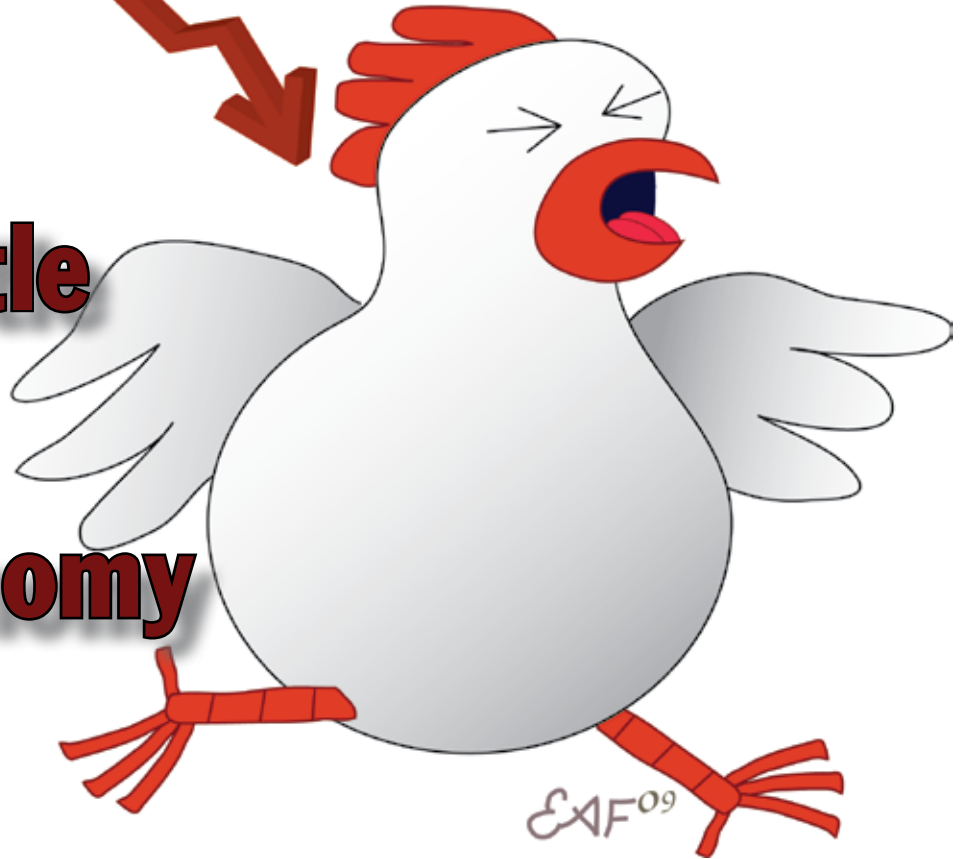




Chicken Little and the Falling Economy

by The Rev. Jay George



Chicken Little was in the woods one day when an acorn fell on her head. It scared her so much she trembled all over. She shook so hard, half her feathers fell out.

“Help! Help! The sky is falling! I have to go tell the king.”

“Help! Help! The sky is falling!”

“Slow down there, Chicken Little. Do

your breathing exercises. The sky is not falling.”

“It’s not?”

“No. Not the sky. Just the budget.”

“Just the budget! Just the budget!”

“Yes, just the budget. We’ve cut programs by \$100,000.”

“SQUAWK! \$100,000! The sky IS falling!”

“Look, I don’t have time to argue. Let’s just say, for the sake of your amazing lack

of vision, that the sky IS falling. So what if it is?"

"So what if the sky is falling? So what! But will happen if the sky falls?"

"When the sky falls, you can finally see beyond the horizon."

"What's a horizon?"

"Oh good heavens. Look, the horizon is an artificial construction of your brain that is merely the point beyond which you cannot see. It doesn't physically exist. It's an idea."

"Oh. I didn't understand that, either."

"I didn't think you would."

"So what happens when you see beyond this artificial whatahoos-it?"

"You can see new horizons, new opportunities, new possibilities."

"New opportunities?"

"Right."

"New possibilities?"

"You are correct, sir."

"I'm not a sir. I'm a chicken."

"And you never watched Johnny Carson."

"Who?"

"Never mind, you paltry poultry. Just look at it this way: the falling budget is not the end, it's a new beginning. A new possibility for our community to examine our individual and communal heart."

"Is that a good thing?"

"You silly chicken! Of course it's a good thing. It's not comfortable. It may not even be pleasant. But in doing so, we gain new perspective."

"With the new horizon."

"Now you're getting it. Just think, we can re-learn the difference between want and need. We can re-examine our mission and how our programs do or do not support it. We can open ourselves to the possibility of more."

"More? If the budget's falling, isn't there less?"

"Less budget leads us to greater opportunity. To the chance to give more of ourselves, our time, our actions, our money - our very lives."

"So the budget falling is a good thing?"

"It could be. Depends on how we live it out. We can duck our heads under our wings, cowering in fear, closing our eyes to the opportunities now before us. Or we can reach out for more."

"More budget?"

"More life. John 10:10."

"Johnny Carson?"

"Different John."

"So the falling budget is really an opportunity for more life."

"That a girl."

"I'm not a girl..."

"Right. You're a chicken."

"And I've got to go tell the king."

"Chicken Little, the King already knows." **t**



Reprinted with permission from a previous edition of St. Mark's Messenger, when George was assistant rector at the San Antonio church. George is now starting a new congregation in northwest San Antonio. Reach him at revjaygeorge@me.com