

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARCH

01	Tom Kovacs
02	Randy Arnold
05	Shana Fasick
08	Lori Worthman
10	Lucas Sanchez
12	Gladys Lansing
14	Randy Marble
16	Mary Lou Martin
17	Helen Poynter
17	Roy Canfield
17	Penny Evers
18	Rosemarie (Schwindt) Applegate
20	Mark White
21	Janet Canfield
21	Athena Lansing
22	Maxine Willingham
27	Robert Reid
28	Bob Petrik
29	Audrey Vestel
30	Amy Vannier

*If your name was omitted or if the date of your birthday is incorrect, please call the church office so that we may add or correct your information on our Birthday List.*

# CALLER

## MARCH 2009



**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**



United Church of Christ  
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(303) 935-8350

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## Christ Congregational Church Identity and Mission Statement

Christ Congregational Church is a progressive, caring, and celebrating Christian Congregation of the United Church of Christ. We are a serving, learning, and worshipping community of faith. We welcome and care for one another. We desire to be diverse, justice-promoting, tradition affirming, future directed, and multi-generational. The focus of our ministry is on our neighborhood and to the larger Metro area, with ongoing attention to the needs of the global community.

## From the Desk of Jerry Eslinger. . .

### LENT: A WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

In “Wouldn’t Take Nothing for My Journey Now,” Maya Angelou tells the story of Annie Johnson, who reviewed her life journey and made a change. “I looked up the road I was going and back the way I come, and since I wasn’t satisfied, I decided to step off the road and cut me a new path.” During the Lenten season of self-evaluation and spiritual renewal, we look at the highway up ahead and glance back in the rearview mirror. Not satisfied with our journey, we too step off the road. For as Marilyn Brown Oden writes in her book, *Wilderness Wanderings*, “As we ponder question of fact and tradition; it looks at the past. But our hearts ask, “What does it mean?” That is the question of faith and transformation; it looks at the present. Moses ventured into the wilderness to lead God’s people out of bondage into the meaning of Lent, our heads ask, ‘Where did it come from?’” That is the e promised land, and Jesus ventured into the wilderness to prepare for the ministry ahead and to be faithful in temptation. We venture into the wilderness during this holy season to allow deepened faith to transform us. “Lent is a season for holistic renewal through study and prayer, worship and praise, humility and discipline. It is a time to transform the center of our being and doing.

There is a verse in the book of Joel which states the purpose of our Lenten journey: “Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart.” The heart is so important in the Hebrew scriptures that it refers to the heart 814 times. In those scriptures the heart represents the total person. It is the center of emotions and moods, understanding and wisdom, devotion and conversion. It is the place where decisions are made, obedience conveyed, and good and evil discerned. The heart is the hub around which the spokes of the wheel of one’s life revolve. To return to God with all one’s heart is to place God – the One whose love heals and reconciles – at the hub of life, so that all relationships, deeds and words extend like spokes from the center. The journey of the heart toward God is both personal and communal. We are led to the private place of solitude and the corporate place of worship. Our soul sings the solo of the intimate and also joins the choir of the communal. Our wilderness time does not shrink our boundaries but expands them, taking us to new depths and breadths

and heights. We

### Tutoring News:

As you know, we as a church have volunteered to tutor daily at the Children's Haven Day Care across the street. The Youth Group has volunteered to cover Wednesdays. If you are interested and available for an hour on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:30, please see Tamara. Tutoring kids is a great way to help them get a leg up in school, review your multiplication tables, and not to mention dramatically pad your college application form. Share your brilliance! The kids need your help. You will love every minute of it.

### Sunday School News:

The Lent series in our One Room Sunday School curriculum spends the coming weeks emphasizing the time between Palm Sunday and Easter. We will look at the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter's Denial, and Jesus' Trial. Join us as we unpack this very significant week in the Christian calendar with our children. The more the merrier! And that applies to kids as well as teachers!

The RMC-UCC is sponsoring a UCC Skate Night and **Colorado Avalanche Game at the Pepsi Center** on Tuesday, March 10. The cost is \$31.75 per person which gets you a corner balcony seat and a an Arby's Value Meal. \$5 from each ticket will support conference camping scholarships! Get a group of friends together, watch the Avs, have a great time, and support our kids at camp. For more information, check the flyer on the Christian Education board across from the kitchen window or talk to Tamara.

