

The Central Visitor



*A weekly visitor to your home bringing you news from Central Christian Church
Our mission ... Sharing Christ,
Changing Lives, Delivering Hope*

Vol. XCIV

Decatur, Illinois, March 2, 2022

No. 9



Welcome New Members!

With joy and thanksgiving we welcome Troy and Patti Swinford to the Central family! Troy and Patti (and their daughter Brooke) have been faithful attenders of our 8:00 a.m. service since the summer of 2020 – shortly after we reopened to in-person worship in the early days of the pandemic. They were looking for a church home at the time and found one here among us. As they joined, they said “It feels like the right thing to do.” We are so grateful to have them part of our faith community!

Thank You For Your Service!

After 11 years of faithful work for Central as a custodian, Jim Denzer retired this past week. Pictured here with his wife Diane, Jim has been a vital part of our staff for more than a decade. He promises not to be a stranger, but is looking forward to spending more time with his wife and their beloved dogs and... a soon-to-arrive grandchild! Thank you, Jim, for your great commitment to Central!

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2022

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

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP
IN-PERSON (GREAT HALL)
AND LIVE STREAMED ON
WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG
AND FACEBOOK LIVE
AT 9:15 AM

Text: Luke 22:14-20
Michael E. Karunas



Leave Winter Behind and Move Forward with Dorcas Disciples!

All Central women are invited to gather for warm fellowship, yummy refreshments and an opportunity to learn how we can make a positive impact on our environment. We will meet on Tuesday, March 15th at 6 p.m. in the Disciples Room.

Please RSVP by Friday, March 11th to Nancy Ellen Taylor at 217-872-9174 or xstr@sbcglobal.net to make sure we have enough delicious dessert! Contact Sandy Garver at 217-877-0800 or revrag@comcast.net for more information about mission-inspired Dorcas Disciples.

Hope to see you March 15th!

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS will be Available Online and at the Welcome Center

Higher education is important and valuable. It opens possibilities and helps students discover and foster unique gifts and talents and demonstrates a person's willingness to make an investment his/her own future! Central Christian Church supports those pursuing higher education and we understand the challenges of meeting its cost. Scholarships are open to all high school graduates as well as anyone who is currently attending a college, university, technical school, vocational school, or is planning to attend one during the 2022-2023 academic year.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DATES:

Available: March 20, 2022

Return Deadline:

May 6, 2022 @ 3 pm

www.cccdisciples.org



Ash Wednesday: Confessing our Need for God

Thus far in 2022, we have focused on the gospel of Luke during Sunday worship. Each of the four gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – tell the story of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection, just from a different perspective. In Luke's telling of the story, prayer is emphasized more than in any of the others. Jesus is often found praying; he is continually *in* prayer. He prays at the beginning of his ministry and at the very end of it. He prays before meals and before performing miracles. He teaches his disciples about the importance of prayer and then demonstrates it by taking time for himself to pray. Sometimes, when he prays, we know the exact words he spoke. From the cross, for example, we know he said "Father, forgive them..." Likewise, we know the precise words he spoke in the Lord's Prayer. But other times we have no idea *what* he said during his prayer, only *that* he prayed.

Which is quite appropriate. For prayer can be two-fold. It can be conversation with God, talking with God, specific words spoken to God. But it can also be communion with God; not necessarily saying anything, but just spending time with God. The word "communion" means "to have unity with." This is also what prayer is – union with God. Furthermore, there is no right and wrong way to pray. Prayer is not about speaking the "right" thing nor doing certain things. It has long been said that the only "bad" prayer is the prayer that isn't offered. Any conversation we have with God and any time we spend with God is, by definition, "good."

Today, March 2, begins the season of Lent. It is the six weeks that leads us into Easter. Since the days of the ancient church, Lent has been a time to give extra effort and energy to drawing near God's presence. It is a special time in the year to remember what is important *all* year round. That is, we should *always* be giving special attention to growing in our faith. We should *always* be giving extra effort and energy to drawing near God's presence. The reality is, however, that the pressures and demands of earthly living naturally pull us *away* from this. So Lent is given to us as a time in the year to re-focus on what's truly important in life, to put our priorities in the proper order.

That is why we are focusing on prayer during Lent this year at Central. We want to encourage one another to spend more time in prayer, more time having unity with God, dwelling in God's presence, talking and conversing with God. This is what really matters in our lives.

Many people think of giving things up during Lent; sacrificing something valuable for these 40 days. The thinking is that we sacrifice something enjoyable to us to appreciate how Christ sacrificed his life on the cross for our salvation. Often times, however, that sacrifice is about something physical. "I'm giving up chocolate for Lent or soda." Or, "I'm going to spend less time on my computer during Lent or on social media." But once Easter arrives and Lent is over, we go back to doing the very things we gave up. So we want to look at Lent differently this year. And this is also why our theme during Lent is prayer. We want to encourage everyone to give up whatever they have to do during Lent to pray more over these 6 weeks. And... the hope is that when Lent is over, we will continue that practice. So that next year, prayer is not something

(continued on page 3...)

special we do, but a reflection of what we have been doing all along.

And it all starts today with Ash Wednesday. On this day, we impose ashes on the foreheads or hands of all who wish to receive them. We wear ashes to remember our dependence on God, how we need God for our very life and survival. Our earthly lives are finite. We are all imperfect people who regularly make poor choices. Were it not for God’s grace and love and provision—revealed to us through a savior in Jesus Christ – we would be lost. We only put ashes on our bodies one day during the year. But receiving ashes on this day is another reminder of the importance of prayer – which we can do every day of the year. Ashes remind us of the need to draw near to God, to confess our need for God, and our gratitude for God.

