



# The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, April 30, 2008

No. 18

## Festival of Hymns This Sunday, May 4, 4:00 p.m.

*Festival of Hymns* by Hal Hopson is a collection of stories about hymn writers combined with their hymns. The Decatur Area Cluster of Disciples Churches is cooperating to present this program at Central Christian Church. Clergy members and some lay people will read the stories. The mass choir and congregation will sing the hymns accompanied by organ, brass group, bells and other stringed instruments. After the singing there will be a time to fellowship. Please mark your calendars and invite your friends.

## Tickets on Sale This Week for Sarah's Daughters Banquet

Stop at the table in the Friendship Center this Sunday to purchase tickets for the Sarah's Daughters Banquet on May 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. This annual event is always a popular one as mothers, daughters, aunts, grandmothers and friends gather for a delicious meal and entertaining program. The Fellowship Department has planned a menu of Italian Chicken over Rice, Green Salad, Rolls and Butter and Dessert. The food will be served by the men of Central. **Mark & Katie Beal** are planning the program, a Showcase of Central Talent. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$3 for children ages 2-10. A nursery attendant will be available for little ones who find it difficult to make it through the evening.

## Eclipsing Empire: Paul, Rome and the Kingdom of God

Join preeminent New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan on location in Turkey as they trace the Apostle Paul's footsteps throughout the Roman Empire. The 2008 produced 12 week multi-media experience explores fresh insights into Paul's message of the Kingdom of God, its challenge to Roman Imperial Theology, and the apostle's radical relevance for today. The course, lead by **Pastor Robert Bushey**, will meet on Wednesday evenings beginning May 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. The themes for the twelve sessions are:

- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Empire           | 7. Paul's Letters      |
| 2. Jesus            | 8. Paul's Ethics       |
| 3. Paul's Mission   | 9. Paul's Theology     |
| 4. Paul's Character | 10. Paul's Eschatology |
| 5. Paul's Vocation  | 11. Icons              |
| 6. Cities           | 12. Eclipse            |

A donation of \$12 per family is suggested to help with the costs of the course. Childcare will be available for families who register before May 12<sup>th</sup>. Register today!

**SUNDAY, MAY 4, 2008**  
WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45  
**The Meaning of  
Church Membership**  
Text: Ephesians 1:15-23  
Charles Watkins

## Youth Cardboard Collection Sunday, May 4th

In April, Central Youth covered more than 40 miles on our route with 22 stops in 3 hours. We collected an estimated 160 cubic feet of packed cardboard. We are grateful for the enthusiasm of members who have saved their cardboard for recycling and we wish to continue to encourage your desire to recycle. Due to the overwhelming increase in demand for our cardboard recycling curbside pick-up, and the increasing cost of fuel, we have a need to change our project. This month we will collect cardboard near the church garage on Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. Youth will be available to unload your vehicle after both morning worship services. Acceptable cardboard includes corrugated, uncoated, clean food containers, dry goods boxes, tissue boxes, etc. Unfortunately, we are not able to accept fast food containers such as cups or French fry boxes. Please, help us by emptying your boxes of foam packaging, tissue paper, or other contents. Boxes should be broken down whenever possible. Remember, the cardboard recycling is a service project and not a fundraiser for our youth.

## Central Youth

### Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup> Cardboard Recycling Project

9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Youth will collect cardboard for recycling that is brought to the church on Sunday morning. We will unload vehicles near the church garage after the morning worship services. Afterwards we will go for lunch together.

### Mother's Day Sunday, May 11<sup>th</sup> Youth will NOT meet.

### Youth in Mission: Hoops of Hope June 3<sup>rd</sup> 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Central Youth will sponsor a Hoops of Hope Project with students at Hope Academy on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Youth will meet at the school at 9 a.m. to help set up and we will finish by 4 p.m. Invite your friends to be a part of this huge event! We will be making a difference in the lives of thousands of children!

### Summer Church Camp Deadlines Approaching!

Camp registration forms are available in the Church Office!

Look for our display on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor!

