

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, September 14, 2022

No. 35

Guest Preacher on September 18

We welcome to the pulpit this Sunday, Rev. Dr. Alex Ruth. Alex is the Associate Regional Minister for Transformation in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Illinois and Wisconsin. He has held this position since November 2021. Alex works with clergy and congregations as they strive to develop and maintain vital ministries promoting life-giving transformation for individuals, congregations, and communities. Alex also serves as the Associate Director of Disciples Men and teaches with the Center for Ministry and Lay Training at Phillips Theological Seminary. Prior to this, he served for over 15 years as Senior Minister of Marshfield Christian Church in Marshfield, Missouri. Alex lives with his wife in Springfield. They have two children, Mason and Kaia. Mason lives in Springfield and works as a cook. Kaia is studying to be a physical therapist and is in her third year at Maryville University in St. Louis.



Sing-With-the-Choir-Sunday!

As our choir director Dr. Hawkinson announced, this Sunday, September 18 will be "Sing-With-the-Choir-Sunday" at the 10:30 service. The goal is to double the size of the choir for one day, experience what great fun it is to sing with others, and sing with some wonderful people! If you've thought about singing, "used" to sing but now no longer do, or if you just want to try something new, this day is for you! Everyone – existing choir members and guests for the day – will gather in the sanctuary at 9:00 a.m. to a rehearse a piece that no one has seen before! That part is important. Everyone will be starting out on equal footing. After rehearsing for a bit, there will be a break for some breakfast refreshments in the Connection Café before singing during worship at 10:30.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 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

Called and Sent

Text: Luke 10: 1-11
Rev. Dr. Alex Ruth

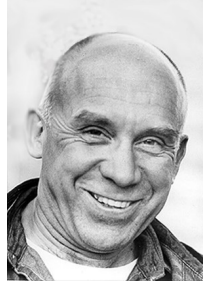


Congratulations Drake!

Drake Niles-Cox, a junior at the University of Illinois majoring in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences, has been named to the U of I Club Golf Team! After graduation, Drake plans to attend medical school. Congratulations, Drake!

Questions and Answers

Thomas Merton has been read widely by spiritual seekers across the world for over 60 years. He was born in France, raised in the United States, and became a Catholic priest before entering a Cistercian monastery in Kentucky in 1941. Before he died an untimely death in 1968, he was a prolific writer on the spiritual life.



Merton believed the spiritual life is, essentially, seeking the answers to four basic questions. We all ask them – whether or not we are aware that we are doing so: 1) Who am I?; 2) Who is God?; 3) Why am I here?; and 4) What am I to do with my life? The last two are more directly related, though the answer to any one of the four will directly affect – and be affected by – how we answer the other three.

But it is these last ones - #s 3 and 4 – that can occupy so much of our attention. We want to do the right thing. We want to make choices that are pleasing to God. We want to live our lives in a way that fulfills our calling as a person of God. But how do we know we are doing that? In late Spring of this year, we spent five weeks on a sermon series about being “stuck.” Sometimes it feels that way with the big questions in life. We ask “What am I to do in this situation,” but we feel stuck because the answer isn’t forthcoming. To this, Merton gave this wisdom:

Don't search for answers which could be given to you now. Rather, live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, even without noticing it, live your way into the answer.

When I read this recently in some of his writings on contemplation, it struck me how this was another way – albeit it very poetic – of saying “God’s time isn’t our time.” We might hear – in these words – the value of being patient. Yet his words are about even more than that. It is okay not having all the answers we wish we had right now. What is important is that we never stop asking the question in the first place. For example, if, every day, I ask the question, “God, what will you have me do with my life,” I may never get, on any single day, the answer to that question as clear as a clap of thunder ringing from the sky. Over time, however, clarity will emerge, but only if I continue to ask the question day after day. The worst thing to do is to stop asking the question at all. For then I will no have a chance of receiving whatever it is God is revealing to me that might lead me toward the very answer I seek.

