



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXX

Decatur, Illinois, November 28, 2007

No. 48

Hang the Greens and Taste the Goodies

We will decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas and begin a new liturgical year this coming Sunday in a single service at 10 a.m. The first candle of Advent will be lit in the morning services, and then banners and wreaths and garlands will dress our sanctuary for the coming of the Lord.

Children and Youth Sunday School Classes will meet at 9-9:45 a.m. Children's Worship will not meet this Sunday.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

WORSHIP AT 10:00

HANGING OF THE GREENS

Are We There Yet?

Text: Isaiah 2:1-5

Charles Watkins



Music for a Merry Christmas

Organist **Leslie Peart** will present the next concert in Central's fall series on December 9 at 4:30 p.m. in our annual Music for a Merry Christmas Concert. A highlight for the season, you will love the beautiful music Sunday afternoon, December 9. Be sure to bring your friends and family.

You're Invited to Come Home for Christmas

You and your family are invited to Come Home to Central on Sunday, December 16th as we celebrate the theme, "Rejoice!". During the worship services special musical guests will be the Millikin/Decatur Symphony Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Dr. Michael Luxner. This year, our Fellowship and Shepherding departments will host a delicious brunch at 9:15 a.m. and an equally delightful lunch at noon, both in the Great Hall. The menu will include Baked Ham, Hash Brown Casserole and Croissants. Added with the brunch will be Scrambled Eggs and Fruit Salad and the lunch will also include Jello Salad, vegetables and dessert. More information and a response card should arrive in your mailbox this week. Deadline for registration for either meal is December 9th. Mark your calendar and plan now to Come Home to Central for Christmas!

Spirit of Christmas

Several cards remain on the kiosk for Central's *Spirit of Christmas* ministry of giving and compassion! You may 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 sharing with 90 children and adults from Webster-Cantrell Hall, Decatur Township Assistance, and the DPS #61 Phoenix II alternative school for teen moms, which meets on our campus. All gifts should be returned to the church, wrapped and tagged, no later than Sunday, December 9th when they will be dedicated during our morning worship.

"Tasting" Party on December 2nd

The Fellowship Department invites you to a tasting party following the single Hanging of the Greens Service this Sunday, December 2nd. After the 10 a.m. service and congregational meeting, we invite you to stay awhile, visit with others from your church family and enjoy goodies throughout the Friendship Center, Welcome Center and Library. We don't often have a chance for members from both services to mix and mingle so this provides a wonderful opportunity! Please bring a finger food to share, place it on the table in the Volunteer Room (in the office) before the worship service. Committee members will take care of refrigeration and setting things out on the tables for everyone to enjoy following the service.

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• **If you are planning to**
 • **attend the Christmas Eve**
 • **service and could serve as**
 • **deacon, please call Kelly**
 • **Swallow, 876-7205.**

Central Youth

Sunday, December 2nd
7-8:30 p.m.

Youth will meet in the Point for planning, prayer and fun.

Saturday, December 8th
Youth Sponsored
Parent's Day Out

Central Youth will provide care and activities for children ages 3-11 yrs. from noon until 4 p.m. Youth are asked to sign up to work a two-hour shift.



Christmas Caroling
Sunday, December 16th
4:30-6:30 p.m.

We will travel to several members' homes to spread Holiday cheer! Hot chocolate will be waiting for us when we return!

Elves Needed for Workshop

Elves and Wrappers are needed for the 2007 Children's Christmas Workshop which will be open on Saturday, December 8th from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. for children ages 3 yrs. – 11 yrs. Children will be able to make Christmas gifts for their parents and siblings. Elves and helpers are still needed to assist the children with their projects.

Please, contact
Pastor Robert
if you can help
us on Decem-
ber 8th.



Charles's Column

This Sunday we go back to the beginning as a new church year begins, and we start our preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Century after century, we gather up our hope and turn our hearts toward God. An old-fashioned Latin hymn from the 9th Century based on Philippians 2:5-11 sets forth our advent prayer:

Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all, we pray you, hear us when we call.

To you the deep travail was known that made the whole creation groan.
You came, O Savior to set free your own in glorious liberty.

When this old world drew on toward night, you came,
but not in splendor bright, not as a monarch, but the child of Mary, blame-
less, mother mild.

At your great name, O Jesus now all knees must bend, all hearts must bow:
all things on earth with one accord, like those in heaven shall call you Lord.

I invite you to renew your hope and grow your faith at Central each Sunday for the rest of the year as the church celebrates the coming of Jesus and the hope of the ages. Each service will be moving and encouraging, especially if you involve yourself in the singing and praying and praising the God of our salvation.

Charles Watkins

Advent Devotional Booklets Mailed

This year's collection of Advent devotional meditations written by members of our congregation were handed out in worship last Sunday. Those who were not in church should receive a copy of the collection in the mail before Sunday. If you want additional copies of the booklet, you can pick them up for family and friends in the church office next week.

Budget for 2008

The congregation will meet in business session this Sunday at the end of the 10:00 service to vote on the recommended budget for 2008. This is the first balanced operating budget recommended since 1997. All members of the congregation are invited to attend and cast a ballot on the budget.

Children's Christmas Pageant Moved to December 23rd

The Children's Christmas Pageant that was previously scheduled for this Sunday has been rescheduled for Sunday, December 23rd at 9:30 a.m. The pageant, which features the story of the nativity from the gospels of Matthew and Luke will take place on the Great Hall Stage and will be followed by a Birthday Celebration for Jesus sponsored by the Christian Education Department with refreshments. Rehearsals are scheduled for Saturdays, December 1st and 15th at 10-11:30 a.m.



