



# The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, January 2, 2008

No. 1

## Serving Board Officers 2008

Congratulations to the following officers leading serving boards at the church in 2008.

### Board of Elders

**Brett Swallow**, Chair  
**Bruce Campbell**, Vice-Chair  
**Kevin Wilmot**, Secretary

### Board of Deacons

**Richard Ward**, Chair  
**Chloe Hoaglin**, Vice-Chair for Preparation Teams  
**Kelly Swallow**, Vice-Chair for Serving Teams

### Board of Trustees

**Dale Ford**, Chair  
**Pat Ash**, Vice-Chair  
**Sally Thicksten**, Secretary  
**Larry Foster**, Assistant Secretary  
**Ron Oliver**, Treasurer  
**Steve Swarthout**, Assistant Treasurer

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2008**  
**WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45**  
**Gifts Worthy of a King**

Text: Matthew 2:1-12  
Gretchen Barron



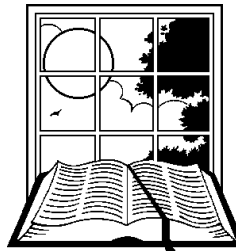
## Elderberries to Meet January 9<sup>th</sup>!

If you are at least 55 years young, we invite you to join the Elderberries for a wonderful meal and program and delightful fellowship together on the second Wednesday of each month. We will meet on Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at noon in the Great Hall. This month's menu includes ham and beans, corn-bread, salad and dessert. The food is lovingly prepared by volunteers in our own kitchen. Following the meal, we will play BINGO! This is always a fun activity. Bring "white elephant" prizes if you wish. 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, January 7<sup>th</sup>, so don't delay, reserve your place at the table today!

## Experiencing the Bible Again for the First Time

Beginning on 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. Marcus Borg is Hundere Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University and the author of the best selling books *The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*; *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*; *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*; and *The God We Never Knew*. He is in great demand as a speaker throughout the United States and Canada and he increasingly focuses on the topic of how to be a true Christian in the contemporary world. 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

**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!!!

**Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Movie Night**  
**5:30-8 p.m.**

### Going to the Hospital?

If you are entering a local hospital, please notify the church office so that the minister or elder who is visiting each day may stop by to visit and pray with you. Frequently, a caller from the church may pass your room, because we don't know you are there. Procedures to protect your privacy make it hard for the church to find you if you don't let us know.



### Gretchen's Gleanings

Did you take your tree down yet? Are there any gifts left to unwrap? Are you still listening to carols? Are there any more family gatherings scheduled? Despite common wisdom and commercial practices that tell us Christmas has come and gone and it's time to get on with the new year, we're not quite ready to move on just yet. We are, after all, still in the season of Christmastide and the traditional 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas (was that ladies dancing or lords leaping?) will actually be this coming Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup>. So, it's okay if you still want to listen to carols and cherish a few more days of Christmas decorations and goodies. You have my permission (not that you need it!).

This Sunday when we gather for worship, we will celebrate Epiphany, the liturgical season just after Christmas. During the short season of Epiphany (which lasts until Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent), our worship services will focus on scriptural texts which speak of God's character as revealed to us in the life of Jesus Christ. Epiphany means "to make manifest".

We often hear of people describing "epiphany" moments in their lives – "aha!" moments of clarity and understanding and discovery. And I think this is what the season of Epiphany is about as well – discovering something new about the ways God is at work in our world and our lives through the gift of Jesus Christ.

The season of Epiphany is also associated with light. When light shines in the darkness, we can see many things that we could not see before. Metaphorically, the light that shines in and through Jesus Christ helps to reveal the true nature of God to us. At Christmas, and throughout Epiphany, we celebrate the light that came into the world in Jesus Christ, light which no darkness can overcome. When the ancient prophet, Isaiah, said "Arise, shine, for your light has come!" he was speaking words of hope to the people of Israel in one of the darkest times of their lives. His timeless words speak a word of hope to us as well.

"Arise and shine," Central Christian Church, for the glory of the Lord has indeed risen upon us! I invite you to join me this Sunday in worship as we celebrate Epiphany together!

