

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. XCII

Decatur, Illinois, December 9, 2020

No. 49

Come Home for Christmas

Due to the pandemic and the decision to move to virtual-only worship for the next few weeks (at least), Central's annual tradition of "Come Home for Christmas" is being modified. On December 13, between the times of 11:45 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., the Fellowship Team will be serving "box dinners to go" at the West Entrance. Menu includes fried chicken, hash brown casserole, peas and carrots, croissant, and a cupcake for dessert. We will serve as many as would like meals, but we need meal reservations made by 4 p.m. on Thursday December 10 (428-4336, central@cccdisciples.org).

Details About the Congregational "Meeting"

Every year in December, at a date set by the congregation's president, the Central Christian congregation gathers for a meeting at which a vote is taken to approve the Nominating Committee's report along with the operating budget for the coming year. Not surprisingly, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to modify this annual regulation. Instead, we will have a "drive-thru vote."

Here's what is planned:

- President Gregg Foltz has called a special congregational vote for Dec. 13.
- Between now and then copies of the Nominating Committee report and the proposed operating budget for 2021 are available inside the West Entrance doors. You may come by anytime the office is open and pick up a copy of each.
- On Sunday Dec. 13, between 11:45 – 12:30, you are asked to drive by the West Entrance. At that time, a ballot will be given to you to fill out.
- Results of the vote will be communicated by email later that night and in the following week's newsletter.

Note: this is meant to coincide with the "Come Home for Christmas" take-away dinner served at the same time.

Sharing the Journey Continues

Sharing the Journey, a prayer group that talks about the sermon, will continue to meet through Advent. The group meets on Zoom Sundays from 6:30-7:30pm. To join us for any Sunday, simply contact the church office for the Zoom link or email Scott and Vicky at svwoolridge@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2020

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP LIVE

STREAMED ON

WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG

AT 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP ON

FACEBOOK LIVE

AT 9:15 a.m.

The Light Will Find You

Text: Isaiah 60:1-3; John 1:6-8, 19-23

Michael E. Karunas

This Week in Advent

There is a lot happening this week in Advent (December 11 - 18).

- Keep building Advent Prayer Chain
- Send a picture of your household by your Christmas tree to: central@cccdisciples.org
- Light the third advent candle on your advent wreath on Sunday, Dec. 13
- "Come Home for Christmas" drive-through carry out dinners on Sunday, December 13 (Note: deadline for RSVPs is December 10)
- Congregational "virtual drive-thru" meeting on Sunday, December 13
- Hope for the Holidays virtual service on Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 5:30 p.m.



THANK YOU!

We know that God knows what we need before we even pray or ask for it. We know that He is able to meet those needs, and we trust Him to do so. He has been faithful and true to His word.

We want to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting the Christian Action Community Service team (CACs) through this year's DOVE Mitten and Hat Drive. It is through your love and support that we are strengthened to carry on the mission that God has called us to do: Share Christ, Change Lives, and Deliver Hope.

Paul says in Galatians 6:2, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." In supporting the work of our missions, you have truly "fulfilled the law of Christ," by further encouraging and enabling us to help others. We thank you because your support means everything to us.

Even though time and distance separate us, the love of God is far reaching and never changing. We know that and we feel it.

We are grateful to have your support!

Peace,

The Central Christian Church
CACs Team



Sunday, December 13th, 2020

Front table: Gregg Foltz &
Carolyn Sunderlik
Elders: Judy Ford &
Charlotte Ballance
PA: David Martin

Spiritual Privacy: It's Entirely Personal

When I studied bible in divinity school at the University of Chicago, a professor was fond of saying "Big things happen in private, so when Jesus does something 'in private,' pay attention!" Things in the bible that occur in relative privacy, thinking goes, are scripture's way of focusing our attention on some special divine revelation about to be shared.

Consider the following examples, which are just some of the many that occur throughout the New Testament. In Matthew 9:27-31, Jesus heals two blind men after he has entered the house and distanced himself from the crowd, even though the two men seeking healing approached him in the crowd. In Mark 7, a crowd brings a "deaf man with a speech impediment" to Jesus for healing. Jesus does, in fact, heal him but not before "taking him aside... in private" (MK 7:33), and later, in Mark 8, Jesus likewise restores sight to another blind man, but only after he "leads him outside the village!" In every one of these cases, Jesus takes the person away from the crowd and into relative privacy.



There are other times when Jesus bestows healing in plain view of the masses, but there must be significance to these "private healings," or else Jesus wouldn't have taken the trouble to make privacy an issue, and I wonder if it has something to do with the nature of crowds in general. It is easy to get lost in the crowd; to become anonymous and not stand out. In a crowd, we can quickly get caught up on the energy, rhythm and movements of others. Remember that the crowd in Pilate's courtyard, which demanded that Jesus be crucified, was encouraged by Caiaphas and Annas to do so. In a crowd, then, it is quite possible that our personal thoughts and feelings get trampled by groupthink. Similarly, sociologists have suggested that the best time to commit a crime like theft is in broad daylight, in front of a crowd. Each member of the crowd is more likely to assume that someone else will have seen it and thus take care of it. Conversely, the worst time to do the same thing is in front of one person. The single individual will act responsibly in a way that the crowd will not.

