

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. XCVII

Decatur, Illinois, March 26, 2025

No. 6



Welcome New Members

With joy and thanksgiving, we welcomed three new members to the Central family this past Sunday. At the 9:15 service, Kenny and Phyllis Cooper transferred their membership. Phyllis had been attending when she and her children lived in Decatur last Spring. Though a move took her back to southern CA nearly a year ago, when an opportunity to come back to the Midwest presented itself, the family took it and found their way back to Central. Then, at the 10:30 service, Lois Lehnhardt reactivated her membership. Lois and her late husband Bill joined Central in the mid-1970s. For many years they were active members until a move took them away from the area. After moving back to Mt Zion however, Lois has been attending worship since Bill passed away earlier this year. Though she was always a member, she is happy to reactivate her membership. Welcome all!

Easter Lilies for Sale

On the next three Sundays (March 30, April 6 & April 13), Central will be selling Easter Lilies in honor or memory of our loved ones. You may also contact the church office during the week. If you call or email, please let us know where you would like your lily to be displayed and names of honorees (don't forget to indicate if in "honor" or "memory". If you intend on mailing your order, please call or email us so that we can get your name in the bulletin insert. The lilies will be displayed in the Great Hall and Sanctuary on Easter Sunday (April 20). After Easter services at 9:15 or 10:30, your lily may be taken home and planted. The cost this year is \$20.00. Leftover lilies after 4/22 will be given away.

SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 2025

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

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

Scripture and Sermon for 3/30/25

Scripture: Luke 15: 1-2, 8-10
Melinda McDonald



Happy Birthday!! (3/30—4/12)

Christen McLeod, Bobby Munos,
Steve Swarhout, Gregg Foltz,
Jane Davis, Luke Kirby,
Samuel Rutherford, Kathy Kauzlarich,
Tatum Little, Josie Morelli,
Hadley Fultz, Adalyn McCoy,
Ruby Glause



Disciples Women Spring Gathering

APRIL 26, 2025

9 AM - 3: 30 PM

"Tending Our Inner Gardens: Sowing
Seeds for Spiritual Growth"

Mosaic Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

2507 West Newman Parkway, Peoria
COST \$50.00 INCLUDING LUNCH

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION:

APRIL 9, 2025

Several women from Central are
planning to attend. If interested,
contact Christine Lyman-Harm
or the church office.

Volunteers needed...

We are looking for volunteers to assist
with the live stream as needed. If
interested, please call the office or
email waynerutherford@mac.com.

Women's Book Club

The evening book club has changed
where we meet and the time. Please
join us April 8 at 3:00pm at the church
as we will be discussing 'The
Nightingale' by Kristin Hannah.

King Services

Correction from the last Visitor
newsletter: Bess King's visitation will
be at noon this Saturday, March 29,
and the services will be at 1:00 PM.

Counting On You

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Total worshipping online = 77

Total worshipping in-person = 316

Counting On You

Sunday, March 16, 2025

Total worshipping online = 145

Total worshipping in-person = 253

Minister's Article

Faces in the Crowd

As we continue to move through Lent, I have been enjoying the bible study that is meeting every Monday evening at 5:30. Each week, we focus on one of the different "faces" that were involved in the final acts of Jesus' life that lead to his crucifixion and burial. So far we have covered the disciples (as a group) and Simon Peter. But we began the bible study by focusing on *many* faces – the crowds (and the many faces that made up those crowds). It was the crowd in Pilate's courtyard that turned its back on Jesus and chose to save Barabbas instead of him.

The idea that the crowds – or at least some in the crowd – turn on Jesus is the subject of endless discussion. We don't know anything about the particular individuals who may have praised Jesus one day but turned on him the next. We know them only as a group; in aggregate. But there were clearly individuals among them who had been "following" Jesus, yet ultimately deserted him. Just like the rest of the twelve – the appointed Disciples – who ran away when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Contrasted with the crowds is the second criminal who is crucified next to Jesus on a cross of his own. He has the first "deathbed conversion" on record. He is actively dying alongside Jesus, has not been baptized, yet with his final breath utters a beautiful confession of faith: "*Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.*" Whereupon Jesus rewards that faith by proclaiming that "*Today you shall be with me in paradise.*" Not at some future time. Not after you "put in your dues." Right here. Right now.