News From the Pews....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Joanne Gustin** and family following the November 24th death of her granddaughter, *Emily Suzzanne "Bunny" Neese*, of St. Charles, Missouri.

Alternative Gift Giving Market Open!

The Christian Action and Community Service Department invites you to participate in the Alternative Gift Giving program this Sunday, December 2nd. 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.



Here's how the program works: browse the gift opportunities in the Friendship Center, stop by the Alternative Gift Market near the West Entrance; make a donation in someone's name to one of our seven organizations; and we will 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 is really that simple, and that hard to buy for person who has everything anybody could possibly want and more, is well taken care of! Plan now to make Alternative Gift Giving a part of your Christmas experience in 2007.

Volunteers Needed for H2O

Our One Church One School ministry with Hope Academy is seeking volunteers to help with Central's after school program H2O, which meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, at the school. We are currently serving twenty students from 3rd-6th Grade. Volunteers are still needed for the program and do not need to be available every Tuesday or Thursday. Contact **Pastor Robert** if you are interested in helping with the H2O program.

Hunger Relief Task Force Needs your Help!

The Hunger Relief Task Force needs more volunteers to help prepare and serve our December 15th meal. If you can help, please sign up in the Friendship Center or contact **Pastor Robert** at 428-4336.

Plan Ahead for a Life-Changing Mission Opportunity in 2008!

Central Christian Church and our sister congregation, Prairie Avenue Christian Church, are planning a third trip to the New Orleans area for next year. Our mission delegation will leave Decatur on Saturday, April 19th and return to Decatur Sunday, April 27th. During our week in Slidell, LA, we will work with local Disciples Churches and the North Shore Emergency Relief Agency, helping to rebuild individual homes that were destroyed in the 2005 hurricanes. Now is the time to plan ahead, save these dates, and arrange for time away! More details and registration forms will be available soon.



Sunday, December 2, 2007

10:00-Hanging of the Greens Service
Music: 10:00 Offertory-Chancel Choir, Trumpet, Organ
10:00 Anthem-Children's Choir
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Liz Campbell
9:00-Sunday School
11:00-Tasting Party, Friendship Center
7:00-Youth Group, The Point

Monday (3)

5:30-Christian Ed. Dept., 290
6:30-Boy Scouts, Great Hall
6:30-CACS Dept., Disciple Room
6:30-CCC Bowling, PlaMor Lanes

Tuesday (4)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting, Senior Pastor's Study
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
6:30-Beta Sigma Phi, 207

Wednesday (5)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290
9:00-12:00-Dove, Disciple Room
12:00-Central Singers

Thursday (6)

9:00-12:00-Dove, Disciple Room
10:00-Alanon, 212
1:30-ChristCare, 290
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
6:30-Decatur Needle Arts, 207
7:00-Chancel Choir

Saturday (8)

7:30-Elders' Breakfast, Great Hall
10:00-12:00-Children's Christmas Workshop, Disciple Room
12:00-4:00-Parents Day Out
8:00-Bells in Motion, Sanctuary

Counting On You

November 25

Worship Attendance 320
Sunday School Attendance 56

Serving Schedule—December 2, 2007

Hanging of the Greens Service

Elders:

10:00 - Larry Chapman, Julie Martin

Elders Serving Imboden Creek Living Center:

Bob Smith, Janet Lyman

Deacons:

10:00 - 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, Erik Harm, Christine Lyman-Harm, Daniel Hinze, David Martin, Ron Oliver, Dave Phillips, Nita Phillips, Kelly Swallow, Steve Swarhout, Janet Thicksten, Larry Thicksten, Sally Thicksten, Kathy Thornton

Ushers:

10:00 - Teams 5 & 10 - Mike Munos, Ruby Agnew, Willie Birkhead, Gerri Munos, Brad Munos, Brittney Munos, Bill Blank, Marilyn Blank, Bob Harmon, Billie Harmon

Greeters:

10:00 - Roe Skidmore, Virginia Griffith, Robert & Chloe Hoaglin

Parish Nurse: Liz Campbell

Acolyte:

10:00 - Rachel Ash

P.A. Operator:

10:00 - Larry Pepper

Preparation of Communion:

Barbara Beyer, Karen Baird, Donna Dash, Gerri & Mike Munos

Van Drivers:

Sunday School and 10:00 service - Bruce Williams

10:00 service - Bruce Williams

December 5 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Janet Gray

Hosts:

Dec. 3 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
Dec. 4 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*
12:30-4:00 - Melissa Byrd
Dec. 5 9:00-12:30 - Joan Smith
12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong
Dec. 6 9:00-12:30 - Shirlee Johnson
12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins
Dec. 7 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*
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 Assistant
Pat Beals Administrative Assistant
Sue Burkham, Jane Latschaw Parish Nurse Coordinators
Katie Beal Childcare Coordinator
Joanne Frady, Debra Fulk Childcare Providers
Shelby Larrick, Kaylene Beal Childcare Providers
Shelly Messmore Preschool Director
Trudy Garland, Janet Langston Preschool Teachers
Wendy Jalley, Kay Villarreal, Robin White Preschool Teachers
Rudi Descaro Caretaker
David Flanders Caretaker
Dean Hadden Caretaker
Charles Wallace Caretaker

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