

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. XCV

Decatur, Illinois, November 8, 2023

No. 22

Christmas Care and Share

Once again, Decatur is coming together for Christmas for the annual Christmas Care and Share program sponsored by Dove, Inc., the Northeast Community Fund and joined by the Salvation Army.

This event is supported by hundreds of churches, businesses, and groups in the community. They became the local distributor for Toys for Tots and helped 867 families and 67 seniors last year to experience a more fulfilling Christmas thanks to our caring and sharing of presents.

We need new unwrapped items: gloves, mittens, scarves (infant to adult sizes), toys, books, board games (for kids up to 17 years old), basketballs, footballs, soccer balls, toothbrushes, shampoo, lotions etc. (The Prayer Shawl team will make hats and scarves!)

Next, we need garbage bags to transport your gifts to St. Paul's Lutheran church along with wrapping paper and tape for parents to wrap your presents.

Finally, bring your presents and wrapping supplies to Central and place them under the Christmas Caring Tree in the Connection Café between November 26th and December 5th. CACS and the Prayer Shawl ministries will do the rest !

Christmas will be more memorable this year thanks to you for Caring and Sharing !

Welcome New Member

Norma Fick began attending the 10:30 service this past summer. Once she began worshipping at Central, she never looked back. Saying that walking in the doors "reminded her of coming home," she transferred her membership and joined our church family on November 5. She is pictured here with Jane French (right). Welcome Norma!



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2023

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 11/12/2023

Text: I Thessalonians 5:1-11
Michael Karunas



Happy Birthday!! (11/12 - 11/25)

Connie Bordner, Jill Heck, Hazel Perry,
David Shields, Cindy Soebbing,
Brandon Stock, Jon Backes, Lisa
Campbell-Hein, Mackenzie Larrick,
Karen Driver, Merle Davis, Brooke
Swinford, Nick McLemore, Griffin Irby,
Roberta Gorden, Sha'Ron Browning,
Nora Damery, Esther Murray, Denise
Swarthout, Laurie Damery, Millie Hyde,
Blair Pena

Good Sam Volunteering

This Saturday, November 13th, Central volunteers will provide food and take full responsibility for preparing and serving lunch for Good Samaritan diners. Workers are needed 8 a.m.-10:30 a.m. to prepare the meal and 11 a.m. -1 p.m. to serve lunch. Volunteers also shop for the needed grocery supplies one or two days in advance. If you would consider helping and would like to know more about what is involved, talk with co-chairs Dave Wagner, (217) 433-2367 or Shirley Swarthout, (217) 620-3246. New volunteers are always welcome!

Caretaker Position Open

Central is looking to fill an open Caretaker position. Caretakers are those that, quite literally, take care of our building and grounds. We are looking for a good team member and someone who is willing to work 20 hours per week (including weekends). If you know of anyone who might be interested, please have them contact us at central@cccdisciples.org or 217-428-4336.

Thanksgiving Holiday

Just a reminder that the church and office will be closed on November 23rd and 24th to celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday. We will not have the normal printed "Visitor" newsletter that week but will have a shortened email midweek update instead. We hope that everyone has a blessed Thanksgiving holiday!

Counting On You

Sunday Nov. 5, 2023

Total worshipping online = 80
Total worshipping in-person = 285

Counting On You

Sunday Oct. 29, 2023

Total worshipping online = 142
Total worshipping in-person = 237

Navigating Dark Valleys

(This past Sunday was All Saints Sunday and called to mind Psalm 13, which is about finding hope in the midst of the dark valleys of life. Here is a reflection on Psalm 13, meant to help us find hope as we navigate our own dark valleys.)

Psalm 13 echoes the words we have all probably felt ourselves speaking at some time or other in our lives (or at least feeling like we wanted to utter them). "Where are you God? Are you here? Close by? Based on how things are going in my life right now, it makes we wonder." Four times in the first two verses, the psalmist speaks the words "How long," as though God has been hidden far away and the psalmist is left to face their challenges alone.

