

The Englewood Christian

*"Seeking the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God"
(Hebrews 11:10)*

Volume 60 Number 11

January 1 , 2012

A POLITICAL YEAR

National politics will dominate most news outlets this year due to the presidential and congressional elections in November. Zeal for power will be made more socially acceptable through the rhetoric of political philosophy and the polite language of feigned statesmanship. While many of us at Englewood will follow the election saga closely, all of us will be exposed to the unfolding story of a different expression of politics...the politics of life together in our community. Politics is nothing more and nothing less than the life of the "polis" (the Greek word for "city").

While there remains a tragic indifference to the strategic role of congregations in God's mission among many professional theologians, Englewood will be immersed in the political life of our community. Our witness of the gospel will be our life together as a Christian community in full view of our surrounding community on the near-eastside of Indianapolis. I say "full view" because of the high profile work in which we are involved. The Commonwealth Apartments will open as a \$7 million public-private partnership between the State of Indiana, the City of Indianapolis, Met Life Insurance Company, the John H. Boner Community Center (with their many partners) and our own Englewood Community Development Corporation. This will happen at a time that many other wonderful things are happening in our neighborhood which our church and members have played a significant role. Englewood and our many good neighbors have "occupied" this neighborhood in ways consistent with God's reconciliation and transformation...very different from the largely symbolic and unsustainable "occupations" of recent media attention.

After the Super Bowl blows into and out of town in February, a pleasant distraction which will bring even more attention to our community, we will turn our attention to continuing partnerships involving the development of East Washington Street as a key artery which binds north and south Indianapolis and feeds directly into the heart of the downtown area. This important work will be a multiple year commitment going on simultaneous with our housing work, walking alongside gifted neighbors who are struggling with many challenges, our work with children and their families and many other day to day activities related to God's kingdom reign on earth as it is in heaven.

Work like this is "public faith" embodied; it is very political. Yale Divinity School's Miroslav Volf has written, "When we work for the well-being of communities, our work acquires a richer texture of meaning than when we work just for ourselves." ([A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good](#)) I do not know exactly what he has in mind in "a richer texture of meaning", but I am confident that such work is consistent with the wisdom of Jesus. Paul seems to indicate as much in [Philippians 2:1-11](#).

There are encouraging signs of this way of thinking filtering into the minds of church leaders. British theologian, Graham Ward, wrote a fantastic book entitled, [The Politics of Discipleship: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens](#) (Baker Academic, 2009). Ward's articulation of the Church/Churches' role in the world is carefully nuanced and filled with the hope of the gospel. This is in contrast to Sojourners Magazine's COO, Charles Gutenson, who wrote [Christians and the Common Good](#) (Brazos Press, 2011). Gutenson's ideas lack

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“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but to the interests of others.” (Phil. 2:3)

Oh...those Facts & Figures

November's Attendance

	<u>11/6</u>	<u>11/13</u>	<u>11/20</u>	<u>11/27</u>
AM	---	160	151	168
PM	---	---	---	50

Income

January – November 2011

Offerings	198,878.92
Capital Campaign	6,983.13
Ministry Teams	62,063.78
Bible School	901.47
Day Care	242,419.73
ECDC Reimbursement	41,255.71
Interest Income	105.76
Total	552,608.50

Expense

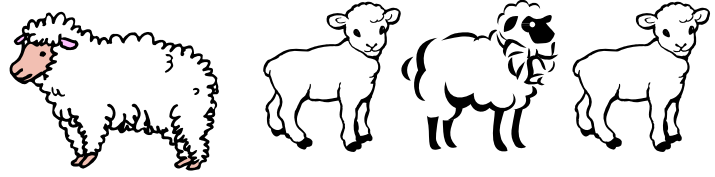
General	258,061.82
Ministry Teams	68,659.60
Bible School	2,297.86
Day Care	241,306.660
Total	570,325.88

Net

Income/Loss	(17,717.38)
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Assemble with the flock...



... Sunday Mornings in January:

- Jan. 1: “The Real Story”
Mark 1:1–8
- Jan. 8: “The Mission Begins”
Mark 1:9–20
- Jan. 15: “Characteristics of the
Jesus Mission”
Mark 1:21–39
- Jan. 22: “Challenging the Old Order”
Mark 1:40–2:15
- Jan. 29: “Challenging the Old
Gatekeepers”
Mark 2:16–28

...Sunday Evenings in January

- Jan. 1 – No Evening Groups
- Jan. 8,15,22,29 – Evening Groups Meet



At our January Ministry Council Meeting, after we finish our round of team reports, we will tackle issues related to the Resources of Englewood Church. Anything you would like discussed as part of that topic, let us know so it can be put on the agenda, printed and available for distribution the week before.

