



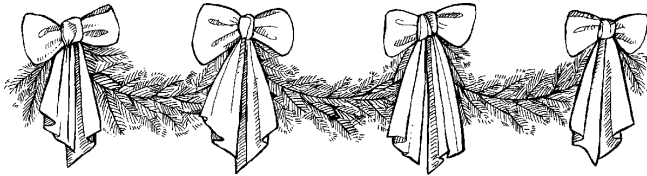
The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, November 19, 2008

No. 47



Single Service Thanksgiving Weekend

For the only time this year, the entire congregation will gather for a single service of worship on Sunday, November 30 at 10 a.m.

Through the course of the service, the sanctuary will be decorated with wreaths, garlands, candles, and banners, preparing our sacred space for the coming of the Prince of Peace, accompanied by wonderful music by organ and choirs. Children, Youth, and Adult Sunday School Classes will meet at 9-9:45 a.m. (Children's Worship will not meet November 30.) Then after the 10 o'clock service, the Fellowship Department invites you to bring a favorite holiday treat to share at a Tasting Party in the Friendship Center. Be sure to invite your family and out-of-town guests to the *Hanging of the Greens* service on November 30.

A Spirit of Christmas Story

I am the oldest child of five; it's me my two brothers and two sisters. This is my family's second time being in foster care. I thought the first time was hard, but this time it is even harder. Before we came back into foster care this time we were staying with my mother. We experienced a lot of people coming in and out of our life, and not every one of these people had our best interest at heart. Our mother suffers from extreme mental health issues and people try to take advantage of her. If we were bigger we could have protected mama and kept her safe.

DCFS visited our house and said my siblings and I have to live with our grandmother for a while. Grandma lives in a small two bedroom home and it is extremely crowded. We try to make the best of our circumstance but it is very difficult. Me and my siblings share toys and sometimes clothes because there is not enough money to go around, yet we still have each other.

My mother tries to be there for us, but the stress of our family being separated overwhelms her. Though we rarely see mama we still love her and pray that God gives her the strength to make it through this situation. When mama gets better we will see her again.

There is a glimmer of hope that arrives each Christmas season, we don't know how or where our Christmas miracle is coming from; we have faith that God will touch someone to bless us.

Deanna, Webster Cantrell Hall.

Central's *Spirit of Christmas* ministry of giving and compassion is underway with 35 names remaining for adoption. All gifts should be returned to the church, wrapped and tagged by Wednesday, December 10th.



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2008

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

Tears and Thanksgiving

Text: Nehemiah 8:9-12

Charles Watkins

Welcome New Member



Welcome to **Shirley Petri** who joined Central's family on Sunday, November 16 by transfer of membership. Shirley lives at 403 Newcastle Drive, Decatur, IL 62526; phone 875-0860.

Central Youth Receive Conservation Recognition

At the annual meeting of the Community Environmental Council of Decatur and Macon County on November 13th, Central Youth were recognized for their outstanding environmental conservation efforts for their cardboard recycling program. Three youth with Pastor Robert attended the recognition, which was held at Millikin University. Congratulations to our youth and thank you to all who supported their project!



Central Youth

**Sunday, November 23rd
Community Thanksgiving
Basket Project
4:30-8:00 p.m.**

We will help assemble 3,600 food baskets for Decatur Area families in need. Afterwards, we will join our friends from First United Methodist Church for a movie and PIZZA in the Great Hall.

**Sunday, November 30th
4:30-7 p.m.**

We will meet at the church and travel to First Christian Church in Blue Mound for food, fun and fellowship.

**2009 Christian Youth
Fellowship (CYF)
Mid-Winter Retreat
January 17 -19, 2009**

For High School Youth at
First Christian Church,
Pontiac, IL
See Pastor Robert
for Details

**SAVE THE DATE!!!
Sr. High Heifer Ranch
Trip
Perryville, AK
June 13-21, 2009
Watch for Details
coming soon...**

Charles's Column

Thanksgiving is not just a wonderful American feast and football day, it is a way of life. Actually, thanksgiving shapes the Christian life. Giving thanks first requires that we stop, step back and look around our lives...zoom out for a camera shot of what an objective observer would see in our daily pursuits. If an unexamined life is not worth living, at least it is quite easy to achieve, never taking a look from outside, from beyond yourself. But if you examine your life objectively to see if there is anything for which to give thanks, you have a refreshing perspective.