We can read these words literally, with the "enemies" in v. 2 being specific people in the world out to get us and the phrase "I will sleep the sleep of death" (v. 3) as an indication that the psalmist is on their actual deathbed. Or we can read them symbolically, with "enemies" being those challenges and obstacles we face that seem impossible to overcome and the "sleep of death" as representing the feeling of hitting a dead-end so monumental life of any kind seems unimaginable. Regardless, we have probably all found ourselves in some situation or other that resembles the way Psalm 13 begins.



And yet... the Good News is proclaimed in the end. Even amid this darkest of valleys, the psalmist remembers that the love of God is steadfast, eternally strong, and everlasting. This causes the Psalmist to "sing" to the Lord out of praise for the generous and life-giving ways the Lord has acted in the past. Even in the midst of what feels like terrible darkness, the psalmist is able to see the "bounty" of the Lord.

In this way, Psalm 13 reminds us of the story of Paul and Silas in Acts 16. They were imprisoned because Paul had set free a woman who was being held in an abusive situation of human trafficking. Paul had spoken truth to power and proclaimed the liberating justice of the Gospel. And what was his "reward?" To be stripped, beaten with rods, flogged, and thrown into prison. Yet instead of turning his back on God, he and Silas "sang hymns to God" (Acts 16:25). All night long they sang in this way and in the midst of their singing, through a power only attributable to the Holy Spirit, their chains were broken, their bars unlocked, and they were able to go free.

(continued on page 3...)

St. Augustine said that we are often able to sing what we cannot speak. It is easier to sing words that reflect our true feelings than to speak words to describe them. In those moments when doubt creeps in and the skepticism of the world tempts us; when we ourselves wonder if God is with us or far away, we can sing. We can sing whatever songs are in us – hymns, camp songs, songs of praise and worship... Perhaps we will experience what Paul and Silas did – that in moments of great difficulty, the way things seem are never truly the way they are; that God’s hope and deliverance are never as far away as the immediate conditions of life can make it seem. Through our own singing, may we find doors and windows once thought locked and barred to be cracked open; pathways to a future and not walls imprisoning us in our past.

Blessings – Michael

Let's Help Grow Disciples with our Thanksgiving offering!

During the next two Sundays (November 12th and 19th), Disciples of Christ churches throughout the United States will be collecting a Thanksgiving offering. This special offering benefits the fifteen colleges and universities and seven seminaries and divinity houses affiliated with our denomination. Our donations fund scholarships, support faculty growth and development, and help prepare Christian leaders. Our own Vicky and Scott Woolridge are proud graduates of Eureka College!

Higher education has always been an important focus for Disciples. When we donate this Thanksgiving, we will be part of a 129 year legacy of educational support.

Please give generously! Every dollar donated makes a difference in the lives of Disciple students, their institutions of higher learning, and eventually the world.

Get Ready for Dorcas Disciples’ Fall Meeting!

It’s time for ALL interested Central women to gather on November 14th at 6:00 p.m. in the Great Hall. We’ll hear the compelling story of “Soldiers and Dogs” from Gary Shuck and then enjoy a yummy soup and sandwich dinner (\$7). We’ll have an opportunity to learn more about our all-church Christmas donation recipient – Webster-Cantrell Youth Advocacy. This community-based organization offers family and foster family care, nurturing and adoption services, as well as residential programs for girls and outpatient counseling.

Please RSVP by Friday, November 10th to Nancy Ellen Taylor at 217-872-9174 or xstr@sbcglobal.net to make sure we have enough delicious soup! Contact Sandy Garver at 217-877-0800 or revrag@comcast.net for more information about Dorcas Disciples.

Hope to see you November 14th!

Thanksgiving Potluck

On November 19, Fellowship will host a Thanksgiving potluck luncheon after the 10:30 service. Fellowship will provide turkey, ham, dressing, and rolls. We ask that if your last name begins with A-M, please bring a side dish to share. If your last name begins with N-Z, please bring a dessert. We look forward to sharing a meal with our church family.

Sunday, October (12)

Do Good Donut Sunday!

