

# Spirit

Central Lutheran Church  
Minneapolis, Minnesota



December 2007

## Advent and Christmas worship with Central

We wait in hope for the coming of Christ. In the midst of a world at war, an environment in crisis—a witness of hope, all earth is hopeful. With something for every age and interest, join in the abundance of worship, service and fellowship planned at Central in celebration of Advent and Christmas this year.

**Sunday worship** services each week will be simple, reflective and include prayer under the advent wreath that hangs from the center of the sanctuary. Worship on December 9 will feature a Buxtehude cantata. (see page 5)

**Advent Fest** on Sunday, December 3 at 4:30 p.m. will be an all-congregation event with crafts, singing and supper. Worship together at 7 p.m. for a blessing of the advent wreath.

**St. Nicholas Day Worship** for youth on December 6 at 7 p.m. will be a contemplative, candlelight Advent worship. (page 7)

All are invited to the **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Tea** on December 8 at 2 p.m. This year's event will feature a distinct Scandinavian theme. (page 3)

**Sunday School Christmas program**, "Jesus Christ, Light of the World" on Sunday, December 9 at 9:45 a.m. in the sanctuary. This program of hymns and readings will lead us from darkness to light telling the story of Jesus' birth and his saving love for the world.

**2007 Agora Christmas of Nations** on Sunday, December 9 at 4 p.m. Celebrate with choirs and performing groups from all over the world. (page 3)

All members of the congregation are invited to attend the **Clothes Closet Christmas Worship** on December 17 at 9:30 a.m. Dinner and gifts for the community will follow the worship service.

### Christmas Worship Services

- ◆ Twilight Christmas service of blessing – a favorite service for the whole family, with blessings of the season for all and a live nativity to visit (December, 24 at 4 p.m.)
- ◆ Candlelight Holy Communion (December, 24 at 10:30 p.m.)
- ◆ Christmas Day Holy Communion (December, 25 at 10 a.m.) Plant distribution to homebound members after morning service.



## Central Lutheran Church

333 South Twelfth Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55404-1496  
phone 612-870-4416  
fax 612-870-0417  
www.centralmpls.org

### Office Hours

Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday: 8:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

### Building Hours

Sunday 7:00 a.m.- 1 p.m.  
5:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.  
Monday 7:00 a.m.- 8:30 p.m.  
Tuesday 7:30 a.m.- 10 p.m.  
Wednesday 7:30 a.m.- 10 p.m.  
Thursday 7:30 a.m.- 10 p.m.  
Friday 7:30 a.m.- 6 p.m.  
Saturday (Scheduled events only)

*Note: The building will be locked 30 minutes after the last event of the day begins.*

One of our pastors is always on call after hours for emergency pastoral care. Please call the Church Office at 612-870-4416 and follow the prompts to reach a pastor.

For regular messages:

#### Senior Pastor

**Richard Nelson**  
612-767-9203  
rnelson@centralmpls.org

#### Associate Pastor

**Kristen Jacobson**  
612-767-9205  
kjacobson@centralmpls.org

#### Interim Associate Pastor

**D. Foy Christopherson**  
612-767-9204  
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#### Visitation Pastors

**Lloyd Thorsen** 612-767-9208  
**Luther Peterson** 612-767-9209  
Messages are checked daily, and calls will be returned as soon as possible.

*The Spirit* is published monthly by Central Lutheran Church.

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Electronic submissions are preferred.  
Article and photo deadlines:

**January Issue** Wed, December 12  
**February Issue** Fri, January 11

# Pastor's Column

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we enter this time of anticipation and hope—we begin with lighting a candle—the first candle of the Advent Wreath. This first candle is *The Candle of Hope*—the candle that stays lit through the entire season of Advent as we wait for the coming of our Lord. And so it is that God may light this same candle of hope within each of us this Advent season. In Advent we are invited into a time of hopefulness. We are invited into a time of wonder and awe, newness and possibility.

For me as a very young child, preparing for Christmas was almost magically wonderful. It wasn't in any way hectic, there was no pressure, and every aspect of preparation seemed to be something fun. But I realized as I grew older that I began to develop expectations around Christmas, expectations that things would be and feel and smell a certain way—and when these expectations weren't met I started to feel disappointed. Somehow the magic wore off and hope was overshadowed with what I expected to feel.

