



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXVII

Decatur, Illinois, December 21, 2005

No. 51



*Wishing you a Merry Christmas
and a Joyous Holiday Season
from the Staff of
Central Christian Church*

*Gretchen Barron
Pat Beals
Sue Burkham
Robert Bushey
Rudi Descaro
Dave Flanders
Joanne Frady
Debra Fulk
Sarah Fulk
Trudy Garland
Dean Hadden
Shelby Larrick
Jane Latshaw*

*Don Martin
Shelly Messmore
C. William Nichols
Leslie Peart
Jean Pease
Valerie Rozanski
Bryan Rutherford
Kay Villarreal
Charles Wallace
Charles Watkins
Jim Whitaker
Robin White*



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2005

WORSHIP AT 10:00

The Word Became Flesh

Text: John 1:1-14

Charles Watkins

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion

The traditional Christmas Eve service will be at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday with carols, candles and communion for all believers regardless of denominational affiliation or background.



**Candlelight
Service**

Christmas Morning Worship

The congregation will celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in worship in a single service on Christmas morning at 10:00 a.m. All members and friends are invited to the combined service this Sunday.

Holiday Office Hours

The church office will close at noon on Friday, December 23 and at noon on Friday, December 30. The office will be closed on Monday, December 26 and Monday January 2.

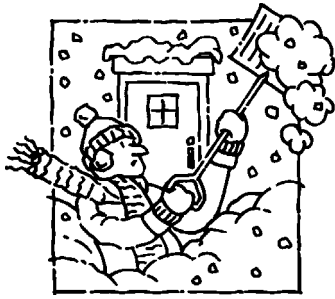


New Year's Eve Pops Concert

Celebrate the completion of 2005 in a concert of popular organ favorites in Central's sanctuary on New Year's Eve at 8:30 p.m. Our guest artist will be **Paul Fleckenstein**, organist and director of music at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, Delaware. A native of California, he holds degrees from the

University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music and Westminster Choir College.

The program Paul Fleckenstein will play is full of delightful pieces and lighter favorites that your friends will enjoy when you invite them to join you at Central on New Year's Eve.



Youth Group Scoop

Christmastide Celebration

Sunday, January 1st
9 a.m.

Celebrate the Christmas Season and New Years with cake and punch! Sponsored by the Christian Education Department & Sunday School. Children and Youth Sunday School Classes and Youth groups will not meet on New Years Day.

Winter Youth Party
Sunday, January 29th
2-5 p.m.

First Christian Church
of Sullivan

A fun break in your January "blahs." So make sure it's on your schedule, then go get the crew, grab some food, and get psyched to Bring it! Koinonia & Shalom Camp Reunions! Led by the Rev. Mike Dixon.

Charles's Column

Central's celebration of Christmas has been marked by fantastic music and enormous generosity. And the celebration is not over yet! This week-end with a service on Saturday evening at 7:30 and on Sunday morning at 10:00 will round out our formal Christmas observances. Between now and then, the tremendous outpouring of your generous gifts in our annual *Spirit of Christmas* mission will be distributed to some of the least fortunate children and adults in our community. We are grateful to the Decatur Township, DOVE, Inc. and Webster Cantrell Hall for the cooperation of their social services staff in gathering information about ninety individuals whose Christmas will be brighter because of their efforts and yours. **Penny Rutherford, Judy Ford,** and **Darla Otis** are the members of Central's *Spirit of Christmas* task force greatly assisted by **HH & Hilary Critchfield** and **Dale Ford**.

Those who believe that Christmas is really all about giving have found many ways of expressing their belief and commitment through our church this year.

I am especially grateful to those who give the gift of music to God and allow us to over-hear it. Minister of Music **Don Martin**, Organist **Leslie Peart**, singers and ringers in our church choirs, soloists and instrumentalists of every sort have added greatly to my joy this Christmas. The service that includes **Dr. Michael Luxner** and musicians from the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra is a favorite of mine. Thanks from all of us are due to those whose over-and-above gifts to Central make it possible to have such wonderful music in our church.

And now, ready or not, Christmas arrives this week-end. I hope you have figured out how your family's celebration can include the two worship services on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. I'll be looking for you! May God bless you with a joyous Christmas!

Charles Watkins

Thank You One and All!

Thank you to everyone who helped make our annual Come Home for Christmas Breakfast and Lunch such wonderful events! Special thanks to the Fellowship and Shepherding Departments, chaired by **Keith** and **Jeannie Backes** and **Brenda Tankersley** and everyone else who helped to plan, prepare, serve and clean up. It was a big job, but you helped make the season bright for so many. Thank you, one and all!

