



# The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXX

Decatur, Illinois, December 5, 2007

No. 49

## Bells in Motion Concert, Saturday, December 8, 8:00 p.m.

The Handbell Ensemble, **Bells in Motion**, is returning to the Central Christian Church sanctuary to present **Ring Noel, 2007**. This group, based in Springfield, Illinois, under the direction of **Michael Lamb**, has been ringing for more than ten years. They have completed several successful tours including trips to Europe. On this visit to Central they will present a concert of Christmas music. Come celebrate the season with such audience favorites as *Sleigh Ride*, *O Holy Night*, *Still, Still, Still* and *Silver Bells*. Tickest are \$10 and are available at the door.

## Service of Christian Baptism

A service of Christian baptism is being planned for the morning services on December 9. If you have been thinking about becoming part of the church through holy baptism, call the church office to make arrangements to be included.

## Poinsettias Ready for Pick Up

If you ordered poinsettias earlier this fall, they are at the church and available for you to pick up this Sunday. The plants will be located in the Heritage Center. Please check the list on the table to make sure you know how many and which type you ordered and mark a check by your name so that we know you've picked them up. We thank you for your support of future mission trips and hope you enjoy the beautiful plants as they help bring holiday joy into your home!



## You're Invited to Come Home for Christmas

You and your family are invited to Come Home to Central on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> 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. Deadline for registration for either meal is December 9<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendar and plan now to Come Home to Central for Christmas!

## Budget Adopted

The operating budget for 2008 was adopted by the congregation voting last Sunday morning by secret ballot. The tabulated vote was 174 in favor of adoption and none opposed.

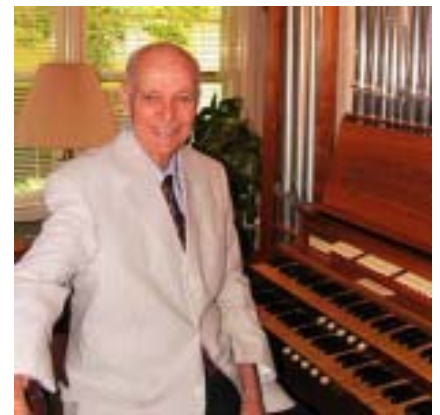
## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2007

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

**Bah! Humbug!**

Text: Matthew 3:1-12

Charles Watkins



## Music for a Merry Christmas

Our church's traditional candle-light "Music for a Merry Christmas" concert is scheduled this Sunday afternoon at 4:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Featured artists include our virtuosic organist **Leslie Peart** along with excellent vocalists **Connie Bordner**, **Karen Driver**, and **Lucien Smith**. The concert will include holiday favorites played and sung in an English Country Gothic sanctuary lit by candles and the joy of the season. This is a perfect occasion to introduce your friends and family to your church. Your guests will thank you for inviting them to this free concert.

## No Council Meeting in December

The Church Council will not meet in December so that church leaders can have an additional evening at home with their families during this busy season.



## Central Youth

### **Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> Dinner after the Concert**

Youth are invited to join Pastor Robert for dinner after the Christmas Organ Concert which begins at 4:30 p.m. We will return to Central by 7:30 p.m.

### **Christmas Caroling Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> 4:30-6:30 p.m.**

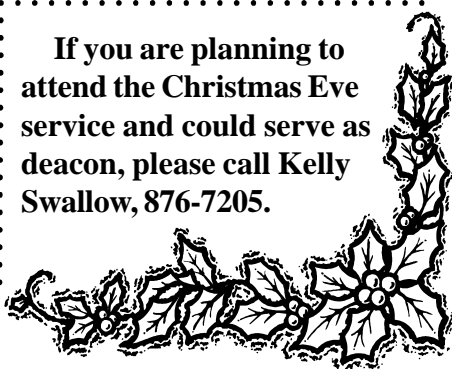
We will travel to several members' homes to spread Holiday cheer! Hot chocolate will be waiting for us when we return!

### **Christmas Party Sunday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> 5:30-8:00 p.m.**

Youth are invited to Pastor Robert's home for a Christmas Party. Watch for an invitation in your mailbox soon.

### **Holiday Schedule Change Sunday, December 30<sup>th</sup> Central Youth will not meet.**

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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.  
: .....



