-7746.

WE'RE ON THE WEB

Check out our website. We are adding new features to it all the time. You will find updated news items, information about upcoming fundraising events, Thrift Shop promotions and coupons, and a list of high-demand Wish List items. For those of you who prefer to receive most of your communications via the internet, we now offer an electronic version of this newsletter. You can subscribe at www.semosafefhouse.org.

Cell Phone "Trash" Turned into Safe House Treasure

Have you ever wondered what to do with that ancient cell phone that sits collecting dust in your closet? Send it to us at the Safe House! With wireless technology advancing so rapidly these days, it seems like we change phones much like we change shoes every season! So, the Safe House for Women participates in a program that collects old cell phones each quarter for recycling. The phones are sent to a refurbishing company and our organization is reimbursed for the donation. This program was designed specifically for domestic violence shelters in need of extra revenue for basic needs in the shelter. If you would like more information and a list of drop-off locations please call 573-335-7745. Accessories not accepted.



Council Financial Report

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Beginning Check Book | Balance 9-1-09 | \$12,600.87 |
| Deposits | September | \$8,822.35 |
| | Interest | \$0.08 |
| | Transfer Edward Jones | — |
| Total Deposits for July | | \$11,181.01 |
| Disbursements | September | \$15,307.13 |
| Ending Check Book | Balance 9-30-09 | \$6,116.17 |
| <hr/> | | |
| Wachovia Securities/ A.G. Edwards {Memorial Fund} | Balance 7-1-09 | \$10,227.66 |
| | Interest | \$0.11 |
| | Deposits | \$100.00 |
| Landscaping Materials | Disbursements | \$0.00 |
| Ending Balance | As of 7-31-09 | \$10,327.77 |
| <hr/> | | |
| Check Book Balance | As of 10-15-09 | \$6,250.49 |



Veterans Day

Calendar Information

| 2009 | 1st | 8th | 15th | 22nd | 29th |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| DIACONATE | Louis Geldmacher | Bill & Rhonda Bolton | Kaye Lee | Michael Bodine | Gary Metje |
| GREETERS | Jim & Marilyn Garner | Ernest & Ida Mae Jordan | Gordon & Andrea Walton | Melbert & Jobyna Daume | Mary Ann Jordan |
| LITURGISTS | Grace Coy | Bill Bolton | Maxine Hale | Rhonda Bolton | Linda Schild |
| COMMUNION PREP TEAM | ————— | Brian Stahlman | ————— | ————— | ————— |
| 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 Bill McMillan Barbara Oberbeck Van Sander | CAPTAIN- PAUL PROPST Bill Bolton Frank Maevers, Jr. Jeff Sneathen Alvin Spencer | CAPTAIN- RANDY COY Michael Bodine Cayleigh Bolton Bob Roloff Lori Siebert | YOUTH AND DIACONATE USHERS |


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.

Please Pray for those on our Prayer List.

Marvin Best, JR; 09-09
 Ruth Bierschwal; 07-09
 Connie Blattner; 10-09
 Dora Briggs; 07-09
 Aleene Ellinger; 08-09
 [Jane McMillan's mother]
 Lillian Graden; 09-09
 Virginia Heise; 08-09
 Joan Hope
 Howard Huffman; 10-09
 [Carolyn Best's Dad]
 Ernie & Ida Mae Jordan; 10-09
 Michael Juegens; 05-09
 [Lisa Spencer's brother]
 Vergie Kies; 04-09
 Bettie Mehrle Family; 06-09
 Cindy McMillan Morris; 08-09
 [Rhonda's Cousin]
 Ester Nussbaum
 Jean Ratliff; 08-09 [Jamaican CMM]
 Bob Roloff; 09-09
 Slaughter Family; 08-09
 Chris Spivey; 08-09
 [Michelle's Nephew]
 Tanner Stallins; 10-09
 Margaret Tallent; 07-09

Marjorie Thompson; 07-09
 J.D. Treadwell; 09-09
 Norma Trickey; 05-09
 Burnell & Elizabeth Turner; 07-09
 Winfield Family; 07-09



NURSING HOME & HOUSE BOUND

| Ratliff Nursing Home | Veteran's Home | Lutheran Home | House Bound |
|--|---|--|------------------------------|
| 717 N. Sprigg Street Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 | 2400 Veterans Memorial Dr Cape Girardeau, MO 63703 | 2825 Bloomfield Road Cape Girardeau, MO 63703 | Loyd Bollinger S. G. Coy |
| Polly Wilmsmeyer | Frank Maevers, Sr. Kenny Mehrle | Dorothy Cole David Kies Leonard Moore Esther Nussbaum | Mary Huckstep Helen Owens |
| Fountainbleau Lodge 2001 N. Kingshighway Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 Alta Proffer | | | |

