

The Central Visitor



Vol. XCIV

Decatur, Illinois, March 16, 2022

No. 11

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 412	Gretchen & Mike Kirby
Tuesdays	7:00 p.m.	Zoom only	David York (call office for the zoom link)
Thursdays	10:00 a.m.	Great Hall	Pastor Tina
Thursdays	4:00 p.m.	Café	Jack Dixon and Paul Gorden
Thursdays	6:00 p.m.	Café	Travis Wilcoxen

Additionally, the following group will also be meeting:

Koinonia (mixed small group)

Room 412 at 5:30 p.m.

Discussing Tony Evans book “Kingdom Disciples” (focus on leading a Christ-centered life and sharing faith with others).

Congratulations, Maricar!!!

Maricar Neumann (9:15 worship, pictured to the right) shared with us that she went in on March 14th for her interview to become a naturalized U.S. citizen, and she passed!!! We are so happy for Maricar and proud to have her in the church family!!!



SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 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

The Heart of the Matter

Text: Luke 23:34

Tina Miller



Happy Birthday!! (3/20 - 3/26)!

Wanda Poisel, Kim Miller,
Shelby Baum, Gary Johnston,
Randy Trei, Kate Neumann,
Blair Moran, Archer Swarthout,
Charles Watkins

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 in 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



Serving Schedule —
Sunday, March 20, 2022

Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Matthew Swarthout
 & David Wagner

9:15 - David Wagner

March Prep Deacons: Donna Dash &
 Christine Lyman-Harm

Offering Deacons:

8:00 - Debbie Hoffert & Gail Prince

10:30 - Ron Oliver &
 Steve Swarthout

Ushers:

8:00 - Team 4 - Hazel Perry, Capt.,
 Karen Penn, Charlotte
 Ballance

10:30 - Team 9 - Kim Miller, Capt.,
 Audrey Miller, Bill Modlin

Greeters:

8:00 - Julie & Ken Jacoby

10:30 - Bob & Mary Jane Linton

P.A. Operator:

8:00 - Jim Bednar

10:30 - Jim Hinze

Love Wins!

This past Sunday, our focus was the raising of Lazarus as found in the gospel of John. In particular, we focused on the prayer Jesus prayed immediately before raising him. In that prayer, Jesus thanked God for always "hearing" him, and we noted that "hearing" is a powerful example of connection. When we say, "I hear you," we convey much more than a recognition of words spoken. We communicate a message of, "I'm with you. I 'get' you. I connect with you. I identify with what you are feeling." The expression "I hear you" doesn't try to offer solutions or quick fixes to someone who is hurting or struggling through some dark valley. It rather walks alongside and acknowledges – if just for a moment – that life is sometimes painful and hard. Let us remember, after all, that reason we shall fear no evil though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death (per Psalm 23) is precisely because God is "with us" and God's presence "comforts" us.

And that is love, isn't it? That which will not allow us to go through anything alone. Even if it is something we must go through, love ensures that we will be accompanied and comforted through it. It is no surprise that Jesus uses the word "Father" when addressing God in this prayer at Lazarus' tomb. It is the first time he uses that term when speaking with God in John's gospel. That relationship of father-son (i.e. parent-child) is so strong it is perhaps the highest expression of what love is. What parent, after all, would not want to go through whatever hardship their child were facing to ensure they would not have to face it alone? Nay, further, what parent would not want to *trade places* with their child so their child would not have to face it at all? Love is an abiding presence. Love is steadfast. Love is comfort.



But Jesus also prays for something specific from this loving God at Lazarus' tomb. He prays that Lazarus would be raised – not for his own sake and not even for Lazarus' sake, but for "their" sake – everyone else, the crowd. Jesus prays that Lazarus be raised so that we all might come to know the love of God as Jesus has known it. It is as though Jesus, the ultimate intercessor, is pleading with God to raise Lazarus out of love for *us*! So that we might see what God sees – that there is always more hope and possibility in any situation, even the darkest and most grief-filled, than we tend to recognize at first glance. And so God raised Lazarus. And we, in turn, were able to see in *that* situation, what God sees in *all* our situations.

What we didn't cover Sunday was what happened right after this in the story. The Pharisees became anxious. With Jesus performing so many signs (turning water to wine, multiplying loaves and fish, walking on water, raising the dead), they feared the Romans, who ruled over them at the (continued on page 3...)



time, would crack down and “destroy” their nation. So Caiaphas, the high priest, stepped forward and delivered the lines made famous by Andrew Lloyd Weber’s musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* – “For the sake of the nation, one man must die.” And so they began plotting to conspire against Jesus – a plot which ultimately led to his death on the cross. They chose to respond to God’s great gift of life and love with hatred, cruelty, violence and death.

