



Central Connections

175 years... and still a frontier church

Volume 44 Issue 2

A Sign of God's Kingdom in the Heart of the City

February 25, 2009

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We are on the verge of Lent as I write these words. Beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 25 and ending with Easter on April 12, Lent is a season of preparation for the commemoration of Jesus' death and resurrection. At Central this year, we have framed Lent as a time of "going deeper." It is an invitation to get off the treadmill of our lives and spend some time below or beyond the surface reality, believing that deeper relationships with God, ourselves, and our neighbors can result. Several opportunities to encourage that deepening are planned, and you can read about them elsewhere in this issue.

This past weekend members of Central's Ministry Coordination Council (your ministry leadership team) gathered for about 24 hours of retreat in Brown County. Getting a bit of a jump on Lent, we invited each other to:

remember a time when we felt deeply connected in our faith community (either Central or another community);
name some of the conditions that contributed to that experience; and
notice opportunities at Central for a similar deepening.

We told these stories in pairs and then harvested our reflections in the whole group. Just a few of the opportunities that we named for deep connection in our faith community were:

When we meet one another's needs in a time of pain or loss
When we ask "big life questions"
In friendships that come from working on what we care about together
When we get out of our heads and into our hearts
When we draw "tangential" people into the circle

There are *many* opportunities, and my prayer for us during this Lenten season is that all of us might walk, run, or stumble into some opportunity to go deeper in our relationship with God or ourselves or our community. I hold each of you in prayer during this time.

Blessings,
Linda



Central Christian Church
Rev. Linda McCrae
701 North Delaware
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317/635-6397

pastor@indyccc.org
<http://indyccc.org>

Worship: Sundays @ 10:30am
Study: Sundays @ 9:00am
Study: Wednesdays @ 6:30pm



*those unable to join us but
are with us in spirit:*

*Don & Wilma Boyd
Bob & Marjorie Kern
Mary Anderson
Helen Speicher
Joyce Roys
Mary Anderson
Effie Burford
Catherine Horton
Phyllis Oldham
John & Betty Morgan
Cleota Purdy*



- 1 Matt Barth & Ed Groves
- 3 Dan Davis
- 7 Sally Evans
- 13 Debbie Abbott
- 13 Andy Stoner
- 15 Nila Lamb
- 15 Tina Ridener
- 17 Kerry Armstrong
- 17 Bob Owczarzak
- 18 Steve Martz
- 19 Phyllis Oldham
- 20 Oletta Keown
- 20 Linda Kirchhoff
- 20 Sarah Owens
- 23 Mary Schilling
- 24 Amy Gastelum

Central News Updates

We join with God's loving concern for those facing life's difficult times:

Deb McIntyre had a stent removed last week and is making a good recovery.

Randall Sherrell is having back pain which may be arthritis.

Holly Powell is dealing with an injury which requires her to be off her feet.

Susan Nickel's grandmother, over 90 years old, fell and broke her hip, followed by surgery.

We offer thanks for the joys we share in community:

Elaine Robinson has begun a program to become a Certified Nurse's Aide

Mail Received

December's Alternative Giving Market at Central generated

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your recent gift of \$389 in support of the work of Global Ministries. As requested, \$155 will be used in its entirety for all Global Ministries program; \$34 will be used to support immunizations for children at Diptipur Hospital in India; \$100 will be used to support lunches for children at the House of Hope in Haiti; and \$100 will be used for the planting of olive trees in Israel/Palestine, all through the Alternative Christmas Program. We value your support of the common witness to God's global mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ around the world.

Sincerely,

Jane Sullivan-Davis, Global Ministries

Dear Linda,

On behalf of the Refugee and Immigration Ministries staff at Disciples Home Missions, thank you for your gift of \$100.50. Part of your contribution will be forwarded to Church World Service for their partner's work in operating the primary health care centers for Afghan refugees in the Mansehra District of Pakistan and to Burundi for the education of refugee children. And the remainder of your donation will be forwarded to Humane Borders for the maintenance of desert water supplies.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Riggs, Director

New Director of Music Joins Central's Staff

This Sunday, March 1, Rachel Dickey will join our staff as Director of Music. Rachel served for six years as choir director of Mount Gilead Christian Church in Bloomington, and is a doctoral student in Choral Conducting at Indiana University. We look forward to welcoming Rachel to our staff and congregation.

