

CHRONICLER

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

www.evangelicalucc-cape.org

December 2008

Mary– Martha News

The ladies of the church are invited to the Mary Martha sponsored Christmas luncheon at 12:00 noon on, Thursday, December 4th.

The program will be presented by Barbara Yallaly and Meta Siemers, and will follow the meal.

Circle members are reminded to bring their gifts for the ladies of Jamaica.

At the November meeting some of the ladies volunteered to bring the following foods: turkey, dressing, ham, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, green beans, and cranberry salad. Other members may bring any food they want to bring. Those who are unable to cook are encouraged to come and enjoy what their friends have cooked!



Friendship Circle

The Friendship Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 9th at 7:00 PM for the annual Christmas program which will be provided by the Entertainment committee. Devotions will be provided by Maxine Hale. Please remember to bring a \$10.00 gift exchange and your wonderful snacks to share with members and guests. The evening is open to everyone, so bring a friend, relative, and neighbor. The more the merrier.

The profit from the annual Auction brought in \$1,100.00, which will be distributed between the same ten organizations as last year.

The Chicken & Dumpling Dinner was a success, with a profit of \$1,751.00. As was previously voted, all monies will be used toward the purchase of new carpeting for the Sanctuary.



Cookie Walk

The Friendship Circle's annual *Cookie Walk* will be Sunday, December 7th right after church services. Please bring your cookies to the lower auditorium before the start of church.

You will have a chance to purchase a small bag of cookies for \$4.00, a medium bag of cookies for \$7.00, or a large bag of cookies for \$10.00. And the coolest thing about these bags of cookies is YOU get to pick out the *cookies* that you want as you *walk* around the tables. Hence the name *Cookie Walk*. How cool is that! Come take home a bag or two of cookies.



Sunday School Program

Join us, Sunday evening, December 21st at 6:30 PM for our annual Sunday School Program. Santa will put in a special visit for young children and the young at heart. Refreshments will be cookies, punch, and coffee and hosted by the Union of Concerned Christians. Offering collected during the program will be sent to the Evangelical **Children's** Home. *Cookie donations are needed for the reception which will be in the lower auditorium.*



From the desk of pastor dan

Note: These are my opinions, based on education in economics 20-odd years ago at the University of Chicago and my 20-odd years of management experience in government and business. They are not necessarily the views of the Evangelical United Church of Christ or its members. They are certainly not the views of the United Church of Christ!]

In many ways, 2008 has been a very good financial year for this congregation. Thanks to a bequest by Lillian Kies, our finances are on a sound basis. Thanks to this bequest, we have begun updating our buildings and have already replaced the heat and cooling system in the recreation building. We have entered into contracts for tuck pointing both buildings and putting a new roof on the sanctuary. We have invested the remainder of the bequest and the interest income will allow our congregation to more than triple its annual mission budget.

The congregation has also decided to use a portion of this income to hire a fulltime pastor: me!

Until a few months ago, I would have said that this was not only a good financial year for our congregation and me personally, but also for our nation.

Then “like a thief in the night” came the economic crisis. This crisis affected me personally—no need any more to waste time planning for retirement. I am quite sure that many of you have also suffered financially. That suffering is likely to get worse before it gets better. I know that some church members, their family members and friends will suffer from pay cuts, layoffs, and business closures.

Before I was a pastor, I worked in business for a company that trained computer and network technicians. The company was founded by immigrants from India and I had the privilege of spending about 10 days working in the Bangalore, India office. I was the branch manager for the St. Louis office and when the company folded, it was heartbreaking for all of us. It was heartbreaking and messy as checks bounced, bills went unpaid, and

the phones were disconnected. The University of Phoenix now occupies the offices where I had my nice little training center.

There was nothing mysterious about the failure of Microhard Technologies, Inc. The owner had bet everything on growth. He believed that the market for information technology would continue to grow rapidly. Based on this, he opened more and more branches and hired more and more staff. Like **many business owners during the so called “dot-com bubble” or “IT bubble” he had dreams of “going public” and promised us all that we would share in the wealth through stock options.** When the bubble burst and companies and individuals stopped spending on training, Microhard was stuck with high fixed costs and no revenue to cover them. The owner had made a bet and lost. All of us at the

company suffered, but he probably suffered the most.

One of the foundations of the free market system is the risk/return tradeoff. If

you want high returns, you have to take risks. If you want less risk, you get a lower rate of return. My guess is that our current crisis reflects a **generational change in our country’s preference for risk.**

The depression generation had direct experience of the downside of financial speculation. This generation placed on strong value on reducing risk. They were willing to forgo the possibility of getting rich quick in exchange for a lesser, but secure return. This generation was characterized by high savings rates and low debt. Whenever my parents wanted something, they saved up for it and then bought it with cash, something unheard of today. This attitude pervaded the entire US economy, but its influence has been weakening since the late 1960s.

