



The Central Visitor

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

Vol. LXXXII

Decatur, Illinois, February 11, 2009

No. 6

Coming Soon!

Next month our congregation will engage its faith and hope in a three-year Capital Campaign under the theme **Building on 175 Years of Serving**. The Building Fund Campaign for 2009-2012 will provide funds for restoration and water-proofing of the Kirkland Bell Tower, restoration of the stained glass windows in the west entrance, sanctuary, and chapel, the renovation of 1950s era restrooms in the lower level into attractive 21st century conveniences, the updating of lighting controls in the sanctuary, and replacement as needed of mechanical systems for heating and cooling the twenty-year-old Nichols Wing of our church. One tenth of the contributions to the capital campaign will go to capital needs of Central's mission partners.

For the first time in decades, there is no provision in this capital campaign for debt retirement. All debts of our congregation have been paid in full, and there is no mortgage on any church property. Capital efforts over the last three years have been financed internally, and it is anticipated that projects in the 2009-2012 will be paid for as funds become available. The church has not paid banks any interest in recent years. Please plan now to make your most generous three-year commitment to the building fund.

Unbinding Your Heart – Sign up this Sunday

We now have nearly 100 people signed up and ready to participate in the "Unbinding Your Heart" experience during Lent, beginning March 1st! We invite you to become part of this 40-day emphasis on prayer and faith sharing! Groups will meet on Sunday mornings during the Sunday school hour and throughout the week as needed. During each group session, we will discuss the daily prayer activities that group members engaged in during the week and will spend time praying for ourselves and others. Why do we pray for ourselves? In sharing our own concerns, we are allowing others to pray for us. We become more aware of our own needs and the ways that God is at work in our lives. And in becoming more aware of our needs, we also become more aware of the needs of others.

Lois Whitaker puts it this way. *"Pray for me, when I am not broken or hurt? That was a strange and new idea. My daily prayers were/are almost totally outward. I had not silently considered what needs God might insert for me to ask for in prayer. Through **Unbinding Your Heart**, I have come to know myself better. It is a freeing experience. It also frees me to better understand and knowingly appreciate others, as they are. Unbinding? Absolutely!"*

Sign up for "Unbinding Your Heart" this Sunday in the Friendship Center!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2009

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

I Do Choose

Text: Mark 1:40-45

Charles Watkins

Mission Challenge 175

Have you challenged yourself as an individual to find one way to strengthen the mission of our church during this 175th anniversary year? Have you written down your idea to challenge other members of Central? The box to receive your challenge is on display in the Friendship Center and ready to hear from you. No

signature is needed: just your idea. Celebrate Central's 175 years in mission by adding your own cleverness and commitment.



Concert Opportunities

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.

One Voice is under the direction of **Steve Widenhofer**, head of the music department at Millikin and a former organist at Central.

March 22 at 4:00 p.m., Central will host a piano recital by **Douglas Ashcraft**. Mr. Ashcraft is a piano instructor at Idyllwild Art Academy in California. He began his formal training as a student of Aldo Mancinelli.



Central Youth

Sunday, February 22nd
Heifer Ranch Trip
Meeting
Noon-2 p.m.

Sunday, March 1st
4 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
Millikin University
One Voice Concert

Come hear this delightfully talented group performing in our sanctuary. Youth from Blue Mound will be joining us and we will share supper together after the concert.

Sunday, March 8th
4:30-6 p.m.

Central Youth will meet in the Great Hall. We will begin designs for our new recycling center.

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!

Charles's Column

The 175th Anniversary theme for January was *175 years in mission*. Mission is to the church as flame is to burning. Great effort for the last century and three-quarters in our congregation has been devoted to keep our eyes on our mission, which is Christ's mission. And what is it that motivates that mission? It is love.

So in honor of St. Valentine's Day this week-end, the February theme of our anniversary celebration is ***175 years of loving***.

- ◆ We love God, honoring the first and greatest commandment of our faith.
- ◆ We love our neighbors, honoring the commandment which is second only to the first and actually is integral to the first.
- ◆ We love our church, an amazing congregation, a remarkable American denomination, a full participant in the ecumenical Body of Christ.
- ◆ We love our community, so assaulted by global economic change and population shrinkage and educational challenge and poverty and homelessness.
- ◆ We love our troubled world, the world that God loved so much that God sent God's only Son to redeem it
- ◆ We love our enemies, so offended by our wealth and arrogance, so threatened by our cultural dominance, so anxious about our military power, so hopeful that we will actually live up to our ideals of liberty and justice for all, yes for all.
- ◆ We love our friends, peoples and nations around the world who still see America as the last, best hope for human dreams and aspirations.
- ◆ We love light and truth and peace and purity and honor.
- ◆ We love our families including even our unlovable relatives.
- ◆ We love our friends, the family that we choose for ourselves.
- ◆ We love our work, the opportunity to accomplish something worthwhile, to provide for our families' needs, to participate with God in creating and strengthening something of value.
- ◆ We love our faith which proclaims the love of God for all people, the grace of God for all who fall short of God's glory, the salvation of God for the entire created order.
- ◆ We love each other.

And we've been doing all this loving for 175 years at Central Christian Church. We're going to keep on loving into the next century and the next. And may God's love comfort and encourage you every day as you determine to love the world and every being in it!

Charles Watkins

Sign the Column

A column in the Friendship Center has been prepared to receive your signature, along with the signature of at least 175 other members, friends, visitors, children and youth in celebration of our 175th anniversary this year. Sign your name and celebrate!



News From the Pews....

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to **Kelly & Brett Swallow** and family following the death of Kelly's uncle, *Walter Malloy* on February 6.

