



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, January 23, 2008

No. 4

Time to Register for Lenten Study

This Sunday is your first chance to register for an all new Bible Study set to begin on Wednesday, February 6th. The recently published ten-week course entitled *Experiencing Jesus Again for the First Time* by contemporary biblical and Jesus scholars Marcus Borg and Tim Scorer, will be offered each Wednesday at 6:30p.m. in the Disciples Room. 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 life and teachings of Jesus through the lenses of the most current scholarship. Sign up this Sunday and prepare to experience Jesus anew as you journey in faith.

Ladies, Mark your Calendars!

You won't want to miss our annual Women's Retreat, March 28-29 at Camp One-Way, near Niantic.

Global Mission Partner from Honduras, Linda Hanson, will be our retreat leader. Linda is excited to bring us the stories of the Honduras women, along with a taste of the music, worship and culture of this beautiful land. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for this inspiring and relaxing time. Registration begins February 3rd!

Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday, February 6th, begins the holy season of Lent with its forty days (plus Sundays) of preparation for Easter. An opportunity to begin the Lenten season with an individual time of prayer, communion, and ashes will be offered in the sanctuary from 4:30-5:30 p.m. As you are ready, you may come up to the Lord's Table to receive communion and then you may choose to receive the sign of the cross in ashes on your forehead. For those who prefer, a brief liturgical service will be led from 5:30-6:15 with a final opportunity at the end to come forward to receive communion and ashes.

Music Opportunities During Lent

The Chancel Choir is preparing music for the season of Lent and Easter. Some of this music is from Handel's Messiah. You are welcome to join us for this special time of the year.

Chancel Bells will begin rehearsals on January 31 to prepare music for Palm Sunday, March 16. We will continue after Easter to prepare music for a Festival of Hymns being planned for May 4. Contact **Don Martin** if you are interested.

On Friday, March 14 at 7:00, **Elaine Pearce** (sister of Don Martin) and her friend **Elsa Bakkum** will present an evening of vocal and organ music.

Maundy Thursday service is being planned for Thursday March 20. We will recall the Last Supper of our Lord as well as the difficult time Jesus experienced after that event. Some of the music will be from *Messiah*.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008
WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45
My Light and My Salvation

Text: Psalm 27:1, 4-9
Charles Watkins

Our Journey of Faith

Copies of a collection of writings by Central members entitled, *Our Journey of Faith* are once again available in the Friendship Center. We invite you to pick one up this Sunday, if you have not yet received one. This booklet was assembled to be a useful resource for Central members and is also distributed to worship visitors in our Sunday morning gift bags. If you are inspired by the stories you read in the collection, take a few minutes to send us your story. We are beginning to gather additional faith journey stories for Vol. II of the collection. Speak with **Pastor Gretchen** for more information.

Super Subs for Hunger

The Youth of Central will be receiving orders for Super Bowl Subs again this Sunday, January 27th. Our Foot-long Subs sell for \$10 each on white or wheat bread with three meat choices and choice of toppings. Six-inch subs are available for \$5. Order forms will be in the worship bulletin this week

with delivery of our famous Subs on Super Bowl Sunday, February 3rd. Profit from this annual youth fundraiser will be



given to Heifer International to help eliminate hunger throughout the world.



Central Youth

Sunday, January 27th

Winter Road Trip!

4:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Central Youth will board the church bus for a Road Trip to Springfield to visit Kicks Buffet & Family Entertainment Center. A large arcade and indoor go-karts await! Youth will need to bring at least \$10 with them. Dinner from the buffet is included. Reserve your seat on the bus by contacting **Pastor Robert**.

Saturday, February 2nd

Super Sub Shop

10 a.m. - Noon

Sunday, February 3rd

Super Bowl Party

6-8:30 p.m.

Pastor Robert's House

Not Too Early

to Plan for

Summer Camps!

Camp Dates for 2008

Mark your calendars and make plans to make camp a part of your summer!