Today, the influence of the depression generation on the economy is almost gone. The economy is dominated by spenders, investors, and corporate leaders who did not personally experience the Great Depression. The new generation economy is marked by low saving rates and high indebtedness. Since these generations do not save, they expect to gain wealth through capital gains—rising

BAILOUT FEVER



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stock prices and appreciating home values. High returns are demanded and time horizons are short. Our refusal to save and instead incur increasing debt reflects a pervasive addiction to high-risk strategies. At the personal level, this is reflected in families who purchase a house they can barely afford with two full-time earners. If even only one is out of work for even a short period, they are almost certain to default. At the national level, our preference for risk is marked by our twin deficits—the national trade deficit and the Federal budget deficit. These deficits are sustainable only assuming increasing and interrupted economic growth.

The market system works because high returns attract more investors, capital, and labor, while resources flee from low returns, gradually bringing abnormally high or low returns back to normal. Above market returns only persist if there is a market imperfection, such as a government-sponsored monopoly.

People have right to gamble. However, when an individual or nation consistently makes risky decisions in pursuit of high returns, it is irrational for them to expect all their bets to be winners. For the market to work efficiently, those who take risks need to bear the full benefits of their successes and the full cost of their failures. The fatal combination our society is suffering from is that we are addicted to the high returns that come from risky behavior while we refuse to accept the high losses that come **when we lose our bets. This might be called “bailout fever.”**

Because bailouts make the market work less efficiently, they make us all poorer. Bailouts also represent a transfer of wealth from one social group to another. Those who lack political clout are likely to be source of the bailout, whether it is paid for by taxation, inflation, or passing the buck to future generations. Bailouts mean that those who have lost in the marketplace but who are good at lobbying get to throw good money after bad. Only this time, the money is not from the stockholders who took the risk of investing in the company, it is from taxpayers who never expressed any desire to invest in GM or Citigroup.

Bailouts are justified by the myth of “too big to fail.” It may be beside the point, but any company allegedly “too big to fail” should have been broken up years ago under the anti-trust laws. In fact, the size of these companies is the best argument for letting them fail and breaking them up. Because of

their great size they unproductively tie up vast amounts of resources—physical plant, human talent, intellectual capital, which should be quickly re-allocated to more productive uses. Is there anything more ridiculous than using precious resources—energy, oil, steel, skilled labor—to produce a vehicle that no one wants and can be only sold for less than it cost to produce? Communism collapsed because its economy destroyed value—it made products that were worth less than the resources used to make them. Bailouts threaten to cripple the US economy in the same way.

When the little training company I worked for folded, it was a personal tragedy for everyone involved. However, because it was not bailed out, all the resources of that company—office space, computers, and talented people—were quickly reallocated to more productive and better-managed companies. The same thing should be done with the resources of Citigroup, GM, and all the other companies jumped on the bandwagon of high risks and quick profits.

I believe that the Bible clearly endorses carefully stewardship and condemns reckless greed. Are free market economics based on Biblical principles? **I’ll let you decide that for yourself!**

—Your Friend In Christ,
Pastor Dan

Biblical Economics

- Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. People reap what they sow. (Galatians 6:6-8).
- Dishonest money dwindles away, but whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow. (Proverbs 13:10-12)
- Those who love money never have enough; those who love wealth are never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. (Ecclesiastes 5:9-11)
- Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us." (Micah 3:10-12)
- For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (1 Timothy 6:9-11)
- The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it a wall too high to scale. (Proverbs 18:10-12)

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- Whoever loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and oil will never be rich. (Proverbs 21:16-18)
- The sleep of laborers is sweet, whether they eat little or much, but the abundance of the rich permits them no sleep. (Ecclesiastes 5:11-13)
- Fools are put in many high positions, while the rich occupy the low ones. (Ecclesiastes 10:5-7)
- Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. (1 Timothy 6:8-10)
- Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. (1 Timothy 6:16-18)
- But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. (James 1:9-11)
- They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: " 'Woe! Woe to you, great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!' (Revelation 18:18-20)

THANK YOU

A Big Thank You to all who made our 50th Wedding Anniversary a wonderful affair! We appreciate our church family!

—Bill & Jane McMillan

Ame and I wish to thank Pastor Dan, and the members of the congregation for all they have done for us. Their prayers and encouragement during this time has lifted us **closer to God's healing.**

—Frank, Jr. and Ame Maevers

I wanted to thank everyone for such a warm welcome on my first visit to your church. I enjoyed meeting everyone. Thank You!

