



# The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXII

Decatur, Illinois, January 21, 2009

No. 3

## Update on Dr. Sharon Watkins's Sermon at the National Prayer Service

If you were able to watch the broadcast of the National Prayer Service on Wednesday and the sermon by **Dr. Sharon Watkins**, our denomination's General Minister and President, you may have noticed the small Celtic cross which she wore around her neck. The cross was a gift from the Christian Church in Illinois and Wisconsin, presented to Dr. Watkins on our behalf by Regional Minister, **Beth Dobyns**. Beth felt it was an appropriate gift for this significant occasion, given that President Barack Obama is from Illinois. *"The symbolism of the Celtic cross and its message of wholeness fit well with the beliefs of the church and those held by Watkins,"* Dobyns said. The cross was engraved with the church motto, "Wholeness in a fragmented world." If you were not able to watch the telecast of the National Prayer Service, a transcript will be made available and will be posted on our website at [www.cccdisciples.org](http://www.cccdisciples.org). We hope to eventually provide a link to a video, but that has not yet been confirmed. Check our website for the most current information regarding the National Prayer Service.



Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins

## Sign-Ups Continue for Unbinding Your Heart!

We've had a great response so far to our six-week Lenten study and emphasis on prayer and faith-sharing, Unbinding Your Heart. More than 40 members and friends of Central have committed to join together in small groups for prayer and sharing, beginning March 1<sup>st</sup>. That's 20% of our goal of 200 people participating. Groups will meet primarily on Sunday mornings, during the Sunday School hour (9:30-10:30 a.m.). If requested, we will also offer additional groups on weekdays or evenings. Sign up this Sunday in the Friendship Center and wear your "Unbinding" button proudly as we prepare for this significant, transformational event in the life of our congregation. **Lois Whitaker**, a member of the Planning group, shares her experience: *"Since my involvement in Unbinding Your Heart in late spring of 2008, I have 'felt' prayers in recognizable ways. It is pretty awesome. Also, I have an awareness of people I don't know – sackers in Kroger's, checkers during the holidays, people I see eating alone. I am able to look at them and share caring conversations (a new and rewarding experience for me). In the beginning, sharing was pretty generic for me, now it is meaningful and welcomed. As I unbind myself, I feel more closely bound to the other people in our small groups and to God. I look forward to that happening in our entire congregation during the Lenten season."* We invite you to sign up for Unbinding the Gospel!

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2009**

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

**Now Hiring**

Text: Mark 1:14-20

Robert P. Bushey, Jr.

## Concert Opportunities

**Greater Decatur Chorale** has invited our **Chancel Choir** to perform at their concerts on **Saturday, January 31 at 7:30 p.m.** and **Sunday, February 1 at 2:00 p.m.** Chancel Choir will sing four pieces and join the Chorale for a fifth. Concerts are at the Civic Center and tickets are available at the Park District or at the door.

**One Voice**, a vocal jazz ensemble from Millikin University will be in our Sanctuary on **Sunday, March 1 at 4:00 p.m.** They will present the concert they have prepared for the prestigious American Choral Directors Convention in Oklahoma City. They are under the direction of **Steve Widenhofer**, head of the music department at Millikin and a former organist at Central.

## Volunteer Opportunity!

Volunteers are needed to host our Fellowship Coffee, following the 8:15 a.m. worship service each Sunday morning. Coffee and Juice are provided and prepared for you in advance. You only set the table, pour the beverages and provide a welcoming smile and goodies (optional, but nice!). Please speak with **Pastor Gretchen** or e-mail at [gbarron@cccdisciples.org](mailto:gbarron@cccdisciples.org), if you are interested in helping!





## Central Youth

### Area Winter Youth Event Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>

1:30-6 p.m.

First Christian Church  
Blue Mound, IL  
Games, Food, Worship, Camp  
Reunions, Camp and Summit 09  
information and more!