If you first notice that you are reasonably healthy, or at least capable of managing the various challenges to your physical well-being, if you find that you don't have intractable and constant pain in your body, then suddenly you have good cause to give thanks. If you can go through a day without giving much thought at all to your body and where it hurts, then you are way ahead of most of the human race. And if you are never desperately hungry, terribly afraid, or too cold to sleep at night, then you rank in the top 90th percentile of all God's most fortunate children.

The Apostle Paul who was responsible for over a quarter of the content of Christian scriptures was not one of those fortunate ones who mostly enjoy days of relative comfort in their bodies. No, instead he complained of a constant "thorn in the flesh," an unnamed ailment which clouded every day of his life. Was it blindness, macular degeneration, arthritis, palsy, acid reflux? We don't know. But it bothered him all the time. It hurt. He prayed over and over that the Lord would remove it from him, release him from its constant grip, free him from pain.

His prayer was not answered as he hoped. And yet from a cold prison cell with lousy and meager food and no soft place to sleep, he wrote to the Greek Christians at Philippi and to us: *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4:4-7)

He advises prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving*. What we ask of God should always be accompanied with thanksgiving, and in order to do that, we have to look around our lives and see if there is anything for which to give thanks.

Always in my Thanksgiving sermon I remind you that when the pilgrims observed a modest feast day with the native Americans who had saved them from starvation the previous winter, and when Abraham Lincoln issued the first presidential proclamation for a national day of thanksgiving in the darkest days of the Civil War in America, there was such desperate trouble in our land that giving thanks required extraordinary vision and faith. So now the test comes to us in 2008. Having lost 20% to 40% of what we thought was ours, can we take a step back, take a look, and give God heart-felt thanks for all the ways in which our lives are blessed? Yes, we can! And may God bless you today and Thursday next week as you give thanks.

Charles Watkins

Children's Christmas Workshop Changes!!!

The Children's Christmas Workshop previously scheduled for Saturday, December 6th has been moved to December 13th from 9:30 a.m.-Noon. Children ages 5 yrs.-11 yrs. will be baking Christmas cookies, singing favorite carols and watching Christmas classics in the Great Hall Theater. A sign up sheet is available in the Friendship Center or you may sign up by calling the church office, 428-4336. Volunteers are needed to staff several stations for cookie baking during the morning. Contact **Pastor Robert** for more information.

Alternative Gift Giving Market Coming Soon!

The Christian Action and Community Service Department invites you to participate in the Alternative Gift Giving program beginning Sunday, December 7th. You are invited to make a tax-deductible donation to one of our seven worthy outreach organizations in honor of someone for the holiday season. This year you may purchase alternative gifts in honor of your loved ones from Baby Talk, ChristCare Stitchers, DOVE, Good Samaritan Inn, Habitat for Humanity, Heifer Project International, and the Oasis Day Center for the homeless. Plan now to make Alternative Gift Giving a part of your Christmas experience in 2008.

Kroger Cares Cards for Local Mission Partners

As you prepare for the holidays and gift giving season we wish to remind you that you may purchase Kroger Cares Cards from the church office. The cards are available in \$10 amounts and may be reloaded with funds up to \$500 whenever you visit a Kroger store locally or nationwide.

Purchase a Kroger Cares Card from the church for \$10 with cash or check payable to Central Christian Church. CACS receives 5% of all card purchases and "reloads" and has already received over \$300 to be distributed to local outreach programs such as Dove, Habitat for Humanity, Oasis Day Center, Good Samaritan Inn, etc. Your gift card purchase cannot be credited on your annual giving record for tax purposes.

Notes of Thanks Received

I want to express my appreciation to the Dorcas ladies for the tasty lunch of soup and pumpkin pie. I pray that God's blessings will be upon each and every one of you for the love and compassion that is shown by your thoughts and desire to share with others. Jesus said, "When you show love to others, you show love for me!" God love you and I love you all.