(continued from front cover)

imagination for delivering Christians from the vicious cycle of national government politics, although that is precisely what he set out to do. Because he expresses no vision for local churches as expressions of the Church and God bearing witness to “the powers” through the Church, his ideas about Christians working for the common good will ultimately lead back to government as the primary locus for change. James Davison Hunter recognizes this in his excellent book, To Change the World: the Irony, Tragedy, & Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World (Oxford University Press, 2010). While there may be some details with which I would argue with Hunter, essentially we see eye to eye: “Christians must cultivate tension with the world by affirming the centrality of the church itself and the parish or local congregation in particular. The church is God’s gift to his people and part of what makes it a strategic gift in our time is that it is a community and an institution.” (p.282)

As we share life together in “faithful presence” (a phrase Hunter repeatedly uses), our faithfulness must be conformed to that which was displayed by and spoken of by Jesus. To that end, our sermons on Sunday mornings in 2012 will focus on the story of Jesus as recorded primarily in the Gospel of Mark (texts and titles are available). I will be using many resource materials for this series, but the two works which have heavily influenced my preparation are Binding the Strong Man: a Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus by Ched Myers and Isaiah’s New Exodus in Mark by Rikki E. Watts. Hopefully, these teachings with our typical discussions which follow will help shape us in preparation for whatever God calls us. It should be another exciting year!

Mike

Ministry Team Meetings Scheduled for this month . . .

- *Monday, January 2nd Youth Team @ 7:30 pm (check with Rick & Ellen)??
- *Sunday, January 8th ... ECDC Team @ 4:30 pm
- *Monday, January 9th ... Ministry Council @ 7:00 pm



Hospitality Supper Crews for January

January 4th

Cooking Crew: Burks/Stultz/Amanda/Rhonda/Eva

Clean Up Crew: Lisa/Sharon/Debbie/Miriam

Dishwashers: Mike/Jake/Brad/Kyle

January 11th

Cooking Crew: Tuesday Night Group

Clean Up Crew: Carol/Claudette/Gwen/Helen

Dishwashers: Larry/Carl/Ted/Joe

January 18th

Cooking Crew: Victory Chapel

Clean Up Crew: Laura/Jennifer/Diana/Paula/Rhonda

Dishwashers: Rich/Kevin/David/Sam

January 25th

Cooking Crew: Mike/Lisa/Jake/Kendra/Laura/Amy

Clean Up Crew: Mary/Libby/Tracy/Tracy

Dishwashers: Greg/Dave/Josh/Tyler

For those who like to read ahead and be prepared for our study together on Sunday mornings, here is a list of the sermon scriptures and titles for 2012.

The following is a list of 44 sermons from the Gospel of Mark. The additional 8 Sundays will consist of 4 sermons for advent, 1 sermon for Easter and 3 special sermons to be announced later.

1. The Real Story (1:1-8)
2. The Mission Begins (1:9-20)
3. Characteristics of the Jesus Mission (1:21-39)
4. Challenging the Old Order (1:40-2:15)
5. Challenging the Old Gatekeepers (2:16-28)
6. The Plan B Community (3:1-19)
7. The New Household (3:20-35)
8. Gardening in Occupied Territory (4:1-23)
9. The Kingdom Will Prevail (4:24-34)
10. Crossing Over to a New World (4:35-41)
11. The Powers Crack! (5:1-20)
12. Healing Two Daughters (5:21-43)
13. No Home for the New Order (6:1-13)
14. The Clash of Prophets and Kings (6:14-29)
15. The Miracle in Sharing (6:30-44)
16. Will They Ever Learn...Will We? (6:45-56)
17. Purity Which Pollutes (7:1-23)
18. The Power of a Pushy Pagan (7:24-37)
19. Bread for the Journey (8:1-10)
20. The Miraculous Sign of One Loaf (8:11-21)
21. The Slowness of Restored Vision (8:22-26)
22. Blind Confessions (8:27-33)
23. A Simple Call (8:34-9:1)
24. Confirming the Word of the Cross (9:2-29)
25. Single-Minded Pursuit of the Kingdom (9:30-50)
26. Divorce and the Way of Jesus (10:1-16)
27. The Ironic Captivity of Wealth (10:17-31)
28. Power's Curse and Vision's Gift (10:32-52)
29. The Hidden Triumph (11:1-10)
30. The Poverty and Crime of Religion (11:11-26)
31. The Question of Authority (11:27-12:17)
32. True Religion (12:18-34)
33. Final Judgment on False Religion (12:35-13:2)
34. The Long and Treacherous Way (13:3-23)
35. The Fall of the Powers (13:24-37)
36. Preparations for the Climax (14:1-25)
37. The Collapse of Old Discipleship (14:26-52)
38. Jewish Denial: Singular and Plural (14:53-15:1)
39. The Gentile Denial (15:2-20)
40. The Way of the Cross (15:21-32)
41. The End of the Old Order (15:33-38)
42. Reaction as Multiple Choice (15:39-47)
43. Reunion as New Beginning (16:1-7)
44. As the Credits Roll (16:8-20)

