

CALLER

**OCTOBER
2007**

From the Desk of Jerry Eslinger..... *“Money and Mammon”*

The Bible calls the allure of wealth “mammon.” (Matthew 6:24) This is what money becomes when treated as the bottom-line of what counts. Often forgotten is that money becomes just this not only when taken too seriously but when not taken seriously enough. Then, sooner or later, the need for money and the role it unavoidably plays in life acquire urgent and disproportionate influence. Ask anyone deeply in debt!

Sometimes around the church one gets the idea that money is not a spiritual matter, not an essential concern of faith and an important emphasis in church life. “If I start hearing talk about money in church, I’m leaving.” When this attitude prevails and talk of giving and financial commitment is low-keyed, far from becoming less of an issue, money becomes more of one. No money means no church, no mission – and weak faith. Giving is central to faith and the whole experience of living close to God. It’s a matter of where we place our reliance and find our security.

This is clear in over half of Jesus’ teaching and in the personal experience of his followers. From the first, they had to reconcile their commitment to him with the loss of the kind of security on which they had depended. Ultimately they found joy and “security” beyond measure.

“Make service your first priority, not success, and success will follow.” (Robert Greenleaf) What’s true of business is also true of the church’s business when we follow the way of Jesus. “Strive first for the kingdom of God and all else follows.” (Matthew 6:33)

While this is no promise of having all we want, it’s a promise of having all we need and, as it turns out, what we really want after all!

What priorities are reflected in the way I spend and give?

How does my faith speak to my concerns about money?

The Big Secret of Giving: Hidden
Treasures in Life and Church

A Stewardship Devotional
William C Green
United Church of

Christ _____

October Mission Offering – Neighbors In Need

Our October Mission Offering is Neighbors in Need (NIN) – one of the United Church of Christ's annual offerings. Contributions help the UCC support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. One-third of NIN supports the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), two-thirds is used by the UCC Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts and direct service projects. The Council for American Indian Ministry is the voice for American Indian people in the UCC. Today there are 200 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban.

The most powerful thing about NIN is that our gifts are pooled. As a result, our individual and congregational gifts have a far greater effect. Coordinated giving allows the UCC to offer to millions of people and to address a whole range of social issues and concerns. Some of the grants are given to sponsor programs that train youth and young adults to be social advocates, teaching others to live in a multicultural world with compassionate attitude. Remember that this offering covers all neighbors. The Mission Ministry asks for your support.

Southwest Community Ministry Food Bank

The food bank has asked our church to donate **canned beans** for the month of October. Of course, any other donations (food, children's clothes, children's undergarments, personal care items) are always appreciated.

TREASURER'S REPORT...Our total income for January through August was \$142,473 and our expenses for the same time period were \$146,279, leaving us with a net loss of \$3,800. Our pledges paid as of Aug. 31 were \$128,825. The budgeted amount for the same time period was \$141,562 – a shortage of \$12,736. As you can see, we are operating at a loss. If you have fallen behind in your pledge payment, please help us provide the resources needed to support our many church ministries and programs. Thank you for your gifts and generosity to Christ Church!

WE WISH TO THANK all our Christ Church friends for their calls, cards and well wishes for Lee's recent health problems.

Lee & Vi Engelking

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AUGUST COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting convened by Steve Nelson, Moderator, at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Steve Nelson, Sandy Selzer, Joanne Eslinger, Marve Evers, Jan Burns, Jim Lynch, Shirley Hendry and Jerry Eslinger.

Reflection: Jerry read from Bishop John Spring's "Praise of the United Church of Christ."

Minutes of July 17 Council meeting were accepted.

Item #1: Jim Lynch, Trustee, presented financial statements that indicated the Sabbatical Account has about \$10,360 which Jerry does not need at present. It was moved and passed that this amount be moved to a 6-8 month CD to earn more interest. Fundraisers account has a zero balance, and past year pledges are slow. Motion made and passed that financial report be printed in Caller monthly and that overdue notices be sent quarterly.