Blessings,  
*Gretchen*

### 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.



### News From the Pews....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Yvonne Purcell** and family following the December 22<sup>nd</sup> death of her niece, *Karen Wilson* of Woodridge, Illinois.....and to **Brenda & Don Tankersley** and family following the December 27<sup>th</sup> death of her mother, *Donnabelle Stombaugh* of Moweaqua, Illinois.

### 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 19<sup>th</sup> and return to Decatur Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. 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.

### 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!

### Note of Thanks Received

My Dear Congregation,

Thank you so much for honoring me as an Elder Emerita. You are a wonderful congregation and I cherish the opportunity you gave me to serve our church, our Lord, and you.

Love! Joy! Blessings!

**Claudine Nichols**

### Offering Envelopes on the Way to You

Central mailed a booklet of offering envelopes to all regular contributors last Monday. Volunteers who operate the financial office at the church pled with you: 1) Please use the numbered envelopes—even if you use only one a month or one a quarter, it still saves volunteer time in the office to receive your gift in a numbered envelope, and 2) Please throw away all old envelopes from previous years—your number may change and an old envelope with the wrong number messes up the record-keeping. If you do not get a set of envelopes by January 5, please phone the church office (428-4336) so we can send yours to you.

### It's Not Too Late!

The annual Christmas special day offering goes entirely to support the regional ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Illinois and Wisconsin. Our region has been in financial meltdown, and those who serve us there really need your financial support. We don't remit this offering until the middle of January, so it is not too late for you to make a Christmas offering for our regional ministries.



### Sunday, January 6, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services  
Music: Offertory-Janice Mitchell, Jan Baird, Cindy Soebbing, & Marilyn Mertz, Piano

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, 250-270  
4:30-6:30-Youth Epiphany Games

### Monday (7)

6:30-Boy Scouts, Disciple Room & Great Hall  
6:30-CCC Bowling, PlaMor Lanes

### Tuesday (8)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207  
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,  
Senior Pastor's Study

### Wednesday (9)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290  
12:00-Central Singers  
12:00-Elderberries Lunch, Great Hall  
1:30-3:00-Low Vision Support,  
Disciple Room

### Thursday (10)

10:00-Alanon, 212  
4:30-Evangelism Dept., Volunteer Room  
6:00-Chancel Bells  
7:00-Chancel Choir

### Friday (11)

6:30-Decatur Emmaus Group,  
Disciple Room

### Saturday (12)

7:30-Elders' Breakfast, Disciple Room

### Counting On You

#### December 30

Worship Attendance .....274  
Sunday School Attendance ..... 68

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## Serving Schedule—January 6, 2008

### Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Keith Backes, Janet Lyman

### Elders Serving Imboden Creek Living Center:

Shirley Swarthout, Randy Brooks

### Deacons:

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

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

### Ushers:

8:15 - Team 5 - Mike Munos, Capt., Gerri Munos, Brad Munos, Brittney Munos, Willie Birkhead

10:45 - Team 10 - Bill Blank, Capt., Marilyn Blank, Ed Acheson, Lucy Acheson, Dick Cain, Sue Ann Cain

### Greeters:

8:15 - Bill & Mary Alice Rule, Charlie & Nicole Ropp

10:45 - Steve & Carrie Funk, Dale & Judy Ford

**Parish Nurse:** Jane Latshaw

### Acolytes:

8:15 - Julia Funk

10:45 - Jessica Brooks

### P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Greg Carter

10:45 - Jim Hinze

**Fellowship Coffee Hosts:** Ron & Jan Dobbs

### Preparation of Communion:

Carole & Francis Songer, Darla Otis, Mary Waldmier

### Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Andy Fulk

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Kevin Wilmot

10:45 service only - Brett Swallow

### January 9 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Ruby Agnew, Joanne Gustin

### Hosts:

Jan. 7 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman  
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

Jan. 8 9:00-12:30 - Carl Morris  
12:30-4:00 - Ellen Sheffer

Jan. 9 9:00-12:30 - Virginia Griffith  
12:30-4:00 - Marilyn Ward

Jan. 10 9:00-12:30 - Gail Prince  
12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins

Jan. 11 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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PERIODICAL  
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