

# Country Covenant Crossroads

December 2008

Country Evangelical Covenant Church  
43W510 McDonald Rd. Elgin, IL 60123

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**A Place to Believe, to Belong, and to Become**



## Under Construction...

How To Plant Your Garden

First, you come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses...

For the garden of your daily living,

**Plant Three Rows of Peas:**

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

**Plant Four Rows of Squash:**

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

**Plant Four Rows of Lettuce:**

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

**No Garden is Without Turnips:**

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

**To Conclude our Garden, we must have Thyme:**

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

**Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.  
There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.**

Pastor Mark

## Dates for your calendar:

- Nov. 30 – First Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 6 – Women Ministries Christmas Brunch
- Dec. 13 – Adult Fellowship Yankee Swap
- Dec. 14 – Caroling at Rosewood Care Center
- Dec. 16 – Caroling in the Neighborhood
- Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service
- Jan. 18 – Annual Church Business Meeting

## December Wednesdays:

Join us at 6:30pm on Dec. 3, 10, 17 for study and discussion as we look at **“The Purpose of Christmas”**.

## Don't forget the ear!

Our music request ear is sitting in the narthex, ready for you to fill! Please grab a piece of paper, write down what hymn or praise chorus you'd like to sing, and place it in the ear. We'd especially like to know what Christmas songs are your favorites so we can try to include them in worship during the Advent season. And if you've put a request in but haven't heard it yet, please be patient. We are continuing to work through those we've received so far and look forward to more great suggestions!



## Women Ministries

Join us at **10:00am on December 6** and start this year's Advent season with the Women Ministries' **Christmas Brunch**. All women are invited. We will reveal our secret pals at this time. If you don't have a secret pal, come for the fun and fellowship. Feel free to bring a \$10 gift for the open gift exchange.

## Hear Ye, Hear Ye!!!

The CCAF is pleased to invite any and all adults to the **Annual Christmas Dinner-Yankee Swap** on **Saturday, December 13, 6:00pm** sharp at church! The evening will begin with a Pot Luck Dinner. Please bring a dish to pass. Following dinner, we will commence the traditional "Yankee Swap." Please bring a non-purchased, "white elephant-type" gift, irresistibly wrapped (or bagged) to be part of this fun gift exchange.

Sign up now. Questions? Talk with Mary Ebert or Linda Mowers.



## Let the Spirit Lead!

In mid-November, a group of Sunshine Boys hoped to solve the water problem at church. Our water filter was blocking up every 7 to 10 days. They replaced the old 80 gal water tank (about 60 years old!) with a new 35 gal tank and pressure switch. Then they installed a new iron filter unit (donated by Dan & Mary Ebert) and re-installed the in-line filter. We will soon know if the problem is solved. If you would like to help with the extra cost of the tank, switch or many fittings, just mark this project on your envelope.

## Reminder!

**If you're the last one out of the church, please check to be sure all the lights are turned off and the doors are locked.**

## Angel Tree

We have not yet celebrated Thanksgiving, but the holiday decorations are up in the stores and remind us to start thinking about our Christmas gift-giving plans!

In addition to asking for participation in purchasing gifts for our Angel Tree endeavor, we would like to ask for some financial aid for a few more items for our families. We would like to purchase a family Bible for each of them and at least one appropriate book for children illustrating and explaining the true blessing of Christmas – our Savior's birth.

We know not everyone is able to partake of the gift-giving opportunity, but we hope you will be able to contribute \$5 or \$10 toward these very important books.

Christ directs us to gather our children and teach them in the way they should grow. It is our hope that this year's Angel Tree can be the beginning of our outreach to families in need with gifts of food, caring concern, prayers, and the knowledge of God's love for them.

Thanks so much for sharing,  
Marci and my advisor, Char

## Outreach opportunity updates...

Centro de Informacion reported that in the last 5 years, the highest number of families helped in one month was 96. In October of this year, that number almost doubled; they had 176 families ask for help!