### Sr. High Heifer Ranch Trip Perryville, AK June 13-21, 2009

High School Youth will travel to the Heifer International Livestock and Learning Center in Arkansas. We will stay in the Lodge, work on the ranch, spend a night in the Global Village and learn about solutions to hunger in the world. And, we will have fun! Registration forms are coming soon - watch for them and mark your calendar today!

### Super Subs for Hunger

The Youth of Central are receiving orders for Super Bowl Subs. Our Foot-long Subs sell for \$10 each on white or wheat bread with three meat choices and choice of toppings. Six-inch Subs are available for \$5. Order forms will be in the worship bulletin this week with delivery of our famous Subs on Super Bowl Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. Profit from this annual youth fundraiser will be used for scholarships to send youth to the Heifer International Livestock & Learning Center in Perryville, AR this summer.

### Robert's Reflections

*"Occasionally in life there are those moments of unutterable fulfillment which cannot be completely explained by those symbols called words. Their meanings can only be articulated by the inaudible language of the heart."* Martin Luther King, Jr.

These words graced the opening of the speech Dr. King gave when he received the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1964. Truly, the historic events of this week are among those moments. We are experiencing a week that began with our national observance of Dr. King's birthday, recalling the dream *that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."* And we pray, that with the inauguration of our 44<sup>th</sup> President, at very least, one grand step has been made along the difficult path to the inclusive freedom of Dr. King's dream and the promise of this land we call our home.

The historic nature of this week is not about political victory or defeat, it is about the realization of a dream that stirred in the hearts of generations of long ago and stirs in the hearts of young and old today. The dream has been the same vision voiced by the prophets of ancient Israel, calling the people of God to turn from the ways of selfishness and exclusiveness, to change their perceptions of one another such that each and all would be seen as children of God. The dream was the vision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who embodied God's unbounded love and mercy for all of humanity as he called his followers to lives of service, love and mercy.

To dream is to have hope for a future full of potential. Watching the events of the inauguration on Tuesday, Dr. King's dream was evident in the faces of the throngs of Americans who flooded our nation's capital. And, it is something we must be proud of as a nation as we continue the journey to the mountaintop that Dr. King spoke eloquently about in his speech on the eve of his assassination, Memphis, TN April 3, 1968...

*"Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life — longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over, and I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land. So I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything, I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."*

May we celebrate the progress we have made as a nation symbolized by the events of this week and may we be humbled by the enormity of the work that remains ahead of us as we heed the calling of our Lord and Savior, *follow me.*

Peace & Joy,  
**Robert**



**News From the Pews....**

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Francis & Carole Songer** and family following the January 16<sup>th</sup> death of his brother, *Charles C. Songer*.

**Note of Thanks Received**

Thank you to the ministers and to our dear Central Christian Church family for their prayers and comfort during our mom's (Virginia Jackson) long illness.

Your strength carried us until the end and will sustain us forever.

God Bless,  
**Gail & Larry Prince & Family**

**Building for the Future, Become a Tutor for H2O**

H2O is one of the ways we reveal the nature and presence of God in our community. H2O is one of the ways you may serve the church as we commemorate the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation. H2O is a way to answer the call to service to help build our nation for the future. By volunteering to tutor elementary students, we enlighten children to worlds of possibility, including the possibility that they are worth your time and your patience. Please, consider volunteering to help with H2O in 2009. We have new curriculum and are looking forward to making a difference in the lives of our students. Some of our work is one on one and some tutoring is done in small groups. The number of volunteers determines the number of students who get this much needed support. There are many children on the waiting list. H2O meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30-4:45 p.m. at Hope Academy (955 N. Illinois Street). Training will be provided for those who request it. If you are interested in joining our H2O volunteer team, or you have questions, contact **Pastor Robert** at 428-4336 ext. 104 or [rbushey@cccdisciples.org](mailto:rbushey@cccdisciples.org)

**Hunger Relief Team Needs You – February 14<sup>th</sup>**

We have been asked to provide Five Saturday meals at the Good Samaritan Inn in 2009. Last year we served nearly 1000 meals to under-resourced individuals, including many children, who were without nutritional meals on the weekends. We expect to serve at least as many in 2009. Our 2009 serving dates are February 14<sup>th</sup>, May 16<sup>th</sup>, June 20<sup>th</sup>, August 15<sup>th</sup>, and October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Your help is needed. Volunteers are needed to help prepare meals in our kitchen from 8-11a.m and to help serve meals at the inn from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. A sign up sheet for February 14<sup>th</sup> will be in the Friendship Center this Sunday.

