

# The Central Visitor



Vol. XCIII

Decatur, Illinois, December 15, 2021

No. 50

## Sharing Hopes and Fears – December 15

At 5:30 p.m. this Wednesday, December 15, Pastors Tina and Michael will be hosting a time of “*Sharing Hopes and Fears.*” We recognize that for some, the Christmas season is one when stress, worry and anxiety can rise and the joy we long to experience this time of year is impeded. Perhaps it is because of disagreements within our family about issues related to Covid and the politics surrounding it; or because you are not able to gather with those closest to you for whatever reason; or perhaps something else is heavy on your heart this Christmas. Whatever it is you are invited to join us (Tina and Michael) at 5:30 p.m. next Wednesday. We will all have a chance to share whatever it is that we are fearing, as well as that for which we are hoping this Christmas season. The purpose of the evening will not be to offer solutions nor to “fix” problems. Rather, we will pray that Christ will meet us in the place where our hopes and fears intersect – “*The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight*” (O Little Town of Bethlehem).

## Digital Advent Calendar

Make sure to save this link to your favorites:

<https://calendar.myadvent.net/?id=69d9877a36fb095e915e3628b184c6b5>.

This will take you to Central’s own “Digital Advent Calendar.” Clicking on this link will direct you to a homepage with 25 boxes on it. Click on the box corresponding with that day in December and “open the door” to reveal an Advent surprise. You will only be able to open the door corresponding to that day’s date (along with those preceding it). So... no cheating and opening any upcoming doors before their day arrives. You can also go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3NUesglqUg> as well to watch a brief video promo that explains it all another way.



## Outdoor Clean-up this Saturday

Help us get the church ready for Christmas! We’ll have having an outdoor clean-up day this Saturday, December 18, beginning at 9:00 am. Stay as long as you can. Most of the leaves have been gathered, but we’ll do the final touch-ups to get our property ready for the Christmas season. For those inclined, we’ll also pick up litter and down limbs from the adjacent lots. We will provide garbage and leaf bags. Feel free to bring a rake and any other “yard work” tools you prefer.

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2021

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

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

## *Serve and Follow*

Text: Luke 1:26-39

Michael E. Karunas



## Happy Birthday!! (12/19 - 12/25)!

Jarrett Bednar, Gerri Munos,  
Rae Owens, Roger Rutherford,  
David Scott, Debbie Seaberg,  
Crystal Thicksten, Dean Larrick,  
Brandon Brewer, Maverick Luthy,  
Travis Wilcoxon, Trajan Campbell

**Stewardship Corner**

Earlier in the year, the Finance Team implemented a new accounting software system. As we continue to review and refine our processes, we are not mailing statements in December. However, if you have questions regarding your 2021 gifts, please contact the church office and the Finance Team will email or mail a statement with your contributions to date. Year-end statements will be mailed in January. Thank you for your support!



**Pocket Prayer Shawls available**

Our Prayer Shawl ministry has created some beautiful pocket prayer shawls and made them available to anyone who would like one. If you know of someone going through a difficult time, please also feel free to take one for them.

Thank you, ladies!

What  
once  
was  
**L** Now is  
**FOUND**  
**S**  
**T**

Did you lose something?

We may have found it!

The church office lost and found currently has a lot of clothing in it. Feel free to stop by during office hours Mon-Fri (8:00-4:30) to check the lost and found for your item.

**Reflections for Advent – Week Three**  
**In honor of John the Baptist**



*On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;  
Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.  
Then cleansed be ev'ry heart from sin; make straight the way for God within,  
And let each heart prepare a home where such a mighty guest may come.*

*For you are our salvation, Lord, our refuge, and our great reward;  
Without your grace we waste away like flow'rs that wither and decay.  
To heal our sick stretch out your hand, and bid the fallen sinner stand;  
Shine forth, and let your light restore earth's own true loveliness once more.*

*All praise the Son eternally whose advent sets his people free;  
Whom with the Father we adore and spirit blest for evermore.*

Charles Coffin, 18<sup>th</sup> century

++++++

*Hair of the camel furnished a coarse raiment to your blessed members; leather  
for your girdle;  
you drink the cold spring, food for you wild honey mingled with locusts.  
All other prophets, in their hearts divining, sang of the light coming to the  
people;*

*Your finger touched the Lamb of God who takes sin from the world.  
None has arisen in the mighty spaces of earth's round borders holier than John  
was:*

*Great was his grace who poured the mystic waters o'er the redeemer.*

Paul, deacon of Apulia, 8<sup>th</sup> century

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(continued on page 3...)

