



The Central Visitor

A weekly visitor to your home bringing you news from Central Christian Church

Vol. LXXVII

Decatur, Illinois, November 23, 2005

No. 47

Hang the Greens this Sunday

The congregation will gather for its traditional service for hanging the greens in the sanctuary this Sunday afternoon at 4:30 p.m. Members who have joined our church in the last year will do the readings for the service. Central's choirs and soloists will sing anthems of the season as the greens are put in place. The service lasts less than an hour. Bring your family and friends!

Spirit of Christmas 2005

Names are now available for adoption in the Friendship Center for our *Spirit of Christmas* ministry of giving and compassion for 2005. Plan now to participate in this wonderful outreach ministry by either "adopting" one or more persons to share your spirit of giving with gifts that you provide, or by giving a cash donation to the program by marking your check made payable to the church with *Spirit of Christmas*. We are anticipating sharing with nearly 100 children and adults from Dove, Webster-Cantrell Hall, and Decatur Township Assistance. All gifts should be returned to the church, wrapped and tagged, no later than Sunday, December 11th when they will be dedicated during our morning worship.

Alternative Gift Giving Coming Soon

The Christian Action and Community Service Department is once again inviting you to participate in the Alternative Gift Giving program for 2005. You are invited to make a tax-deductible donation to one of our seven worthy outreach organizations in honor of someone for the holiday season. This year you may purchase alternative gifts in honor of your loved ones from Baby Talk, ChristCare Stitchers, DOVE, Good Samaritan Inn, Habitat for Humanity, Heifer Project International, and the Oasis Day Center for the homeless.

Stop by the Alternative Gift Market near the West Entrance on Sundays, December 4 & 11; make a donation in someone's name to one of our seven organizations; and we'll provide you with a certificate or card to send to your loved one telling them of the wonderful gift you have made in their honor for the holidays. It's really that simple! Make Alternative Gift Giving a part of your Christmas experience.

Sisters in Spirit December Gathering

Our December Sisters in Spirit Gathering will find us, once again, meeting at Mari-Mann Herb Farm where Maribeth King will talk to us about and present some examples of finger foods for the holidays. We will gather at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7th at the Farm, located at the north end of St. Louis Bridge Road. Participants are also invited to bring their own favorite finger food creations to share (both to eat and on recipe cards). The cost is \$4 per person (payable that evening) and you may sign up this Sunday in the Friendship Center or by calling the church office. Sisters in Spirit is a monthly gathering of Central women and is open to all who are interested. It is not a group in the traditional sense, but rather an opportunity to gather around specific interests and programs. Plan to join us for this interesting and delicious presentation and sign up in the Friendship Center!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2005

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

False Hope

Text: Mark 13:24-37

Robert Bushey

Congregational Meeting This Sunday

The Congregation will meet at noon on Sunday, November 27 to vote on a recommended budget for 2006 and on a proposal to conduct a capital campaign for building fund needs next spring. All members are invited to attend and vote.

Believe!

The 2005 collection of Advent devotional readings written by members of our congregation was handed out last Sunday with the worship



bulletins. Copies of the booklet are being mailed to other members to reach them by the beginning of Advent next Sunday. Additional copies to share with family and friends are available in the church office.

Partners in Prayer

A booklet of Advent devotional readings collected from the books by **Dr. C. William Nichols** has been published by Christian Board of Publication and is available for sale at the church for \$2 per copy.



CCC KIDS

Sunday, December 4th

4:30-5:30 p.m.

Games, snacks, friends and fun!

Central Youth

Sunday, December 4th

5:30-7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting and Game
Table Fun.

Bring money for a Fast Food run and we will learn about events coming later in December and in January.

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 18th

5:00 p.m.

CCC KIDS and Central Youth will bring "tidings of comfort and cheer" to several homes of church members. Hot chocolate, finger foods and goodies will be waiting for us afterwards at Pastor Robert's house.

A Message from Our General Minister & President

You are invited to come and listen to the closing message from the General Assembly in Portland, Oregon preached by our recently elected and installed General Minister and President Rev. Sharon Watkins. The DVD of the sermon has arrived and will be shown in the Great Hall this Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Robert's Reflections

Soon we will begin the last month of another calendar year. Certainly not the least of months, December can be one of the busiest for our consumer-oriented culture. Soon yards and homes will be decorated in anticipation of that most special day, which is one of the first dates we memorize. Before we know it we will be struggling to remember to write 06 instead of 05 at the end of dates. And, we will be making all those hopeful plans for the New Year.