Scripture expertly uses these two characters to show us that *when* doesn't matter so much with Jesus. He doesn't care if you're the first one or the last one to come to the party, he cares only *that* you're at the party. He wants us inside the party when the party begins. How you get there or what time you arrive is of far smaller significance. Likewise, he doesn't care if you're the first to desert him or the last to desert him – if you desert him by yourself or among a group of others - only *that* you've deserted him. When that happens, even though we've lasted longer than others, we're still responsible for abandoning. The world loves to compare. We are always, whether consciously or unconsciously, looking at ourselves in comparison to others. *We may be bad, we think, but at least we're not as bad as they are.* The problem with this, when it comes to our spirituality, is that as when we find someone worse off than we are, we are mistakenly fooled into thinking we don't have to change, don't have to improve.

Lent is our reminder that none of the ways the world compares matters to God. God doesn't care if you think you're better than your neighbor or that you think you're closer to God than the guy across the street. God cares that you are better period, that you are closer period! If God cares anything about comparison, it's in comparing us to who and where we were yesterday. And comparing who and where we'll be tomorrow with where and who we are today. In that respect, we all fall short. We're all in need of repentance – like all of those who abandoned Jesus. But, like the second criminal, we are also still welcome; still invited into the kingdom; still given an opportunity to receive the kingdom today.

Blessings – Michael

Food Donations for Northeast Community Fund

Thank you, Central Christian Church, for supporting the shopping cart with your donations each month. On March 4, 2025, approximately 80 pounds of nonperishable food items were delivered to Northeast Community Food Pantry. Let's join together and support Northeast on April 6, 2025.

Here are some suggestions to help those who may be facing hunger: canned and pouches of chicken and tuna, soup, pancake mix that only requires water, syrup, rice, canned fruit, canned spaghetti sauce, peanut butter, cereal, elbow and spaghetti pasta, mac and cheese, boxed potatoes, and individual serving packages and family size applesauce. Please, be sure to check the expiration date. It is also a good idea not to donate items in glass packaging. Please place your food donations in the shopping cart in the Connection Café. Together we can make a difference in our community!

Generosity 101 – Orientation to Giving at Central

For the duration of Central's long and illustrious history in Decatur, we have been the recipients of tremendous generosity by our members. This has allowed us to undertake capital campaigns every three years, support the yearly special offerings of our denominational church, make possible projects through our memorial funds, and all the while maintain a healthy yearly operating budget to fund our many ministries. What a gift it is to be able to say all that! In recent years, we have gained more and more members who are new to many of these traditions and customs at Central. And whenever anyone gives any kind of offering to the church, we want to make sure it is done in a way that is meaningful to the giver, as well as to the church. If you would like to learn more about:

- *How our 3-year capital campaigns work and what they allow us to do...*
- *How our memorial funds are used to promote the church's ministries...*
- *How we give 10% of all our received offerings to outreach and where that outreach goes...*
- *How all this relates to our annual operating budget...*

We would like to invite you to a seminar called **Generosity 101 – An Orientation to Giving at Central**. On Thursday, April 3, from 5 – 6 p.m., Pastor Michael and representatives from the financial office will provide materials and answer any questions you might have. Everyone is welcome, but we do ask you to RSVP so that we can have enough materials for everyone. [Contact the church office to reserve your place](mailto:central@cccdisciples.org) (central@cccdisciples.org).