Join us for

**Poverty Issues and
Community Development**

A Conference hosted by:
Keystone Urban Institute & Victory Inner City Ministries

Thursday, January 19th 1:00 – 5:00 and 7:00 pm (rally)

Friday, January 20th . . . 1:00 – 5:00 and 7:00 pm (rally)

Saturday morning, January 21st . . . 9:00 – 12:00
(workshop for ministry planning)

To be held at Englewood Christian Church
57 N. Rural Street, Indianapolis

Registration: \$25 (group rates available)
College Credit available
Register at: keystoneui.org or call 752-7517

Facilitators:

Eric Himelick – Director of Victory Inner City Ministries
Dr. Stephen Gibson – Director of Keystone Urban Institute
Michael Bowling – Pastor of Englewood Christian Church

Learn to understand the inner-city street economy,
The meaning of vandalism and graffiti,
Definitions of poverty;
responsibility-based help
and the good and bad effects of current programs.
Hear both statistics and real-life stories.
Learn how to evaluate a plan for poverty relief

Applying methods of John Perkins, Bob Lupton, Wayne Gordon and others

Among our Family

A Thank You from Pat Starks for all the thoughts, prayers, notes and calls while she was recuperating from her fall and her surgery. It's great to have such a wonderful Englewood family!

Our thoughts and prayersare with Diana Tapp and all of her family at the death of her son, Jeremy, this past month.

We welcome Claudette Thomas into our Englewood family and rejoice in her baptism and decision to join us in God's kingdom work here.

From Shelley....Life Centers

I think most of you know what the G.R.A.C.E. Bible study is - a 5-week Bible study followed by a weekend retreat that helps post-abortive women find life-changing forgiveness and peace. A leadership training class will be held January 13 for anyone who's interested in leading a study group. You do not have to be post-abortive to be a leader. If you'd like to know more about it, you can call Life Centers at 280-2635. You can also call that number if you'd like to attend the next G.R.A.C.E. Bible study. No matter how long it's been since your abortion, it's not too late for God to release you from the burden you're carrying.

The next counselor training class will be held January 24-26 during the daytime. You can get details at 280-2635. If you're available during daytime hours to help as a peer counselor, they would love to hear from you.

For those of us who are not called to be leaders in this way, we can still participate in the work of saving lives. As you renew your license plates, you can purchase a Choose Life plate for \$40 above the normal cost (\$25 to Life Centers and \$15 processing fee). This simple action provides extra income to pregnancy resource centers in Indiana and is an encouragement to choose life-affirming alternatives.

On December 13 I heard an excellent hour-long conversation with Carol Everett on *In the Market With Janet Parshall*. You can listen to it by going to www.moodyradio.org/inthemarketwithjanetparshall. The topic is life after abortion and includes women and men telling their stories of how abortion affected their lives. I highly recommend it.

Shelley Van Antwerp shelley@bcibenefits.com

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Have you ever wanted to learn to sew??

A beginner's sewing class will be offered by Jenny Dickinson to be held on Saturdays from 10:00 am until Noon, beginning January 7th. The particular room we will meet in will be decided when we know how many are interested in attending. The number of people in attendance will determine the duration of the series of classes, but I would expect there to be approximately nine sessions. The class will entail hand stitching, pattern identification and layout for starters. A donation of one dollar is requested to cover the material for the hand sewing portion of the class. The class will be open to all age groups over 8 years old. We will need portable sewing machines; if you are willing to loan your machine to the project, we will ensure that the machines are locked up. Please let Jenny know if you plan to attend or if you have a machine to loan.

Missions Update

Christina Francis

A reminder to those of you who have committed support to Christina...our commitments to give begin this month. Thanks!

Andy & Jen May

Hello everyone! I've got a lot to update you all about, but I know no one likes long blog updates, so here I go.