**Ladies Night Out Rescheduled for Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>!**

Ladies Night Out has been rescheduled for Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. You may sign up in the Friendship Center and plan to gather with members and friends of Central for Ladies Night Out at Pastabilities Italian Grill on Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. Great food, laughter, fellowship and door prizes are guaranteed! Come and experience the fun that we have when we gather together! Sign up this Sunday in the Friendship Center!



**Sunday, January 25, 2009**

- 8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
- Music: 8:15 Offertory-Central Singers
- 10:45 Offertory-Chancel Choir; Marilyn Ward, Piano
- 10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir; Marilyn Ward, Piano
- 9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Clinic
- 9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
- 9:30-Sunday School
- 11:15-Children's Worship
- 1:30-6:00-Area Youth Winter Event, First Christian, Blue Mound, IL

**Monday (26)**

- 6:30-Bowling Banquet, Main Hangar

**Tuesday (27)**

- 9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207
- 10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting, Senior Pastor's Study
- 3:30-H2O Volunteers, Hope School
- 6:00-World Outreach, Volunteer Room
- 7:00-Dorcas, Disciple Room

**Wednesday (28)**

- 12:00-Central Singers
- 5:30-Stephen Ministers, Room 211
- 6:30-Unbinding Your Heart Prayer Team, Disciple Room

**Thursday (29)**

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

**Saturday (31)**

- 10:00-12:00-Youth Sub Shop, Great Hall Kitchen

**Counting On You**

**January 18**

Worship Attendance ..... 249

Sunday School Attendance ..... 63

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## Serving Schedule—January 25, 2009

### Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Mike Holbrook, Dick Cain

### Elders Serving Hospital Communion:

**St. Mary's Hospital:** Randy Brooks

**Decatur Memorial:** Connie Bordner

### 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, 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, Aaron Osman, Betsy Osman, Dave Phillips, Nita Phillips, Brett Swallow, Kelly Swallow, Steve Swarouth, Janet Thicksten, Kathy Thornton, Kent West, Lea West

### Ushers:

8:15 - Team 4 - Ed Acheson, Capt., Gordon Gregory, Carole Holbrook, Mike Holbrook, Betty Ann Roe

10:45 - Team 9 - Ed Acheson, Capt., Kevin Miller, Kim Miller, Aaron Osman, Betsy Osman, York Powers

### Greeters:

8:15 - Charlie & Nicole Ropp, Frances Heiserman, Roe Skidmore

10:45 - Ruth Ewing, Dee Hill, Janet & Larry Thicksten

### Acolytes:

8:15 - Sam Funk

10:45 - Rachel Ash

### P.A. Operator:

8:15 & 10:45 - Donna Dash

### Preparation of Communion:

Carole & Francis Songer, Jan & Ron Dobbs, Darla Otis

### Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - John Flanders

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Keith Backes

10:45 service only - Richard Ward

### January 28 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin, Marge Karl

### Hosts:

Jan. 26 9:00-12:30 - Rosie Doore  
12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

Jan. 27 9:00-12:30 - Dee Hill  
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

Jan. 28 9:00-12:30 - Virginia Griffith  
12:30-4:00 - Ruby Agnew

Jan. 29 9:00-12:30 - Evelyn Sperry  
12:30-4:00 - Charlotte Lyon

Jan. 30 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*  
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

**Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**  
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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

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PERIODICAL  
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