

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*Cheryl Punzalan, Council President*

“Nothing is certain except death and taxes.” What this well-worn phrase refers to is the fact that changes in every aspect of our lives are inevitable. How we live our lives has changed so much even since I was young. Some of the changes have been for the better, while some have been to our detriment. I think about the small group of faithful worshipers who gave life to our ministry on Salem Street more than three-quarters of a century ago and wonder if they could imagine the changes that have taken place in the world, let alone their legacy in the intervening years. Just the current price of a gallon of gasoline alone would probably astonish them. Since the founding of this congregation, the cost of doing ministry has soared. I'm certain that we would be surprised at the cost to print and mail this newsletter each month.

We are lucky here at Salem in that we have a concerned and conscientious group of stewards who are watching what is spent out of our adopted budget. They have been very faithful in curbing costs this year, and although we still find ourselves behind in our budgeted expenses versus our receipts, we are doing better than we were last year at this time. Can anything be blamed for this budget gap? The slow economy, low interest rates, the rising costs of fossil fuel, the slow job market and the soaring costs of housing all affect us. However, there is no blame to be placed. What we need to do is look at how to cope with these factors.

If you haven't already received it, a letter is coming asking for your prayerful consideration of an extra monetary gift to help us deal with the rising costs of doing ministry. Last year's gifts made a great deal of difference in closing the gap between income and expenses. This year we can ensure that we keep up with our costs if each of us makes an additional gift to the ministry of Salem. Please look at your own Salem balance sheets and see how you can help us deal with the changing costs we are facing. For me, the blessings I receive from this ministry are priceless. My Salem balance sheet is heavily weighted toward the receipt side. I will do what I can to help offset it with my extra gift.

Shalom, Cheryl



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