**“RADICAL ABUNDANCE: A THEOLOGY OF SUSTAINABILITY” – THE 2009 TRINITY INSTITUTE PROGRAM.** Eco-Justice Ministries invites you to attend this institute on a topic of contemporary importance on March 8, 2009 from 3 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and March 9, 2009 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Saint John’s Episcopal Cathedral, 1350 Washington St., Denver, CO. As we rethink how to grow, build, supply, consume, dispose, and recycle everything in our lives, we often fail at partnering with the marginalized and powerless, and thus adversely affect them. The Institute will explore sustainability through the lens of liberation theology, with keynote speeches and panel presentations by leading theologians and grassroots activists. Registration for both sessions is \$35 and includes dinner both nights. questions or would like more information, contact Brian Ray James, Outreach To register, please call Carol at Saint John’s at 303-831-7115 x7703. If you have questions, contact Eco-Justice Ministries at 303-715-3873

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND MISSIONS MINISTRY.

**Missions Ministry.** The mission offering for March is One Great Hour of Sharing, which supports international programs of health, education and agricultural development, relief, and refugee assistance. OGHS joins our hearts with God’s by providing decisive aid when disaster strikes and by helping refugees rebuild their lives. Your gift strengthens struggling communities with basics like education, health care, tools, seeds, and wells. When we care for God’s treasured children, we ourselves are transformed. We see more clearly what matters most in life and are inspired to live courageously. Our hope rises as we realize new life is possible. “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:21.

TREASURER’S REPORT

For 2009 to date

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total Income	\$33,699.00	\$35,183.00	95.8%
Total Expenses	\$28,987.00	\$37,915.00	76.5%
Net Income	\$ 4,712.00		
2009 Pledges	\$31,702.00	\$31,016.00	102.2%

MISSION OFFERING FOR FEBRUARY

The Denver Rescue Mission \$1,237.00

ADULT FORUM NEWS

Thanks to all who have been attending the adult forum in recent weeks. We spent February working on our UCC identity, church identity, and communal identity. We have talked about autonomy, covenant, and dialogue. We offer a special thank you to Diane and Seichi Otsuka for their leadership with the Dialogue series. While we acknowledge that honest conversation can be difficult at times, we truly applaud the work we have all been doing around trying to listen more, honor differences more, and look inside ourselves a little more.

The Adult forum during Lent will be a video/discussion series entitled “First Light: The Historical Jesus and the Kingdom of God.” Dr. Marcus Borg and Dr. John Dominic Crossan, world renowned Biblical scholars, will take us through various Biblical sites in Galilee and Jerusalem, where the whole series was filmed. Bring your curiosity, your thinking caps, and your hearts of faith as we learn and share together every Sunday morning at 8:30. The pastors lead the discussion and coffee and donuts are always available.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NOTES AND NEWS

*"We believe in God - such as it is, we have faith - because certain things happened to us once and go on happening. We work and goof off, we love and dream, we have wonderful times and awful times, are cruelly hurt and hurt others cruelly, get mad and bored and scared stiff and ache with desire, do all such human things as these, and if our faith is not mainly just window dressing or a rabbit's foot or fire insurance, it is because it grows out of precisely this kin of rich human compost. The God of biblical faith is the God who meets us at those moments in which for better or worse we are being most human, most ourselves, and if we lose touch with those moments, if we don't stop from time to time to notice what is happening to us and around us and inside us, we run the tragic risk of losing touch with God too."* Frederick Buechner, *Telling Secrets*

Youth Group News and Schedule:

March 1 - Collect pledges for the Bowl-a-thon from 11:00-11:30. Youth Group from 11:30-1:00 in the Jubilee Room. Topic: Spiritual Practices - Prayer

March 8 - **Denver Inner City Parish Bowl-a-Thon**, 12:30 p.m. at Bowlero Lanes. On March 1 and March 8 after church, we will be collecting pledges for our bowlers at a table in the Fellowship Hall. Please come by, donate a lump sum or a per pin amount (if you like to live dangerously!) and help our youth make a difference in the lives of low income folks of West Denver. We will eat lunch at the church and drive over together. We will bowl three games. The time will depend on the number of bowlers.

March 15 - Youth Group will meet at the **Service Auction** after church. Bring some money so you can bid on service items. As a youth group, we have posted a couple of items on the list, too. So come talk up your donation. It is a great time of sharing with the congregation!

March 20-22 **Middle School Spring Retreat at La Foret**. The theme will be "Common Ground" and will address issues surrounding conflict, resolution, and tension. The cost is \$135 per person. The church does have some scholarship money set aside to help with costs. Retreats at La Foret are a BLAST and are a great way to deepen your faith. The registration deadline is March 10. Be sure to talk to Tamara if you are interested.

March 22 - No youth group. We are on retreat.

March 28 - 11:30-1:00 in the Jubilee Room. Topic: Spiritual Practices: Journaling envision a new world, and –created in God’s image and empowered through God’s love –we have a part in shaping that world.