Blessings – Michael

Small Groups this Week

For the next six (6) weeks – starting March 8 and going through April 17 – the following small groups will be meeting at the following times. All small groups will be discussing the same curriculum – “Teach us to Pray: 40 Days of Prayer.” Feel free to join any of the groups (even if you haven’t signed up yet). You may still sign up at the Welcome Center, or you can email central@cccdisciples.org, or you may click [HERE](#) to sign up online.

Sundays	9:15 a.m.	Room 340	Charlotte Ballance and Brian & Kim Maple
Tuesdays	7:00 a.m.	Café	Jim Fitzpatrick and Pastor Michael
Tuesdays	6:00 p.m.	Room TBD	Gretchen & Mike Kirby
Tuesdays	7:00 p.m.	Zoom only	David York <i>(call office for the zoom link)</i>
Thursdays	10:00 a.m.	Room TBD	Pastor Tina
Thursdays	4:00 p.m.	Café	Jack Dixon and Paul Gorden
Thursdays	6:00 p.m.	Room TBD	Travis Wilcoxon

Volunteers Needed March 19 at Good Samaritan Inn

Volunteers from Central Christian will prepare and serve lunch at the Good Samaritan Inn on Saturday March 19. The crew needs 5-6 workers 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. for food preparation, and 12-14 people for serving lunch 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. And all workers are invited to stay and enjoy lunch after the serving line closes! If you can help, please sign up at www.cccdisciples.org/resources/events/ or click [HERE](#) or call the church office. A sign-up sheet will also be available at the church on Sundays March 6 and March 13.

Dave Wagner, (217) 433-2367, and Shirley Swarouth, (217) 620-3246, head up Central's volunteer team. Please contact one of them if you have questions.

Save the Date! Millikin Faculty Performance—March 14th

Current and former Millikin faculty will perform a Schubertiade recital commemorating the 225th anniversary of Franz Schubert's birth on March 14th at 7:00 PM. The concert is free and open to the public and will include:

- String Trio in B flat Major, D. 471
- Fantasia in F minor, D. 940, for piano four-hands
- “Die Forelle” - The Trout Lied, D. 550
- Piano Quintet in A Major, D. 667, Op. 114



Sunday (6)

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

Monday (7)

5:00-Elder Planning

Tuesday (8)

7:00-Fitzpatrick/Karunas Small Group, Connection Café
9:00-Christcare Stitchers, 407
5:30-Women’s Book Club, Panera
6:00-Kirby Small Group
7:00-Millikin Heights
7:00-York Small Group, Zoom

Wednesday (9)

10:00-Ministers’ Meeting
1:30-Prayer Shawl Ministry, C. Café
4:00-D.A.R., Connection Café
5:00-Elders

Thursday (10)

10:00-Alanon, 340
10:00-Miller Small Group
4:00-Gorden/Dixon Small Group, Connection Café
5:30-Koinonia, 412
6:00-Brass Choir, Disciples Room
6:00-Wilcoxon Small Group
7:00-Chancel Choir, Choir Room

Friday (11)

Saturday (12)

9:00-Faith Quest

Sunday (13)

Imboden Creek Worship

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall & Facebook Live & Live Stream
9:15-Maple/Ballance Small Group
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & Facebook Live & Live Stream

Food Collection for NECF March 6th

For March 6th, we are collecting donations of cereal.

Counting On You

Sunday, February 27, 2022

Total worshipping online = 140
Total worshipping in-person = 188



**Serving Schedule —
Sunday, March 6, 2022**

Serving Deacon duties start this Sunday, March 6.

Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Gretchen Kirby & Krista Rohrscheib
9:15 - Gretchen Kirby

Deacons:

8:00 - Gene & Sandy Garver
10:30 - Christine Lyman-Harm & Dale Ford

Ushers:

8:00 - Team 2 - Becky Johnston, Capt., Bruce & Liz Campbell
10:30 - Team 7 - George Virgil, Capt., Linda Virgil

Greeters:

8:00 - Gene & Sandy Garver
10:30 - Karen Baird & Brett Swallow

P.A. Operator:

8:00 - Donna Dash
10:30 - Keith Backes



Happy Birthday!! (3/6 - 3/12)!

Jim Bednar, Sandy Garver, Mary Jane Linton,
Amy Mattingly, Ellen Sheffer, Tom Spry,
Lawrence Thicksten, Kevin Wilmot, Mark Kincaid,
Leona Bray, Carole Baumann, Yvonne Purcell,
Dee Dee Gain, Janelle Beedle

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Michael E. Karunas Senior Minister
Tina Miller Associate Minister
David Martin Youth Director
Ben Hawkinson Interim Director of Music
Cordelia "Dee Dee" Gain Organist
David Williams Organist
Kathleen Dudley Administrative Assistant
Yvonne Boyd Administrative Assistant
Kattina Williams Nursery Attendant
Andrew Evans Caretaker
Toby Jones Caretaker
Cheri Russell Caretaker

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To "like" hit the thumbs-up icon.

To "follow" click on the ellipse icon (...).

You will see a list of options pop up.

Find the option marked "follow" and click on that.



Prayer Request Text-In!



Have a prayer request? Text "PRAY" (all caps) to 217-212-2173, or use the QR code to the left. "PRAY" is the only word you should type. Your phone then sends you a link to the prayer request form to fill out. We would love to pray with you and follow up, if you wish.

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