#### Genesis Camp

for Grades 2-3

June 4-6 (May 5<sup>th</sup>)

#### Shalom Camp

for Grades 9-12

June 9-14 (May 12<sup>th</sup>)

#### Koinonia Camp

for Grades 3-8

June 23-28 (May 26<sup>th</sup>)

#### ADDaM Camp

for Grades 8-12

June 22-29 (May 26<sup>th</sup>)

## Charles's Column

The year I was ordained as a minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), our denomination began a steep decline in membership, worship attendance and even number of congregations. I don't think I alone am the cause of denominational decline, but I have spent my entire career struggling with it and trying to understand it. Mainline Protestantism has been disestablished from the pre-eminent place it enjoyed for two hundred years in American culture. More and more Americans have moved to cities and away from our church's frontier rural roots. More and more Americans are carrying on their spiritual quest outside organized religion. More and more Americans long for absolutes, unambiguous certitude, and doctrinal positions that are beyond question, while Disciples are really big on questions and the intellectual complexity of faith.

After about thirty years of falling numbers in our church, we began some serious study, and we found that the churches in America that are growing are growing because they start so many new congregations—Baptists, Mormons, Pentecostals. Most church growth in our country takes place in new congregations rather than established ones. After noticing that almost two-thirds of North Americans live more than fifty miles from a Disciples congregation, our church adopted a new strategy for addressing our future.

In order to be a "faithful, growing church, that demonstrates true community, deep Christian spirituality and a passion for justice" we discovered that we had to be starting new Disciples congregations in the places where population is growing. In adopting the 20/20 Vision for our church proposed by General Minister and President Richard Hamm, we established a "New Church Ministry," housed in Church Extension and set the goal of starting 1,000 new Disciples congregation by the year 2020.

The good news is that we Disciples have started over 535 congregations since 2001. Six of these are being formed in our Illinois/Wisconsin region. Our dream is to start 53 new congregations in our region by 2020.

More good news is that you can directly and personally support this effort. The annual Pentecost special offering which will be received at Central in May goes entirely for the New Church Ministry, with half of all funds contributed being used for new congregations in Illinois and Wisconsin. The theme of this year's Pentecost emphasis is "Share the Chalice," and truly it is more than just a slogan, for 80% of our new congregations are of different racial, ethnic, and sociological. By your individual action and generosity you can make a positive impact on the future of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in North America!

*Charles Watkins*

## Help the Nominating Committee

This Sunday you are invited to assist the 2008 Nominating Committee by suggesting the names of those whom you would like to see nominated for the offices of trustee, deacon, and elder. Fill out the sheet inserted in your worship bulletin and place it in the offering plate or turn it in to the church office. The Nominating Committee begins its work next month. The 2008 Nominating Committee includes **Bruce Campbell '08**, **Al Fagin '08**, **Sandra Garver, '09**, **Chloe Hoaglin '08**, **Steve Swarthout '09**, **Mike Holbrook** and **Charles Watkins**, ex-officio

## News From the Pews....

Congratulations to **Kaleigh Larrick** on the April 23<sup>rd</sup> birth of her daughter, *Madison Capri*. Grandparents are **Pam & Dean Larrick**; great-grandparents are **Bob & Phyllis Logan**. Aunts **Shelby** and **Mackenzie** and Uncle **Trey** also welcome Madison home.

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Carol Charlton** and family following the death of her husband, *William H. Charlton*, on April 28.

## Hoops of Hope at Hope Academy

Every 14 seconds a child is orphaned by AIDS somewhere in the world, according to the United Nations. This means that every day, more than 6,000 children join the 15 million children worldwide who have already lost one or both parents to this disease. Hoops of Hope is a volunteer run non-profit organization started in 2004 by then 10-year old Austin Gutwein who wanted to bring awareness and raise funds for the more than 15 million children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. On World AIDS Day 2004, Austin shot over 2000 free throws to represent the more than 2000 kids who were orphaned during his day at school. Since then, Austin has been recruiting other kids to join him and together they have raised over \$350,000 for these children. This money was used to support more than 100 orphan children, build a high school for 1000 students in remote Zambia and most recently build a medical lab and counseling center 1 hour south of the school. This year, the goal is to raise \$280,000 to build a second medical lab and voluntary counseling center, as well as provide 1,000 remote medical care kits and 1,000 bicycles in Northern Africa, an area devastated by HIV/AIDS. 100% of all Hoops of Hope funds go to World Vision who is building the lab and counseling center.

