



# The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXX

Decatur, Illinois, December 26, 2007

No. 52

## Ring in the New Year with Paul Fleckenstein

At the New Year's Eve Pops Organ Concert at 8:30 p.m. on Monday, December 31, **Paul Fleckenstein** returns from Wilmington, Delaware, to the console of the Diller Memorial Organ in the sanctuary of our church. A native of California, he holds degrees from the University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music and Westminster Choir College, where he held a graduate assistantship as accompanist for the famed Westminster Symphonic Choir. Noted for the diversity of his musical activities, he has performed extensively as solo organ recitalist, conductor, piano and organ accompanist, organ soloist with orchestras, organ accompanist for silent movies, cocktail pianist, and professional choral singer.



Mr. Fleckenstein's organ recital venues have included St. Patrick's Cathedral and St. Thomas Church in New York City, Trinity Church in Boston, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Newark (NJ), the Princeton University Chapel, the Conservatory Ballroom at Longwood Gardens (Kennett Square, PA), the Spreckels Organ Pavilion in San Diego, the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, and the Wanamaker Organ in Philadelphia. He has also been a featured performer at conventions of the American Guild of Organists, the Organ Historical Society, the Association of Anglican Musicians, and the San Anselmo Organ Festival.

At home, Paul enjoys spending time in the kitchen, where his current specialties include Inside-Out Ravioli, Mississippi Mud Cake, Blueberry Popcorn Bars, and of course his award-winning Frosted Cranberry Salad. With great determination but irregular practice, he hopes someday (perhaps in his next life) to become proficient at his second-favorite instrument, the harp.

End your year being entertained at the church by one of America's notable organists along with all the family and friends you can persuade to come with you. Thanks to generous benefactors in our church, this concert is free and open to all.

## Deadline for 2007 Gifts.

The final deposit of 2007 gifts to Central Christian Church will be prepared in the church office on Monday morning, December 31. To have your gift included on your 2007 giving statement, your gift must be received in the mail on December 28, in the offering on Sunday December 30 or in the office no later than 9:00 a.m. on Monday, December 31. Every gift is needed and appreciated.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2007**

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

**"Now Run!"**

Text: Matthew 2:13-18

Charles Watkins

## Installation of Officers December 30

On the last Sunday of the year, those elected last September as trustees, deacons, elders, and honorary emeriti officers will be recognized and "sworn in" to their offices for new terms beginning January 1. All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend and pledge prayer and support for those who will pledge to serve God and us in the offices to which they have been elected.

## Experiencing the Bible Again

Beginning Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup> a new ten-week course entitled *Experiencing the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg and Tim Scorer will be offered each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the Great Hall. Cost for the course is \$10 per book payable to Central on the first day of the course. Pastor Robert will lead the multi-media course which surveys the Old and New Testaments through the lenses of contemporary scholarship. An engaging Bible Study is a great way to begin the New Year! Sign up this Sunday and prepare to experience the Bible as a fresh new resource for your faith journey. Watch for information soon on another new course from the same series entitled: *Experiencing Jesus Again for the First Time* beginning on Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.



## Central Youth

### **Holiday Schedule Change**

**Sunday, December 30<sup>th</sup>**

Central Youth will not meet.

### **Cardboard Pickup**

**Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Noon-3 p.m.**

### **Annual Epiphany Games**

**Sunday, January 6<sup>th</sup>**

**4:30-6:30 p.m.**

What will he think of next?!

Clue: To Spin or Not to Spin

Pizza will be served!

Friends are Welcome!!

Prizes, Prizes, Prizes!!!

### **Join the Hunger Relief Team in 2008!**

The Hunger Relief Team is recruiting volunteers for our 2008 Weekend Meals at the Good Samaritan Inn. During the past year Central volunteers have prepared and served over 1200 meals for some of our community's most under-resourced persons. We have been asked to provide meals on the following dates in 2008: February 16, April 12, June 21, August 16, October 4. Volunteers are needed to help prepare meals in our kitchen from 8 a.m.-11 a.m. and to serve meals at the inn from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Join the Hunger Relief Team in 2008! Sign ups will begin this Sunday in the Friendship Center.

### **Charles's Column**

In all the excitement of this past week, you may have not have observed what is really one of the most hopeful days of the year—December 21, the winter solstice. In the northern hemisphere on that date there are fewer hours of daylight than on any other day of the year. It is officially the first day of winter in our part of the world, and each day after it has just a few more minutes of sun light than the day before all the way to bright mid-summer. Certainly it is no coincidence that we celebrate the dawning of the Light of the World right at the darkest time of the year. Notice how the themes of this geophysical season and this spiritual season are sounded in this prayer by twentieth century theologian Karl Barth:

O Lord, our loving God, we thank thee that thou remainest the same and that thy years have no end; that it is thy will and thy gift to grant us to remain; that thy word remains, in which thy heart is manifest to us and which speaks to our hearts. Give us the freedom, where all else decays, to hold to it and it alone.

And now grant that in this freedom we may take today our final steps in the old year and tomorrow our first in the new, and then all further steps into that future which is granted to us, whether it be long or short.

Awaken to this same freedom and enlighten in every place more and more men and women, old and young, high and low, wise and foolish, that they too may become witnesses of that which abides forever. Let a little, or even at times much, of that dawn of eternity shine into the prisons in all lands, into the clinics and schools, the council halls and editorial rooms, into all places where humankind suffers and achieves, speaks and makes decisions, and so easily forgets that thou art the sovereign ruler and that they must answer to thee. And let such dawn shine too into the hearts and lives of our families at home, and of those many known and unknown to us who are poor, forsaken, confused, hungering, sick, and dying. And do not withhold it from us when our hour shall strike.