Your Friend in Christ, **Roe Skidmore**

God is so good! Much of our joy comes from the wonderful people of Central Christian Church who faithfully fulfill their roles as God's hands and feet.

The last two Saturdays, people have given us much needed help with our TONS of leaves and a wonderful lunch of soup and pie.

Thank you elders and friends and Dorcas angels. You are dear to us and we are so grateful to you.

Love! Joy! Blessings! **Bill & Claudine**



Sunday, November 23, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
Music: 8:15 Offertory-Central Singers
10:45 Offertory-Chancel Choir, Chancel Bells, Organ
10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir; Jessica Villarreal, Flute
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Clinic
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
9:30-Sunday School
11:15-Children's Worship
12:00-Thanksgiving Dinner, Great Hall
4:30-Youth Thanksgiving Basket Project
6:00-Decatur Youth Symphony Rehearsal

Monday (24)

6:30-Bowling, PlaMor Lanes
7:00-Decatur Youth Symphony Concert, Sanctuary

Tuesday (25)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting, Senior Pastor's Study
6:00-Fellowship & Shepherding Depts., Disciple Room

Wednesday (26)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 240
10:30-Preschool Thanksgiving, Great Hall
12:00-Central Singers

Thursday (27) Thanksgiving Day

Church & Office Closed

Friday (28)

Church & Office Closed

Saturday (29)

10:00-Greens Preparation, Disciple Rm.



November 30, 10:00 a.m.

Counting On You

November 16

Worship Attendance 280
Sunday School Attendance 61

Serving Schedule—November 23, 2008

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Jo Carter, Larry Otis

Elders Serving Hospital Communion:

St. Mary's Hospital: Becky Johnston

Decatur Memorial Hospital: Kevin Miller

Deacons:

8:15 - Team 3 - Mike Holbrook, Capt., Charlotte Ballance, Jarrett Bednar, Greg Carter, Larry Chapman, Jane Davis, Andy Fulk, Theresa Fulk, Sherri Hood, Carol McClure, Debbie Seaberg, 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, Andrew Otis, Kevin Ann Otis, Bryan Rutherford, Gary Rutherford, Roger Rutherford, Doug Soebbing, Donna Strong

Ushers:

8:15 - Team 5 - Mike Munos, Capt., Gerri Munos, Brad Munos, Brittney Munos, Willie Birkhead

10:45 - Team 10 - Bill Blank, Capt., Marilyn Blank, Ed Acheson, Lucy Acheson, Dick Cain, Sue Ann Cain

Greeters:

8:15 - Jim, Pamela & Jarrett Bednar, Morris & Willie Birkhead

10:45 - Ed & Jean Voice, Jim & Lois Whitaker

Fellowship Coffee Hosts:

 Mike & Gerri Munos Family

Acolytes:

8:15 - Bobby Munos

10:45 - Jessica Brooks

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Jim Bednar

10:45 - Jim Hinze

Preparation of Communion:

Carole Holbrook, Kim Miller, Yvonne Purcell, Nancy Taylor

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Keith Backes

10:45 service only - Karen Baird

November 26 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin, Marge Karl

Hosts:

Nov. 24 9:00-12:30 - Rosie Doore

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

Nov. 25 9:00-12:30 - Dee Hill

12:30-4:00 - Louise Boline

Nov. 26 9:00-12:30 - Virginia Griffith

12:30-4:00 - Ruby Agnew

Nov. 27 **Thanksgiving Day**

Church & Office Closed

Nov. 28 Church & Office Closed

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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
Jane Latshaw Parish Nurse Coordinator
Katie Beal Childcare Coordinator
Joanne Frady, Sean Beal Childcare Providers
Lindsey Compton, Hannah Fitch Childcare Providers
Shelly Messmore Preschool Director
Trudy Garland, Paula Gruen Preschool Teachers
Wendy Jalley, Jennifer Van Dyke Preschool Teachers
Kay Villarreal, Robin White Preschool Teachers
Rudi Descaro Caretaker
David Flanders Caretaker
Dean Hadden Caretaker
Charles Wallace Caretaker

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