Item #2: Minister's Report. Jerry reported that La Foret Sunday had 69 attendees, 73 paid, and a very enjoyable day it was. Owd Dabar's music at worship, the burger/brat lunch and games/swimming/walking/talking afternoon made a fine day. Thanks to Donna Green and Nick Nicholson and all.

Jerry said Deacons have decided on new pictorial directory produced by Olan Mills who will do all the scheduling and prep work at no charge to us. Dates are set for Thanksgiving weekend, November 23-24, with make-up appointments.

A request for space for a yoga class was welcomed, and the class will be on Mondays, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Item #3: Steve urged attendance at bylaw meeting on August 26; discussion is invited on August 19 at 10:30 for possible amendments. Motion made and passed to send reminder postcard immediately stressing importance.

Item #4: Shirley said architect has made measurements and is proceeding with sketches for sanctuary to seat 300 and narthex.

Discussion on fundraising and stewardship was postponed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. with Lord's Prayer.

Jan Burns

Social Action Ministry

Just what is a Social Action Ministry? I thought I knew, but as I ponder over the role Sandy Selzer asked me to fill, I began to wonder what this is all about. I

began to see a depth to social justice that has yet to be examined. What is there to social justice beyond helping the poor, the homeless, and standing up for equal rights?

I would invite members interested in this area to begin meeting and discussing the issues around social justice. We will work to gain an understanding of the impact of referendums and various issues and create opportunities for the congregation to explore the issues of difference among people.

To this effect, I am announcing a workshop to be scheduled beginning in January on the issues of recognizing, understanding, and valuing differences among people. This will be a workshop of four days, scheduled on Saturdays once a month for 4 months. (The dates are January 5, February 9, March 1, and April 5. Look for more details in the future.) The workshop intends to explore the issues of differences among people. It will explore how these differences can be both real and perceived and how perceived differences can become ingrained in cultural behavior that might be termed as stereotypes. These perceived differences are mostly unconscious, and the behavior of individuals based on these unconscious beliefs may have a different impact than the intent for which it was made.

Framing discussions about social justice around the beliefs of the members of the committee and congregation may result in differences. However, disagreements and differences are embraced by treating each other's differences with love and respect.

I look forward to engaging many members of the congregation in this endeavor. Please contact me. Phone: 303-979-0046; email: al_ots@hotmail.com.

Al Otsuka
Coordinator of Social Justice
Ministry

Volunteers Of America Sponsors Handyman Program

If you have a few handyman skills . . . There are seniors trying to remain in their homes who need a little help with minor repairs and the installation of safety devices such as a grab bar or handrail. Many have no one, except people like you. The VOA Handyman Program doesn't charge them anything, but needs handymen and handywomen to help do the work. The Program has now expanded to serve seniors in Jefferson, Arapahoe, and Adams, as well as Denver County. If you can help by donating a little time each month, call the Handyman Program at 303-297-0408.

CAMPAIGN HELPS FAITH COMMUNITIES ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

The Governor's Energy Office and Colorado Interfaith Power & Light are teaming up to sponsor the 2007 "Change a Light, Change the World" initiative for communities of faith. The purpose of the program is to equip congregations to share important information with their members on global climate change and

discover ways faith communities and individuals can make changes in their uses of energy. Christ Congregational Church will join dozens of other Colorado churches in participating in this program. The 30-minute class will be offered after worship on Sunday, October 14 in the Commons Room. As an incentive for participation, each individual will receive a free compact fluorescent light bulb. If you are interested in participating in this program, please R.S.V.P. with Jeremy Shaver, Director of Education and Family Ministries, by Sunday, October 7.

New Yoga Class Meets At Christ Church

A new yoga class is meeting at Christ Church from 6-7:30 p.m. Mondays in the Fellowship Hall. The class features classical hatha yoga, the Day-Star method, to build strength and flexibility both internally and externally. Day-Star Yoga is gentle enough for beginners and yet challenging for those with more experience. If you have never done yoga before, this is the perfect opportunity to try it! Students are encouraged to work at their own level. Please wear comfortable, layered clothing and bring a mat to class. A new eight-week session began on September 10 and will run through October 29. The cost for the session is \$64, but you may also pay a single drop-in fee of \$10. Payment for the session can be made the first night of class or on a drop-in basis. Your first class is free. If you decide you love the class, you can register for the complete session or join on a drop-in basis as your schedule allows. There is no obligation to join. For more information, contact Pam Gelwick a YogaYahooee@comcast.net or 303-936-3284.

