



The Central Visitor

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

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No. 48

Alternative Gift Giving Market Opens Sunday

The 2009 Alternative Gift Market is open Sunday, December 6th. This year you may purchase alternative gifts in honor of your loved ones from Baby Talk, Christ Care Stitchers, Dove, Good Samaritan Inn, Habitat for Humanity, the Oasis Day Center for the homeless, and Heifer International, which provides solutions to the root causes of hunger and poverty globally.

Stop by the Alternative Gift Market near the West Entrance; make a donation in someone's name to one of our seven organizations; and we will provide you with a certificate or card to send to your loved one telling them of the wonderful gift you have made in their honor for the holidays. Plan now to make Alternative Gift Giving a part of your Christmas experience in 2009.

Elderberries to Meet Wednesday, December 9th!

Elderberries meets on Wednesday, December 9th at noon in the Great Hall. The menu this month is pork roast, au gratin potatoes, green beans, Waldorf Salad, and peppermint trifle. Cost for the meal is just \$4 per person. Following lunch, we will learn about the history behind some of our favorite Christmas Carols and may even have an opportunity to sing some of them. To sign up, call the church office or mark "Elderberries" next to your name on the Friendship Pad this Sunday. Reservations need to be made before 5 p.m. on Monday, December 7th so don't delay, reserve your place at the table today!

Reserve Your Place to Come Home for Christmas, December 20

Sunday, December 20th Central will celebrate our annual *Come Home for Christmas* with a fellowship meal in the Great Hall. Brunch will be served at 9:30 a.m., and lunch at noon. Central's Shepherding and Fellowship Departments will provide a delicious holiday meal. Bring your out-of-town family members who are home for the holidays and enjoy this time with your Central church family. Make your reservations on Sundays, December 6 or 13. Just write 'brunch' or 'lunch' next to your name in the friendship register, and the number from your family attending. Or call the church office, 428-4336.

Young Family Christmas Party – Saturday, December 12th

Families with children, age 12 and younger, are invited to a Family Christmas Party on Saturday, December 12th from 5-7:30 p.m. Bring a potluck salad or side dish to share (meat, desserts, beverage and table service will be provided) and join us for a fun evening of family games and activities. Share the fun with your children as you decorate a plate of Christmas cookies to take home, make a craft together, watch Christmas cartoons on the big screen and more! We're even expecting a visit from Santa! Treat bags will be provided for all children so we need to know if you're planning to attend. Sign up this Sunday in the Friendship Center or call the church office to register!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2009

WORSHIP AT 8:15 AND 10:45

Salvation You Can See

Text: Luke 3:1-6

Robert Bushey, Jr.

Spirit of Christmas Ministry to Dedicate Gifts

Central's Spirit of Christmas ministry of giving and compassion is in the home stretch. All gifts should be returned to the church, wrapped and tagged by this Sunday, December 6. 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. We will dedicate the gifts this Sunday during our morning worship services.

Congregational Meeting Sunday

The congregation will meet this Sunday at 11:55 a.m. in the Disciple Room to vote on the proposed 2010 budget. Copies of the proposed budget are available on the counter in the Friendship Center. All members are invited to attend and vote on the budget.

Lasagna Take-Out Dinner

Did you get your tickets yet for the Take-Out Lasagna dinner this Sunday? You may purchase them in the church office until 3 p.m. on Friday. Meals can be picked up following the worship service at the West Entrance on Sunday. If you requested to pick up your meals following the first service, they will be ready for you by 9:15 a.m. Thank you for supporting this fund raiser for Women's Ministry and Scholarships at Central.

**Central Youth
Sunday, December 6th
6-8 p.m.**

Central Youth will meet to report on Summit 2009, discuss options for a Summer 2010 Mission Trip and share an Advent devotional time.

**Sunday, December 13th
Movie Night - *Invictus*
Time TBA**

Central Youth will go to a local theater to see the movie *Invictus*. From director Clint Eastwood, the movie tells the inspiring true story of how Nelson Mandela (Morgan Freeman) joined forces with the captain of South Africa's rugby team, Francois Pienaar (Matt Damon), to help unite their country.