Our November contribution was:  
48 jars of grape jelly (We bought \$50 worth!)  
46 items given on Nov 2  
25 fresh squash

That totaled 119 items – thanks to everyone who helped make this possible!

On November 25<sup>th</sup> seven people from our church helped Centro de Informacion pack and deliver Thanksgiving food baskets for about 150 needy families in our area.

## Russian Radio offering:

October was \$40.00

### Trash to Treasure...

Linda Mowers is looking for a five-wheel base for a broken hydraulic swivel office chair.

Are you looking for something – or have something to give away? This newsletter may be your best resource. Give your info to Nancy or Linda and it will be listed in this section...

### \$5000 is the question...

#### Snow removal is the answer!

What cost \$5000 last year?

Removing snow from the parking lot!!

So here's a budget saving idea for this year: We had such success with the VBS bake sales, how about we do it again to help offset our potential upcoming snow removal costs.

Pull out your apron and favorite recipe, and turn on that oven! We'll have the bake sale table ready for you on the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays**. And maybe we won't limit our table to baked goods. How about a quart of your famous chili? or your to-die-for snack mix?

No pricing needed - all donations accepted.  
*(How much will you give for Mark B's fabulous cinnamon rolls??)*



**Green Tip:** Supersize isn't always best, at least when it comes to appliances. One of the keys to long-term energy, water, and money savings from any appliance is to buy the right size for your needs. If your refrigerator is often partly empty, then you're paying for electricity that you're not using. If your washing machine is too small, then you do more loads and end up using more resources. No matter what size, it's most efficient to run dishwashers and washing machines when they're full, even if it means waiting a day until you can fill the load.

### Wise words from Lynn...

Thanksgiving is the day when millions of Americans finally do something about their weight – **increase it!**

### September financial information:

Receipts	\$ 7,808.60
Expenses	<u>13,540.22</u>
Difference	-5,731.62

### Year-to-date financial information:

Receipts	\$ 89,864.50
Expenses	<u>106,186.20</u>
Difference	-16,321.70

The council members are aware of the deficit and we are all trying to be as frugal as we can. All committee chairs are below the amount allowed in the budget. Terry Mowers and the Sunshine Boys are doing a great deal of work themselves so they don't have to pay an outside contractor. We are blessed that so many people give of their time and talents to this church in so many ways.

To meet our budget we need \$2775 each week in donations. The expenses were high in October because medical insurance and pension bills are paid quarterly. Also the snow removal fund has \$580 in it - \$80 from the first bake sale and a \$500 donation. No 2<sup>nd</sup> bake sale amount is available yet.

### Newsletter info...

Do you have news for next month's newsletter? Please submit it to Nancy in the church office by **December 20**.



The following comes from Pat Bergman:

## THE BLOOD

One night in a church service a young woman felt the tug of God at her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. But the change in her was evident. As time went on she became a faithful member of the church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. The relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans. This is when problems began. You see, about one half of the church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son.

The church began to argue and fight about the matter. So they decided to have a meeting. As the people made their arguments and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand.

The young woman became very upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry, the pastor's son stood to speak. He could not bear the pain it was causing his wife to be. He began to speak and his statement was this: "My fiancée's past is not what is on trial here. What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. So, does it wash away sin or not?"

The whole church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Too often, even as Christians, we bring up the past and use it as a weapon against our brothers and sisters. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely, then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble. What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! End of case! "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain the. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55.22

This prayer is powerful and prayer is one of the best gifts we receive. There is no cost but a lot of rewards. Let's continue to pray for one another. Here is the prayer:

"Father, I ask you to bless my friends, relatives and email buddies reading this right now. Show them a new revelation of your love and power. Holy Spirit, I ask you to minister to their spirit at this very moment. Where there is pain, give them your peace and mercy. Where there is self doubt, release a renewed confidence through your grace. In Jesus' precious name. Amen."