Through our One Church One School Partnership with Hope Academy, Central Youth and their friends will host a Hoops of Hope event at the school on June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Each classroom of children in Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade will be allowed to participate during the day. During the month of May the students will be collecting pledges in support of the event. Each participant will receive a t-shirt and some wonderful incentives are planned for classrooms raising the most money. You may participate in Hoops of Hope as well! You may sponsor a grade level with a donation through Central (forms available in the Friendship Center), you may volunteer to help at the event, or you may donate directly online through our website or at [www.firstgiving.com/decaurhope](http://www.firstgiving.com/decaurhope). Help our youth bring hope to thousands of orphans by sponsoring our Hoops of Hope event!

## In Memoriam

During the first quarter of 2008 Central received special gifts honoring the memories of *Ruth Bean, Virginia Butts, Jim DeZarn, Emmett Hicks, Scott Hunter, Harold Irwin, Nathalie Irwin, Roy Miller, Samuel Miller, John Reed, Donnabelle Stombaugh, Robert E. Ward, A. B. Watkins, and Jim Williams*.

We are grateful for the lives of these whose memories are honored here at Central and for those who have given memorial funds honoring them. Memorial gifts to Central in the first three months of 2008 total \$4,690.

Gifts to the church honoring the memories of friends and family members are always welcome and appropriate. Each gift is recorded at the church and acknowledged to the family. Memorial gifts are used for special needs approved by the Church Council and in consultation with family members.



## Sunday, May 4, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services  
Music: Offertory-Pat Ash, Piano  
10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir, Chancel Bells, and Organ  
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Mary Jane Linton  
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.  
9:30-Sunday School  
9:30-12:00-Carboard Collection (before & after 2nd service) West Parking Lot  
11:15-Children's Worship  
4:00-*Festival of Hymns*, Sanctuary

## Monday (5)

6:00-Oasis Meeting, Great Hall

## Tuesday (6)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207  
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting, Senior Pastor's Study  
12:00-Staff Lunch, Disciple Room  
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School  
6:30-Preschool Board, 290  
6:30-Beta Sigma Phi, 207

## Wednesday (7)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290  
10:30-Preschool Mothers Tea, Disciple Room  
12:00-Central Singers  
5:15-Mission Funding Task Force, Disciple Room

## Thursday (8)

10:00-Alanon, 212  
10:30-Preschool Mothers Tea, Disciple Room  
2:00-Preschool Mothers Tea, Great Hall  
4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School  
6:00-Chancel Bells  
7:00-Chancel Choir

## Friday (9)

6:30-Sarah's Daughters Banquet, Great Hall

## Saturday (10)

7:30-Elders' Breakfast, Disciple Room

## Counting On You

### April 27

Worship Attendance ..... 268  
Sunday School Attendance ..... 63

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## Serving Schedule—May 4, 2008

### Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Mark Beal, Mary Jane Linton

### Elders Serving Imboden Creek Living Center:

Mark Beal & Larry Otis

### 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 2 - Don Tankersley, Capt., Brenda Tankersley, Frances Heiserman, Becky Johnston, Betty Scott, Dave Scott

10:45 - Team 7 - Jon French, Capt., Jane French, George Virgil, Linda Virgil, Ed Voice, Jean Voice

### Greeters:

8:15 - Jim, Pamela, & Jarrett Bednar, Roe Skidmore

10:45 - Ron & Mary Jane Oliver, Larry & Janet Thicksten

**Parish Nurse:** Mary Jane Linton

### Acolytes:

8:15 - Julia Funk

10:45 - Joshua Bushey

### P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Donna Dash

10:45 - Jim Hinze

**Fellowship Coffee Hosts:** Jon & Jane French

**Children's Worship:** Teri Bushey

### Preparation of Communion:

Robyn Spry, Carol Charlton, Don & Virginia Swallow

### Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Kevin Wilmot

10:45 service only - Brett Swallow

**May 7 Visitor Mailing Crew:** Janet Gray, Joanne Gustin

### Hosts:

May 5 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman  
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

May 6 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*  
12:30-4:00 - Melissa Byrd

May 7 9:00-12:30 - Joan Smith  
12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

May 8 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*  
12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins

May 9 9:00-12:30 - Harold & Bess King  
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

**Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**  
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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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**(Disciples of Christ)**  
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