The skeptic among us might say, “Sure, it’s easy for Merton to say things like ‘Just slow down and let God act on God’s time,’ or ‘Just be patient and answers will emerge.’ He was a monk after all. He didn’t live in the ‘real world’ where there are real-time pressures, demands and deadlines.” While such thoughts could be merited, I’m reminded of something a Jesuit priest told me on a retreat I took several years ago. Monks, he said, have taken it upon themselves to pray for us and to pray for the world. This is their gift to us. Free from the very pressures and demands and deadlines among which we live, they can devote themselves to this prayerful life. In thinking of Merton’s words today, we might take that a step further. The gift that monks

(continued on page 3...)

Small Groups this Week

If you would like to attend any of these groups, simply show up!
If you would like more information before attending, let us know (central@cccdisciples.org).

Sundays - Ecclesia

(mixed Sunday School class)

Room 340 at 9:15 a.m.

Study and lively discussion of scripture based on the “Seasons of the Spirit” curriculum.

All are welcome.

Tuesday Journeymen

(men’s bible study)

Connection Café at 7:00 a.m.

Conversation led by Brian Maple, Jim Fitzpatrick, or Pastor Michael

Thursday Journeymen

(men’s bible study)

Connection Café at 4:15 p.m.

Conversation led by Jack Dixon or Pastor Michael

Thursdays - Koinonia

(mixed small group)

Room 412 at 5:30 p.m.

Beginning September 29, we will be studying the Sermon on the Mount as it was originally intended- one cohesive, well-ordered message intended to challenge us to think differently about what it means to be a follower of Christ. Come be exhorted and equipped by the greatest sermon ever preached.



Memorial Service for Karen Baird

We will be confirming more details about this service as the date approaches, but for now you are invited to mark your calendars for Sat., 10/22 at 3:00 p.m. That will be the date and time of the memorial service that the children of Karen Baird are planning for their mother.

like Merton give to the world is to call us above the constraints within which we live our lives and to remind us what matters most as God's people. So that... when we return to the hectic nature of that life we momentarily transcended, we bring more of what matters most with us. And that which we have brought, influences more of how we live within it. Something to ponder this week.

Blessings – Michael

Meet, Greet, and Mix-It-Up with Dorcas Disciples!

All Central women are invited to gather in fellowship and service on Tuesday, September 20th at 6:00 p.m. in the Disciples Room. Meet and greet Melissa Miller, Central's Preschool Director, and then have fun mixing-it-up with other Central women. Enjoy refreshments while learning about Dorcas' 2022-2023 program year.

RSVP by Friday, September 16th to Nancy Ellen Taylor at 217-872-9174 or xstr@sbcglobal.net to make sure we have enough goodies. Contact Sandy Garver at 217-877-0800 or revrag@comcast.net for more information about Dorcas Disciples. Hope to see you September 20th!

Seeking Hospital Visitors

Would you like to help Central Christian Church care for our members who are sick or injured? We have a team of members who volunteer to call or visit our members who are hospitalized. Each volunteer takes 1 day of the week (or more if desired) and volunteers to visit or call whoever is in the hospital on that day of the week (if there is anyone in the hospital that day). Right now, we need people to call those hospitalized at St. Mary's for 2 days of the week. If you are interested in this vital ministry to care for our members, please contact either Sue Burkham or the church office at 217-428-4336.

Reconciliation Offering to Combat Racism

September 25 and October 2, Disciples of Christ congregations are collecting a special offering to support our Reconciliation Ministry. Reconciliation is defined as the action of making one view or belief compatible with another. As we follow the daily news, it seems as though reconciliation is out of reach. Tensions between people, acts of violence, natural disasters – the list goes on and on. We feel more separated than ever. All of creation longs for the revelation of God's presence. But here is the good news – we are God's children, loved and entrusted with the sacred responsibility to care for each other and the earth we live on. Out of nothing, God created heaven and earth and breathed life into a separated, broken void. Through God, all we are and everything we know is connected. As God's people His breath is in us, giving us the same power and authority to connect that which has been separated. In March, 2022 your generous giving to Reconciliation Ministry helped fund the Kirkpatrick Lecture Series of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. The theme was "Visions of Wholeness: Systemic Racism, Antiracism, and Reconciliation in Our Shared History and Tradition." More than 250 people, most of whom were supported in their attendance, had the chance to wrestle with the truth of their brokenness and need for healing of our fractured humanity. Reconciliation Ministry strengthens our capacity to be remembered, reconnected, and restored as God's beloved by disrupting racism and oppression. Your generosity funds grants and education that promote restoration and healing. Your financial gifts allow the mission and ministry of our Church to realize visions of wholeness. Please give generously - we are all the beloved children of God!