I remember reading once that Lent was probably the most abused season of the faith journey, becoming at times “a period of excessive introspection, empty abstinence from tidbits of affluence (like giving up chocolate), and the enjoyment of the gloom of self-denial.” Lent indeed is a deeply serious season, but it is also a profoundly joyous one. Not only do we confess and repent, but we also remember that God is gracious and loving and does not give up on us. As we journey toward the cross, both as persons and congregation, we do so in full awareness of the Resurrection.

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**SERVICE “PLUS” AUCTION**  
**Sunday, March 15**

Following the church service  
(See the enclosed partial list of offerings)



**Who’s invited?** Members and friends  
**Why do it?** To promote fellowship, learn about each other  
by sharing our talents and ... raise some money!

Come and join the fun! As you can see from the list, there are lots of deals and lots of goodies awaiting you. Don’t forget to invite your friends and family!  
We’ll try to start at 11:15 a.m. and be finished by 12:15 p.m. The Fellowship Ministry is providing drinks and snacks. (They are so good to us!) If you can’t be there, but see something you want to bid on, you can have a “proxy” bid for you! Contact Charles Grosshans 303-936-6859 or Sandy Selzer 303-935-5808 to arrange this.

**THANK YOU** to all who regularly buy King Soopers and Safeway cards on Sunday mornings. Purchasing the cards really DOES benefit Christ congregational Church! 5% of each King Soopers card and 4% of each Safeway card comes back to the church, because we only pay 95% and 96% of the value of these cards to King Soopers and Safeway. They are easy to use – just slide the card through the regular credit card machine at the check-out stand and the sales slip will tell you how much you have left on your card. They are GIFT cards – and they do make great gifts for the person who “has everything”! So – see Joyce and Mary on Sundays for your next purchase!

**3W – CONVERSATION ON RACE, MARCH 18, 6:30 P.M.** Our denomination has urged our churches to have a “Sacred Conversation on Race.” On Wednesday evening, March 18, the Christian Education Ministry and Social Justice Ministry are sponsoring a conversation with Dr. Tony Bandele, a noted psychologist at Fort Logan Mental Health Center. The time is 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, with a light supper provided. Dr. Bandele provided leadership for a “Visions” workshop, at which a number of our members participated, along with members and friends of Washington Park UCC. Mark the date on your calendar and join us for this informative session!

**FROM COMMUNITY MINISTRY**

2008 was an exciting and productive year for Community Ministry. We started the year seeing fewer people than in previous years and ended the year helping feed almost 27% more families than in our recorded history. Thank to your support we were able to feed every family and help cloth more children than ever. Because of your support the following are some of the highlights we were all able to achieve in 2008:

- 5,348 families made up of 18,535 individuals received emergency food.
- \$379,949 worth of food was disbursed.
- 707 children from 213 families received clothing and an additional 2,017 coats were disbursed.
- 120 families received energy assistance with the help of Energy Outreach Colorado.
- 201 children received school supplies.
- 363 holiday food boxes were given out and 315 children received Christmas gifts.
- Volunteers served 12,989 hours with their time valued at \$254,515.
- We had our first major fundraising event – Celebración del Corazón on May 18 which raised \$11,687.
- We had our first run added to the annual walk which raised \$4,700.

## **USEFUL CELL PHONE INFORMATION**

For all the folks with cell phones. (This should be printed and kept in your car, purse, and wallet. Good information to have with you.) There are a few things that can be done in times of grave emergencies. Your mobile phone can actually be a life saver or an emergency tool for survival. Check out the things that you can do with it:

### **Emergency**

The Emergency Number worldwide for Mobile is 112 If you find Yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an Emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to Establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly, this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out.

### **Have you locked your keys in the car?**

Does your car have remote keyless entry? This may come in handy someday. Good reason to own a cell phone: If you lock your keys In the car and the spare keys are at home, call someone at home on their cell phone from your cell phone. Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock button, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Saves someone from having to drive your keys to you. Distance is no object. You could be hundreds of miles away, and if you can reach someone who has the other 'remote' for your car, you can unlock the doors (or the trunk). (Editor's Note: It works fine! We tried it out and it unlocked our car over a cell phone!)

### **Hidden Battery Power**

Imagine your cell battery is very low. To activate, press the keys \*3370#. Your cell phone will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery. =2 0 This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell phone next time.

### **How to disable a STOLEN mobile phone?**

To check your Mobile phone's serial number, key in the following Digits on your phone: \*#06#. A 15-digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe. If your phone gets stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody does this, there would be no point in people stealing mobile phones.

### **Free Directory Service for Cells**

Cell phone companies are charging us \$1.00 to \$1.75 or more for 411; information calls when they don't have to. Most of us do not carry a telephone directory in our vehicle, which makes this situation even more of a problem. When you need to use the 411 information option, simply dial: (800)FREE411, or (800) 373-3411 without incurring any charge at all. Program this into your cell phone now.