



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, January 30, 2008

No. 5

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.

Week of Compassion Gratitude Calendar

Our annual Week of Compassion offering will be received February 17th and 24th. Week of Compassion is the Disciples of Christ response to suffering, tragedy and disasters around the world. When an earthquake crumbles lives and property in Turkey, Week of Compassion is there. When flooding ravages villages in India, Week of Compassion is there. When hurricanes devastated the Gulf Coast, Week of Compassion was there and remains there to this day, rebuilding lives, rebuilding structures, rebuilding hope! Week of Compassion can only do what it does when members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) respond with grateful and generous hearts and donations. In preparation for our Week of Compassion offering later in February, the World Outreach Department is making available "Gratitude Calendars" and blessing boxes for all our children and youth through Sunday School classes and Children's Worship. Each day, the children read the thought on the calendar and respond by putting a few coins in the box. At the end of the month, children are asked to return their blessing boxes (full of coins) to be used for Week of Compassion. Adults can participate in this project as well. Extra calendars and boxes are available in the Friendship Center. Begin today by counting your blessings!

Registration Begins this Sunday for Our Women's Retreat!

This is shaping up to be our best retreat ever! Linda Hanson, our retreat leader and Mission Partner to Honduras, is full of all kinds of ideas, information, stories and music to share with us when we gather as Sisters in Solidarity: From Illinois to Honduras and Back! The retreat will be held March 28-29 at Camp One-Way, near Niantic. More information and registration forms will be available this Sunday in the Friendship Center. Cost for the retreat is \$80 and includes all materials, overnight accommodations and 4 meals! Limited scholarships are available. Pick up your registration form this week and return it soon with your fee. Deadline for registration is March 9th! Join us for this inspiring and relaxing experience as we celebrate our sisterhood with others around the world!



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2008

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

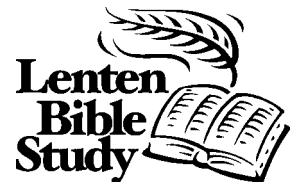
Transformers!

Text: Matthew 17:1-9

Robert Bushey, Jr.

Lenten Study: Experiencing Jesus Again for the First Time

Register this Sunday 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 6:30 p.m. in the Disciple 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. Contemporary theologian Walter Wink writes of Borg, "*In every generation there is a handful of writers of whom it can be said, read everything they write. Marcus Borg is one of these today: a writer of rare lucidity, original scholarly insights, profound spirituality, and the universal capacity to connect it all to life in the present.*" Sign up this Sunday and prepare to experience Jesus anew in your life!



Central Youth

Saturday, February 2nd
Super Sub Shop
10 a.m. - Noon

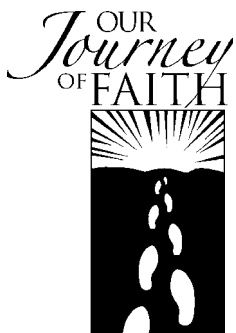
Sunday, February 3rd
Super Bowl Party
6-8:30 p.m.
Pastor Robert's House

Sunday, February 10th
Cardboard Pick-Up
1:30-3 p.m.
Dress appropriately
for being outside!

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.



Robert's Reflections

As a gift to myself, for my tenth anniversary of being privileged to be one of your ministers, I recently spent several hours cleaning and reorganizing my office. Honestly, it just had to be done! Ten years of accumulated *very important documents* filled four recycling bins not including the catalogues for recycling and the trash bins of things I couldn't recycle! Where does it all come from? Files for nearly every program and event we have shared are now organized in drawers and bankers boxes. Books that never found an appropriate place on my book cases, shelved and dusted! Special awards that have been given to you, framed and displayed. Dr. King's *I Have a Dream* speech framed and always in my line of vision. A statue of St. Francis of Assisi, one of my many muses, now overlooks my desk. This labor of love has created quite an amazing transformation! I love it! I have always been fed and am most creative in a neat and orderly place to work – not to mention much more efficient! It is wonderful to walk into my study and not dread the piles. This simple work has given me a renewed energy – I want to be in there all the time!

Of course, we all know that eventually the torrent of paper, mail, and “I’ll get to that later” items will attempt to reduce my current joy and take over my space. In the meantime, like one of those pesky resolutions we often make, I am trying my best to keep the accumulation to a manageable state. I remain amazed at the power this gift, that I have given to myself, has had for my spiritual and mental health - we were not quite to the dangerous to physical health stage! Simple change in our everyday environment can have a dramatic effect on us.

Transformation is the subject of much conversation within the church these days. Specifically, what does it mean to say that we are transformed by our faith? And what do our individual transformations mean for the mission and ministry of the community of faith, in our case, the church? Several contemporary Christian thinkers describe an *emerging Christian way* that is born out of the transforming power of God made known to us in Jesus Christ. This *emerging way* is different from a more traditional way of thinking and talking about God, Jesus and the Church. This *emerging way* seeks to make compelling sense in our contemporary world – in other words – it seeks to be relative in a world where so much that we once held as true, we know no longer as truth. My friends, this is an extraordinary time to be a member of the body of Christ! Now is a time of transformation in our midst!

