



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXI

Decatur, Illinois, December 10, 2008

No. 50

Jubilate!

As the third candle on the Advent Wreath is lighted this Sunday, the theme is Joy! Adding to our joy this Sunday will be Dr. Michael Luxner, Music Director and Conductor of the Millikin Decatur Symphony Orchestra and the ensemble of strings and brass from the symphony who will play during both services. This service includes favorite Christmas Carols and concludes with a sing-along "Hallelujah" Chorus from Messiah. This is the perfect Sunday to invite a friend to worship at Central with you.



Music for A Merry Christmas

Sunday, September 21st Central's organist **Leslie Peart** along with vocal soloists from the chancel choir—**Connie Bordner, Karen Driver, Janice Mitchell** and **Lucien Smith**—will present the annual Candlelight Christmas Concert at 4:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. This program of entertaining and meaningful music will enhance your Christmas spirit and delight all whom you invite to join you at the concert.

You're Invited to Come Home for Christmas

You and your family are invited to Come Home to Central on Sunday, December 21st. This year, our Fellowship and Shepherding departments will host a delicious brunch at 9:15 a.m. and an equally delightful lunch at noon, both in the Great Hall. The menu will include Baked Ham, Hash Brown Casserole and Croissants. Added with the brunch will be Scrambled Eggs and Fruit Salad and the lunch will also include Jello Salad, vegetables and dessert. Please return your reservation card or call the church office to make your reservation by Sunday, December 14th. Mark your calendar and plan now to Come Home to Central for Christmas!



Spirit of Christmas Wrapping Up

We will dedicate *Spirit of Christmas* gifts this Sunday, December 14th during our morning worship services. If you have not turned in your gifts, please bring them to the Church Library this Sunday. Central's *Spirit of Christmas* is a ministry of giving and compassion. If you have not had the opportunity to participate in this annual holiday tradition, you may do so by donating to the Spirit of Christmas Fund.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2008

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

Pointing to the Light

Text: John 1:6-8; 19-23

Charles Watkins

Deacons Needed for Christmas Eve Service

If you are planning to attend the Christmas Eve service and are willing to serve as deacon, please call **Kelly Swallow**, 876-7205.



New Year's Eve at Central

Robert MacDonald of Fort Worth, Texas, will return again to the console of the Diller Memorial Organ in our sanctuary to present the New Year's Eve Pops Organ Concert. End the year at church with entertaining music that is not usually heard on Sunday morning. The concert is at 8:30 p.m. on December 31 and will conclude in time for you to attend other celebrations of the dawning of the new year.

Vote on the Budget

The congregation will meet this Sunday, December 14 at 11:55 a.m. in the Great Hall to vote on the budget for 2008 recommended by the Stewardship Department and the Church Council. All members of the congregation are invited to attend and to vote.



Central Youth

Saturday, December 13th
9:00 a.m. - Noon

Central Youth are invited to help children make cookies during the Children's Christmas Workshop. We will help with Christmas games and a carol sing as well.

Sunday, December 14th
4:00-7:00 p.m.

Christmas Caroling
Central Youth will bring tidings of comfort and cheer to members.

Sunday, December 21st
6:00-8:00 p.m.

Central Youth will gather at Pastor Robert's house for Dinner and Christmas Fun. Bring two pairs of new socks, one for an exchange and one or more to give to the Dove Clothing Room.

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

Charles's Column

The candles on the Advent Wreath count down the Sundays until the celebration of Christmas. The daily devotional guide distributed to the congregation by the Worship Department encourages us all to "*Be Not Afraid.*" You may feel as though you live in two worlds at once—the world of the twenty-four hour news channel that proclaims economic gloom and doom, and the world of the church which proclaim, "Fear not, for I bring you glad tidings of great joy." Yes, you are a citizen of the world, and at the same time a citizen of the Realm of God. As we sing the joyous carols of our faith in these closing weeks of a year in economic recession, I hope that you will feel strengthened and encouraged and filled with hope as a citizen of God's kingdom of justice and peace. God bless you!

Charles Watkins

Kroger Cares Cards – Gifts that Keep on Giving

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.

Here's how the program works. 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.

Welcome New Members



Welcome to **Irwin & Roena Soliday**, who became members of Central by transfer of membership on Sunday, December 7.

Christmas Offering Benefits Our Regional Church

All gifts to the annual Christmas special offering benefit the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Illinois and Wisconsin. Your gift supports direct services to Illinois congregations, the summer camping program for youth, and leadership development opportunities throughout the year. This outreach gift stays close to home.