And how true it is for so many adults (and even some kids) that our expectations get in the way of our hopefulness. We have grown to place so much expectation around how Christmas and this season of Advent ought to be that we miss out, frequently, on the invitation into hope that God gives us in this season.

What are we hoping for after all? Are we hoping for something from Santa, a perfectly roasted turkey, all the kids around our tree, pretty dresses, dainty candies, happy people and Christmas cards all sent out on time? Are we hoping that a relationship improves, or our careers stabilize, or the car just keeps working through the winter?

These things may all be worthy items to hope for and some we may even pray for. However, this candle, this invitation into “hopefulness,” is much bigger and more powerful than these things that we can see. For this light of hope, dear Christian friends, is a light so bright that no darkness or missed expectation can hinder it. This Christ that gives us hope fills us with more than fruitcake. He fills us with light and life, an eternal flame, an eternal life—that nothing on this earth can destroy. And this new life of light and hope is a promise for you.

As we enter this time of anticipation and hope—we begin with lighting a candle—the first candle of the Advent wreath. This first candle is the candle of hope—the candle that stays lit through the entire season of advent as we wait for the coming of our Lord. And so it is that God comes to light this same candle within you.

*We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest for ever.*

*Hebrews 6:19&20a*

In the Hope and Light of Christ,

+ Pastor Kristen Jacobson

# Celebrate. Discover. Share.

Welcome to the  
**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Tea  
with A Touch of Scandinavia**  
Saturday, December 8 at 2 p.m.

*Scandinavian Marketplace opens  
for shopping at 1 p.m.*

Entertainment provided by  
**Dr. Stephen Gabrielsen**—Professor  
of organ and piano theory at Augsburg  
and college organist; organist at Peace  
Lutheran Church in Coon Rapids;  
accompanist for Exultate, a professional  
Chamber Choir & Orchestra; holds a  
B.A. from Augsburg, M.A. and D.M.A.  
from University of Minnesota;  
published composer of organ and  
choral music and Fellow of the  
American Guild of Organists.  
Delightful teller of stories  
and leader of song!!!  
Limited seating tickets @ \$12  
Available beginning November 11  
ONLY at South Commons table  
or by phone: 763-533-0482



The **Downtown Coalition for  
Grief Support** meets on Saturdays  
from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at St. Mark's  
Episcopal Cathedral, 519 Oak Grove,  
Minneapolis, 612-870-7800. Parking is  
available on the east side of the  
church. Topics include:

**December 1**, Janet Larsen, "Surprised  
by Spirit or Am I Making This Up?"

**December 8**, Marjorie Watson,  
"Walking Through Grief with Poetry"

**December 15**, Janie Jasin, "Moments,  
Mentors and Miracles"

**December 22 and 29**, Informal  
gathering

Volunteers are needed on Saturdays  
starting January 5 when the Grief  
Coalition moves to Central for four  
months. If you are willing to help out  
a couple of Saturdays to greet and  
direct people attending the meetings  
contact Joan VanWirt at 612-333-3273.

**Central's OWLS** (Older Wiser  
Lutheran Seniors) invite you to their  
annual **Christmas Luncheon** at 12  
noon on Wednesday, December 5, in  
Fellowship Hall. With Pastor Jacobson  
offering devotions, Pastor Nelson  
leading "Christmas Carols from  
Around the World," and the staff  
helping to serve the delicious meal,  
this promises to be another time for  
good fun and fellowship. The last day  
to purchase tickets in South Commons  
will be December 2—cost is \$10.

At 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 9,  
the OWLS gather again for a high  
energy program—"History to Music"  
with Delores Heirs. Her stories of  
American history, peppered with songs  
and accordion harmony, will be  
accompanied by dessert and coffee.  
Sign-up in South Commons  
December 16 and 30 and January 6.

Next, stay tuned for details about the  
OWLS February visit to Chanhassen  
Dinner Theater. Information will be  
provided at the Christmas luncheon  
on December 5, and tickets will go on  
sale in South Commons December 30.



