

Christ Congregational Church
2500 South Sheridan
Denver, CO 80227

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CALLER

JANUARY

2010



CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ

2500 South Sheridan Boulevard

Denver, CO 80227

(303) 935-8350

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WWW.VISITCHRISTCHURCH.ORG

CHRISTCONGREGATIONALCHURCH@HOTMAIL.COM



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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 Beth Robey Hyde

It is a joy to be among you at this time, as the church begins to bustle with activity. On December 1st, some 35 people gathered to look at congregational life cycles and learn how churches become renewed. Many people said it felt good to realize that this church is going through changes that are normal and to be expected, and that new vitality is in the offing.

Thanks to Generation Gap for spearheading the long-delayed freshening of the sanctuary worship center. Everyone is invited to participate in the planning meetings chaired by Mark

The choir loft is already noticeably brighter, and you can read about anticipated changes elsewhere in this Caller. Everyone is invited to participate in the planning meetings chaired by Mark Pleuss.

What are the most important things needed to bring about church vitality? First of all, we need to focus outward. Each of us needs to look beyond our own preferences and comfort, toward the good of the whole fellowship. The whole fellowship needs to remember that we are not here solely for ourselves, but to bring Christ's love into the wider community: serving and inviting. An outward focus brings broader perspective, an awareness of human needs, and open hearts and hands. The second important thing needed to bring about vitality is regular and consistent prayer. If you love your church, pray for it and its leadership. Third is kindness in all interactions. These three things are equally important.

As we enter this new year, we are looking at a very tight budget. So the fourth item of which I would remind you is that we are not alone in suffering financially in these days. Let's apply our spiritual principles to our finances. I am grateful that it looks like we can accomplish everything we need to accomplish this year, as long as we step up to perform tasks we once paid someone else to do. There are ebbs and flows in the life of a congregation and ebbs and flows in finances. Fear of shortage can be more crippling than actual shortfall. I believe that for Christ Church, the worst is over and we're on the upswing. So let us enter the new year rejoicing and keeping on the lookout for what God is doing in and through this congregation.

May God bless you and yours in 2010!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
JANUARY

- 01 Brad Bern**
- 03 Maiya Otsuka**
- 03 Betty Sanders**
- 04 Betty Clark**
- 09 Beverly Fox**
- 10 Charles Scott Duncan**
- 15 Mary Lee Kuttler**
- 17 Katie Renee Overman**
- 28 Scott Marble**
- 29 Chris Anderson**
- 30 Connor Rock**
- 30 Alan Kovacs**

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.

COMMUNITY MINISTRY FOOD DONATIONS

During January, any canned goods and peanut butter and jelly would be appreciated. On February 7 — Super Bowl Sunday — we'll have a soup drive — so look for soup on sale now. Thanks

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ON JANUARY 17

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP

Please read Sandy Mabens' article "Where Do We Go From Here," for information about the meeting. We will vote on our 2010 budget. Also, pick up a copy of the proposed budget at church on Jan. 10. If you would like a copy mailed to you, please contact the office.

PRAYER LIST

Members and friends who have been on our prayer list during the past few weeks are:

Karen Bickett, on the death of her father

Jan Burns

Evie Collins

Sue Duncan

Hank Edwards

Gladys Lansing, currently in Western Hills Nursing Home

Sid Nelson, on the death of her stepfather

Rob Overman, currently in Lutheran Hospital

Family of June Plourde

Jacque Smith

Betty Walker

Ginny White, currently in Life Care Center

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Sandy Maben

It is not yet Christmas as I write this, and I find that my heart is resisting my brain's attempt to write something that you will read after we have entered 2010. But I think that what I need to tell you this month is just a bit about the budget process that began with the stewardship drive and will be finalized at our congregation meeting on January 17.

So first, as will be no surprise to you, we have lost some members and some financial support. In total, we are expecting about \$148,000 income from pledges compared with last year's \$186,000. I did a really brief analysis of the members who pledged last year and who did not this year, and this is what I discovered about the reasons (as far as I can tell) that some folks have not pledged.

\$11,500 - members who moved out of state

\$ 1,700 - members who passed away

\$ 5,600 - members who are very ill

\$ 6,300 - members with changed financial circumstances

\$15,300 - members who left church membership

\$11,300 - don't know why (yet!)

We have also had some reduction in expenses, and Karen Bickett has done an incredible amount of work looking at each of the expense items that relate to our building. (Please thank her the next time you see her.) But this still left us with about a \$20,000 to \$23,000 expected deficit when council met on December 15. And I will tell you that I was not looking forward to that meeting! We spent almost the entire 2 hours of the council meeting looking at every line item of the budget. In addition to the council members and Pastor Beth, we received invaluable assistance from Sid Nelson, our bookkeeper. (Please thank her, too, the next time that you see her.) With her help, we were able to reduce the budget by a few hundred dollars here and there, and some costs were moved from the expense budget, to be covered by funds that are available in our savings to be spent by the ministries. We will tell you a little more about this at the meeting on January 17. At the end of the evening, we had reduced the deficit to just a few thousand dollars. It was hard work, but I think all left the meeting knowing that we had accomplished a pretty amazing task that evening.

There will be at least one more meeting of the budget sub-committee of council before we meet in order to reach a final recommendation to you in January. But I wanted everyone to have this brief bit of background before we meet. On Sunday, January 10, we will have a written summary of the proposed budget available at church so that you may pick it up and review it before the vote on January 17. My thanks to every council member who contributed so much to the discussion on December 15. It was a difficult evening, but I think you will find that, although the picture cannot be called "rosy", we have crafted a budget that we can meet in 2010. PLEASE come on January 17 and call me at (303) 914-0031 if you have any questions ahead of time.