While the calendar year begins on January 1st, the church year begins this Sunday with the start of the season of Advent. The season of Advent is a time of anticipation and preparation for the joyous celebration of Christmas that honors Christ's birth. The season of Advent is also one of anticipation of Christ's return and the consummation of God's plan of salvation for the world. For the early church the focus during Advent was one of penitence, but today the season focuses more on the hope that Christ's birth and rebirth in the world will usher in a new age of peace and joy. Advent is a season of tension between the "already" and the "not yet" as we prepare to celebrate the first coming of Jesus and anticipate his coming into the world again.

Advent began as a six-week season of preparation for baptism at Christmas, paralleling the Season of Lent. However, because Christmas was seen as a lesser festival than Easter, Advent was shortened to four weeks in the 6th century. Advent is known as a "little Lent" in which we reflect and prepare. While in recent times this has meant preparing for all the delight of Christmas, it should be a time of spiritual preparation as well, for the indwelling of Christ in our lives in a new way.

This Sunday, we begin our observation of the season of Advent with the lighting of the first candle of the Advent Wreath during our morning worship and with the Hanging of the Greens that afternoon. We begin our preparation for the Advent of our Lord anew in our lives with a call to watchfulness and with words of hope.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel and grant us hope for this season of waiting and watching.

Peace & Joy, *Robert*

Remembrance and Hope for Those Who Grieve at Christmas

All are invited to attend a special service of Remembrance and Hope for Those Who Grieve at Christmas on Sunday, December 4th at 4:30 p.m. Through meditation and scripture, prayer and song, we will lift up the names and memories of those who have passed away and offer hope and peace for those who grieve. The service, sponsored by our Stephen Ministers, is open to the community. Childcare will be provided for young children in the nursery. For more information, speak with **Pastor Gretchen**.

FunTimers on the Go to Sullivan

The Fun Timers, Central's "on the go" group for those 55 years and older, will head to Sullivan on December 21st for their Holiday Show matinee *The Magic of Christmas*. We will join the talented performers of The Little Theatre On The Square for a magical adventure filled with beautiful songs, dances, comedy routines, and classic stories that will surely lift your spirits and challenge even Scrooge to leave the theatre without Christmas in his heart. Admission to the show is \$23. Tickets are limited and must be paid in advance. We will leave the church at 10:30 a.m. Following the show, we'll plan to stop at the Old School Market for a late lunch/early supper (lunch additional). Sign ups begin this Sunday in the Friendship Center or call the church office to reserve your ticket. For more information, see **Pastor Gretchen**.



News From the Pews....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of **Betty Warner**, following her death on November 16.....and to **Myra & Jim Hinze** and family following the death of Myra's mother, **Maryann Hunter** of Calumet City.

Note of Thanks Received

What a Thanksgiving season blessing was extended to me by the Dorcas Disciples ladies when they brought me one of their "soup-er" home cooked meals. It was "soup-er" delicious! May the good Lord richly bless each and every one of you.

Your Friend in Christ, **Roe Skidmore**

Mobile Phone Collection

Don't know what to do with your old cellular phone? Don't throw it away! CACS is sponsoring a Cellular Phone Collection called Shelter Help for the Dove Domestic Violence Program. Bring your used mobile phone to the church and we will give them to Dove, who will earn credits and/or phones to give to shelter clients. All phones are programmed to be used for emergency use and stored memory, such as fast dial phone numbers, is deleted.

Donations Needed for Mothers and Children

Our Sisters in Spirit Women's Group is currently soliciting donations of small items for both mothers and babies involved in the Baby Talk Family Literacy and Teen Parent programs, both programs housed at Central. Items will be used as Christmas gifts and incentive gifts for those involved. Items needed are body lotions, sprays and soaps; nail polish; candles; women's "fun" socks; hot chocolate mix; mugs; diapers; board books for children; puzzles; blocks; balls; hats and mittens for children; children's educational toys for ages 6 weeks to 3 years. Items will be collected in the box provided on the Women's Ministry Table in the Friendship Center through Sunday, December 4.

Children's Christmas Workshop, December 10th

The Christian Education Department is sponsoring a Children's Christmas Workshop on Saturday, December 10th from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. for children ages 3 yrs.-11 yrs. Children will be able to make Christmas gifts for their parents and siblings. Elves and helpers will be available to assist the children with their projects. Santa will also stop by for a visit. The cost for the workshop is \$5 per child. Plans are being made for a Parent's Day Out, on a donation basis, for children birth to 11 yrs. beginning at 11 a.m. and running until 3 p.m. Mark your calendar today and watch for your chance to register for the workshop in the Friendship Center.



