



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, November 26, 2008

No. 48

Single Service this Sunday

The four congregations of Central Christian Church (balcony 1st and 2nd services, nave floor 1st and 2nd services) will all gather to worship God in this year's only single service on Sunday, November 30, at 10 a.m. for the Hanging of the Greens and the Lord's Supper. Following the one service, the Fellowship Department invites you to bring a plate of holiday "finger foods" to share in a Tasting Party in the Friendship Center. Begin the new liturgical year and the holy season of Advent in God's house this Sunday!

A Spirit of Christmas Story

I personally want to thank you for being willing to be an encouraging light to the impoverish families of Decatur. What you do NEVER goes unnoticed and I am grateful for each of you. The families that we deal with literally become family because we are constantly in their homes, trying to mend brokenness and despair, and bring hope and practical resources to otherwise destructive circumstances. We work with children and families who live in dangerous situations, who are being neglected, who have been sexually abused by their parents, family, or close friends, who often run away from their homes, hoping to find a sense of peace, but often end up on the streets, and are exposed to situations beyond their control. Every day is a nightmare for some of these children. Normal is dysfunction.

For the parents, most if not all are overwhelmed. We often have children who are the adults in the home taking care of their parents, or who are often left alone without supervision. They are often behind on bills and necessities such as electricity and water. Food, love, safety, and adequate housing are scarce. And, there are the parents, who absolutely love their children, but due to unfortunate circumstances, illness, disability, and lack of education, there are not enough resources to help them from day to day.

The only hope and joy that these families have to look forward to is the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Some families don't have any hope or resources until they receive Thanksgiving food baskets or Christmas gifts from people like you. There is no greater blessing than knowing that because of your contributions and love, you have made someone's house become a home on Christmas Day. You have made what a child felt would be another day of nightmares and fear, become a dream come true. You all are people who show compassion and humility, grace and mercy; who are willing to give of themselves, when children don't have anyone else. So, I thank you. The children of Webster-Cantrell Hall thank you. Without you and your giving, it would be almost impossible for children to have a future or at least hope for a better future. Camille – Case Worker, Webster-Cantrell Hall

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

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2008

WORSHIP AT 10:00 a.m.

Hanging of the Greens Service
The Dream Isaiah Saw

Text: Isaiah 2:1-5

Charles Watkins



Congregational Meeting

The congregation of Central Christian Church will meet to consider the 2009 budget proposal recommended by the Church Council on Sunday, December 14, at 11:55 a.m. in the Great Hall. All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend and to vote on the budget.

Dorcas Brunch, December 6

"*LISTENING FOR GOD'S QUIET VOICE – Slowing Down Enough to Hear Clearly*" is the theme for the annual Dorcas Brunch, Saturday, December 6, at 9:30 a.m. in the home of **Carol Graham**. God's voice comes in many volumes during the season of Advent. As we prepare for a season that is often hectic, our gathered time together will offer stories from scripture and from our sisters that will allow us to listen for the gentle, quiet, and powerful voice of God.



Central Youth

**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!!!

**Senior High
Heifer Ranch Trip
Perryville, AK
June 13-21, 2009**

Watch for Details coming soon...

Children's Christmas Workshop

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 at 428-4336. Volunteers are needed to staff several stations for cookie baking during the morning. Contact **Pastor Robert** for more information.

Charles's Column

Sunday morning with your worship bulletin you will receive this year's collection of Advent devotional meditations written by members of our congregation. The theme for this year's booklet is "Fear Not." The committee planning the collection was impressed with how many scriptural references are available for anyone who wants to reflect on our refusal to fear. Prophets proclaim it, angels sing it, and Jesus says it, "Fear Not." "Be Not Afraid."

This holy instruction and admonition is not just a casual theme for Central's latest publication. Given the state of the world and its economic system, it is a vitally important message to each of us. The cause of many problems in securities and real estate markets is fear. Panic! Anxiety.

In any system—family, church, nation—whenever fear and anxiety start to take control of everything that happens (or doesn't happen), it tends to multiply and spread like a viral infection. Your fear makes those around you afraid, and their fear frightens everybody else. Our new world of twenty-four hour electronic media and global interdependence makes it possible for fear and dread to grip the entire world with remarkable speed. The world has never seen what is happening right now in every economy on the planet. We were never so inter-connected before. And the word that is toppling great financial empires and enormous institutions of wealth is *panic*.

Franklin D. Roosevelt most famously described this problem as he wielded the executive power of the United States presidency and counseled the American people about fearing fear itself.

At the end of many of our worship services, we sing a prayer: "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me." In the same spirit now we need to sing, "Let the world calm down, and let it begin with me." You are an important part of the world economic system. Your individual decisions impact the entire global system. It's all too big for any of us to comprehend or control, but with God's help, we can control ourselves.

Dearly beloved, each of us needs to get a grip. We need to calm down. We need to fear not. We must not panic. For we rely not on the principalities and powers of this world but on the Almighty God who made heaven and earth. If God is for us, who can be against us?

All you can really control in this world is yourself. Take some good deep breaths. Thank God for life and love and hope. Calm down. And your quiet confidence in God's love and providence can calm the persons closest to you. Their faith and assurance can calm others. We are part of a global system, and your attitude and behavior can affect the entire system.