Yet in spite of all their conspiratorial efforts, love won in the end. The tomb could not contain Jesus. The stone was rolled away. The chains of death were broken. Overcoming all the attempts to silence and eliminate him, love won in the end. And therein lies our hope today. Our world is violent. Sales of weapons in our country are annually higher than anywhere else in the world. There are ever-increasing numbers of school and public shootings to which we turn a numbed eye and ear. The Russian invasion of Ukraine invokes memories of the last two world wars. And our public rhetoric – spoken and on social media – has become vitriolic in a way that our ancestors would not recognize. If there is any hope for us, it is in the gospel truth that love wins in the end. Not hatred. Not bloodshed. Not violence. The best these can offer is a fleeting and false sense of security. Only love lasts. Only love endures. It cannot be conquered by hate, cruelty, violence, or death, no matter how many times these options are chosen in a broken world today. Thanks be to God for that love – and may we be wise enough to embrace it sooner rather than later.

Blessings – Michael

Dueling Pianos! March 25th, 7:00 PM

Come enjoy an evening of beautiful music with Herb Buffington, organist, and Randy Frieling, pianist.

Organist Herbert Buffington has performed in major venues including Washington National Cathedral, National City Christian Church, the Peabody Conservatory of Music, Duke University Chapel, the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, the Savannah Music Festival and the Westobou Festival. He won second place and the coveted audience award in the American Guild of Organists National Competition in Organ Improvisation and his work has been featured on Minnesota Public Radio’s “Performance Today” and American Public Media’s “Pipedreams”. His recordings are on the Sonare label.

Herbert was the Organist and Associate Choirmaster at Peachtree Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Atlanta, Georgia for 25 years.

Pianist Randall Frieling has performed throughout North America and Europe as a soloist, accompanist and chamber musician. He has taught piano and organ for 34 years at three Indiana Universities and served as accompanist for the summer program of the American Boychoir School. He has performed on PBS televised broadcasts and was a featured performer on Indiana Public Radio. In addition, Frieling is a regular accompanist for the National Youth Choir at Carnegie Hall.

Randall has been a Director of Music, Organist and Pianist for several Indiana churches including Central Christian, St. Paul’s Episcopal and Pendleton United Methodist. Frieling is currently the Director of Music and Worship Arts and Organist at the First Presbyterian Church in Mount Dora, Florida.



Sunday (20)

Scholarships available

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

Monday (21)

5:00-Maundy Thursday practice, Sanct.

Tuesday (22)

7:00-Fitzpatrick/Karunas Small Group, Connection Café
9:00-Christcare Stitchers, 407
11:00-Décor Committee, Connection Café
6:00-Kirby Small Group, 412
6:00-Capital Campaign Comm., C. Café
7:00-York Small Group, Zoom

Wednesday (23)

10:00-Ministers’ Meeting

Thursday (24)

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

Friday (25)

5:00-Women’s Celebration Planning
7:00-Herb Buffington & Randy Frieling, piano & organ concert, Sanctuary

Saturday (26)

9:00-Faith Quest

Sunday (27)

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

See Page 4 for the new Spring Concert schedule at Central!

Counting On You

Sunday, March 13, 2022

Total worshipping online = 114
Total worshipping in-person = 159

CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH SPRING 2022 CONCERTS

Schubertiade (Music by Schubert)

Monday, March 14, 2022, 7 p.m.

Current and former Millikin faculty bring this all-Schubert program, featuring Amy Catron, cello, with Silvan Negrutiu, Troy Castle, Sharon Chung, Susan Cobb, Ion-Alexandru Mălaimare

Dueling Keyboards!

Friday, March 25, 2022, 7 p.m.

Acclaimed musicians and long-time friends Herb Buffington and Randy Frieling will entertain with this piano and organ recital

Vocal Concert

Sunday, April 3, 2022, 2 p.m.

Troy Castle, baritone, with Pei-I Wang, pianist, collaborate to present favorites that all music lovers will enjoy

Millikin University Spring Concerts

Sunday, May 1, 2022, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

2 p.m. – Mothers and Mentors concert, Millikin Women
6 p.m. – Spring Sing, University Choir, Collegiate Chorale, Millikin Men

Opus 24 Spring Choral Concerts

Sunday, May 15, 2022, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

650 W. William St., Decatur, IL (217) 428-4336

Worship with us Sundays: 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
traditional; 9:15 a.m. contemporary



Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
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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
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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