A NEW WAY OF WORKING

On September 30, 2007, the congregation will vote to accept coordinators of the ministries and Church Officers as established through the new Church Bylaws.

The seven Church Ministries and Coordinators nominated are:

Worship and Music – Betty Sanders

Christian Education – Sherry Crawford

Facilities and Grounds – Jim Lynch

Social Justice and Mission – Al Otsuka and Sue Duncan

Evangelism and Church Growth – Sandy Maben

Fellowship – Shirley Hendry

Stewardship – Jan Burns

The number of people on each Ministry will vary as will the frequency of meetings. Every effort will be made to reach consensus in the decision-making process within each Ministry.

The Church Officers are:

Moderator – Sandy Selzer

Vice-Moderator – Randy Arnold

Clerk – Joanne Eslinger

Treasurer – Ken Miller
Past Moderator – Steve Nelson

It is our goal to have the work of the Ministries and Council be guided by the Identity and Mission Statement of the Church. **It is our hope** that each and every one of you will lend your talents to our faith and service community, while being directed by your interests and passions.

We have much to accomplish to implement the proposals of the Long-Range Plan for the future health and vitality of the church.

I'm looking forward to a productive year!

Sandy Selzer

Moderator

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holiday Mart Brings Crafters, Artists, Vendors To Church

The Third Annual Holiday Mart will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, November 17, at Christ Church. This popular event has brought dozens of quality crafters, vendors, and home-based business owners to our church. And, it is a perfect opportunity to begin your holiday shopping! There is still space available for participants. The cost is \$20, which includes a six-foot table and approximately 8X8 foot space. Registration forms are available in the Narthex. We are also looking for volunteers to help prepare for the event by assisting with set up, distributing flyers, and helping with a variety of jobs on the day of the event. If you would like to help, or know of a vendor who may like to participate, please contact Sidney Nelson at 303-988-5031 or svnels@hotmail.com.

Laforet's Largest Fundraiser

"A Night at the Speakeasy" is the theme of the LaForet fundraiser, to be held Thursday, October 11, at Turnhalle in the Tivoli Center downtown. This "swingin" evening features Lannie Garrett, a well-known Denver entertainer and singer. The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction. Tickets are \$40 per person and it is hoped that we can fill at least one table with Christ Church folks – eight to a table for \$500. We have spent Sundays at LaForet for worship and lunch and recreation and a number of our children and youth have attended camp over the years. How about it? See Jerry in the office for tickets!

DINNERS FOR 8/6. Those who would like to participate in Dinners for 8/6, please contact Rhonda Overman at 303-232-1861.

MANY THANKS...to Steve and Sidney Nelson for donating the large television for use in the Adult Forum on Sunday mornings. The Christian Education Ministry also purchased a new DVD player and audio/visual cart for use by the Adult Forum. We hope the new equipment will enhance the learning process for all of the class participants. And of course, many thanks to all of you who support Christ Congregational Church with your regular giving and pledges. Your gifts fund all of our education programs at the church. Thank you!

“THE BIG SECRET” OF GENEROSITY IS . . .

ABUNDANCE

Do we have . . . ?

LIFE
HOPE

LOVE

FAMILY

CHURCH
LIBERTY

FAITH
GIVING

FRIENDS

HEALTH
LEARNING

WORK

PRAYER

Our Identity and Mission Statement: “Christ Congregational Church is a progressive, caring, and celebrating Christian Congregation of the United Church of Christ”

It is NO SECRET that every October **WE**, the Church, demonstrate what Christ Church’s Mission means to us financially.