No we have not all suddenly grown into a "giant" family, that's just a small Christmas tree behind us.

We have been getting a number of encouraging emails from friends and partners this month and we want to express how much they mean to us. Culture stress is real and always with us, so it really makes a difference when we get messages of encouragement.

Flood update. Literally, the flood waters came just across the canal from the church, but never crossed it. The flood waters are going down, many people are beginning the clean up, the danger is over. School is back in session and so are my English classes.

Visitors. We have 5 friends from Englewood Christian Church in Indianapolis, IN coming to share a visit with us. We have lots of Christmas activities planned, and they will be providing for us a much needed retreat. We are looking forward to the blessing of their visit.

Christmas. This year the church here has decide to forgo the traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service and instead will be sharing Operation Christmas Child gifts with our neighborhood kids. Although I'll miss the traditional service, this somehow seems more fitting and hopefully will make a greater impact. On Christmas day, along with our visitors, we will be having a birthday party for Jesus in our apartment for my students. This is a first for us, but we are excited about sharing Christmas in this way this year.

God is opening more opportunities to get closer to our students, please pray that as we get closer, God will use us in even greater ways.

*We pray that you have a blessed Christmas
-Andy, Jen, and the Boys*

At this writing, the Adams family is in Thailand with the May family....they get on the plane to come home on January 1st. We look forward to hearing stories and reports from their visit.

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Saltillo Christian Mission

Hello from Saltillo! We hope this brief update finds you well as we celebrate together the beginning of a new year and the arrival of the Messiah; our Lord Jesus the Christ.

Buy a Block Project

We would like to begin by expressing our deep appreciation for everyone who dedicated their time, energy and resources toward the Rummage Sale which has helped a great deal towards the construction of our home. We are very grateful for this beautiful expression of love and are committed to honoring your trust through faithful stewardship of these funds. Thank you all very much.

The next phase of the construction will be finishing the staircase and the roof over the back 2 bedrooms. Unfortunately, this is the same time of year when everybody else receives their Christmas bonuses. Meaning, we will have to wait a little bit to have workers available to do the actual construction, but in the first part of January we do plan to complete these aspects of the construction.

Family

We are thankful as well for the general health of our immediate family. We do ask that you please included Erika's grandpa in your prayers. He went to the hospital for the minor surgery in late July (and everything seemed o.k. afterward), but last week he went back to the hospital and we were informed that he has terminal cancer (detected in his liver but having spread from other as yet unknown areas) and that he has perhaps a week, two weeks, or maybe a month to live. For those of you who may not know, Erika was raised by her grandparents (from age 2); so this is especially difficult for her. Please keep the entire family in your prayers.

Salvador Christian Church

In the local congregation where we are members, we are in the final preparations for our Winter Vacation Bible School, finishing up the Children of the King year, and finalizing plans for 2012. One of the things that I appreciate the most about serving together with our brothers and sisters here is the openness to new ideas and the creative consideration of possibilities outside our inherited paradigms. In our conversations together, it is truly a blessing to witness how our Lord continues to lead His People unto greater faithfulness. Without a doubt, this next year will be very challenging and yet the commitment to a more radically discipleship has given us a sense of excitement as we look ahead. Please keep the entire congregation in your prayers as we humbly seek to discern God's Will for us as His people in this place.

Christian Bible Academy

We are also finishing up our current semester in the Academy. This year has been special in part because we have reached out and been received in a new location for our classes as well as the blessing of being able to serve new students in our studies together, all of which has helped to enrich our discussions and considerations of our Bible classes. I have personally been encouraged by the honest interaction many of our students have had with the practicality of our studies related to the priesthood of all believers, the Church and teaching to equip. I believe that honest consideration of our past and present will open the door to a new future which honors the incredible work of Christ in uniting and calling us to truly be a light unto the nations. Please continue to pray for all the students, teachers, and new students in the Academy.

In closing, we are truly blessed and sincerely grateful for all the Lord has done for us, in us, and among us and through us. We thank you for your faithful support of this ministry and commitment to our Lord's work here in this place. We hope you have a wonderful celebration of the Messiah's coming and are encouraged as we continue to live together in grace and peace.

Love, Nathan, Erika, Larissa, and David Ralston

The Englewood Christian

57 N. Rural Street

Indianapolis, In 46201-3297



All-Church Breakfast

Sunday, January 8th



8:00 – 9:00 am

Adults \$3.00 Kids...\$2.00

Proceeds go toward next summer's Youth Trip

Our All-Church Breakfast is the 2nd Sunday of each month...