Lenten Study Leading to General Assembly

Contact: Pastor Linda McCrae

This summer, the General Assembly of the Disciples of Christ will be held here in Indianapolis. We'll get some media attention around that time, so it's a great opportunity for Disciple congregations in this area to reach out to our neighbors, let them know we're here, and invite them to join us. To help us prepare to take advantage of this opportunity, the Indiana region has invited Martha Grace Reese, a Disciples pastor who has spent a lot of time studying and thinking about evangelism, to lead an "evangelism event" here in Indianapolis on Saturday, May 2. And to prepare for *that*, we are invited to read Reese's book entitled Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism.

To that end, during Lent we will have a prayer/study/reflection group meeting on Thursdays from 6:00-7:25pm. The first 15 minutes will be spent in prayer and worship, using resources from the Iona community. From 6:15-7:25 we will be focusing on "real life evangelism" using Unbinding the Gospel as a guide. All are welcome.

A light supper will be served between 5:30 and 6:00 for those who can come a little early.

Old Hymnals Available

The church has several dozen old hymnals that it will be disposing of in the next few months. They are currently located on the balcony above fellowship hall. If you know anyone who could use any of these hymnals, please help yourself.

Job Openings

The Office of the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has announced two job openings. Both are for Administrative Assistants, one full-time (application deadline March 1) and one part-time (application deadline March 10). For more information or to submit a confidential resume please contact (for the full-time position) Dr. Todd Adams, 130 E. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 46204, tadams@ogmp.disciples.org, or (for the part-time position) Wanda Bryant Wills, same street address, wbwills@cm.disciples.org.

Thank you to...

The Indiana Mankind Project Leader Body for their donations of food and clothing in support of Central's ministries.

Statistics for January 2009

Date	Attend	General	Building	Designated
1/4/2009	95	4,703.00	558.00	100.00
1/11/2009	130	4,475.79	605.00	75.00
1/18/2009	108	3,015.00	780.00	70.00
1/25/2009	119	2,332.00	2,355.00	
January		14,525.79	4,298.00	245.00



Regardless of our politics, we remember and pray for the families of those who died in military service since the last newsletter. We also remember the countless innocents from every nation who have died in war whose names we will never know.

Matthew G. Kelley, 30
Joshua M. Tillery, 31
Benjamin H. Todd, 29
Jr., Philip E. Windorski, 35
Darrell L. Fernandez, 25
Christopher P. Sweet, 28
James M. Dorsey, 23
Garnet R. Derby, 44
Albert R. Jex, 23,
Jonathan R. Roberge, 22
Joshua A. Ward, 30
Stephen S. Thompson, 23
Sean D. Diamond, 41
Cwislyn K. Walter, 19
Mark C. Baum, 32

*"In war, there are no
unwounded soldiers."*

Jose Narosky



**Saturday, March
21st**

**5:30 p.m.
In the parlor.**

The Wednesday Evening Book Group would like to invite the congregation to join us for a Family Game Night.

Just bring what you want to drink, a snack to share and any games you would like to play. We will furnish paper products and ice. There will be someone to play games with any children that would like to come.



Congregation & Community

Gather for Easter Breakfast

Contact: Glenda Survance

Once again this year, we will gather Easter morning - we, the members and friends of Central and we, the larger community, including the poor, the elderly and the homeless. We will share food and conversation and perhaps get to know one another a little better. In order to let the most folks possible participate in the Easter morning worship service, this year, we will again ask that all who can donate a Breakfast casserole. These can be brought in the day before or brought as you come for breakfast. Since we serve breakfast from 7:00 until 9:30, not all food needs to be there at the start.

In years past, there has been a concern about the amount of food and whether it is enough for the community and the congregation. Please rest assured that we are a generous congregation when it comes to food and last year there was more than enough. We fed about 200 and had plenty to donate to Wheeler when we were finished. The complements resounded long after the meal was finished.

If you'd like to bring a casserole, this is a wonderful website full of recipes - <http://www.bbonline.com/recipe/casseroles-breakfast.html>. Please send an email to Glenda (witness@indyccc.org) or call 317.413.1139. We'll be grateful for any donations and if you decide on Saturday to make one and didn't call - we'll gladly accept it.

So please come join us, bring a casserole or just bring yourself. We are all welcome at this table.



Event on Capital Punishment

Bill Pelke, author of "Journey of Hope...from Violence to Healing," will tell his story at St. Thomas Aquinas Church at 46th and Illinois on Thursday, March 19, at 7:00 pm.