Maybe that is the reason why Jesus heals in private from time to time – to remind us that when it comes to salvation, individuals are saved and not crowds. He wants us to know who we are, what we think and in whom we believe apart from the crowd. It is not enough to espouse what the crowd thinks when Jesus asks "Who do you say that I am?" He wants to know who we – as individuals – say he is.

(continued on page 3...)

Advent – this time of waiting for Christmas - is an invitation and opportunity for us to step away from “the crowd” and come face with face with Christ privately and personally. It is our chance to confess our faith in him, to give voice to that faith and consider how we might best embody and live out that faith. For it is always what we stand for personally that saves us, and not what the crowd puts forth, and sometimes it takes some privacy, and a respite from the crowd, for us to come face to face with that.

Blessings... Michael

Hope for the Holidays on December 16

Though the holiday season is thought of as a happy one – with families making great effort to get together and celebrate together – for those who grieve the loss of a loved one, the holidays can remind us that our family bonds have been broken; that an important person in our family traditions is no longer here. Moreover, 2020 has been a year like none other. Throughout this year, we have been asked to give up and let go of so many things that have otherwise defined us. So many events and gatherings have been cancelled this year. Even during this month, many families may be “losing” one another – not able to reunite at Christmas (or choosing not to).

For this reason, Pastor Don, Tina and Michael will be offering a Hope in the Holidays virtual only service on Wednesday, December 16 at 5:30 p.m. The service will be hosted by means of Facebook Live on the church’s Facebook page.

This is for anyone and everyone who is hurting this holiday season – either because of grief over a loved who may have died recently or long ago, or because of grief over something important lost in 2020. The service will be no longer than 30 minutes. If you can’t watch it live, it will continue to be posted to our Facebook page.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

With last spring’s passing of the CARES Act, there has never been a better time to give. The Act provides that charitable contributions up to \$300 qualify for an above-the-line tax deduction, even if deductions are not itemized. This charitable tax deduction - \$300 per individual or married couple filing jointly - is only offered through December 31st, so if you choose to give, don’t delay.

Together in Prayer

“Where two or three are gathered, I am there among them.” These familiar words of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 18:20, may have us wondering, during these days of separation, about how and when we can gather. With this promise from Jesus, let’s get creative.

You are invited to join with the Central Christian Church family for prayer by calling this number – (516) 387-8842. We will gather Monday through Friday evenings at 7pm, starting November 30 and going through Wednesday, December 23. Time will be given to share joys and concerns, and then the host will offer a prayer. It will be a 5-10 minute gathering.

During this season of Advent, as we await the coming of Christ, we can be together in prayer. You are welcome to call the prayer number every day or when your schedule allows. We hope this offering of time to pray with your church family is one more affirmation that we are in this together.



Sunday (13)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Live Stream

9:15-Contemporary Worship,

Facebook Live

10:30-Traditional Worship, Live Stream

11:45-Come Home for Christmas drive-through meal pickup

11:45-Congregational drive-through vote

12:00-Praise Team rehearsal, G. Hall

Monday (14)

5:30-Women’s Book Club, Disc. Room

Tuesday (15)

10:30-Support Staff Meeting, Conn. Café

5:30-Women’s Craft Night, Disc. Room

Wednesday (16)

10:30-Ministers’ Meeting

5:30-Koinonia, Connection Café

5:30-Hope for the Holidays grief service

Thursday (17)

5:15-Brass Choir, Disciples Room

Friday (18)

Saturday (19)

Sunday (20)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Live Stream

9:15-Contemporary Worship,

Facebook Live

10:30-Traditional Worship, Live Stream

12:00-Praise Team rehearsal, G. Hall



Happy Birthday!!

Birthdays this coming week

(12/13-12/19)!

Bethany Barron, Theresa Fulk,
Jack Funk, Billie Harmon,
Pamela Larrick, Betsy Osman,
Paula Partain, Karen Penn,
Andrew Rutherford, Roger Rutherford,
Adam Scirle, Isabella Wagener

Counting On You

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Total worshipping online = 329

Christmas Offering received Dec. 13th & 20th



On December 13th & 20th, we will have the opportunity to give to the Christmas offering for our denomination. Our gifts support the work of regional ministries this Christmas. Your regional ministry works to:

- Connect congregations to each other
• Foster faith development
• Gather Disciples in camps, conferences, and assemblies
• Nurture the development of a new generation of pastors
• Assist churches in calling new ministers
• Interpret the global mission of the Church
• Represent the Church in ecumenical gatherings
• Counsel and pray with those who are troubled of spirit
• Lead the Church to address racism
• Inspire leaders to experiment and create
• Witness to the power of God to make things new

The Christmas Special Day offering supports all of these and many other ministries of our regions.

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www.cccdisciples.org
e-mail: central@cccdisciples.org

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
Gabrielle Coulthard.....Nursery Attendant
Maddie Genz.....Nursery Attendant
Cheryl WilliamsNursery Attendant
Kattina WilliamsNursery Attendant
Paula Partain.....Preschool Staff
Lora WrightLead Caretaker
Jim Denzer.....Caretaker
Andrew Evans.....Caretaker
Toby Jones.....Caretaker



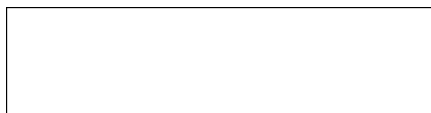
"Like" and "Follow" us on Facebook

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.

Temporary Church Office Hours as of
July 20th, 2020:
Monday through Friday
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

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