## 2007 Christmas of Nations

At 4 p.m. on December 9, Christians  
of diverse cultures and nationalities  
will gather at Central to celebrate the  
birth of Jesus, the Savior of the world.  
Choirs of people from countries in  
Asia, Africa, Central and South  
America—many in their native  
dresses—will sing with traditional  
American church choirs. People from  
all over the world will sing Christmas  
carols and pray in their native  
tongues.

To learn more the Christmas of  
Nations, contact Agora at 952-888-  
5197 or e-mail to Pastor Puthiyottill  
[cherianp@agoraministry.org](mailto:cherianp@agoraministry.org).

## Experience "Love in Action" with a gift to Central's Clothes Closet

Our Clothes Closet is a vital and  
important way for Central to connect  
with others in our immediate  
neighborhood and beyond. In every  
sense, the Closet truly is "Love in  
Action!"

During the month of December, you  
have a special opportunity to support  
the program with the **Clothes  
Closet's Annual Appeal**. The money  
that is raised in December provides  
year-round funding for the program.  
Gifts will be received in the South  
Commons after both morning worship  
services on Sundays, December 2, 9, 16  
and 23. Cash donations are always  
welcome and especially appreciated.

The **Annual Clothes Closet Holiday  
Celebration** will begin on Monday,  
December 17 at 9:30 a.m. with a  
Christmas worship service in the  
sanctuary. All members of Central are  
invited to join members of the  
community for this service. Lunch will  
be served in Fellowship Hall following  
the service. Food vouchers and toys  
will also be distributed during lunch.

The Closet has an ongoing need for  
volunteers to help with clothing  
distribution, especially on Thursdays  
from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more  
information, contact Marcia Pelham,  
Central's Director for Community  
Resources.



Children and youth participating in the  
**Sunday School Christmas program**  
should plan to attend the dress rehearsal  
on Saturday, December 8 at 10:30 am.  
Lunch will be served following the  
rehearsal. (Please also note that Sunday  
School classes are not scheduled for  
December 23 and 30; they will resume  
again on January 6.)

# Celebrate. Discover. Share.

## “Advances and Challenges in Madagascar”

Sunday, December 2 at 9:45 in the Community Room

The vibrant church in Madagascar offers many insights and opportunities for other Christians. The focus of this presentation will be on the three synods (former American Lutheran Church fields) that are seeking assistance.

**Dr. Morris Vaagenes** grew up in Madagascar, the son of missionary parents. Morris and his wife, Bonnie, also served there as missionaries. He was senior pastor of North Heights Lutheran Church in Roseville and Arden Hills for more than 38 years.

## “Christmas: A Surprising History”

Sunday, December 9 at 9:45 a.m. in Room 123

**The Rev. Dr. Bruce Forbes** returns to Central to dispel some myths about how our modern Christmas came to be, its origin in pagan festivals, and how it has become the sacred and, in many ways, secular celebration we have come to know and love.

He will discuss how Saint Nicholas evolved into the modern icon known as Santa Claus, as well as the historical roots of such beloved holiday traditions as the Christmas tree and crèche (manger scene); the music of Christmas—carols, hymns, choral and orchestral works; greeting cards; gift-giving; and classic films such as “It’s a Wonderful Life.”

Bruce is Professor of Religious Studies at Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, and an adjunct Professor of Religion in Augsburg’s Weekend College program. A graduate of Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and Princeton Theological Seminary, he is an ordained minister of the United Methodist Church.

He is co-editor of *Religion and Popular Culture in America* and co-authored *Rapture, Revelation and the End Times: Exploring the ‘Left Behind’ Series*. His new book, *Christmas: A Candid History*, will be on sale at the forum.

## “For the Peace of Jerusalem: Pray and Work”

Sunday, December 9 at 9:45 in the Community Room

**Charles P. Lutz** will look at Christian ministries in the Holy Land, as well as God’s call to U.S. Christians to be more engaged in seeking a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Lutz has spent his professional life working with Lutheran and ecumenical institutions on social justice concerns. He serves as volunteer coordinator in Minnesota Churches for Middle East Peace, a national coalition of 22 Washington-based Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant public policy agencies. Lutz has made eight visits to Israel/Palestine, including five in the past decade as leader of pilgrimage groups.