Bill, who was a steel worker in northwest Indiana, is now retired and dedicating his life to working for the abolition of the death penalty. His grandmother was murdered by four teenage girls in May of 1985; and Paula Cooper -deemed to be the ringleader and 15 years old at the time- was sentenced to die in the electric chair. At first Pelke supported the death sentence, but prayed for love and compassion for Paula and her family and became involved in an international crusade on Paula's behalf . In 1989 she was taken off of death row, her sentence commuted to 60 years.

Bess Klassen-Landis will also be on the program. Her mom was raped and murdered in their home in northern Indiana 36 years ago; the murderer was never caught. However, the last thing their family would want would be more violence to be done in the mother's name.

Submitted by Frisco Gilchrist

Going Deeper: Lent 2009 at Central Christian Church

Saturday, February 28

Prayer Retreat, 9am-noon

An opportunity to slow down for a few hours to prepare your spirit for the Lenten season. Drawing on experiences from her recent sabbatical, Pastor Linda McCrae will lead participants in prayer and spiritual practices.

Sundays of Lent, March 1-April 5: Going Deeper

Adult Sunday school at 9:00am

Worship at 10:30am, where we will engage in praise and prayer, as well as reflection on how we might "go deeper" in our faith

Sunday noon Bible study on the book of Romans

March 1, 8, 15, and 22, 12:00-1:30pm, beginning with a light lunch, led by Calvin Porter, New Testament scholar.

Thursday worship and study

March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2

A soup supper will be served between 5:30 and 6:00pm

6:00-6:15, worship in the style of Iona (an ecumenical community located on an island off the coast of Scotland)

6:15-7:25, a study of the book Unbinding the Gospel

Led by Linda McCrae

Palm Sunday, April 5

Maundy Thursday Service, April 9, at 7pm

Good Friday, April 10

A light supper at 6pm, following by a brief worship and showing of the PBS documentary "Bonhoeffer" and discussion. "Bonhoeffer" is a 93-minute documentary film that tells the dramatic story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the young German theologian who offered one of the first clear voices of resistance to Adolf Hitler. Bonhoeffer openly challenged his church to stand with the Jews in their time of need, and eventually joined his family in the plots to kill Hitler. His books, Cost of Discipleship, Letters and Papers from Prison, and Ethics, were written during the struggle and are considered classics in the world of religion and ethics.

Easter Sunday, April 12

7am Ecumenical Sunrise Service

7-9:30am Easter breakfast

10:30am Worship: a feast of sights and sounds to celebrate Christ's resurrection and our own.

Brass, tympani and the chancel choir will lead us in singing our praises to God.

Lectionary Scripture



March 1

- * Genesis 9:8-17
- * Psalm 25:1-10
- * 1 Peter 3:18-22
- * Mark 1:9-15

March 8

- * Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
- * Psalm 22:23-31
- * Romans 4:13-25
- * Mark 8:31-38

March 15

- * Exodus 20:1-17
- * Psalm 19
- * 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
- * John 2:13-22

March 22

- * Numbers 21:4-9
- * Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
- * Ephesians 2:1-10
- * John 3:14-21

March 29

- * Jeremiah 31:31-34
- * Psalm 51:1-12
- * Hebrews 5:5-10
- * John 12:20-33

April 5

- * Mark 11:1-11
- * Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

PRAYER BOX

Family prayer time is a good habit. Make it fun with this activity for all family members. They can use this special box whenever they have a prayer request.

What you need:

- Shoebox
- Wrapping paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Stickers, markers, etc. (optional)
- Index cards
- Pencils or pens



What you do:

1. Wrap the shoebox like a present. Be sure to wrap the lid separately so it can be removed.
2. Let the whole family help decorate the box. You can write Bible verses about prayer, draw pictures, glue on pictures or add stickers. Be creative!
3. Put the box in a prominent location of your house. Keep a pile of index cards and pencils or pens near the box.
4. Whenever a family member has a prayer request, he or she can write or draw it on a card and put it inside the box.
5. Family members can share the cards in a prayer circle, or people can take turns praying for all the requests. Throughout the week, family members can check the box for new prayer needs.



A FAMILY OF PRAYER

The book of Acts tells about a man named Cornelius. He was a Roman centurion from Caesarea who worshiped God. Through his encounter with Cornelius, Peter learned that God accepts everyone who fears him and does what is right.

Use the code below to see the example set by Cornelius and his family. Solve the math problems by using the grid. Then use the key to find the letter that matches each answer. Write the letter on the blank.

