

The Central Visitor



Vol. XCIII

Decatur, Illinois, June 2, 2021

No. 22

Coffee served on Sunday mornings, beginning June 6

Beginning this Sunday, we will begin serving coffee on Sunday mornings again. Here is what you can expect:

- A 6ft table will be stationed at the west entrance outside under the canopy by the large flower pots.
- Our custodial staff will place white carafes of coffee on the table.
- Volunteers will pour in cups to "grab and go."
- Coffee will be served after 8 a.m. worship and 9:15 worship. But not after 10:30 (10:30 worshippers are encouraged to get coffee before worship).



Bottle Cap Collection is Back!



Our youth have finished with their collection of the bottle caps, but don't fret! Our Journeymen have decided to continue the bottle cap collection project! You may continue to bring your bottle caps to Central so that we can help create benches for different organizations in our community. The collection bins are in-between the doors of the West Entrance, as they have been for the past year. Thank you, Journeymen!

Food Collection for NECF

Your generous food donations for our grocery cart last month were graciously received by Northeast Community Fund. For the collection for June 7, cereal, dried or canned beans, & tomato products are needed. Thank you.



SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2021

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP IN-PERSON (SANCTUARY) AND LIVE STREAMED ON WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG AT 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP IN-PERSON (GREAT HALL) AND ON FACEBOOK LIVE AT 9:15 a.m.

Text: John 6:30-35
Michael E. Karunas

Sunday Door Hosts Needed

While elevator repairs are being made (for about 6-8 weeks), we will need extra sets of hands at the Ramp door to assist members with check in. We also need more volunteers for the West Entrance. Please contact the church office at 217-428-4336 or central@cccdisciples.org if you can help us with this.



THANK YOU to all who contributed supplies for VBS!
The leaders and children appreciate your support.

Blessings,
Central Christian Church
CE Committee

MARK YOUR CALENDAR VBS DECORATION DAY

Please come and help turn our church into a castle!
Wednesday, June 9th
2 pm
Friendship Center
Great Hall
Sanctuary

New Address!



New addresses!!

Claudia Quigg asked us to share her new address as well as Claudine's.

Claudine Nichols
15055 West 87th Street Parkway
Apartment 124
Lenexa, KS 66215
913.242.7244

Claudia Quigg
12811 West 49th Terrace
Shawnee, KS 66216
217.433.3553



At the Crossroads

In John 15:1-8, Jesus compares himself to a vine and us to the branches of the vine. In so doing, he uses two more images to underscore the analogy: 1) bearing fruit and 2) "abiding." Our goal as branches of the vine is to bear fruit. This is not an uncommon image in the New Testament and this metaphor implies being faithful. Specifically in John's gospel it refers to exemplifying Jesus' own acts of love. The operative word here is "acts." To bear fruit is to show forth *actions* and not merely utter words. We remember, for example, how John the Baptist told the crowds (Matthew 3 and Luke 3) that they needed to *bear fruit* worthy of their repentance (and not merely speak words of repentance).

I've always understood the cross to be a compelling symbol for bearing fruit. The vertical beam of the cross signifies our relationship with God (with us at the bottom and God at top), while the horizontal beam signifies our love for our neighbors, who dwell on the same, lateral, earthly plane as we do. In this model we see the full meaning of the Great Commandment. We cannot have love of God (vertical) without love of neighbor (horizontal). It is not enough to experience love of God (vertical) without bearing fruit toward neighbor (horizontal).

I still think this is a valuable way to view the cross' symbolism. But in light of this passage from John 15, I find myself focusing on the cross in a different way thanks to a shift from "bearing fruit" to "abiding." Without *abiding* in the vine there can be no bearing fruit on behalf of the vine. Connection to the vine, then, is the prerequisite for any good fruit being borne. In this sense, the cross can be viewed not only with beams that extend *outward* to God (vertical) and neighbor (horizontal) but also as an intersecting crossroads drawing the vertical and horizontal edges *inward*.



Richard Rohr has spoken of the cross as the intersection of opposing forces. On the vertical side, there is heaven and earth, separated by sin and humanity's abandonment from the eternity of Eden. On the horizontal side, there are the disputes and divisions between humans, due to the serving of self-interest in the earthly realm. At the center of all of this stands Christ, suffering in the attempt to bring together and hold together that which has become separated. I'm drawn to this image of Christ as the Great Connector. For us to be connected to Christ – the branches on his vine – is to stand at the crossroads with him, and to bear fruit on his behalf may simply be to give witness to the reconciliation that is possible between neighbor and neighbor because of Christ's work on the cross.

(continued on page 3...)

When it comes to reconciliation – and bringing together things that are separated – the greatest thing Jesus showed us on the cross is that this is possible. Bringing together things that are presently broken apart is – in him – always possible. Exactly how and in what fashion it will occur may not be visible to us now, and reconciliation may not mean things being exactly as they once were, but our hope in the face of things divided – by distance, by death, by sin, by pain and loss, by age or anything else – is the knowledge that standing at their crossroads is Christ, with arms outstretched to show us the possibility of their future connection.

