



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, May 7, 2008

No. 19

Wear Red for Pentecost

This Sunday as we celebrate one of the high holy days of our faith, you are invited to wear something red as a reminder of the flames of the spirit that appeared on the first Pentecost. The Worship Department will distribute white doves to wear in our celebration.

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 14th at 6:30 p.m.



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 12th.

Keeping our Children Safe

In 2006, Central adopted a Child Protection Policy to provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth programming. The policy requires screening for any volunteers working with children and training for any children's ministry staff. While we have a policy in place, we must be diligent as parents and adult caregivers to do our best to provide a safe environment for our children. As a reminder, children should never be left unattended while in the church or in any public place for that matter. For instance, if your child exits the sanctuary during worship, the best policy is for you to accompany them to their destination. Childcare and other official programming are staffed by volunteers who have received approval and have been trained in our safety policies. Central Preschool and children and youth programming by other agencies operating on Central's campus have Emergency Plans and safety policies as well. As always, parents are their children's first line of defense against harm and we appreciate your support of our efforts to continue to make Central a safe and welcoming place for all children.

Rabbit Proof Fence Now Showing at Just Flicks

The final film for the 2007-2008 Just Flicks Series will show this Sunday, May 11th at 6 p.m. A powerful story of hope and survival, **Rabbit Proof Fence**, which is set in Western Australia in 1931, portrays the daring escape of three aboriginal children from their internment camp. The young girls must elude authorities on a 1500 mile adventure along the rabbit-proof fence that bisects the continent as they find their way home. The film will show in Central's Great Hall Theater with light refreshments and a brief discussion following.

SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2008

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

Blow Spirit, Blow!

Text: Acts 2:1-12

Charles Watkins

Help the Nominating Committee

Again 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 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 in May. 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.**

Elderberries to Meet May 14th!

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, May 14th at noon in the Great Hall. This month's menu is Chicken and Noodles, Mashed Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Rolls and Dessert. Following the meal, Deputy Jeff Schiebly of the Macon County Sheriff's Department will present a program entitled "Safety Comes First With You!" To sign up, call the church office (428-4336) or mark "Elderberries" next to your name on the Friendship Pad this Sunday. Reservations need to be made before 5 p.m. on Monday, May 12th, so don't delay, reserve your place at the table today!



Central Youth

**Mother's Day
Sunday, May 11th**

Youth will NOT meet.

**Sunday, May 18th
4:30-6 p.m.**

Come celebrate the last week of school before Summer Break gets underway! We will toss a few Frisbees, try out some new hoops, enjoy supper from the grill and more. Bring a side dish or dessert to share.

**Youth in Mission:
Hoops of Hope
June 3rd 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

Central Youth will sponsor a Hoops of Hope Project with students at Hope Academy on June 3rd. 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 Are Here!

Camp registration forms are available in the church office! Look for our display on the 2nd Floor!

Shalom Camp

for Grades 9-12

June 9-14 (May 12th)

Koinonia Camp

for Grades 3-8

June 23-28 (May 26th)

ADDaM Camp

for Grades 8-12

June 22-29 (May 26th)

A Letter From Sharon E. Watkins - April 25, 2008

Giving Witness to the Hope Within Us

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Last week I joined with about 200 other Christian leaders from across the United States to have prayer with Pope Benedict XVI. It's tempting to say that "everyone" was there.

In fact, just about every stripe of Christian in the United States was represented. Just in front of me sat Pat Robertson. Next to me sat a Pentecostal bishop, and on the other side was the dean of an Orthodox seminary. Two rows up (on the front row) was Rev. John Thomas of the United Church of Christ and across the aisle from me was Rev. James Forbes. There were Missouri Synod Lutherans, Mormons, Evangelicals and Mainline Protestants. There were bishops dressed in purple, Orthodox hierarchs dressed in their ancient garb, and Protestant leaders in business suits and dresses.

All there because the Pope had invited us. Most, I am sure, had changed busy schedules to be there. (Thanks to the North Carolina Region for their flexibility in changing my keynote to a different night of their regional assembly.) Perhaps the president of the United States could have commanded such a crowd, but he's the only one. It was impressive to see the range of traditions represented by the people who accepted the Pope's invitation to pray together.

I was struck by his simplicity, by his air of sincerity. He was quiet – maybe tired after his morning at the United Nations. He spoke of the importance of our Christian witness in a time of globalization, a time which can either draw us together as a global community or drive us more deeply into individualism and fragmentation. The theme of the service, Christ our Hope, was the dominant note of his message.

Some commentators have noted that Pope Benedict XVI chose, on this visit, not to address large challenges. No big word on the war in Iraq. No "in your face" admonishing of American Catholics to change their ways. Instead on this visit, the Pope chose to draw us in. (In fact, one of the hymns we sang was "Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether.") Instead of emphasizing differences, he seemed to be looking for common ground.

Maybe this was exactly what we needed.

Daily life is an experience of fragmentation for so many. Low-income seniors fight through a tangle of regulation to have access to medication. Single parents struggle to provide resources for their families in a tightening economy. Suburban families are broken by the demands of family and dual careers. Military families await word on loved ones as we surpass the 4,000th American death in Iraq. Daily our world is segmented, segregated, and fractured. And yet, like a bulb bursting forth into a flower announcing life over dismal winter, Pope Benedict brought this gentle reminder that as a people of faith, we live in hope.