Sunday, November 27, 2005

8:15 and 10:45- Worship Services
Music: 8:15 Offertory-Central Singers
10:45 Offertory-Chancel Choir
8:15 & 10:45-**Blessing of Children**
8:30-10:15-Parish Nurse Clinic
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
9:30-Sunday School
9:30-Jr. High Chimes, Music Room
11:15-Children's Worship, 250
12:00-Congregational Meeting, Disciple Room

4:30-Hanging of the Greens Service

Monday (28)

8:00-Wellness Walk/Light Aerobics, Great Hall/Heritage Center
4:00-Aerobics

Tuesday (29)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting, Senior Pastor's Study
1:15-ChristCare, 218
4:00-Aerobics

Wednesday (30)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290
12:00-Central Singers
2:00-ChristCare, 290
4:00-Aerobics

Thursday (December 1)

10:00-Alanon, 212
4:00-Aerobics
6:00-Chancel Bells
6:30-Decatur Needle Arts, 207
7:00-Chancel Choir

Friday (2)

8:00-Wellness Walk/Light Aerobics, Great Hall/Heritage Center

Saturday (3)

9:30-Dorcas Brunch, home of Carol Graham

Counting On You

November 20

Worship Attendance 374
Sunday School Attendance 67

Serving Schedule—November 27, 2005

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Jan Baird, Carol Graham

Elders Serving Hospital Communion:

St. Mary's Hospital: Linda Kuhns

Decatur Memorial: Julie Martin

Deacons:

8:15 - Team 1 - Chris Fagin, Capt., Tina Canfield, Jared Carter, Bev Chapman, Merle Chapman, Jim DeZarn, Dennis Downey, Al Fagin, Sally Force, Gene Garver, Sandy Garver, Dean Gray, Janet Gray, Bob Hoaglin, Joe Lewis, John Paradee, Gail Prince, Dean Simcox, Sue Simcox, Rebecca Smart

10:45 - Team 2 - Richard Ward, Capt., Cathy Ash, Jim Ash, Neil Baird, Debbie Bateman, Philip Bateman, Azalee Berner, Warren Berner, Dale Ford, Judy Ford, Alex Harm, Christine Lyman-Harm, Ernestine Mrozinski, Ron Oliver, Dave Phillips, Nita Phillips, Brett Swallow, Kelly Swallow, Steve Swarthout, Janet Thicksten, Larry Thicksten, Karen Thomas, Kathy Thornton

Ushers:

8:15 - Team 2 - Don Tankersley, Capt., Carl Boline, Frances Heiserman, Becky Johnston

10:45 - Team 7 - Karen McFadin, Chad McFadin, Jon French, Jane French, Clyde Booher

Greeters:

8:15 - Tom & Doris Israel, David & Rosalie Poland

10:45 - Betty & Larry Chapman, Bob & Mary Jane Linton

Fellowship Coffee Hosts:

 Glen & Jody Featherstun

Acolytes:

8:15 - Sarah Funk

10:45 - Erik Harm, David Martin

Children's Worship:

 Katie Powers

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Donna Dash

10:45 - Jordan Backes

Preparation of Communion:

Jean & Judson Pease, Claudia Curry, Kevin Miller, Susan Woods

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Keith Backes

10:45 service only - Richard Ward

Hanging of the Greens Service - Richard Ward

November 30 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Sara Field, Patt Kuhns

Hosts:

Nov. 28 9:00-12:30 - Sara Field

12:30-4:00 - Ken Davis

Nov. 29 9:00-12:30 - Carol Charlton

12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

Nov. 30 9:00-12:30 - Lilabelle Traylor

12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

Dec. 1 9:00-12:30 - Betty March

12:30-4:00 - Shirlee Johnson

Dec. 2 9:00-12:30 - Bonnie Sauer

12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

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Charles Watkins Senior Pastor
Robert Bushey Pastor for Children Youth and Families
Gretchen Barron Pastor for Evangelism and Membership
C. William Nichols Senior Minister Emeritus
Jim Whitaker Pastor for Visitation
Don Martin Minister of Music
Leslie Peart Organist
Valerie Rozanski Administrative Secretary
Pat Beals Church Secretary
Sue Burkham, Jane Latshaw Parish Nurse Coordinators
Joanne Frady, Sarah & Debra Fulk Childcare Providers
Shelby Larrick, Bryan Rutherford Childcare Providers
Jean Pease Preschool Director
Trudy Garland, Shelly Messmore Preschool Teachers
Kay Villarreal, Robin White Preschool Teachers
Rudi Descaro Custodian
David Flanders Custodian
Dean Hadden Custodian
Charles Wallace Custodian

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