**Sunday, December 20th
Christmas Caroling &
Party
4-8 p.m.**

Central Youth will bring tidings of comfort and cheer to Central homes from 4-6 p.m. and then meet at Pastor Robert's house for a Christmas Party. Bring a favorite book (used or new) to exchange and a children's book to be donated to Baby Talk.

Looking Ahead...

**Chi Rho (Jr High School)
Mid-Winter Retreat
January 16-17, 2010
at First Christian Church
Pontiac, IL**

**CYF(High School)
Mid-Winter Retreat
February 19-21, 2010
at Mackinaw Christian
Church, Mackinaw, IL**

Robert's Reflections

During the early 1980's, the sprawling Roper appliance factory one mile from my parent's home closed. The machinery and equipment used to manufacture stoves, cook tops, ovens and radar ranges was loaded onto trucks and railcars destined for Georgia where automation greatly reduced the cheaper workforce needed to make the products. The corporate headquarters just one block away was also packed up neatly as the company merged with Whirlpool and eventually was purchased by General Electric. Eventually the Georgia plant was closed as well and shipped to Mexico. The Roper outdoor products plant across town suffered a similar fate, as well as a furniture company and A.O. Smith Co. In total five major manufacturing plants closed within a few years and thousands of people lost their decent paying jobs. After nearly 25 years with the company, operating a press stamping out stove parts, my father was among the jobless. Unemployment rates that year stood unmatched, that is until this year.

I remember Thanksgiving and Christmas when Dad's unemployment checks were the only source of limited income for a limited time. I remember when food stamps helped buy our holiday meals along with government commodities of cheese and peanut butter. I remember because the way we celebrated the holidays was different. I remember the conversations about changing our expectations for Christmas morning. I was barely a teenager and I remember when the economy tried to destroy our holiday spirit, and lost.

The economy is at it again this year. With more than 2 million families losing their homes to foreclosure and unemployment rates above 10%, many families are facing the holiday season with the added stress of a national economic disaster weighing on them. Too many will fall prey to short term loans with unbelievably high interest rates of 300-1000% to provide their families with the kind of celebration complete with secular expectations that have been carefully marketed as the best way to share the spirit of the season. We may be quick to pass judgment at this point, saying that presents don't make the holiday, and irresponsible financial management is laziness or sin. The facts are that most people repay these high cost loans. Unless we have walked in their shoes, not similar shoes, but their shoes worn from every step they have taken or have been pushed to take by forces beyond their control...we may wish to withhold judgment. We may wish to work for the development of reasonable lending options in our community without usury rates that take advantage of the vulnerable or even ask if there are obstructions that refuse some people access to opportunity.

This Sunday, we encounter the introduction of John the Baptist as recorded in Luke's gospel. We are told that John came to "prepare the way of the Lord." Reciting Isaiah's vision of a "voice crying out in the wilderness," Luke proclaims that through Jesus "all flesh will see the salvation of God." The prophet envisioned barrier-free, equal access to salvation with "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth." What does salvation look like? When do we experience God's salvation? Do we all really get to see it? Are there barriers that prevent some from seeing the salvation of God? What does it mean when we proclaim Jesus Lord and Savior? We'll explore these questions this week as we prepare our hearts and minds to receive the Prince of Peace as Lord and Savior of the world.

Peace & Joy, *Robert*



**Central's Youth having fun
at the Christmas Tree Farm.**



Holly Jolly Christmas!

Presented by members of the Chancel Choir
Central Christian Church Great Hall
Friday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m.

Holiday Music & Treats

Freewill Offering will support our 2010 singing tour in Canada

Volunteers Needed for Dove Christmas Baskets

Dove needs volunteers December 15-18 to sort, shop, and prepare food and gift baskets. Help is needed on December 22nd to deliver the baskets. If you are available to help with food baskets contact Jerry Pelz at 429-5846 or gift baskets contact Francie Johnson at 428-6616.