It is defined as EVERYTHING we do:
Believe in the God of all Ages and in Jesus Christ
Preach and teach the Good News
Lead with professionals into deeper spirituality
Care for our people
Maintain and improve our facility
Reach out to the community
Contribute to the Church’s wider needs.

“The Big Secret!” What do you believe it is?

YOUTH GROUP CORNER

YOUTH MEET FOR PIZZA, MOVIE NIGHT

Our next meeting of the Middle and Senior High Youth Group will be from 6-8 p.m. Sunday, October 21 in the Fellowship Hall. We will order pizza and will decide as a group to either watch a movie or the Broncos' game on the big screen! Be sure to get your homework done earlier in the day so you can join us for Youth Group!

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE HOSTS FALL HIGH SCHOOL RETREAT

The Rocky Mountain Conference UCC's annual fall high school retreat will be held Oct. 19-21 at the La Foret Conference and Retreat Center. The retreat is open to youth in grades 9-12. The theme for the retreat is, "Be Me!" Participants will learn more about themselves and who they want to be and not what other people want them to be. The cost is \$120 and the registration deadline is October 8. Scholarships are available. Please see Jeremy Shaver, Director of Education and Family Ministries, for an application.

YOUTH SELL E-BOOKS TO EARN SKI TRIP

The Christ Congregational Church Youth Group still has the fantastic Ebook coupon booklet, with discounts for dozens of area businesses, available for purchase. The book is a particular bargain for King Soopers shoppers! The book includes four \$5 off coupons on purchases of \$50 or more at King Soopers stores. Each book costs \$10 and the Youth Group will earn \$6 from each sale to support youth programs at church and fund an upcoming ski trip. You may buy a book for yourself, or as a gift for someone else, in the Fellowship Hall after church. Thank you!

CHILDREN, YOUTH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AS ACOLYTES

One of the most important and visible ways our church's children and youth participate in the worship service is to serve as acolytes. Acolytes light our altar candles at the beginning of the worship service to remind us that we have entered into a sacred time and space. The act of candle-lighting also reminds Christians that we are each called to be a light in the world. Two volunteers are needed each Sunday morning to serve as acolytes. Children ages seven and older, as well as high-school age youth, are invited to volunteer. If you are interested, please sign up on the acolyte chart located on the Education Bulletin Board outside of Fellowship Hall. Thank you in advance for your help and participation!

NOTES FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

The CCC CHANCEL CHOIR is a group of faithful, devoted and generous singers, who spend Thursdays from 7:00-8:30 p.m. preparing to lead the music in three out of four monthly 10:00 a.m. worship services. We sing an extremely

varied mix of anthems and hymns from "Traditional/Classical" to Contemporary. We invite you, most warmly, to join us!

OWD DABAR is our contemporary music ensemble, led by Nick Nicholson, who've been sharing their upbeat music usually the third Sunday of each month. And their monthly Friday Song services on the last Friday of every month. Rehearsals are 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. on Thursdays, space usually alternating between Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary, sometimes Sunshine Room, and even homes of members. Please contact Nick for up-to-date info.

CCC's BELL CHOIR also welcomes new hands to ring our 5 octave Malmark Bells! If you have some music-reading skills, it is helpful, but playing bells is a great way to increase and improve musicianship, and the opportunity to be a creative part of an inspiring sound, which adds to the musical variety in worship services, once a month. We are a multi-generational group, and we rehearse Sundays, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Sunshine Room.

Liana Lansing
Music
Director

INTERFAITH MUSIC FESTIVAL AIMS TO “TURN THE WORLD AROUND”

The Seventh Annual Interfaith Music Festival sponsored by The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado is set for 7 p.m Sunday, October 14 at Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia St. in Denver. The theme for this year's concert is "Turn the World Around." The festival will feature performers from a variety of faith traditions, including: Los Lantzman, a group that plays a lively combination of Jewish and Sufi music; Alandi Ashram of the Boulder Kirtan, who will raise his voice in Hindu chanting; and the Sojourners, and ensemble of The Spirituals Project. Tickets cost \$12 and can be purchased from Jeremy Shaver. This is an event that will touch your heart and move your spirit!