GRID	
A	B
2	4
C	D
6	5

KEY: a=7 e=8 i=10 o=9 u=11 y=6

"He _____nd _____ll _____s _____f _____m _____l _____
 A+C A+D A+D B+C A+D B+C A+B

w _____r _____d _____v _____t _____nd
 A+C A+C A+C B+D C+D A+D

G _____d - f _____r _____ng; h _____g _____v _____
 B+D A+C A+D B+C A+C A+D A+C

g _____n _____r _____s l _____t _____th _____s _____n
 A+C A+C B+D C+D A+B B+D B+D A+C B+C

n _____d _____nd _____pr _____d _____t _____G _____d
 A+C A+C A+D A+D A+B A+C B+D B+D

r _____g _____l _____r l _____." _____cts 10:2, NIV
 A+C C+D A+D A+B A+D

Answers: "He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly." Acts 10:2, NIV



Community Garden

Some *Green* Space Becoming *Growing* Space

Contact: Mary Hays

You may have heard the words of Plato: “Necessity is the mother of invention.” These words, spoken over 2400 years ago, are still applicable today. Many of us are trying to find new ways to do things that will s-t-r-e-t-c-h our resources. The same is true in our faith community. We are seeking to find creative ways to live into our mission.

In this spirit, we are trying an experiment. We will use some of our green space adjacent to our large parking lot to plant a community garden, approximately 30’ X 30’ in size, raised beds. This project will go into the spring, through the summer, and well into the fall. The hope is that it will be an outward illustration of the fact that we are a growing, living community of faith. We want to provide fresh produce for those who visit our food pantry and out of the garden’s abundance will share with those in our faith community as well as those in our neighborhood. It is a project with room for all – children, teens, young adults, middle-aged folks, and the more experienced among us, too! We will need many hands and a “whole lot of energy” to support this project.

This project will begin getting underway at the next *Keepers of the Ark* gathering, Saturday, March 7th. We meet at 8:00 am for breakfast and devotions. Work then goes from approximately 9:00 am – 12:30 pm. If you are interested in digging, planting, weeding, watering, harvesting, cheer-leading, or participating in some other way, please join us on March 7th – or say something to Terry Bradbury (Leader of our Physical Assets Team), to Pastor Linda, or contact me (mehays@mac.com, 317-972-0558).



School of the Americas March 13, 7:00pm in the Parlor

Contact: Glenda Survance

Several members of Central have been long advocates for the closing of the School of the Americas Frisco Gilchrist and Linda McCrae among others.. And many of us have never heard of the institution. Join us on March 13 at 7 to see a video and have a discussion on the School of the Americas (renamed to Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation). If you’d like to see a bit out the institution and our complicity in torture world wide, check out <http://soaw.org/>



Keepers of the Ark March 4th 8:00 to Noon

With over 6,000 Disciples from across the country coming to Indianapolis for General Assembly in July, there is much to do to have our building ready for guests. And spring is just around the corner so there are plenty of project for that as well.

This is a great time to join Keepers of the Ark. You’re welcome to join for breakfast at 8:00 or come between 9 and noon for as long as you like. There are projects for all interests and skills. If you have any questions, please contact Terry Bradbury.



Indianapolis 2009 Offering of Letters Workshop

Now is the time for our nation to commit to effective development assistance to help the poorest people in our world lift themselves out of extreme poverty and hunger.

Join us!

WHAT: Bread for the World Offering of Letters Workshop

WHEN: Saturday, March 14, 2009 - 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (lunch provided)

WHERE: North United Methodist Church,
3808 N Meridian St,
Indianapolis, IN 46208

COST: Free



MCC Report

Contact: Jennifer Riggs

The Ministry Coordination Council (MCC) held both a retreat and its February meeting on February 20 and 21. The retreat setting provided the MCC time for “going deeper” through worship, community building, renewal, and exploring several issues in depth. We discussed how we can:

- expand our welcome to the church neighborhood;
- help people move from a guest to a full participant in the life of the church;
- help people discover their gifts for ministry and encourage them to share those gifts;
- help build self-directed teams and facilitators that free up the Team Leaders from having to manage all the individual volunteers;
- help people with passion step into the vacant positions we need filled;
- plan for the succession of Team Leaders each year; and
- make some “tweaks” to the new church structure, which we affirmed is working well overall.

We figured out next first steps in dealing with each of these issues, began the discussion of setting team budgets for next year, and set several dates including the date for the Annual Planning Event (June 14).