## Charles's Column

What an emotional roller-coaster we are riding through these days of December. There is the aching anticipation of our children who can hardly wait through the interminable delay for the arrival of Saint Nicholas. There is the nagging worry of parents who want to provide that "ah ha! Oh, yes!" moment of joy for their children, but hardly know how they can do it; after all, it's no longer about a talking doll or an electric train. Expectations have gone digital if not virtual! There is the wistful nostalgia of those in the middle years who have such fond memories of Christmases past and such painful awareness of the losses which have diminished them and their joy these days. It is surely what they call "bittersweet." There is the intensified sadness of those who have suffered some terrible loss this year so that a new Christmas seems a fresh stab into an open wound.

In planning church events, it's all about joy, and hardly a nod toward the anxiety and sadness that are everywhere among us. And that's just as it should be. The Advent promise of the coming of God's anointed one comes as a glad announcement to all people in all circumstances. When Isaiah first saw the dream, it was for people who have walked in a great darkness. The church's proclamation this month is that on each very sad one, a great light has shown. And so into our glad anticipation and our sorrowful grief come angels, bright lights, evergreen branches, flickering candles, trumpets and banners, organ and choir, and the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Christmas is not just for the happy and contented, not just for the melancholy and nostalgic, not just for the grief-stricken and sorrowful. Christmas hope and joy is for every soul and every condition. In the stories and truths of Advent, God addresses us however we are. It's all there: the scandalous embarrassment of unplanned pregnancy, the determined love of true commitment, the ordeal of long and inconvenient journey, the rejection and desolation of no room in the inn, the happy celebration of new life, the silent acceptance of stable animals, the looming danger of spiteful hatred from the palace, the gleeful arrival of unexpected guests bearing royal gifts, the puzzlement and amazement of new parents, the cold and dark entry into life on a prickly bed of straw wrapped in swaddling cloths, and the exultant choruses of the heavenly host breaking forth in brilliance over the plains of Judea above terrified shepherds: for unto us a child is born, a son is given, and his name shall be Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

If you are glad, joyous and full of anticipation, Christ Jesus is coming for you. If you are wounded and grieving and covered in darkness, Christ Jesus is coming for you. If you are bereft and diminished and deeply hurt, Christ Jesus is coming for you. This is the time. Central is the place. Come each week to be healed and redeemed by God's Holy Spirit of Love.

*Charles Watkins*

## Pastoral Visits

Would you like one of the pastors to visit you in your home or office? Please call the church office, 428-4336 so that a suitable time can be arranged for a pastoral visit.



**News From the Pews....**

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Pamela Ferguson** and family following the November 29<sup>th</sup> death of her mother, *Wanda Wager* of Mt. Carmel.....and to **Leo & Claudia Quigg** and family following the November 29<sup>th</sup> death of his aunt, *Beverly Andrews*, of Anderson, Missouri.

**Elderberries to Meet Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>!**

We invite you to come and enjoy lunch with Central's fellowship group for those at least 55 years young! We will meet at noon on Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> in the Great Hall. This month's menu is Baked Ham Balls, Potatoes, Jello Ribbon Salad, rolls and dessert. The food is lovingly prepared with the dedicated hands of Central volunteers. Cost for the meal is just \$4. Following the meal, our own Central Singers, under the direction of **Don Martin**, will share beautiful music of the season. To sign up, you will need to call the church office (428-4336) or mark "Elderberries" next to your name on the Friendship Pad this coming Sunday. If you think you would like to come, but are not yet sure, please go ahead and make a reservation. We would rather have food left over than not have prepared enough for everyone. Reservations need to be made before 5 p.m. on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, so don't delay, reserve your place at the table today!



**If you would be willing to serve on an Usher Team for 2008, please call Ed Acheson, 422-7104.**



**Please Help in December!**

At the end of November, Central has operated in the black for the first eleven months this year with a very small surplus.

At the end of November, members who turned in Estimate of Giving Cards for 2007 still had **\$60,000** to go in December to fulfill their giving plans. That means that if everyone will give Central what they planned to give this year, and any who are able will make extra gifts, we will pay all our obligations for December and be financially solvent for the second year in a row.

Two days ago contributing members received in the mail a progress report on each giving plan through November 30. If you did not get a grateful acknowledgement of all your gifts so far this year, please phone the church office today to have a copy mailed to you. If you have not yet fulfilled what your Estimate of Giving Card indicated for 2007, your success in achieving your goal will help keep your church "in the black" for successful completion of another year.