He is co-author (with Robert O. Smith) of *Christians and a Land Called Holy: How We Can Foster Justice, Peace and Hope* (Fortress, 2006). His Minneapolis congregation, Lutheran Church of Christ the Redeemer, has had an 18-year long sister parish relationship with Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, Palestine.

## “Praying the Magnificat: The Prayer of Mary, the Mother of Jesus”

Sunday, December 16 at 9:45 a.m. in Room 123

The Gospel of Luke tells the story of Mary’s encounter with Elizabeth and their praise of God for the gifts of their unborn sons, Jesus and John the Baptist. Mary’s prayer, which has become known as the *Magnificat*, is the longest passage attributed to a woman in Christian scripture.

**Mary Kaye Medinger** will explore the *Magnificat* interactively, drawing on the theological reflections of women scholars from both North and South America. Participants will listen to a musical rendition of Mary’s prayer from both medieval and contemporary composers, and reflect on how it can inspire our petitions to God.

The text of the *Magnificat* has been set to music innumerable times and has also been a source of inspiration for visual artists and poets. On the day of this forum, Dietrich Buxtehude’s *Magnificat in D*, will be presented during morning worship by Central’s Senior Choir accompanied by members of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra and directed by Mark Sedio.

# Celebrate. Discover. Share.

## World Voices

Target presents the 8th annual “WorldVoices: Peace On Earth” concert conducted by **Dr. Karle Erickson**, on Saturday, December 8 at 7 p.m. Come and share the hope for peace with 370 children and singers and instrumentalists from World Voices as they perform songs and carols of peace from around the world. John Rutter’s *Gloria* will once again thrill your ears with its combination of voices, brass, percussion and full organ played by **Dr. Lynn Trapp** from St. Olaf Catholic Church in Minneapolis. Dancers from Saint Anthony Sacred Dance will add their graceful interpretation for several pieces.

**TICKETS:** Discounted tickets are available for Central members at \$5 off the regular \$20 ticket price. These tickets at \$15/adults and \$8/students may be purchased by mailing a check payable to WorldVoices, 7500 Market Place Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55344 or by charge card or check at our website, [www.worldvoicesmn.org](http://www.worldvoicesmn.org). Identify yourself as a Central Lutheran Church member. Children 10 and under are free! For further information call the ticket line at 952-947-0162 or [worldvoices@earthlink.net](mailto:worldvoices@earthlink.net). Limited reserved-area-seating is available for an additional \$10 per ticket. Contact the ticket line to reserve.



The **Friday Downtown Bible Study** meets to discuss the texts for the following Sunday’s service each Friday from noon - 1p.m. in Fireside Lounge.

The **Young Adults Bible Study** will gather for regular Bible study on Monday, December 17 from 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. in Fireside Lounge.

**Dr. Jim Hart** will be speaking on the topic of “The Future of Health Care in Minnesota,” at the **Men’s Fellowship Breakfast** on Saturday, December 1 at 8 a.m.

## Buxtehude Cantata

This year’s Advent Choral Service at both the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. services on Sunday, December 16, will focus on the music of **Dietrich Buxtehude** marking the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the composer’s death. Buxtehude (1637–1707) spent 40 years in the prestigious position of organist at the Marienkirche in Lübeck, and attained such stature that he was visited by the likes of Handel and J. S. Bach. Although he is often classified as a German baroque composer, he seems to have considered himself Danish, his father having moved from northern Germany into the then-Danish province of Scania where Dietrich was born. Buxtehude made an impressive contribution to the choral and chamber music repertoire, including 128 choral compositions. All but eight of his surviving choral works are based on sacred texts from biblical sources, Latin devotional poetry, or German Lutheran chorales.

One of these is the *Magnificat in D* which will be performed by the Central Choir along with members of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. The *Magnificat* (Mary’s song of praise from Luke’s Gospel) has played a central role in Christian sacred music since the Middle Ages. It is one of the three New Testament canticles that has had a place in the daily ritual of prayer known as Vespers. Buxtehude’s setting is scored for five-part choir, strings and continuo. He also employs brief solo, duet, and trio sections. The musical sections he creates are strongly contrasted but unified within the framework of the piece by a dance-like string *ritornello*. Also included in the service will be sections of Buxtehude’s Advent cantata, *Ihr lieben Christen, freut euch nun*.