Sunday (18)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall
& Facebook Live & Live Stream
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
& Facebook Live & Live Stream
4:00-Youth Group

Monday (19)

1:00-DOVE Kids' Clothing Room open
5:15-Preschool Board

Tuesday (20)

7:00-Journeymen, Connection Café
9:15-Prayer Group, Connection Café
9:30-Christcare Stitchers, 3R
9:30-Card Ministry, 340
5:30-Mission Task Force, Connection Café
6:00-Dorcas Disciples, Disciples Room

Wednesday (21)

10:15-Preschool Chapel, FC
1:00-DOVE Kids' Clothing Room open
5:30-Church Council, Committees

Thursday (22)

10:00-Alanon, 340
4:15-Journeymen 2, Connection Café
5:00-Koinonia, 412
5:15-Stewardship Committee, C. Café
7:00-Chancel Choir, Choir Room

Friday (23)

Saturday (24)

Sunday (25)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall
& Facebook Live & Live Stream
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
& Facebook Live & Live Stream
4:00-Youth Group

New Koinonia Bible Study

The Koinonia Bible Study invites you to join us as we begin our exciting new Bible study, "Sermon on the Mount" by Jen Wilkins. Thurs. 9/29, 6:30 PM in Room 412. Contact Angie Horvath, 217-972-8294, or Liz Campbell, 217-521-5995, by 9/23 to order a book or if you have any questions.

Counting On You

Sunday, September 11, 2022

Total worshipping online = 90

Total worshipping in-person = 223

**Serving Schedule —
Sunday, September 18, 2022**



Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Jan Dobbs & Karen Wade
9:15 - Karen Wade

Outreach Communion Elders: Bruce Campbell, Gretchen Kirby, Diana Ritter, Krista Rohrscheib, Linda Virgil, Kevin Wilmot

September Prep Deacons:

Carol Bischoff, Susan Bryant, Carolyn Sunderlik

Offering Deacons:

8:00 - Gene & Sandy Garver
9:15 - Randy Trei
10:30 - Dale Ford & Christine Lyman-Harm

Ushers:

8:00 - Team 5 - Mike Munos, Capt., Gerri Munos, Brad Munos, Brittney Moran, Bobby Munos
10:30 - Team 10 - David Martin, Capt., Gretchen Kirby

Greeters:

8:00 - George & Pearl Jones
9:15 - Angie Horvath
10:30 - Roberta Gorden & Suzie Miller

P.A. Operator:

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

Liturgist:

8:00 & 10:30 - Andy Fulk
9:15 - Jodi Van Uytven



Happy Birthday!! (9/18—9/24)

Lucy Acheson, Bruce Campbell, Jessica Sebok, Dennis Downey, Ken Long, Jean Maggioncalda, Bess King, Krista Rohrscheib, Helen Ryan, Barb Tyler, Anne Webb, Carrie Funk, Katie Beal, Scott Woolridge, Fran Rutherford, Jensen Rutherford, Ireland Irby, Luca Morelli, Diana Murray, Blake Murray, Zedekiah Auten, Lyndzi Bottom, Wesley Murray

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Michael E. Karunas Senior Minister
David Martin Youth Director
Ben Hawkinson Director of Music
Vicky Woolridge Pastor for Families
Don Martin Visitation Associate
Cordelia "Dee Dee" Gain Organist
David Williams Organist
Kathleen Dudley Administrative Assistant
Yvonne Boyd Administrative Assistant
Emily Elsea Nursery Attendant
Abigail Smith Nursery Attendant
Kattina Williams Nursery Attendant
Andrew Evans Caretaker
Jenny Goodman Caretaker
Sam Hawkinson 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.

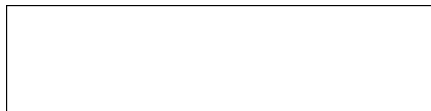


Prayer Request Text-In!

Have a prayer request? Text PRAY 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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