Your IRA can Help Your Church

If you are 70 ½ years old and are required to take a distribution from your IRA before December 31, you can bypass income tax on your distribution if you have it disbursed to Central Christian Church. In October President Bush signed the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 which includes a two-year extension of the IRA charitable rollover for all of 2008 and 2009. If you are interested in making a gift to the church from your IRA, please speak with your financial or tax adviser this week. Donor-advised funds do not qualify for tax-free IRA transfers.

Notes of Thanks Received

When I sat down last Sunday evening to read the meditations in the ADVENT BOOKLET, I was so inspired by the first one written by Azalee and Warren Berner that I continued reading until I had read almost all of them before I stopped.

At age 94, all of my life's FEARS have vanished and I FEAR NOT for the future years, because I know that God loves me and will always care for me.

Thank you and God bless you, my friends, for sharing your beautiful inspiring, comforting stories with us.

Roy O. Schilling

I was surprised, grateful and honored when I was told I would be receiving the Deacon Emerita award. It has truly been a labor of love for a caring and loving congregation. May God's peace be with you all.

Mary F. Boyle

Giving Acknowledgments Mailed

Each regular financial supporter of this church received last week in the mail a grateful acknowledgment of all your gifts through November 30. With just one month to wipe out an accumulated deficit of \$23,000 remaining before the end of the year, please review your giving record and fulfill your giving plan in December. Every single gift makes a difference: even a token gift is better than no gift at all. Thank you for supporting your church.

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, December 14, 2008

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
Music: Offertory-Millikin-Decatur
Symphony Orchestra
10:45 Anthem-Millikin-Decatur
Symphony Orchestra
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Clinic
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
9:30-Sunday School
11:15-Children's Worship
11:55-Congregational Meeting,
Great Hall
4:00-7:00-Youth Caroling

Monday (15)

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

Tuesday (16)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,
Senior Pastor's Study
3:30-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

Wednesday (17)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 240
12:00-Website Task Force, Volunteer Rm
12:00-Central Singers
5:30-Spirit of Christmas Wrappers, 280
6:00-Unbinding Your Heart Planning
Meeting, Disciple Room

Thursday (18)

10:00-Alanon, 212
3:30-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
7:00-Chancel Choir

Friday (19)

6:00-Wedding Rehearsal
6:45-Wedding Rehearsal Dinner,
Great Hall

Saturday (20)

4:30-Sanctuary Wedding,
Ginger Flanders & Brian Morgan

Counting On You

December 7

Worship Attendance 295
Sunday School Attendance 52

Serving Schedule—December 14, 2008

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Keith Backes, John Graham

Communion to Shut-Ins:

Deacons

Janet Thicksten
Larry Thicksten
Sally Thicksten
Kathy Thornton
Kevin Otis
Ed Acheson
Lucy Acheson
Jeannie Backes
Louise Boline
Mary Boyle

Elders

Felicity Williams
Mike Holbrook
Larry Otis
Kevin Wilmot
Bruce Campbell
Mary Jane Linton
Shirley Swarthout
Jo Carter
Mary Jane Oliver
Cindy Soebbing
Alternate: John Graham

Deacons:

8:15 - 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
10:45 - 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 3 - Dennis Downey, Capt., Debbie Downey, Tina Canfield, Paula Hovey, Connie Schabowski
10:45 - Team 8 - Dean Hadden, Capt., Pamela Ferguson, Doug Soebbing, Donna Strong

Greeters:

8:15 - Greg & Jo Carter, Bruce & Liz Campbell
10:45 - John & Carol Graham, Pamela Ferguson, Florence Bolin

Acolytes:

8:15 - Julia Funk
10:45 - Austin Econie

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Jim Bednar
10:45 - Jim Hinze

Preparation of Communion:

Barbara Beyer, Karen Baird, Donna Dash, Gerri & Mike Munos

Fellowship Coffee Hosts: Steve & Shirley Swarthout Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Andy Fulk
Sunday School and 10:45 service - Keith Backes
10:45 service only - Ron Oliver

December 17 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin, Marge Karl

Hosts:

Dec. 15 9:00-12:30 - Darla Lienemann
12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong
Dec. 16 9:00-12:30 - Barbara Beyer
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
Dec. 17 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman
12:30-4:00 - Sally Thicksten
Dec. 18 9:00-12:30 - Jean Booher
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
Dec. 19 9:00-12:30 - Juanita Ballance
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

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HTTP://WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG
e-mail: central@cccdisciples.org

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 Coordinators
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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