This Sunday, the lectionary texts recall the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain of the LORD, when the power of God's transforming love for us shone with the brilliance of the sun. I look forward to joining with you in the conversation of transformation emerging in our midst this Sunday.

Peace & Joy,
Robert

Good Samaritan Inn Monday Crew

Central volunteers prepare and serve meals at the Good Samaritan Inn the second Monday of every month. As many as 400 home cooked, hot meals may be served to our most vulnerable neighbors. Other volunteers from Central provide freshly baked cakes throughout the year to be served for dessert. If you would like to join our Central Good Samaritan Inn Monday Crew or help by providing cakes, please contact **Judy Ford**.



New Orleans Mission Trip

Sign Up Now for the Mission Trip to New Orleans

Central Christian Church and our sister congregation, Prairie Avenue Christian Church, are planning a third trip to the New Orleans, April 20-27th. Registration and information forms are now available in the Friendship Center and an informational meeting will be held soon. If you are interested in the trip, please let **Pastors Gretchen** or **Robert** know so we can keep you informed of new developments.

Gifts of Love

Did you know that underwear is a luxury for many folks? The pieces of clothing that most of us think of as necessities or basics are often the last an under-resourced person will buy with the very limited funds they have. A child can go to school without underwear on, but not without a shirt or pants or shoes, and underwear is expensive. Can you imagine what it would be like to be a child and not have underwear that fit you or were without exceptional wear? During the month of February, the Christian Action & Community Service Department is sponsoring an underwear drive for the Dove Clothing Room for Children located at Prairie Avenue Christian Church. New children's underwear of all sizes is needed. We will collect new children's underwear each Sunday during February. Help us give a gift of love to our community's under-resourced children.



Financial Reports Available

Detailed reports on church finances are always available on the counter in the Friendship Center next to the church office. The monthly Treasurer's report to the Church Council on the General Operating Fund and various designated funds are placed there along with the monthly Board of Trustees financial report.

Hospitalized?

Whenever you enter any hospital, please phone the church so that ministers and elders can pray for you and visit you. Regulations to protect your privacy as a patient prohibit hospitals from notifying your pastors as they previously did. For the hospital to release this information requires your specific permission, and often your permission is never even requested, especially if you enter the hospital through the Emergency Room. Any time you are in the hospital more than forty-eight hours and no one from Central has visited you, you may be sure that the church does not know you are hospitalized. Help us provide good pastoral care!



Sunday, February 3, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
Music: Offertory-Rachel & Lea West
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
6:00-8:30-Youth Super Bowl Party,
Robert & Teri Bushey's house

Monday (4)

6:30-CACS Department, 290
6:30-Boy Scouts, Disciple Room &
Great Hall

Tuesday (5)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,
Senior Pastor's Study
11:45-Staff Lunch, Disciple Room
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
5:30-Worship Dept., Disciple Room
7:00-Beta Sigma Phi, 207

Wednesday (6)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290
12:00-Central Singers
4:30-Ash Wednesday Meditations
5:30-Ash Wednesday Service
6:30-Jesus Study, Disciple Room

Thursday (7)

10:00-Alanon, 212
10:15-1:15-HSAC Meeting, Disciple Rm.
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
6:00-Chancel Bells
6:30-Decatur Needle Arts, 207
7:00-Chancel Choir

Saturday (9)

7:30-Elders' Breakfast, Disciple Room

Counting On You

January 27

Worship Attendance 315
Sunday School Attendance 64

Serving Schedule—February 3, 2008

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Felicity Williams, Kevin Miller

Elders Serving Imboden Creek Living Center:

Mary Jane Oliver, John Graham

Deacons:

8:15 - Team 3 - Mike Holbrook, Capt., Charlotte Ballance, Jarrett Bednar, Larry Chapman, Jane Davis, Andy Fulk, Theresa Fulk, Sherri Hood, Bob Keller, Karen Keller, Shelby Larrick, 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 4 - Ed Acheson, Capt., Carole Holbrook, Mike Holbrook, Carl Morris, Phyllis Morris, Betty Ann Roe

10:45 - Team 9 - Bruce Stoddard, Capt., Carol Stoddard, Kim Miller, Kevin Miller, Aaron Osman, Betsy Osman, York Powers

Greeters:

8:15 - Morris & Willie Birkhead, Al & Chris Fagin

10:45 - Warren & Azalee Berner, Carol & Bob Bischoff

Fellowship Coffee Hosts:

Mike & Gerri Munos Family

Parish Nurse:

Cindy Soebbing

Acolytes:

8:15 - Brad Munos

10:45 - Andrew Otis, Austin Econie

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Jim Bednar

10:45 - Jim Hinze

Preparation of Communion:

Suzie Miller, Jim & Myra Hinze, Mark & Nancy McAfee

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Kevin Wilmot

10:45 service only - Brett Swallow

February 6 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Janet Gray

Hosts:

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

Feb. 5 9:00-12:30 - Gail Prince
12:30-4:00 - Melissa Byrd

Feb. 6 9:00-12:30 - Joan Smith
12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

Feb. 7 9:00-12:30 - Shirlee Johnson
12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins

Feb. 8 9:00-12:30 - Harold & Bess King
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

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HTTP://WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG
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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 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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