Be brave. Be strong. Stay calm. Love God and serve your neighbor. Prepare your heart to receive God's messiah, and let's start over again with courage and faith as Advent begins this Sunday.

Charles Watkins

Ladies Night Out - Tuesday, December 9th!

Members and friends of Central are invited to join together for a delightful meal and night out on Tuesday, December 9th at 6:00 p.m. at Junz Asian Grill in Forsyth (corner of Weaver Rd. and Hwy. 51). Great food, laughter, fellowship and door prizes guaranteed! Sign up this Sunday in the Friendship Center!

News From the Pews....

Congratulations to **Jim & Karolyn Rich**, of Frankfort, Illinois, on the adoption of their son, **Kaeden Trevor**, born on October 3rd. Kaeden is also welcomed into the family by his big sister, **Kaylee** and proud grandmother, **Helen Wells**.

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. Use the card to pay for your purchases at your local Kroger store. Reload the card at your local Kroger store with up to \$500 each refill. Reloads may be made at the Customer Service Counter. Continue to use/refill the card and support Central's local mission partners! The cards may also be given away as gifts. Be sure to tell the recipient that the card is refillable and will support ministries important to your 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

We would like to thank the Dorcas ladies for their delicious vegetable soup and pumpkin pie. Thank you for your thoughtfulness. God bless all of you.

John & Alice Paradee

To our Church Family,

We want to thank the church for bestowing the honor of Emeritus on us. We are grateful we were able to serve our Lord in many ways and to have our church support local and world missions for those in need.

You have touched our hearts with your love, prayers, cards and food especially the past 3 1/2 years. We continue to battle the highs and lows of cancer, but we know we are not alone.

Thanks again and it is a privilege to be a part of the Central Christian Church family.

Sue & Dean Simcox

Festival of Church Choirs, 4:00 p.m., Sunday, January 11, 2009

Ten churches forming seven choirs will provide a benefit performance, supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters, at the Kirkland Fine Arts Center at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 11, 2009. Come enjoy the wonderful music and blended voices of choirs from Antioch Missionary Baptist, Central Christian, Church of the Living God, First Baptist, First Christian, First Lutheran, First Presbyterian, First United Methodist, New Salem Baptist, and St. Peter A.M.E. Churches.

Tickets are \$10 per person (\$8 for seniors, 65 and up) and are available at the Kirkland Box Office, 1184 West Main Street. The box office is open Monday-Tuesday; Thursday-Friday from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Tickets may also be purchased online at www.kirklandfinearts.com



Sunday, November 30, 2008

10:00-*Hanging of the Greens Service*

Music: Offertory-Vocal Ensemble,

Piano, Bass, Drums

10:00 Anthem-Chancel Choir; Jessica Brooks, Soloist

9:15-9:45-Parish Nurse Jane Latshaw

9:00-Sunday School

11:00-Tasting Party, Friendship Center

4:30-Youth to First Christian,
Blue Mound

Monday (December 1)

11:30-Website Task Force, Volunteer Rm.

5:15-CACS Department, Disciple Rm.

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

6:30-Bowling, PlaMor Lanes

Tuesday (2)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207

10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,

Senior Minister's Study

3:30-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

5:30-Peace & Justice, Disciple Room

6:00-Unbinding Your Heart, Friendship
Center

Wednesday (3)

12:00-Central Singers

Thursday (4)

10:00-Alanon, 212

10:15-HSAC Meeting, Disciple Room

3:30-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

6:30-Decatur Needle Arts, 207

7:00-Chancel Choir

Friday (5)

6:00-Staff Christmas Party, Main Hangar

Saturday (6)

9:30-Dorcas Christmas Brunch, home
of Carol Graham

**No Adult Sunday
School Classes
This Sunday,
November 30**

Serving Schedule—November 30, 2008

Elders:

10:00 - Brett Swallow, Mary Jane Linton

Deacons:

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 Swarhout, Janet Thicksten, Larry Thicksten, Lawrence Thicksten, Sally Thicksten, Kathy Thornton

Ushers:

10:00 -Team 6 - Mark Beal, Capt., Katie Beal, Kaylene Beal, Sean Beal, Charlotte Lyon, Barb Tyler

Greeters:

10:00 - Glen & Jody Featherstun, Andy & Theresa Fulk

Parish Nurse: Jane Latshaw

Acolyte:

10:00 - Sam Funk

P.A. Operator:

10:00 - Larry Pepper

Preparation of Communion:

Carole Holbrook, Kim Miller, Yvonne Purcell, Nancy Taylor

Van Driver:

10:00 service - Bruce Williams

December 3 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin

Hosts:

- Dec. 1 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
- Dec. 2 9:00-12:30 - Joy Adams
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
- Dec. 3 9:00-12:30 - Joan Smith
12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong
- Dec. 4 9:00-12:30 - Shirlee Johnson
12:30-4:00 - Melissa Byrd
- Dec. 5 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*
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
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

Counting On You

November 23

Worship Attendance 286
Sunday School Attendance 70

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