We'll have to be careful that we don't leave it with the Pope's reminder, however. As important as his words are, it's our witness that finally matters most.

We in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) don't have a Pope who can speak for all of us. We even question our own democratic processes of gathering representatives of every congregation together and voting on a word to the church from the church. That means that every one of us has to take responsibility for making the gospel real in our lives and giving witness to the

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people around us. It means we can't wait for someone else to be or share the gospel for us. Each one of us is responsible for making real the life-giving call of Christ to reconciliation and wholeness in our context.

Our new identity statement says, "We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world." It's time for us to live the call for unity and one-ness that has always been part of the historic Disciples plea and challenge ourselves to faithfully move forward. Our identity statement continues: "As part of the one Body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us."

The Pope's call to the Christian community to give witness to the hope that is within us was right on cue. It's time for each one of us to take up our part.

Sharon E. Watkins, General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

News From the Pews....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of *Mary Ellen Finch*, following her death on April 27 in El Cajon, California.....and to the family of *Elsie Donaldson*, following her death of May 5th.

Note of Thanks Received

Congratulations to the members of the Diaconate for a wonderful luncheon for us, the Senior Citizens. The preceding reception was great and we really enjoyed visiting with each other. The Great Hall looked so nice. The table decorations were beautiful, the meal was delicious and the travelogue by Dean & Sue Simcox was especially entertaining.

Love & Blessings, *Barb Tyler*

Hoops of Hope at Hope Academy

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 3rd from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Each classroom of children in Pre-K through 8th 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 to bring awareness and raise funds for the more than 15 million children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. You may sponsor a grade level with a donation through Central (forms available in the Friendship Center), volunteer to help at the event, or donate directly online through our website or at www.firstgiving.com/decaturhope. Our goal is to raise \$5,000 to help build a medical lab and voluntary counseling center, and 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. Help bring hope to thousands of orphans by sponsoring our Hoops of Hope event!

H2O Update

On a recent Friday morning, 13 of 25 students participating in Central's Hope Homework Oasis at Hope Academy received academic honors for their accomplishments during the third quarter. Way to go H2O volunteers! H2O meets every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon at the school and volunteers are always needed. Contact **Pastor Robert** for information or if you would like to volunteer.



Sunday, May 11, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
Music: Offertory-Kaylene Beal, French Horn

10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Liz Campbell
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
9:30-Sunday School

11:15-Children's Worship, 250

6:00-Just Flicks, Great Hall

Monday (12)

9:00-Volunteers to Good Samaritan Inn

Tuesday (13)

9:00-ChristCare Stitches, 207

10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,

Senior Pastor's Study

4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

5:00-CADV Meeting, Great Hall

6:00-Leadership Group, Disciple Room

6:30-MCCOCP, Great Hall

Wednesday (14)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 290

12:00-Elderberries, Great Hall

12:00-Central Singers

1:30-Leadership Group, Disciple Room

5:15-Nominating Committee, Parlor

6:30-Eclipsing Empire, Disciple Room

Thursday (15)

10:00-Alanon, 212

10:00-Leadership Group, Disciple Room

4:00-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

5:30-Phoenix II, Great Hall

5:45-Church Council, Disciple Room

6:45-Leadership Group, Disciple Room

7:00-Chancel Choir

Saturday (17)

10:00-Latinos en Accion, Disciple Room

Counting On You

May 4

Worship Attendance292
Sunday School Attendance 56

Serving Schedule—May 11, 2008

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Rebecca Johnston, Cindy Soebbing

Communion to Shut-Ins:

Deacons

Claudia Curry
Carol McClure
Joan Stewart
Gene Garver
Jared Carter
Bev Chapman
Merle Chapman

Elders

Felicity Williams
Shirley Swarthout
Rebecca Johnston
Claudia Quigg
Mike Holbrook
Connie Bordner
Kevin Miller
Mark Beal
Wayne Honeycutt
Janet Lyman
Alternate: Mary Jane Oliver

Deacons:

8:15 - Team 3 - Mike Holbrook, Capt., Charlotte Ballance, Jarrett Bednar, Larry Chapman, Jane Davis, Andy Fulk, Theresa Fulk, Sherri Hood, 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 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 - Ed & Joy Adams, Darla & Norman Lienemann

10:45 - Steve & Carrie Funk, Bruce & Carol Stoddard

Parish Nurse: Liz Campbell

Acolytes:

8:15 - Sam Funk

10:45 - Jessica Brooks

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Greg Carter

10:45 - Keith Backes

Fellowship Coffee Hosts: Dean & Sue Simcox

Children's Worship: Robert Bushey

Preparation of Communion:

Robyn Spry, Carol Charlton, Don & Virginia Swallow

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Andy Fulk

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Jan Patrick

10:45 service only - Ron Oliver

May 14 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Ruby Agnew, Joanne Gustin

Hosts:

May 12 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*

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

May 13 9:00-12:30 - Carl Morris

12:30-4:00 - Ellen Sheffer

May 14 9:00-12:30 - Virginia Griffith

12:30-4:00 - Marilyn Ward

May 15 9:00-12:30 - Jean Booher

12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

May 16 9:00-12:30 - Juanita Ballance

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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