Sunday (30)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online
4:00-"From Heaven Distilled a Clemency,"
Millikin University Choir & Collegiate Chorale

Monday (31)

9:15-Prayer Group, Heritage Center
1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407
5:30-Lent Bible Study, Great Hall

Tuesday (April 1)

7:00-Journeymen, Conn. Café
9:30-ChristCare Stitchers, 3R
9:30-Card Ministry, 411/412
6:00-P.E.O. I.F., Fireside Room

Wednesday (2)

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407
1:30-Prayer Shawl Ministry, Connection Café
5:00-Christian Ed., Connection Café
5:00-Contemporary Worship, Fireside Room
6:00-Millikin Heights, 401

Thursday (3)

8:00-Emmaus Reunion Group, 401
10:00-Alanon, 401
3:00-Visitation Group
3:00-Decatur Needle Arts, Disciples Room
5:00-Generosity 101, Connection Café
5:30-Capital Campaign Committee
7:00-Chancel Choir, Choir Room

Friday (4)

Saturday (5)

11:00-FaithQuest, Connection Café

Sunday (6)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online

Monday (7)

9:15-Prayer Group, Heritage Center
1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407
5:30-Lent Bible Study, Great Hall

Tuesday (8)

7:00-Journeymen, 401
9:30-ChristCare Stitchers, 3R
3:00-Women's Book Club, 401/Bride's Room
3:30-Pastoral Support Committee, Conf. Rm.

Wednesday (9)

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407
5:00-Elders

Thursday (10)

10:00-Alanon
12:00-Support Staff meeting
5:30-Capital Campaign Comm., Fireside Rm.
7:00-Chancel Choir rehearsal, Choir Room

Friday (11)

Saturday (12)

11:00-Faith Quest

Sunday (13)

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online

Sound & Vision:
An Evening with the Movie Organ

The Navigator
Presented by
Clark Wilson
organist

Friday, April 25, 2025
7:00 PM

Central Christian Church
650 W. William St., Decatur

The poster features a red background with a white organ on the left and a movie poster for 'The Navigator' on the right. The text is in a mix of white and red fonts, with the title in a large, elegant script.

Serving Schedule — Sunday, March 30, 2025

Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Gretchen Kirby, Linda Rowden
9:15 - Linda Rowden

March Prep Deacons: Mary Jane Linton, Lea West, Linda Zinn

Offering Deacons:

8:00 - Jane Davis, Julia Munos
9:15 - Marci & Steve Baumann
10:30 - Mike Kirby, Ron Oliver

Ushers:

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

Greeters:

8:00 - Carolyn McCall, Gail Prince
9:15 - Cheryl & Dave Zollinger
10:30 - Suzie Miller, Brett Swallow

P.A. Operator:

8:00 - Krista Rohrscheib
10:30 - Mike Kirby

Liturgist:

8:00 & 10:30 - Tom Ritter
9:15 - Cheryl Zollinger

Contemporary Snacks: Susie Turner

Nursery and Sunday School Schedule

Sunday, March 30

Nursery: Izzy Kostbade, Julia Munos

Children's Sunday School: NO Children's Sunday School today

Sunday, April 6

Nursery: Izzy Kostbade, Rachel Miller

Children's Sunday School: Julie Martin, TBA



**Central Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)**

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www.cccdisciples.org

e-mail: central@cccdisciples.org

www.facebook.com/CCCDecatur

Serving Schedule — Sunday, April 6, 2025

Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Krista Rohrscheib, Lea West
9:15 - Lea West

April Prep Deacons: Larry & Michele Bafford, Christine Lyman-Harm

Offering Deacons:

8:00 - Debbie Hoffert, Gail Prince
9:15 - Angie & Ron Ingram
10:30 - Gretchen Kirby, Steve Swarhout

Ushers:

8:00 - Team 3 - David King, Capt., Nancy King
10:30 - Team 8 - Tom & Diana Ritter, David Sheffer

Greeters:

8:00 - Gene & Sandy Garver
9:15 - Angie & Ron Ingram
10:30 - Bob & Mary Jane Linton

P.A. Operator:

8:00 - Bobby Munos
10:30 - Luke Kirby

Liturgist:

8:00 & 10:30 - Sue Ann Cain
9:15 - Rebecca Monroe

Contemporary Snacks: Angie & Ron Ingram

“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 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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