Volunteer Opportunity — Faith in Action

Additional volunteers are needed to keep up with the growing demand for services that many elderly have come to depend on. Even if you have only 1 to 2 hours per week to contribute – you could be helping a homebound person combat loneliness or provide a ride to a medical appointment. Please consider becoming a Faith in Action volunteer to help your neighbors maintain their independence. Speak with **Pastor Gretchen** if you're interested in learning more about this volunteer opportunity.

Lasagna Dinner for Good Samaritan Inn

The Good Samaritan Inn will host a "drive-by" Lasagna Dinner on Sunday, February 22nd from 11 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Tickets are available in the church office and in the Friendship Center this Sunday for \$7.50 or four for \$25. Dinners may be picked up at 543 N. Water Street. Good Samaritan Inn serves our community by providing hot meals seven days per week for the under-resourced of our community.

Special Needs Luncheon

A free luncheon to assist parents of special needs children will be held on Saturday, February 21st from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Heartland Community Church's Grand Palace. The luncheon will feature **Joan Clark**, autism specialist, educator and author of *Jackson Whole Wyoming* and *Ann Drew Jackson* which tell the story of a boy with Asperger's Syndrome. Mrs. Clark currently works with students at Hope Academy. RSVP by February 18th at 877-9529.

Week of Compassion — "Where Your Treasure is, There will Your Heart Be Also"

All around the world, God's treasured children are deeply hurting. Through Week of Compassion, our church gently, persistently, and strongly cares for all God's people. By sharing some of our earthly treasures — our money, our time, our energy – decisive aid can be sent when disaster strikes. We help people help themselves through education, health care, tools, seeds, and resources to improve community infrastructure. And when we care for people nearby and far away, we also become transformed by experiencing the presence of God. How can YOU share your treasure with brothers and sisters around the world?

♦Make a donation to this annual Special Offering and help us reach our goal of \$3,862 donated in February.

♦Donate school supplies and toiletry items to help fill 200 kits (items include children's scissors, 70-count spiral bound notebooks, rulers, pencil sharpeners and erasers, pencils, 24-count crayons, hand towel and washcloth, soap, toothbrush). Complete lists and information are available in the Friendship Center. (Dollar Stores are an excellent place to purchase the needed items.)

♦Donate additional funds to help purchase items for School and Health Kits (mark "school/health kits" in your check memo line").

♦Keep Week of Compassion and the suffering millions around the world in your prayers and visit the display this Sunday in the Friendship Center.



Sunday, February 15, 2009

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services

Music: Offertory-Katie Powers,

Soprano; Marilyn Mertz, Piano

10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir

9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Clinic

9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.

9:30-Sunday School

11:15-Children's Worship

Monday (16)

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

Tuesday (17)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, 207

10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,

Senior Pastor's Study

Wednesday (18)

9:00-Baby Talk Parents, 240

12:00-Central Singers

5:30-Church Council, Disciple Room

6:30-Unbinding Your Heart Prayer Team, Disciple Room

Thursday (19)

10:00-Alanon, 212

3:30-H2O Volunteers, Hope School

7:00-Chancel Choir

Counting On You

February 8

Worship Attendance 267
Sunday School Attendance 56

Children's Underwear Collection Progress

Our tub of New Children's Underwear was delivered to the Dove Clothing Room this week. Our collection will continue through February 22nd. New children's underwear of all sizes is needed. Help us fill another tub this week to give to our community's under-resourced children.

Serving Schedule—February 15, 2009

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Cindy Soebbing, Robert Garrett

Deacons:

8:15 - Team 3 - Mike Holbrook, Capt., Charlotte Ballance, Jarrett Bednar, Greg Carter, Jo Carter, Megan Carter, Jane Davis, Andy Fulk, Theresa Fulk, Christy Hanson, Dave Hanson, Sherri Hood, Brittney Munos, Larry Otis, Debbie Seaberg, Connie Shields, Max Sperry

10:45 - Team 4 - Kevin Otis, Capt., Ed Acheson, Lucy Acheson, Jeannie Backes, Louise Boline, Mary Boyle, Shirley Brooks, Sue Ann Cain, Claudia Curry, Debbie Foster, Larry Foster, Jon French, Melinda Hawbaker, Scott Hawbaker, Bob Linton, David Miller, Katie Miller, Alex Otis, Andrew Otis, Kevin Ann Otis, Gary Rutherford, Roger Rutherford, Doug Soebbing, Bruce Stoddard, Carol Stoddard, Donna Strong, Kevin Wilmot

Ushers:

8:15 - Team 2 - Don Tankersley, Capt., Brenda Tankersley, Frances Heiserman, Becky Johnston, Betty Scott, Dave Scott

10:45 - Team 7 - Jon French, Capt., Jane French, George Virgil, Linda Virgil, Ed Voice, Jean Voice

Greeters:

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

10:45 - Marylu Lyman, Sid Rotz, David & Christy Hanson

Parish Nurse: Liz Campbell

Fellowship Coffee Hosts: Bill & Mary Alice Rule

Acolytes:

8:15 - Sam Funk

10:45 - Austin Econie

P.A. Operator:

8:15 - Donna Dash

10:45 - Keith Backes

Preparation of Communion:

Suzie Miller, Jim & Myra Hinze, Mark & Nancy McAfee

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams

Sunday School and 10:45 service - Doug Soebbing

10:45 service only - Karen Baird

February 18 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Joanne Gustin, Marge Karl

Hosts:

Feb. 16 9:00-12:30 - Rosie Doore

12:30-4:00 - Donna Strong

Feb. 17 9:00-12:30 - Barbara Beyer

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

Feb. 18 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman

12:30-4:00 - Sally Thicksten

Feb. 19 9:00-12:30 - Jean Booher

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

Feb. 20 9:00-12:30 - *Help Needed*

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

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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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