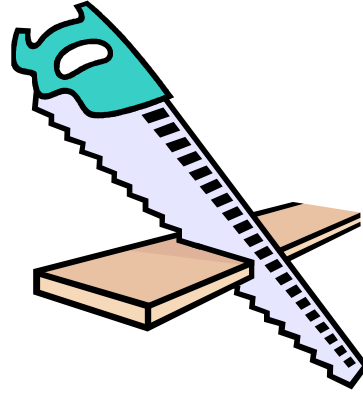
REMODELING WORK HAPPENING

Our minor remodeling of the Sanctuary has started. The Pulpit has been removed and the South wall has received a new light finish. Thanks to all that have helped with these improvements.

A small change will be made to the lectern to raise it to a better height. Then, in January, work will take place to remove the "fence" from the front of the Sanctuary. A group of people in the church have volunteered to do the work. If you would like to be part of the team call Mark Pleuss at 303-234-1355. Following the removal of the "fence," additional work will need to be done with the flooring material.

Resizing of the raised area will follow with the "fence" removal. We will also be reviewing the sound system during this first phase of the remodel. During 2010 the building/remodeling group will move onto the second phase. Stay tuned for what will be phase 2.

Mark Pleuss
Remodeling Group Leader



Many thanks to Carolyn Anderson and to all the Christmas Elves who baked, packed and carried cookies to shut-ins and a number of others the week of December 13. The cookie giving was a great success, and we hope to make it a tradition. We have received "thank you's" from many of the recipients.



A MUSICAL EPIPHANY FROM ROBIN MILLER



As we find ourselves preparing to embrace the New Year, I wonder what the Magi must have thought or felt when they journeyed two years to find the Christ-child. Would they have said that the journey and its complications were worth the wait? Were they surprised

to find a small child at the end of their search? Did they hesitate to give this tiny being their frankincense, gold, and myrrh? I don't think so. In fact, they were so impressed with the Christ-child that they ventured home a different way so that Herod would not be able to find this precious treasure, Jesus.

In the past two months, we have been journeying as a music team to see where our path would lead. We joined together to bring our own frankincense, gold and myrrh during the December 20th worship service. Bells ringing, choir singing and praise moving forth throughout the congregation. As we move from this place into our New Year, may we continue to go a different way: one that honors the tradition of the past and reaches toward the experience of the present and hope of the future.

Just as the Magi that journeyed for years, may we continue to feel the hope of our treasure as we travel together in 2010. Please join us. All are welcome to find a place in the music program.



WATER FOR PEOPLE

**A WORLD WHERE ALL PEOPLE HAVE
ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER
AND SANITATION;
A WORLD WHERE NO ONE SUFFERS
OR DIES FROM A WATER OR
SANITATION-RELATED DISEASE.**

Water for People is our January Mission Offering. Our own Ken Miller is the Founder and Past President of Water for People. Water for People assists people in developing countries to improve quality of life by supporting the development of locally sustainable drinking water resources, sanitation facilities and hygiene education programs. Around the world 884 million people do not have access to safe drinking water and 2.5 billion are without adequate sanitation facilities. Every day, nearly six thousand people who share our planet die from water-related illnesses, and the vast majority are children. Christ Congregational Church has contributed over ten years as an outreach mission striving to support this organization. Thank you to the members of Christ Church from the Board of Water for People Directors.

Notes from the Worship and Music Ministry

Georgia Bachmann

Greetings to you for the New Year! This new year has some exciting and great times to come for us. If you haven't noticed – the wall behind the choir has been painted. It has really made the area brighter. There is also a lovely young lady directing our music program. We are quite excited as we look to the future under her leadership. Please take time to introduce yourself to Robin Miller.

We will be planning an All-Church Retreat soon, so please watch for information on this very important meeting. We need to work together to prepare for a new minister.

With Pastor Beth's help we are looking to have this Ministry plan ahead so as to eliminate the monthly meeting schedule. Our Ministry bears the responsibility as its title says for all worship and music. We welcome your help in our service to this great church family. One area needing help is our ushering. We are in the process of reorganizing and need your help! Please contact me, Georgia (303-797-8888) to help as you are able. Many thanks go to all who see that our sanctuary is always ready for us on Sunday.

God Bless you!!

Christmas Cards Received

from Jan Burns — "A very happy holiday to all my Christ Church friends. Your kind cards and calls were so welcome. Joyous Christmas to ALL!"

from Marie Hahn — "I have enjoyed the pretty cards I have received from the lady members of our congregation. It was very sweet and nice for them to remember a 93 year old gal.



JANUARY 2010		
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS 3 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship 7:00 p.m. AA-Fellowship Hall	4	5 6:30 p.m. Budget Meeting 7:00 p.m. Ministry Mtgs.
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 10 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship 7:00 p.m. AA-Fellowship Hall	11	12 7:00 p.m. Council Mtg.
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 17 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Congregational Mtg. Followed by Fellowship	18 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OFFICE CLOSED	19
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 24 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship 7:00 p.m. AA-Fellowship Hall	25	26
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 31 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Fellowship 7:00 p.m. AA-Fellowship Hall		

JANUARY 2010			
WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2
6 10:00 a.m. Gal-axies	7 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	8	9
13 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast at Rosemary's 10:30 a.m. Gal-axies	14 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	15	16 12:00 noon— Bridge Marathon Pot Luck Lunch
20 10:30 a.m. Gal-axies	21 6:30 a.m. Women's Breakfast at Rosemary's 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	22	23
27 10:30 a.m. Gal-axies	28 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	29	30