Genesis Camp

for Grades 2-3 - June 4-6

Shalom Camp

for Grades 9-12 - June 9-14

Koinonia Camp

for Grades 3-8 - June 23-28

ADDaM Camp

for Grades 8-12 - June 22-29

Charles's Column

My guess is that you think your own faith story is not really important to anyone but you. You don't consider yourself an especially saintly person, and you don't imagine that anybody cares how you came to believe what you believe and value what you value.

The Evangelism Department at Central and I hope to convince you that what formed your present faith is vitally important and really interesting to others. What we have discovered is that individual stories of real people are more inspiring and helpful than you may think.

Earlier this year the Evangelism Department published a little booklet of individual faith journey stories written by members of our congregation. The church provided the little books for free to any who wanted to read them. Jane and I each wrote for the publication, and we found it pretty difficult to stay within the limits of space and time set for the publication, but when we saw the stories of personal faith written by others, we were fascinated. As I usually do with the annual Advent devotional booklet prepared by the Worship Department, I read the gathered faith stories from cover to cover within half an hour of receiving them. Your stories were really a page-turner for me!

And guess what! What you have experienced and come to believe is greatly valued by both people who know you and people who don't. First there is that immediate sense that I have been where you have been, and I understand what you have responded to. But next there is the fascination with how your life has been moved and influenced in ways different from my own. Frankly, there was not an uninteresting essay in the whole bunch!

So now the Evangelism Department hopes to publish again the first booklet and to gather a second collection of personal stories. And what they and I hope is that you will write your own story for this new collection.

This is not just an exercise in self-absorption and self-expression. What we now understand is that your individual story of faith may bring someone else closer to Jesus Christ. And that, of course, is why it is a project of the Evangelism Department.

The Good News of our faith is about salvation in Jesus Christ. But unless that good news is seen in actual lives and experience, there is no genuine appeal to others. Your story can help someone else draw closer to Jesus. So I hope that you will sit down this week and write the story of how you came to be where you are spiritually. You will find that trying to keep it under 250 words is really a challenge. But it's a challenge worth taking, and it may have positive results for Jesus beyond anything you imagine! Sit down and write, dear one!

Charles Watkins

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 this Spring. Our mission delegation will leave Decatur on Saturday, April 19th and return to Decatur Sunday, April 27th. During our week in New Orleans, LA, we will stay at the Westside Christian Church Mission Center and work with local Disciples and other agencies, 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! There will be an informational meeting early in February for those interested in this mission opportunity.



News From the Pews.....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Myra & Jim Hinze** and family following the January 20th death of Myra's brother, *Scot Hunter*.

Note of Thanks Received

My heart is full with gratitude to all of you who helped make Jim's Memorial service so beautiful. It was so comforting and truly a wonderful tribute to him. The Church truly surrounded my family with a blanket of love. Thank you so much for everything.

Emmy Williams

H2O Volunteers Needed

Hope Homework Oasis, Central's after school ministry with students at Hope Academy, is looking for volunteers to help when we are back in session beginning on January 24th. H2O assists students from 2nd-8th grade with homework completion, skill practice, tutoring, and character development. During the first semester we worked with 30 students and we anticipate the same number this semester. H2O meets at Hope Academy on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45-5:00 p.m. Activities volunteers help with large motor activities in the gym and snack in the cafeteria and arrive by 3:30 p.m. Tutors and Homework helpers arrive by 4 p.m. and help students in the school library and computer lab. If you are interested in helping with H2O, contact **Pastor Robert** for more information.

Camp Intern Position

The Christian Church in IL/WI has an opening for a Summer Camp Intern to work with children and youth from 2nd -12th grades at Camp Walter Scott near Effingham. Candidates must be at least 20 years old and have completed their third year of college. For more information or to apply, visit the CCIW website at <http://www.cciwdisciples.org> or contact the Rev. Christal Williams at (309)828-6293.