**Counting On You**

**December 2**

Worship Attendance ..... 262  
Sunday School Attendance ..... 30



**Sunday, December 9, 2007**

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services  
Music: Offertory - Han-Yuan Wang, Violin  
8:15-Anthem - Women of the Choir, Han-Yuan Wang, Violin  
10:45 Anthem - Men of the Choir, Han-Yuan Wang, Violin  
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Jeannie Backes  
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.  
9:30-Sunday School  
11:15-Children's Worship, 250  
4:30-*Music for a Merry Christmas*  
Organ Concert, Sanctuary

**Monday (10)**

9:00-Volunteers to Good Samaritan Inn  
6:00-Shepherding & Fellowship Depts.  
6:30-Boy Scouts, Great Hall & Disciple Room  
6:30-CCC Bowling, PlaMor Lanes

**Tuesday (11)**

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207  
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting  
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School  
5:00-CADV, Disciple Room

**Wednesday (12)**

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290  
12:00-Elderberries Lunch, Great Hall  
12:00-Central Singers  
1:30-3:00-Low Vision Support, Disciple Room  
6:30-Young Adults, Robert & Teri Bushey's house

**Thursday (13)**

10:00-Alanon, 212  
1:30-ChristCare, 290  
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School  
5:30-Baby Talk Pre-K Family Fun, Disciple Room  
7:00-Chancel Choir

**Saturday (15)**

8:00-Hunger Relief Task Force, Great Hall Kitchen  
10:00-11:30-Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, Great Hall Stage  
11:00-Serving Team, Good Samaritan Inn

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## Serving Schedule—December 9, 2007

### Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Chris Fagin, Tom Spry

### Communion to Shut-Ins:

#### Deacons

Dean Simcox  
Sue Simcox  
Richard Ward  
Cathy Ash  
Jim Ash  
Neil Baird  
Azalee Berner  
Warren Berner  
Dale Ford  
Judy Ford

#### Elders

Wayne Honeycutt  
Larry Pepper  
Brett Swallow  
Lois Whitaker  
Keith Backes  
Kevin Wilmot  
Rebecca Johnston  
Mark Beal  
Shirley Swarouth  
Jan Dobbs  
Alternate: Brett Swallow

### Deacons:

8:15 - Team 3 - Mike Holbrook, Capt., Charlotte Ballance, Jarrett Bednar, Jane Davis, Andy Fulk, Theresa Fulk, Sherri Hood, Bob Keller, Karen Keller, Shelby Larrick, Charlie Ropp, Nicole Ropp, Debbie Seaberg, Connie Shields, David Shields, Max Sperry

10:45 - Team 4 - Kevin Otis, Capt., Ed Acheson, Lucy Acheson, Jeannie Backes, Jordan Backes, Louise Boline, Mary Boyle, Shirley Brooks, Jon French, Melinda Hawbaker, Scott Hawbaker, Dee Hill, Karen McFadin, David Miller, Katie Miller, Janice Mitchell, Alex Otis, Bryan Rutherford, Gary Rutherford, Roger Rutherford, Doug Soebbing, Donna Strong

### Ushers:

8:15 - Team 1 - Charlotte Ballance, Jim Bednar, Pamela Bednar, Jarrett Bednar, Bill Fogerson, Nicole Ropp

10:45 - Team 6 - Betty Chapman, Larry Chapman, Mark Beal, Katie Beal, Kaylene Beal, Sean Beal

### Greeters:

8:15 - Harold & Bess King, Dean & Sue Simcox

10:45 - Larry & Debbie Foster, Larry & Betty Chapman

### Parish Nurse:

Jeannie Backes

### Children's Worship:

#### Acolytes:

8:15 - Sam Funk

10:45 - Andrew Otis

### P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Donna Dash

10:45 - Jim Hinze

### Fellowship Coffee Hosts:

Bill & Mary Alice Rule

### Preparation of Communion:

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

### Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Jan Patrick

10:45 service only - Brett Swallow

### December 12 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Ruby Agnew, Joanne Gustin

### Hosts:

Dec. 10 9:00-12:30 - Mary Boyle

12:30-4:00 - Melissa Byrd

Dec. 11 9:00-12:30 - Carl Morris

12:30-4:00 - Ellen Sheffer

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

12:30-4:00 - Marilyn Ward

Dec. 13 9:00-12:30 - Darla Lienemann

12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins

Dec. 14 9:00-12:30 - Harold & Bess King

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

**Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**  
**650 West William Street Decatur, Illinois 62522**  
**Telephone (217)428-4336 FAX (217)428-1700**  
**HTTP://WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG**  
**e-mail: *central@cccdisciples.org***

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 Latshaw ..... 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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