Bequest Giving Reaches Out to Decatur Children

Recently a task group of persons from our local and global outreach departments met to allocate funds from undesignated bequests that were left to Central. Our policy allows for one-third of such bequests to be used for outreach ministries. Earlier this month, Central granted a gift of nearly \$12,000 to Project Success of Decatur & Macon County to help fund a truancy prevention program and after-school tutoring program. Due to federal cut-backs, these highly effective programs were in danger of being lost. Executive Director, Jane Shade said, "Thanks to the response of Central Christian Church, our Right Track truancy program and After School tutoring program can continue this year to positively impact at risk children by helping them succeed and stay in school." Remembering Central in your estate planning positively impacts the lives of those both near and far.

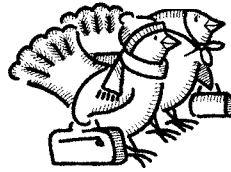
News From the Pews....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Jane & Jon French** following the December 15th death of Jane's 93 year old father, *George Wagner* of Morris, Illinois.....to **Dorothy Keck** following the December 15th death of her brother, *Herbert Clyde Foster* of Greenville, Illinois.....and to **Julie & Don Martin** following the December 17th death of Julie's uncle, *Robert Mikels* in Florida and following the Dec. 18th death of Julie's aunt, *Bev Crowden*, of Lafayette, Indiana.

Congratulations to **Karen Gagnon**, who graduated magna cum laude on Sunday, December 18 from Millikin University. Karen is the daughter of **Ed & Jean Voice**.

Snowbird Alert

If you are a "snowbird" headed for warmer weather for the winter, please let the church office know before you leave town. We want you to continue to get your newsletter and other mail from the church. Call the church office, 428-4336 or email central@cccdisciples.org.



Complete your 2005 Giving Plan

If you need an updated report on where you stand with your 2005 giving plan, please call the church office so that these figures can be provided for you. We hope all giving plans can be fulfilled by December 31 so that your year-end acknowledgement will show no balance remaining. If we all achieve the estimates of giving we filed in 2004, our church can end the year in a positive financial position!

Counting On You

December 18

Worship Attendance493
Sunday School Attendance 74

During the month of November, Central received gifts for the General Operating Fund of \$42,723 which is \$8,277 below the giving goal for the month.

Expenses to operate the church in November were \$62,297. The cost of carrying on our church's ministries in November exceeded total income by \$12,421. In the first eleven months of this year, it has cost \$39,773 more to do the work of our church than our church has received.

All outreach commitments for November both locally and globally were paid in full.

Gifts to the *Sailing Forward in the Spirit* capital campaign during November were \$9,279. The church's total indebtedness stands at \$47,191.

Your regular and generous giving keeps Central going! We're counting on you! Be sure to do your best for your church, so that your church can do its best for God. Detailed monthly financial reports for the congregation and for the Board of Trustees are always available on the counter in the Friendship Center by the church office. You can pick up a copy and see exactly where the congregation stands financially.



Sunday, December 25, 2005

10:00-Worship Service

Music:

10:00 Offertory-Central Singers

10:00 Anthem-Chancel Choir

Monday (26)

Church & Office Closed

Tuesday (27)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207

10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,

Senior Pastor's Study

4:00-Aerobics

Wednesday (28)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 280

4:00-Aerobics

Thursday (29)

10:00-Alanon, 212

4:00-Aerobics

Friday (30)

8:00-Wellness Walk/Light Aerobics,

Great Hall/Heritage Center

12:00-Trustees Meeting, Disciple Room

12:00-Church Office Closes

Saturday (31)

8:30-Organ Pops Concert with

Paul Fleckenstein, Sanctuary

2005 Christmas Special Offering

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

"God sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. We saw his Son and are now telling others about him"
- 1 John 4:14 (CEV).

Give generously to support the ministry of your Region.

This special offering, part of the Disciples Mission Fund, is collected and distributed for Disciples through the Church Finance Council.

Serving Schedule—December 25, 2005

Elders:

10:00 - Kevin Otis, Cindy Soebbing

Elders Serving Hospital Communion:

St. Mary's Hospital: Bob Smith

Decatur Memorial: Larry Chapman

Ushers:

10:00 - Team 6 - Maxine Koenig, Betty Chapman, Larry Chapman,
Mark Beal, Katie Beal, Kaylene Beal, Sean Beal

Greeters:

10:00 - Bruce & Liz Campbell, Larry & Sally Thicksten

Acolyte:

10:00 - Joshua Bushey, Daniel Hinze

P.A. Operator:

10:00 - Larry Pepper

Preparation of Communion:

Barbara Beyer, Karen Baird, Donna Dash, Jan & Ron Dobbs

Van Driver:

7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service, Andrew Fulk

10:00 service only - Richard Ward

December 28 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Sara Field, Patt Kuhns

Hosts:

Dec. 26 Church & Office Closed

Dec. 27 9:00-12:30 - Barb Flanders

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

Dec. 28 9:00-12:30 - Virginia Griffith

12:30-4:00 - Ruby Agnew

Dec. 29 9:00-12:30 - Sara Field

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

Dec. 30 9:00-12:00 - *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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