

Issue 33
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The Caller

Pastor's Corner

President Calvin Coolidge once said, "The "business of America is business." Maybe Cal was right. When business is down, like it is in times of recession, the anxiety of our people goes up. We seem to forget that capitalism has always been prone to business cycles that feature peaks and dips, some more extreme than others.

Forbes magazine had a listing of the ten cities that are hardest hit by the recession and the bursting of the real estate bubble. Most of them were in California, Florida or Nevada. The article also listed the ten cities least affected by the crisis. Baltimore, and all the "close in" DC suburbs, made this list. The author was asked how people can best deal with these tough times. First thing he said was that for most people things will remain about the same. Most people will keep their jobs. Ninety eight percent of Americans will keep making payments on their homes. Children and youth will continue to make it through school. The author reiterated that the key to going through any period of life is to faithfully "keep on doing what you should be doing."

I have mentioned several times that when I read books I often turn to the end to see how it will come out. When I like the ending, I actually look forward to returning to the beginning of the book and getting to trace all the twists and turns that lead to the end. This approach applies especially to studying the Bible. As we read our way through Matthew's gospel, we come to parables that have to do with the end times. We are warned to not fall asleep, to beware of whom we trust the care of our investments (that's timely), and finally in Matthew 25:31-46, we are told the criteria by God will judge us at the last judgment. We have the good fortune of hindsight: we know that Jesus is resurrected.

We have a choice how we can respond to the challenges we face because we know that God controls how the story ends. I view life as an endless series of character tests. When facing times of great uncertainty, I try to focus clearly on trusting God and making wise decisions. I try to minimize any anxieties so I can resist the urge to panic. I have learned to not get worried about my own economic status so that I might be present to the hungry, the stranger in our midst, or the prisoner. These great parables of Jesus are designed to help us examine how we live so that we can always be prepared to receive Christ, whose light always shines brighter than the darkest moments we face.

James Brassard

Gifts from Your Heart

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink."
Matthew 23:35

In these troubled times, it can be hard to remember that many people in our world are much less fortunate than we are. You can make a difference—one family at a time. Consider that for the price of an iPod® you could provide a struggling family in Asia with a draft animal to help make them self-reliant. For the price of a pound of gourmet coffee, you could provide seeds and tools to an impoverished farm family trying to feed themselves.

On **Sunday, November 9**, you can reach out to our brothers and sisters around the world and in our community through the CCPC **Christmas Gift Market** in Dodds Hall between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Consider providing a gift of food, medicine, water, and shelter to a community stricken by disaster. What about providing supplies and materials to build houses? Think of what it would be like to have your sight restored by the removal of cataracts or cancer discovered early enough that it could be treated. And you don't have to spend a minute in the mall!

The **Christmas Gift Market** is an opportunity to consider an alternative Christmas celebration where instead of giving more things, we give more meaning. CCPC shoppers have bought medical items for their children who are nurses and school materials for their children who are teachers. Grandparents have bought chickens in honor of their grandchildren, whose understanding the importance of giving has grown over the last several years. CCPC shoppers honor their co-workers with malaria tents and immunizations. And what about a heifer for the "man who has everything"? The Christmas Gift Market catalog will be available on October 26 so you'll have time to think about how to honor your friends and family members. After you select your gifts and make your contribution, you will receive a lovely card to present to recipients describing how the contributions made in their honor will be used.

After shopping at the Market, stay for soup and bread, with proceeds going to Prince George's Hospice. We are expecting members of our community to join us so this is a good opportunity to share what's happening at CCPC.

Fall Clean-Up Day November 15th 8:30 AM

Lots of hands will make the work go quickly. Bring your family, friends, leaf blowers, rakes, weed-eaters and get our campus ready for winter. There are inside as well as outside chores. We'll start at 8:30 and continue until lunch at noon.



Trunk-or-Treating

Games, crafts, pumpkin painting are featured at this year's Trunk-or-Treating on Sunday, October 26 from 3 to 5 p.m. in Dodds Hall. CCPC members and friends are encouraged to decorate their car trunks, pass out "treats" to the kids from their trunks, dress in costume, and enjoy this annual event. Invite friends and neighbors with kids to join in the fun.