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online
4:00-Youth Group

Monday (13)

9:00-Good Sam. Volunteering-Good Sam. Inn
9:15-Prayer Group-Lea West, Heritage Room
12:30-Woman’s Book Club-Dobbs, Panera
1:00-DOVE Kids’ Clothing Room open, 407
1:00-Golden K Kiwanis, Disciples Room
5:00-Advent Small Group, Disciples Room
6:30-Advent Small Group, Disciples Room

Tuesday (14)

7:00-Journeymen, Conn. Café
9:30-Christcare Stitchers, 3R
5:30-Woman’s Book Club-Lyman, Panera
6:00-Dorcus Meeting, Disciples Room

Wednesday (15)

1:00-DOVE Kids’ Clothing Room open, 407
5:30-Church Council, Great Hall

Thursday (16)

10:00-Alanon, 401
7:00-Chancel Choir rehearsal, Choir Room

Friday (17)

Youth Fireside Retreat - Camp W. Scott

Saturday (18)

Youth Fireside Retreat - Camp W. Scott

Sunday (19)

Youth Fireside Retreat - Camp W. Scott

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
9:15-Sunday School
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online
11:30-Thanksgiving Pot Luck
12:00-Faith Quest, Disciples Room
3:00-Opus Concert, Sanctuary

Monday (20)

9:15-Prayer Group-Lea West, Heritage Room
1:00-DOVE Kids’ Clothing Room open, 407
5:00-Advent Small Group, Disciples Room
6:30-Advent Small Group, Disciples Room

Tuesday (21)

7:00-Journeymen, Connection Café
9:30-Christcare Stitchers, 3R
9:30-Card Ministry, 411,412
10:15-Operations Committee, Conf. Room

Wednesday (22)

1:00-DOVE Kids’ Clothing Room open, 407

Thursday (23) - THANKSGIVING

Church & Office Closed

Friday (24)

Church & Office Closed

Saturday (25)

Sunday, October (26)

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



Serving Schedule — Sunday, November 12, 2023

Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Matthew Swarthout, Jeannie Backes
9:15 - Matthew Swarthout

November Prep Deacons: Yvonne Purcell, Kim Miller

Offering Deacons:

8:00 - Sandy Garver, Krista Rohrscheib
9:15 - Rod & Laurie Damery
10:30 - Christine Lyman-Harm, Tom Ritter

Ushers:

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

Greeters:

8:00 - Jane Davis
9:15 - Andy & Theresa Fulk
10:30 - Jeannie & Keith Backes

P.A. Operator:

8:00 - Donna Dash
10:30 - Mike Kirby

Liturgist:

8:00 & 10:30 - Keith Backes
9:15 - Greg Barnes

Serving Schedule — Sunday, November 19, 2023

Elders:

8:00 & 10:30 - Diana Ritter, Susan Bryant
9:15 - Diana Ritter

November Communion Elders: Matthew Swarthout, Kevin Wilmot,
Dick Cain, Charlotte Ballance, Theresa Fulk

November Prep Deacons: Yvonne Purcell, Kim Miller

Offering Deacons:

8:00 - Gail Prince, Jane Davis
9:15 - Louis & Laura Kappler
10:30 - Dale Ford, David Martin

Ushers:

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

Greeters:

8:00 - Donna Dash, Charlotte Ballance
9:15 - Cheryl & Dave Zollinger
10:30 - Jean & Jud Pease

P.A. Operator:

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

Liturgist:

8:00 & 10:30 - Andy & Theresa Fulk (Thanksgiving Offering)
9:15 - Travis Wilcoxon

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

Michael E. KarunasSenior Minister
Vicky Woolridge Pastor for Families
David Martin Youth Director
Ben Hawkinson Director of Music
Cordelia "Dee Dee" Gain Organist
David Williams Organist
Kathleen Dudley Pastoral Assistant
Yvonne Boyd Administrative Assistant
Carl Fuerstenberg Administrative Assistant
Rachel MillerNursery Attendant
Abigail SmithNursery Attendant
Megan SchippertNursery Attendant
Andrew EvansLead Caretaker
Jim Denzer Caretaker
Sam Hawkinson Caretaker

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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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