



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, June 25, 2008

No. 26

Central Emergency Fund

The Central Emergency Fund provides emergency assistance for individuals and families who find themselves in times of need. Through gifts such as assistance with prescription medicines, transportation, power bills and a variety of other types of gifts, Central reaches out to our neighbors through the fund. Working closely with agencies such as the Macon Assistance eXchange (MAX) program, the Good Samaritan Inn, the Northeast Community Fund Food Pantry, the Oasis Day Center, DOVE, and Catholic Charities Central works with persons in need or in crisis. The Emergency Fund exists completely through donations from members and friends of Central. On Sundays, July 6th & 13th we will receive a special offering for the Emergency Fund. Please, consider this vital outreach ministry for our neighborhood and wider community with a gift to the fund.

Facing Frontiers Faithfully

Plan now to attend the 2008 Assembly of the Christian Church in Illinois & Wisconsin which will be held November 14-16 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, IL. The assembly's featured speakers will be the Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Dr. Richard Lowery, Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs of Lexington Theological Seminary, and the Rev. Dr. Beth Dobyns, Acting Regional Minister and President of CCIW. More details will follow in future editions of the Central Visitor or you may visit the CCIW website at <http://www.cciwdisciples.org>



Clearing the Path for Stronger Healthy Families

During the month of July, Central will host a family camp for families in Macon County who speak English as their second language. Meeting on our campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the family camp is a collaborative effort of Baby Talk, Richland Community College and The University of Illinois Extension Macon County Unit. The camp will have activities for infants through adults with special emphases on family literacy, storytelling and healthy cooking. Families will read together, make a family book, learn a cultural dance, and participate in cooking lessons. Field trips will be held on Wednesdays to the Decatur Public Library and local parks. A Fiesta is planned to celebrate the close of the program at the end of July.

SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2008
WORSHIP AT 8:00 AND 10:00
Proclaim Liberty!
Text: Leviticus 25:8-12
Charles Watkins

Youth Cardboard Recycling This Sunday!

Central Youth will collect cardboard near the church garage this **Sunday, June 29th**. 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.

Vacation Bible School is Coming!

Vacation Bible School is here at our very own Central Christian Church! Registration has begun for "Power Lab" August 4-8 from 9:00-11:45. Register now for the fun, just call the church office for more information.

We need your help to make this year's Vacation Bible School a success! Please call the church office or contact **Katie Powers**.



Central Youth

Saturday, June 28th

2 p.m. - 6 p.m.

**Central Family Day
at Nelson Park!**

Come out and enjoy the games including Miniature Golf!

Tickets are \$5. Bring a friend and their ticket is FREE!

Sunday, June 29th

Cardboard Collection

9:00-9:15 a.m.

& 11-11:30 a.m.

Central Youth will collect cardboard for recycling after both worship services on Sunday, June 29th. Youth available to help take the cardboard to the recycling center on Monday, June 30th should let **Pastor Robert** know this Sunday.

Sunday, June 29th

4:30-7:30 p.m.

**Sunday Night Special
Rain or Shine!**

Supper, swimming and more at Pastor Robert's house.

Grades 6-12. Bring a dessert or snack food to share.

Friends are welcome! Future Dates: July 27th, August 3rd & August 17th.

**Youth Volunteers for
VBS**

Central Youth are encouraged to volunteer to help with VBS which will be held August 4-8 from 9-11:45 a.m. Contact **Katie Powers** for more information.

Charles's Column

Long, long ago but not too far away, religion was all about nature. Human beings reaching for meaning and understanding, found what they comprehended as they looked to the sky and around the earth. When Moses demanded of the Pharaoh, "Let my people go," the official god of the Egyptian empire was the sun. A lesser but holy god was the moon. And the rhythm of the seasons had significance not only for agriculture, but for religion. Yet, the Hebrew people worshipped an even greater God, One who was mightier than Mother Nature, and indeed, had created the natural order out of primeval chaos.

Last weekend thousands of partygoers, pagans and self-styled druids cheered and banged drums to greet the dawn at Stonehenge in southern England on the longest day of the year, the summer solstice. One of my dearest friends called me up to remind me that it was the saddest day of the year, the longest day of the year when the sun starts its countdown to the darkest and shortest day of the year next December—gloom approaching. Actually, it was just payback for my calling him on a cold and snowy day last December 21 to remind him that from that day forward, each day would get a little longer and a little brighter, and summer could not be more than six short months away.