Note of Thanks Received

I certainly want to thank Central Christian for being able to serve them for twelve years. It was a very nice experience, and I will always remember those years, and will miss the organ of Central very much. I will also miss all the friendly people of the church. I am sorry I lived so far away and could not be a part of the community more. But again, thanks to all of you, and thank you for the lovely and unexpected gift!

Leslie Peart

Mission Trip to Slidell, Louisiana – March 14-20, 2010

Plans are gearing up for our Mission Trip to Slidell, Louisiana next spring, March 14-20th. These dates coincide with spring break at Millikin University. During our week in Louisiana, we will be helping to blitz build a community center at First Christian Church, continuing work that will begin in February. A planning/participants meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13th at 6 p.m. If you are interested in participating in this exciting opportunity, please contact **Pastor Gretchen** for more information (428-4336 or gbarron@cccddisciples.org).



Sunday, December 6, 2009

8:15 and 10:45-Worship Services
Music: Offertory-Jubilee! &
John Baird, Piano
10:45 Anthem-Chancel Choir, Organ
9:00-9:45-Parish Nurse Clinic
9:15-Fellowship Coffee, Friendship Ctr.
9:30-Sunday School
11:55-Congregational Meeting,
Disciple Room
6:00-8:00-Youth Meeting

Monday (7)

5:00-Bowling, Spare Time Lanes
6:30-Boy Scouts, Disciple Room &
Great Hall

Tuesday (8)

9:00-ChristCare Stitchers, Room 207
10:00-Pastors' Staff Meeting,
Senior Pastor's Study

Wednesday (9)

9:00-Baby Talk, Disciple Room
12:00-Elderberries Lunch, Great Hall
12:00-Central Singers

Thursday (10)

10:00-Alanon, 212
6:00-Chancel Bells
7:00-Chancel Choir

Friday (11)

7:00-Chancel Choir Christmas
Program, Great Hall

Saturday (12)

7:30-Elders' Breakfast, Disciple Room
5:00-Young Families Christmas Party,
Great Hall

Counting On You

November 29

Single Service for Hanging of Greens
Worship Attendance 250
Sunday School Attendance 12

Serving Schedule—December 6, 2009

Elders:

8:15 & 10:45 - Lois Whitaker, Felicity Williams

Elders Serving Imboden Creek Living Center:

Cindy Soebbing & Julie Martin

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, 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 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 - David & Rosalei Poland, Betty Ann Roe, Virginia Griffith
10:45 - Randy, Shirley & Jessica Brooks, Marylu Lyman

Acolytes:

8:15 - Brad Munos
10:45 - Andrew Otis

P.A. Operator:

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

Fellowship Coffee Hosts:

Mark & Kylee Tillman, Kevin, Kim & Audrey Miller

Preparation of Communion:

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

Van Drivers:

8:15 service and Sunday School - Bruce Williams
Sunday School and 10:45 service - Kevin Wilmot
10:45 service only - Brett Swallow

December 9 Visitor Mailing Crew:

Ruby Agnew, Joanne Gustin

West Entrance Hosts:

Dec. 7 9:00-12:30 - Marylu Lyman
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
Dec. 8 9:00-12:30 - Evelyn Sperry
12:30-4:00 - Ellen Sheffer
Dec. 9 9:00-12:30 - Virginia Griffith
12:30-4:00 - Marilyn Ward
Dec. 10 9:00-12:30 - Dee Hill
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*
Dec. 11 9:00-12:30 - Harold & Bess King
12:30-4:00 - *Help Needed*

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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
Valerie Rozanski Administrative Assistant
Pat Beals Administrative Assistant
Jane Latshaw Parish Nurse Coordinator
Katie Beal Childcare Coordinator
Joanne Frady, Sean Beal Childcare Providers
Shelly Messmore Preschool Director
Trudy Garland, Regina Rhodes Preschool Teachers
Wendy Jalley, Janet Langston Preschool Teachers
Jennifer Van Dyke Preschool Teacher
Kay Villarreal, Robin White Preschool Teachers
David Flanders Caretaker Supervisor
Dean Hadden Caretaker
Crystal Thicksten Caretaker
Charles Wallace Caretaker

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