Blessings – Michael

Your Faith in 60 Seconds

During the weeks preceding Easter, we introduced a challenge to everyone: Describe why you are a Christian in 60 seconds. Why we believe in Christ and not something (someone) else? Many have taken us up on this challenge and have shared their testimonies with us. As they do, we are asking them to share them in worship. We will then publish the testimony in *The Visitor* the following week. Cindy Soebbing, longtime member of the choir, former elder and chair of shepherding, offered her faith in 60 seconds this past Sunday. Here is what she said:



I have many times pondered the question of why I am a Christian and how to verbalize my reasons to others. Having been born into a Christian believing household, I always knew about God and Jesus, but it was not personal for me as a child. I remember that my mom, being very musical, would play bible songs on our stereo, and I didn't really like many of them. Then I would feel guilty because I felt that I should like them, but I really didn't. Church and worshiping God regularly were always a big part of my young life. Yet, as I grew up, I knew that I could no longer be on the shirt tails of my believing parents, but must decide if I personally believed in the Christian faith and accepted Christ as my Savior.

So my answer is: I am a Christian because as an adult, I had several times when I was at wits end and I asked God to take over and help me and (to me it was miraculous,) the situations changed so that things turned out fine. I also have had times when I tried to handle things all by myself without looking to God and things turned out very badly. I also took part in a nondenominational bible study for many years and I learned and questioned a lot about God and Christ from reading the Bible. I feel that there are so many lessons written that are so timeless and super wise in how we are to deal with Life, that it just can't be fabricated....it seems so deeply thought out that no human alone could have created it.

My faith is as much an inward feeling as it is something that I can express in words. The more I lean on God and try to follow Jesus' teachings, the more I feel that God is truly guiding me. Both my parents were in hospice before they died. I know that God supported them as they ended their earthly life and gave me strength to endure it all. I truly felt God's presence then and continue to feel His presence surrounding me each and every day.



Sunday (6)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & Live Stream
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall & Facebook Live
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & Live Stream

Monday (7)

5:00-Elder Planning
6:00-I.T. Committee, Connection Café

Tuesday (8)

7:00-Journeymen, Connection Café
9:00-Christcare Stitchers, 207
10:30-Support Staff Meeting

Wednesday (9)

10:30-Ministers' Meeting
2:00-VBS Decoration
5:00-Elders

Thursday (10)

10:00-Alanon, Disciples Room
4:00-Journeymen 2, Connection Café
5:15-Brass Choir, Disciples Room
6:00-Choir, Choir Room

Friday (11)

9:00-VBS

Saturday (12)

9:00-VBS

Sunday (13) - VBS Sunday

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & Live Stream
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall & Facebook Live
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & Live Stream



Happy Birthday!! (6/6—6/12)!

Warren Berner, Christy Forsyth,
Bob Hoaglin, Shelby Matherly,
Aaron Osman, Byron Perry,
Emmett Reed, Emily Rohrscheib

Counting On You

Sunday, May 30, 2021

Total worshipping online = 173
Total worshipping in-person = 187



Sunday, June 6, 2021

7:45-9:30 teams

Front table: Jane Davis, Christine Lyman-Harm

Ushers: David Martin, Mike Munos

9:30-11:30 teams

Front table: Keith & Jeannie Backes

Ushers: Gretchen Kirby, David Martin

Elders: Gretchen Kirby, Gail Prince

PA: 8:00 Donna Dash

10:30 Mike Kirby

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Michael E. Karunas.....Senior Minister
Don Martin.....Minister of Music
Tina Miller..... Associate Minister of CE & Family Life
David Martin.....Youth Director
Cordelia "Dee Dee" GainOrganist
David Williams.....Organist
Kathleen Dudley.....Administrative Assistant
Yvonne Boyd.....Administrative Assistant
Hannah Brimmer.....Social Media Coordinator
Bri Lockwood.....Nursery Attendant
Carlee Phillips.....Nursery Attendant
Kattina WilliamsNursery Attendant
Lora WrightLead Caretaker
Jim Denzer.....Caretaker
Andrew Evans.....Caretaker
Toby Jones.....Caretaker

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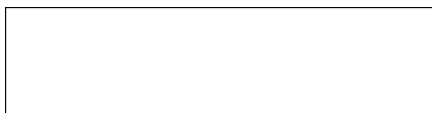
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The Central Visitor (USPS 098-520) is published weekly by Central Christian Church, 650 W. William, Decatur, IL 62522.

Periodical Postage paid at Decatur, IL.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Central Visitor,
650 W. William St., Decatur, IL 62522.



NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
DECATUR, IL
PERMIT NO. 80

Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
650 West William Street
Decatur, IL 62522