The deeply rooted nature religion which is older than Judaism or Christianity or Islam makes much of the movement of sun, moon and seasons especially on March 21, June 21, September 21, and December 21. The Christian Church has baptized the spring equinox and turned it into Easter and the festival of the Risen Son of God (previously known and celebrated as the festival of the risen sun). And the Church has taken the winter solstice and baptized it as Christmas and the festival of the birth of God's Son of Light and Truth (previously known and celebrated as the festival of light overcoming darkness). Many of our most beloved Christmas traditions have been adopted from pre-Christian nature religion—evergreens in the house during the bleakest days of desolate winter, candles and twinkling lights in the house during the darkest days of gloomy winter. Northern Europeans were delighting in Yule logs long before the Christian faith entered the celebration. One of the marvels of today's December delights is a warmly clad St. Nicholas who actually was a bishop in southern Turkey on the sunny Mediterranean Sea and in real life never had any need to wear a white fur collar or tasseled cap over a red velour suit with snow boots and reindeer imported from many, many kilometers north.

And yet, the Church has done nothing in all these centuries to highlight and celebrate the summer solstice last Saturday. At Central, we mark it only as a time when we are on "summer schedule," and when casual dress is especially encouraged in Sunday worship.

At Stonehenge last Saturday, police estimated 28,000 revelers had made the trip to exult as blow horns signaled the rise of the sun over the ancient stone circle at 4:58 a.m., although in typically English fashion, the sunrise was barely visible through the clouds. It is un-natural for us to pay no attention to the summer solstice. And yet, perhaps just to enjoy the day (which was very nearly perfect in Central Illinois) is sufficient celebration, with no wrapped packages, no greeting cards, no baskets of goodies and no department store sales. Happy summer! And may God bless you in these lovely days when Light is so much more powerful than Darkness.

Charles Watkins

Our Identity

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is a community of believers who through baptism into Jesus Christ are bound by covenant to God and one another. Disciples draw their inspiration from Scripture and the Holy Spirit, celebrating around the Lord's Table the life, death, resurrection and continuing presence of Christ. They proclaim the Good News of salvation and claim as their particular mission the quest for Christian unity. While stressing freedom and diversity under God, they believe unity and mission are inseparable. They witness and serve among the whole human family in the interest of peace, justice, mercy and kindness.

Our 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.

Note of Thanks Received

Gordon Gregory and family wishes to thank the family at Central Christian for their kindness, sympathy and support in the recent passing of my wife Susan and my mother. CCC has made a very difficult time bearable by the love you have shown, thank you.

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.

Counting On You

June 22

Worship Attendance 268
Sunday School Attendance 62



Sunday, June 29, 2008

8:00 and 10:00-Worship Services
Music: 8:00 Offertory-Central Singers
10:00 Offertory-Matthew Swarthout,
Saxophone
10:00 Anthem-Chancel Choir; Matthew
Swarthout, Saxophone
9:00-Sunday School
4:30 p.m.-Youth Sunday Night Special,
Robert & Teri Bushey's house

Monday (30)

6:30-Just Flicks Planning, Disciple Rm.

Tuesday (July 1)

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

Wednesday (2)

12:00-Central Singers
5:15-Nominating Committee, Parlor
6:30-Eclipsing Empire, Great Hall

Thursday (3)

10:00-Alanon, 212
10:15-HSAC Meeting, Great Hall
6:30-Decatur Needle Arts, 207
7:00-Chancel Choir

Friday 4th of July!

Church & Office Closed

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!

Serving Schedule—June 29, 2008

Elders:

8:00 & 10:00 - Shirley Swarthout, Mary Jane Oliver

Deacons:

8:00 - Team 1 - Gene Garver, Capt., Bev Chapman, Merle Chapman, Dennis Downey, Al Fagin, Chris Fagin, Sally Force, Sandy Garver, Dean Gray, Janet Gray, Brittney Munos, Gail Prince, Larry Prince, Dean Simcox, Sue Simcox

10:00 - 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:

8:00 - Team 5 - Mike Munos, Capt., Gerri Munos, Brad Munos, Brittney Munos, Willie Birkhead

10:00 - Team 10 - Bill Blank, Capt., Marilyn Blank, Ed Acheson, Lucy Acheson, Dick Cain, Sue Ann Cain

Greeters:

8:00 - Gene & Sandy Garver, Betty Ann Roe, Betty Cox

10:00 - Dave & Christy Hanson

Acolytes:

8:00 - Brad Munos

10:00 - Joshua Bushey

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Jim Bednar

10:45 - Jim Hinze

Preparation of Communion:

Ed & Joy Adams, Bess & Harold King

Van Drivers:

8:00 service and Sunday School - Andy Fulk

Sunday School and 10:00 service - Doug Soebbing

10:00 service only - Richard Ward

July 2 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin, Shirlee Johnson

Hosts:

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

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

July 1 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*

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

July 2 9:00-12:30 - Joan Smith

12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

July 3 9:00-12:30 - Shirlee Johnson

12:30-4:00 - Linn Cummins

July 4th *Church & Office Closed*

Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
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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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