*Nothing worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime.*

*Therefore we must be saved by hope.*

*Nothing which is beautiful or good makes complete sense in our immediate context.*

*Therefore we must be saved by faith.*

*Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone;*

*Therefore we must be saved by love.*

*No virtuous act is ever quite as virtuous from the standpoint of another than from our own.*

*Therefore, we must be saved by forgiveness.*

*Reinhold Niebuhr*

*-Blessings, Michael*

### **Special Christmas Offering Collected on December 19**

On Sunday, December 19 we will be collecting a special offering called the "Christmas Offering." 100% of the donations to this offering supports the ministries of our region, the Christian Church in Illinois and Wisconsin. One of those ministries, with which Central has had profound connection, is the Committee on Ministry. This committee journeys with ministerial candidates as they navigate the path toward either ordained or commissioned ministry. In just the last eight years, this committee has worked with no less than four members of Central in this regard! They are Hannah Fitch, Zach Martin, Tina Miller, and Vicky Woolridge. Moreover, longtime member Larry Pepper, served on the committee faithfully during many of these years. This will be collected in addition to our regular offerings. Gifts to this offering may also be made online by looking for the "Christmas Offering" option.

### **News from the Preschool**

The following was announced this past Sunday by Ellen Damery, church member, mother of two, and our new interim director of our Central Christian Preschool.

*As most of you know, our preschool opened in 1965 and has been educating and nurturing young children in our community ever since! Unfortunately, in the spring of 2020, the school closed due to challenges with COVID-19. However, over the last few months, I, along with the preschool board members, have been working hard to explore the possibility of reopening our wonderful preschool. During this time we have been able to get approval from the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services to reopen in the Fall of 2022. We have some promising leads on teachers and staff members and are excited to begin the process of registering students in the new year.*

*I am honored to help reopen the school. As a parent and an educator, I can say first-hand that Central Christian Preschool provides students with an amazing foundation for the rest of their lives. Students get to play and explore but they also learn about God's love, kindness and being a good citizen - which I believe is equally important to academic learning! Our church has always been tremendously supportive of our preschool in many different ways. So today we ask for your prayers and thank you for your continual support. We look forward to working together to help guide children on their life-long journey of growth and discovery.*



### **Sunday (19) - Bring a Bell Sunday**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary  
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall  
& Facebook Live & Live Stream  
9:15-Ecclesia Sunday School, 412  
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary  
& Facebook Live & Live Stream  
4:00-Youth Group

### **Monday (20)**

### **Tuesday (21)**

9:00-Christcare Stitchers, 407  
9:30-Card Ministry, 340

### **Wednesday (22)**

10:00-Ministers' Meeting

### **Thursday (23)**

10:00-Alanon, 340  
7:00-Chancel Choir, Choir Room

### **Friday (24) - Christmas Eve**

5:00-Contemporary Candlelight and  
Communion Service, Great Hall  
6:30-Julia Jamison, Harp Concert,  
Sanctuary  
7:00-Traditional Candlelight and  
Communion Service, Sanctuary &  
Live-Streamed

### **Saturday (25) - Christmas Church & Office closed**

### **Sunday (26)**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary  
9:15-Contemporary Worship, Great Hall  
& Facebook Live & Live Stream  
9:15-Ecclesia Sunday School, 412  
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary  
& Facebook Live & Live Stream

### **Looking Ahead**

The church and office will be closed on December 27th and January 3rd, in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays.

### **Counting On You**

**Sunday, December 12, 2021**

Total worshipping online = 198  
Total worshipping in-person = 283



**Serving Schedule — Sunday, December 19, 2021**

**Elders:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Janet Lyman & Diana Ritter  
9:15 - Diana Ritter

**Ushers:**

8:00 - Team 1 - Donna Dash, Capt., Carolyn Sunderlik,  
Dianne Devore  
10:30 - Team 6 - Mark Kincaid

**Greeters:**

8:00 - Debbie & Jim Hoffert  
10:30 - Carrie & Steve Funk

**P.A. Operator:**

8:00 - Pat Penhallegon  
10:30 - Mike Kirby

**Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**  
650 West William Street Decatur, Illinois 62522  
Telephone (217)428-4336 FAX (217)428-1700  
www.cccdisciples.org  
e-mail: [central@cccdisciples.org](mailto:central@cccdisciples.org)

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  
Hannah Brimmer ..... Social Media Coordinator  
Bri Lockwood ..... Nursery Attendant  
Kattina Williams ..... Nursery Attendant  
Lora Wright ..... Lead 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.



**Prayer Request Text-In!**

Have a prayer request? Text "PRAY" (all caps) to 217-212-2173, or use the QR code to the left. We would love to pray with you and follow up, if you wish.

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