—Michelle Schrock



Memorial General Fund
In Honor of the McMillans 50th Anniversary
 S.G. & Grace Coy

Scholarship Fund
In Honor of the McMillans 50th Anniversary
 Marvin Jr. & Carolyn Best
 Marvin Sr. & Verna Best
 Calvin & Verla Sailer


Odds and Ends

Jamaican Mission: As of November 16, 2008 the gross receipts for the Dinner-Dance-Auction is \$15,218 with an approximate net total of \$10,000. The monies will be used to purchase supplies, ship packages, etc. *All volunteers pay their own expenses.*

McAlister's Deli: The Jamaican Christian Medical Mission will have a fund raising event on Monday, December 1st and Monday, January 5th from 6—8 PM at **McAlister's Deli, 244 S. Mt. Auburn Rd, Cape Girardeau.**

Union of Concerned Christians

We will be serving the refreshments after the Sunday School Christmas Program on December 21st, 2008. Refreshments will be cookies, punch, and coffee. Please bring cookies to share.



Council Financial Report

Beginning Check Book	Balance 10-1-08	\$25,243.91
Deposits	October	\$11,830.98
	Interest	\$0.23
Total Deposits for October		\$11,831.21
Disbursements	October	\$7,429.75
Ending Check Book	Balance 10-31-08	\$29,645.37
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A.G. Edwards {Memorial Fund}	Balance 10-1-08	\$10,832.17
	Interest	\$20.61
	Deposits	----
	Disbursements:	----
Ending Balance	As of 10-31-08	\$10,852.78
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Check Book Balance	As of 11-15-08	\$29,371.79



2008 Christmas Fund — Special Offering

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through our witness and gifts, both to loved ones and to distant neighbors. The Christmas Fund Offering is an important way of sharing our joy at God's renewing and life-giving grace. The Offering is an expression of joy and gratitude to, and for, those who serve the church. Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension & health premium supplementations to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees and Christmas Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants.

In 2007, the Christmas Fund celebrated 105 years of continuous ministry. Facts taken from a 1953 publication indicated that: "In 1902, a little money was collected and special Christmas gifts were sent to ten older ministers." The same article also reports that \$121,054 was received for the Christmas Fund in 1952. A little more than 50 years later, in 2007 the Christmas Fund received \$1,571,050 and nearly 1,500 families were assisted. Our goal is to be able to provide at least \$1,650,000 in assistance from the 2008 appeal.

The theme for the 2008 Offering is: "Don't Be Afraid, Shout!" We are commissioned to boldly proclaim Good News, that the incarnation of God in the Christ Child was happened—Good News that a new day, God's day, was about to dawn. The church today is the incarnate presence of the Christ. We are called to be the presence of the Christ in the lives of those who have served the church so faithfully, as well as to usher in a new day for God's whole earth.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low income annuities make it more difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in **God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.** *Evangelical UCC will take up this Special Offering on Sunday, December 21st during worship service. Please use the enclosed 2008 Christmas Fund Offering envelop for your donation.*

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
 Linda Anderson; 05-08
 Loyd Bollinger
 Ian Bolton; 10-08
 Heather Cato; 07-08
 Eldon & Phyllis Chasteen; 10-08
"Red" Clifton; 08-08
 Bettye Crockett; 06-08
 *Eldon Davis; 11-08
 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
 Jane Juergens; 09-08
 Anita MacDonald; 09-08
 Frank, Jr & Ame Maevers; 09-08
 *Dana McClard; 11-08
 Kenny Mehrle
 Bill McMillan; 06-08
 M.D. McMillan; 08-08
 Ester Nussbaum
 Hannah Parks; 06-08
 Travis Rister—Iraq; 09-08
 Bob & Nora Lee Seabaugh; 09-08
 Brett/Cherie Stembel; 06-08
 Karen Stephens; 06-08
 Marshall Whitworth; 08-08

Friends at Home

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

Polly Wilmsmeyer

Fountainbleau Lodge
 2001 N. Kingshighway
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Alta Proffer

Lutheran Home
 2825 Bloomfield Road
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63703

Dorothy Cole
 Viola Geiser
 Frank Maevers, Sr.
 Leonard Moore
 Andora Peetz

Auburn Creek
 2910 Beaver Creek Drive
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Irene Orlando

Home Bound
 S. G. Coy
 Mary Huckstep
 Helen Owens



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Pastor Daniel Johnson
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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



Christmas Caroling & Pizza

Angels We Have Heard on High; Away in a Manger; O Holy Night!
Go, Tell It on the Mountain; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
It Came upon the Midnight Clear; Joy to the World!; What Child Is This?

These are just a few of the many possible songs to be sung as the ASAP Group and anyone else who desires to make a joyful noise unto the Lord will be singing. Make plans to meet at the church at 2:30 PM on Sunday, December 14th. We will carpool to the various locations and come together for pizza at the end of the evening. Join us and fill your heart with the love of Christ.