In the upcoming weeks, please note the following events in the life of the congregation:

- Feb 28 – Central Prayer Retreat, led by Pastor, 9:00AM to noon
- March 1, 8, 15, and 22 – Class on Romans, led by Calvin Porter, after worship, lunch provided
- March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 2 – Lenten series, soup supper 5:30PM to 6:00PM, worship (based on Iona community) 6:00PM to 6:15PM, and book study on “Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism” 6:15PM to 7:25PM
- March 7 – Keepers of the Ark 8AM
- March 13 – Movie for Justice on School of the Americas, 7PM
- March 21 – Family Game Night, 5:30PM (hosted by the Wed. Book Group)
- April 4 – Keepers of the Ark, 8AM
- April 5 – Palm Sunday
- April 9 – Maundy Thursday Service, 7:00PM
- April 10 – Good Friday, 6:00PM light supper and showing of “Bonheoffer”
- April 12 – Easter Sunday Breakfast, bring a breakfast casserole to share
- April 19, 26, and May 3 – Annual Campaign promotion, during worship
- April 25 – Arbor Day planting of trees at Central

Please note that a new bulletin board has been placed by the restrooms where you can learn of volunteer opportunities where you can join in providing ministry at Central!

Good News from the Poor: Self-Sufficiency in Haiti



Week of Compassion helps to fund a food security program in northwest Haiti, implemented by Church World Service and Foods Resource Bank. The following is a reflection by CWS volunteer Hillary Prag, who visited the program. There are many treasures found in our work together in Haiti!

In 2004, the Haitian city of Gonaïves was hit by a tropical storm, which killed nearly 3000 people and damaged the local agricultural capacity. Four years later, the city and surrounding region in northwestern Haiti has finally begun to rebuild the infrastructure that was devastated in this storm. This August and September Haiti was once again struck by an alphabetical series of storms, Hurricanes Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike, that have left the entire country reeling.

CWS' implementing local partner, the Christian Center for Integrated Development (SKDE) connects with local agricultural cooperatives to provide an organized and efficient emergency aid distribution. These cooperatives have been a major source of stability in the midst of the devastating hurricanes as members, who pay a buy-in of about 1000 gourdes (\$25 US), are able to receive psycho-social and material support from other members. Membership in a rural cooperative means access to small loans, literacy programs, livestock, shared gardens, and now, emergency aid. Where other hurricane survivors wait in line for a government official or international NGO to provide for their needs, the cooperatives are emulating self-sufficiency.

"With this movement, we're becoming a new society," says Valery Mesidieu, a cooperative 'animator' who specializes in building group camaraderie and encourages mobilization against unjust social systems. He's referring to the way that cooperatives are working to develop rural communities into self-sufficient entities that require less and less support from the international community. Members boldly attribute their survival to the cooperative and the support of other members. "I don't have any hope; the only hope I have is in the cooperative...It's only thanks to the cooperative that I can live now," says Jesusla Volteur, member of a cooperative near Jean Rabel. "If my children are able to stand up and speak, it is thanks to the cooperative," says Germaine Jean of the same cooperative. A third woman, Petitehomme Limeresse, from the Jean Rabel cooperative, who lost her home in the hurricanes, says that we might as well have buried her if it were not for the cooperative.

Cooperative members are circulating new building material for destroyed homes as well as sheets of aluminum to replace lost roofs. Once homes have been repaired, members will work to resume their livelihoods. In order to do this, pack animals for carrying goods to market must be replaced. Money spent repairing homes must also be replenished before commerce can resume. Thus, despite the rare self-sufficiency that is seen in these cooperatives supported by CWS, they are still in need of financial support to return to their normal functioning capacity. CWS continues to support the cooperatives in Northwestern Haiti on their path to full self-sufficiency.

Thanks to your compassion, Week of Compassion is able to be a part of these sustainable food security programs. Lives are transformed!

Indy Food Coop to Open in Indy in 2009!

Hungry?

Battlemind to Home Symposium March 5-6, 2009

Understanding the Challenges
Facing Returning Veterans and
Their Families

Presented by the Richard L.
Roudebush VA Medical Center

The symposium will help professionals gain a more in-depth understanding of the challenges that our veterans and their families face as our troops transition home, as well as help implement effective ways to care for, treat and support our veterans.

Presented free of charge.

Target audience: Clergy, police officers, university personnel, school counselors, school principals, community mental health providers, nurses, physicians, judges, lawyers, teachers, social workers, probation officers.

www.battlemindsymposium.com

Newsletter submissions may be left in the church office or by eMailing newsletter@indyccc.org. We welcome articles, notes of congratulations or concern, biographical sketches... anything for the good of the church family.

**Deadline for
next newsletter
March 22**



Central Christian Church
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Indianapolis, IN 46204

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