Marriage Celebration

The CCPC Youth Group would like to invite the congregation to join in a celebration of the recent marriage of James Rada to Laura Powers. Please join us for great fellowship and light refreshments provided by the Youth Group. If you are interested in contributing toward a group gift, please see Laurel Cox or contact her by e-mail at TCABowie@gmail.com or call 301-352-7854.

Sunday, October 26, 2008 (9:30 & 11 AM)

You have heard of "KISS" (not the old rock group) but the acronym that means "keep it simple stupid." This Sunday the sermon text is the "The Great Commandment" in Matthew 22:34-46 where Jesus answers the question: What is the greatest of all the commandments in the law? His simple two part answer to love God and your neighbor has been used by many people to summarize how they try to live their Christian faith. Known by many as the "gospel in miniature," the Great Commandment shows up in many personal mission statements and has even been incorporated into 'core values' brochures. Why is this simple summary so hard to follow?

Events at CCPC ...

Christmas Market Card Stamping

Card stampers are invited to stamp cards for the Christmas Gift Market on October 26 after the 11:00 a.m. service in the conference room. No prior experience necessary and a chili lunch is provided. Any questions? Call Sharon McNamara at or Peggy Oates.

"Zen of Knitting" class for SpiritedSouls

Would you like to learn a creative, meditative practice that will keep you in stitches and help you create a gift or two in time for the holidays? **When? Sunday, October 26th from 2-5pm** at Sheree Ruhl's home. \$35 for the three hour class plus \$10 materials fee. Space is limited, Call Sheree to register Already knit? Bead? Crochet? Bring your current craft project and relax with kindred spirits, tasty snacks and wine \$10.

Emergency Response Committee (ERC) News

Want to see an emergency radio and find out how to order one for your emergency back pack? The Emergency Response Committee will have them on display **during coffee hour on November 2nd**. Some of you wanted to order last year's three day one person survival kit or the "Grab N Go" kit. The Web Site information will be available so you can place the order yourself. NINE TEAMS or GROUPS are designated to help our church family in various ways during a city emergency. Look over the lists while you have your coffee and see if your talents or interests fit. If you volunteer to be a helper you might receive an SOS phone call during an emergency event, but of course, availability varies so more people are always needed.

Hungry for pizza or other yummy treats? Go to Uno Chicago Grill on Tuesday, November 4 and Tuesday, November 11 and they will donate up to 20% (excluding tax and tip) of your check to CCPC. You'll need a coupon so look for them on the kiosk and information table in the atrium.

BUS TRIP—Broadway, Here We Come!

Come join us for a charter bus trip to New York City's Vivian Beaumont Theatre to see *South Pacific*, the winner of seven Tony Awards. April 29, 2009; bus leaves CCPC at 8:30 AM and returns by 10:30 PM. \$172.00 which includes transportation, reserved orchestra seats for the show, all taxes and tips including the driver. (If fewer than 54 participate, the cost per person will be slightly more.) Meals: A fast food stop will be made en route to NY City and a dinner stop at Mastoris Restaurant on the return trip home, both at your own expense. Contact Marge Clark as soon as possible to make your reservations. First come, first served. Let's try to fill the bus. Invite your friends and family members to join us for this fun and enjoyable outing. **A deposit of \$122.00 is due October 29, 2008** and the balance of \$50.00 is due March 22, 2009. Checks should be made out to Marge Clark and either mailed to her home, or left in Marge Clark's mail slot in the church office.

Christian Community Presbyterian Church



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CCPC, the first Protestant church in Levitt Bowie, was born from a passion for Christian mission in the local community, and this focus continues.

Our Mission:

*To worship God,
 to grow in faith and community,
 and to place our gifts in the
 service of Jesus Christ.*

*** Next Caller Distribution: 10/28/08 ***
Articles are due by Thursday, 10/23.

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