Central's Mission Statement

The mission of Central Christian Church is to love God and through Christ serve others. This mission finds expression in deepening our spirituality, developing our capacity to serve, and reflecting the diversity of God's creation.

We believe that God is calling us to:

- ♦ **Deepen** the spiritual life and promote the intergenerational spiritual growth of our congregation.
- ♦ **Discover** ways to attract young families and encourage their fuller participation.
- ♦ **Diversify** our congregation by finding ways to meet the spiritual needs of all racial, socio-economic, and generational groups.
- ♦ **Develop**, strengthen, and support our youth ministry.
- ♦ **Demonstrate** good stewardship using our time, talent, facilities and our human, material, and financial resources.



Sunday, January 27, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
 Music: 8:15 Offertory-Central Singers
 10:45 Offertory-Men's Chorus
 8:15-Anthem-Central Singers
 10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir
 9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Cindy Soebbing
 9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
 9:30-Sunday School
 11:15-Children's Worship, 250-270
 4:00-8:30-Youth, Kicks in Springfield

Monday (28)

4:00-Aerobics, 290
 6:30-Bowling Banquet, Rusty's
 6:30-Boy Scouts, Disciple Room & Great Hall

Tuesday (29)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
 10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,
 Senior Pastor's Study
 4:00-Aerobics, 290
 4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

Wednesday (30)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290
 4:00-Aerobics, 290
 12:00-Central Singers

Thursday (31)

10:00-Alanon, 212
 4:00-Aerobics, 290
 4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
 7:00-Chancel Choir

Saturday (2)

10:00-Youth Super Sub Shop, Great Hall
 Kitchen
 2:00-4:00-Disciple Room Reserved

Counting On You

January 20

Worship Attendance 252
 Sunday School Attendance 61

Serving Schedule—January 27, 2008

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - John Graham, Jo Carter

Elders Serving Hospital Communion:

St. Mary's Hospital: Felicity Williams

Decatur Memorial: Brett Swallow

Deacons:

8:15 - Team 1 - Gene Garver, Capt., Greg Carter, Jared Carter, Megan Carter, Bev Chapman, Merle Chapman, Dennis Downey, Al Fagin, Chris Fagin, Sally Force, Sandy Garver, Dean Gray, Janet Gray, Carol McClure, 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, Erik Harm, Christine Lyman-Harm, Daniel Hinze, David Martin, Julie Martin, Ron Oliver, Dave Phillips, Nita Phillips, Kelly Swallow, Steve Swarthout, Janet Thicksten, Larry Thicksten, Lawrence Thicksten, Sally Thicksten, Kathy Thornton

Ushers:

8:15 - Team 3 - Dennis Downey, Capt., Debbie Downey, Tina Canfield, Paula Hovey, Connie Schabowski

10:45 - Team 8 - Dean Hadden, Capt., Pam Ferguson, Doug Soebbing, Donna Strong

Greeters:

8:15 - Darla & Norm Lienemann, Dennis & Debbie Downey

10:45 - Dave & Christy Hanson, Dee Hill, Sid Rotz

Fellowship Coffee Hosts:

 Harold & Bess King

Parish Nurse:

 Cindy Soebbing

Acolytes:

8:15 - Sam Funk

10:45 - Rachel Ash

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Greg Carter

10:45 - Keith Backes

Preparation of Communion:

Carole & Francis Songer, Darla Otis, Mary Waldmier

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - John Flanders

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Keith Backes

10:45 service only - Richard Ward

January 30 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin

Hosts:

Jan. 28 9:00-12:30 - Darla Lienemann

12:30-4:00 - Chris Fagin

Jan. 29 9:00-12:30 - Rosie Doore

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

Jan. 30 9:00-12:30 - Judy Ford

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

Jan. 31 9:00-12:30 - Rosie Doore

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

Feb. 1 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*

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

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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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