Mighty God, we praise thy name, in thee alone we hope, O let us not be lost. Amen.

Rejoice, my friend, for once again we are marching toward the Light!

*Charles Watkins*

### **Money Jitters**

Only two months in 2007 have ended with a deficit in the General Operating Fund at Central Christian Church. While the balance was positive at the end of November, the surplus was tiny and the demands of December for programs of ministry and for facilities in winter storms is huge. Any additional help you can provide in fulfilling your 2007 giving plan or in making an extra gift to keep your church strong will be truly welcome and greatly appreciated.

## Offering Envelopes On Their Way to You for 2008

**Central asks: Why is the church sending me offering envelopes next week?**

Answer: Contributors who use numbered envelopes save so much volunteer time in processing church receipts. Using your numbered envelopes is really a kindness to your fellow church members who process all contributions to Central. Marking on your envelopes how you want your gifts used takes all the guess work out of the process and saves both time and phone calls.

**Central asks: But you send me an envelope for every week, and I make my gifts to the church monthly or quarterly. Why?**

Answer: It costs very little (only pennies per envelope plus postage) to mail you all the envelopes, and then you have them whenever you want to use them. By closing the flap to protect your privacy, you can mail your gifts to Central at any time just by adding a postage stamp. The envelope is already addressed to the church. Even if you used just one envelope all year, it would be helpful to the church for you to use that one. Keeping the envelopes near your check book may remind you that the church really needs your help.

**Central asks: I still have envelopes from last year. Can I use them?**

Answer: Please don't. Destroy all old offering envelopes. The envelopes you receive for 2008 probably have a different number, and it is the use of that number in data entry that really saves the volunteers' time.

**Central asks: Well, so?**

Answer: Please use a numbered envelope whenever you make a gift to Central, mark on the envelope how you want your gift used (operating, building, special), and the church can keep an accurate record thanking you correctly for each gift all year. Please use the envelopes! And if you do not get a set of envelopes for 2008, please call the office. We have a set for you!

### Notes of Thanks Received

Dear Central,

Betty would like to thank you for your visits and also to the Dorcas Ladies for their gift. Even though she can't talk and express herself, hopefully there is a glimpse of your love. Thank you.

In Christ's Love,  
**Betty Tolladay & Family**

We wish to thank the young group of kids, including Don and Robert, who came to our door and sang Christmas carols. What a great feeling it is to know that there are such CARING people in this troubled world we live in.

The people of Central should realize how fortunate we are to have five outstanding pastors and minister of music, along with the world's best organist and, last but not least, a choir that stands second to none.

The congregation is one of the most CARING Christian families in my lifetime, other than my own family.

May the good Lord bless all of you,  
**Linn & Mary Cummins**



### Sunday, December 30, 2007

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services  
Music: Offertory-Marilyn Mertz &

Marilyn Ward, Piano Duet

8:15 Anthem-Central Singers

10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir

9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Jane Latshaw

9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.

9:30-Sunday School

11:15-Children's Worship, 250

### Monday (31)

8:30-New Year's Eve Organ Concert,  
Sanctuary

### Tuesday (January 1, 2008)

Church & Office Closed

### Wednesday (2)

12:00-Central Singers

### Thursday (3)

10:00-Alanon, 212

10:00-1:00-HSAC, Disciple Room

6:30-Decatur Needle Arts, 207

7:00-Chancel Choir

## Counting On You

### December 23

Worship Attendance ..... 332

Sunday School Attendance ..... 44

### Ladies, Mark your Calendars!

Our annual Women's Retreat will be held March 28-29, 2008 at Camp One-Way, near Niantic. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for this inspiring and relaxing time. More details and registration forms will be available in January!

### Cardboard Pickup Scheduled

The Youth Cardboard Recycling Pick up has been scheduled for Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup> from noon – 3 p.m. Sign up in the Friendship Center to be included on the routes. Most Christmas gift boxes are acceptable as well as cereal and dry food containers, tissue boxes, corrugated and smooth cardboard.

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## Serving Schedule—December 30, 2007

### Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Brett Swallow, Jan Dobbs

### Deacons:

8:15 - Team 1 - Gene Garver, Capt., Jared Carter, Bev Chapman, Merle Chapman, Dennis Downey, Al Fagin, Chris Fagin, Sally Force, Sandy Garver, Dean Gray, Janet Gray, Joe Lewis, Brittney Munos, Gail Prince, Larry Prince, Dean Simcox, Sue Simcox

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

### Ushers:

8:15 - Team 4 - Ed Acheson, Capt., Carole Holbrook, Mike Holbrook, Carl Morris, Phyllis Morris, Betty Ann Roe

10:45 - Team 9 - Bruce Stoddard, Carol Stoddard, Allison Stoddard

### Greeters:

8:15 - Robert & Wanda Webb, Bill & Mary Alice Rule

10:45 - Neil & Karen Baird, Ron & Mary Jane Oliver

**Parish Nurse:** Jane Latshaw

### Acolytes:

8:15 - Brad Munos

10:45 - Rachel Ash

### P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Donna Dash

10:45 - Keith Backes

**Fellowship Coffee Hosts:** Doug & Cindy Soebbing

### Preparation of Communion:

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

### Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Andy Fulk

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Keith Backes

10:45 service only - Richard Ward

### January 2 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Janet Gray, Joanne Gustin

### Hosts:

Dec. 31 *New Year's Eve*

Jan. 1 *New Year's Day*

Jan. 2 9:00-12:30 - Joan Smith

12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

Jan. 3 9:00-12:30 - Shirlee Johnson

12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins

Jan. 4 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*

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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**Central Christian Church**  
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650 West William Street  
Decatur, IL 62522-2326

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