Evangelical United Church of Christ

33 South Ellis Street
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703-6201

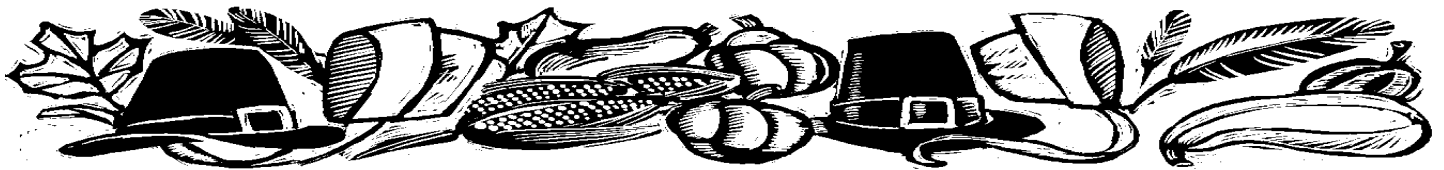
Pastor Daniel Johnson

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

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63703-6201



Dear Members of Evangelical UCC,

Thank you for allowing us to stay in your Church on our return to Dubuque from New Orleans. After nearly 600 miles your door and its rooms were greatly appreciated. I do

not know what we would do without the Churches along our way who were willing to open their doors. Bless you and thanks again for the hospitality.



give Thanks
with a
Grateful
Heart

Sincerely,
The Work Group
First Congregational
UCC—Dubuque, IA

World Community Day

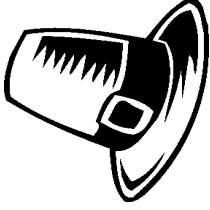
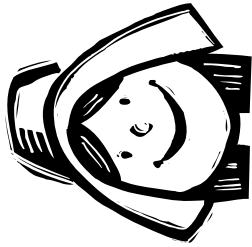
Friday, November 6th, 2009
Opening 9:30 AM
Program Starting 10:00 AM

“Piecing Earth Together”


Grace United Methodist Church
521 Caruthers Street
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701



World Community Day



November 2009

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|---|---|---------------------|---|
| 1 ASAP Shannondale Mission Trip <i>Guest Speaker</i> <i>Michael Hester</i> | 2 | 3 | 4 Bible Study, 6:30 PM Confirmation Class 6:30 PM @ St. John's— Fruitland | 5 Mary-Martha Circle, 1:30 PM | 6 | 7 |
| 8 Communion | 9 Board of Christian Ed., 5:00 PM | 10 Friendship Circle AUCTION, 6:30 PM | 11 Bible Study, 6:30 PM Confirmation Class 6:30 PM @ St. John's— Fruitland | 12 | 13 | 14 Confirmation Class <u>Trip to Emmaus Home</u> <u>MO-Mentoring, lower</u> <u>Auditorium, 10 AM-1 PM</u> Jackson H.S. Choir—GYM 11:00 AM– 12:30 PM |
| 15 JMMM @ 3:00 PM UCC All Church Supper | 16 Council, 7:30 PM | 17 Diaconate, 7:00 PM | 18 Bible Study, 6:30 PM Confirmation Class 6:30 PM @ St. John's— | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 ASAP Gospel/ Talent Show, 5:00 PM Community Thanks- giving Service, 6:30 PM Conference President Jeff Whitman Speaker @ St. John's UCC | 23 | 24 <i>Pie Baking w/ 4-H</i> <i>group lower auditori-</i> <i>um—Stahlman</i> | 25 NO Confirmation NO Bible Study | 26 Office Closed  Thanksgiving | 27 Office Closed | 28 |
| 29 Hanging of the Greens | 30 | | | | | |

| November BIRTHDAYS | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Terry Best |
| 4 | Molly Johns |
| 5 | Lisa Elfrink, Charles Mattingly, & |
| 8 | Gail Best |
| 11 | Lori Siebert |
| 12 | Joyce Abernathy |
| 15 | Jim Gibson |

| November BIRTHDAYS | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 16 | Jamie Popp |
| 19 | Amanda Stricker |
| 20 | Joan Hope |
| 25 | Kara Stricker |
| 26 | Ruth Harper & Elijah Vines |
| 28 | Roxie Lindsay & Ralph Nussbaum |
| 29 | Sharon Lindsay |

| November ANNIVERSARIES | |
|------------------------|--|
| 7 | Bill & Rhonda Bolton Bill & Shireen Eckelmann |
| 14 | Bill & Sandra Brinkopf |
| 16 | Bob & Lori Siebert |
| 17 | Ron & Dee Jordan |

“Revised Common Lectionary-Scripture Readings”

| DATE | OLD TESTAMENT | PSALM | EPISTLE | NEW TESTAMENT |
|--------|--|---|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Nov 1 | Ruth 1:1-8 | Psalms 146 | Hebrews 9:11-14 | Mark 12:28-34 |
| Nov 8 | Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17 | Psalms 127 Or I Kings 17:8-16 | Hebrews 9:24-28 | Mark 12:38-44 |
| Nov 15 | I Samuel 1:4-20, I Samuel 2:1-10, or Daniel 12:1-3 | Psalms 16 | Hebrews 10:11-14, [15-18], 19-25 | Mark 13:1-8 |
| Nov 22 | 2 Samuel 23:1-7 | Psalms 132:1-12, [13-18] Or Psalm 93 | Revelation 1:4b-8 | John 18:33-37 |
| Nov 29 | Jeremiah 33:14-16 | Psalms 25:1-10 | I Thessalonians 3:9-13 | Luke 21:25-36 |