Come, worship, celebrate!

The Perfect Christmas Present for Music Lovers:

Recordings of last year’s performance of **Mozart’s Requiem** by the Central Choir and the Choir of Zumbro Lutheran Church with members of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra are now available. Cost is \$10—such a deal! Contact Director of Music Mark Sedio for more details.

# December Calendar

## Saturday, December 1

8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Breakfast  
 9:00 a.m. Sunday School Staff Mtg  
 9:30 a.m. Minneapolis Brass Rehearsal  
 10:00 a.m. Olan Mills Photo Session  
 5:00 p.m. Augsburg Advent Vespers  
 8:00 p.m. Augsburg Advent Vespers

## Sunday, December 2

7:30 a.m. Prayer of the Heart  
 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
 9:30 a.m. Augsburg Nursing Center  
 9:45 a.m. Sunday School Classes  
 9:45 a.m. Confirmation Class  
 9:45 a.m. Global Mission Forum  
 9:45 a.m. Mission & Vision  
 Implementation Task Force  
 Congregation Conversation  
 9:45 a.m. Senior High Youth Group  
 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion  
 12:00 p.m. Camp Amnicon Luncheon  
 12:00 p.m. Sr. High & Confirmation  
 Youth Aliveness Project  
 12:15 p.m. Special Congregational  
 Meeting  
 4:30 p.m. Advent Fest  
 6:00 p.m. 8 – 80 AA  
 7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer with  
 Holy Communion

## Monday, December 3

9:30 a.m. Clothes Closet Worship  
 10:00 a.m. Clothes Closet  
 10:30 a.m. Clothes Closet Meal  
 6:30 p.m. Central Friends Meeting  
 7:00 p.m. Nurses Helping Nurses AA

## Tuesday, December 4

10:15 a.m. Staff Meeting  
 1:00 p.m. Grace Circle Christmas  
 Luncheon  
 1:00 p.m. Floral Guild Christmas  
 Party  
 5:30 p.m. Executive Committee  
 5:30 p.m. Camp Amnicon Board Mtg  
 6:30 p.m. New Member Mnstry Team  
 6:30 p.m. Facilities Revitalization  
 Task Force &  
 Congregation Council

## Wednesday, December 5

11:00 a.m. Pictorial Directory  
 Planning Team  
 12:00 p.m. OWLS Christmas  
 Luncheon  
 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal  
 6:30 p.m. Schola Cantorum Rehearsal  
 7:15 p.m. Central Choir Rehearsal

## Thursday, December 6

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet  
 1:30 p.m. Global Mission  
 Ministry Team  
 6:00 p.m. Amnicon Phone Calling  
 6:30 p.m. Group Qi Gong Exercise  
 7:00 p.m. Advent Youth  
 Worship Service  
 7:30 p.m. Central Pacific AA

## Friday, December 7

12:00 p.m. Downtown Bible Study

## Saturday, December 8

9:30 a.m. Group Qi Gong Exercise  
 10:30 a.m. Sunday School Christmas  
 Program Dress Rehearsal  
 2:00 p.m. Annual Christmas Tea  
 7:00 p.m. World Voices Concert

## Sunday, December 9

7:30 a.m. Prayer of the Heart  
 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
 9:30 a.m. Augsburg Nursing Center  
 9:45 a.m. Global Mission Forum  
 9:45 a.m. Hospitality Workshop  
 9:45 a.m. Life Long Learning Forum  
 9:45 a.m. High School Youth Group  
 9:45 a.m. Sunday School Christmas  
 Program  
 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion  
 4:00 p.m. Agora Christmas of  
 Nations Worship Service  
 6:00 p.m. 8 – 80 AA  
 7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer with  
 Holy Communion

## Monday, December 10

9:30 a.m. Clothes Closet Worship  
 10:00 a.m. Clothes Closet  
 10:30 a.m. Clothes Closet Meal  
 6:00 p.m. Shalom Circle  
 6:30 p.m. CLCW Investment Club  
 7:00 p.m. Nurses Helping Nurses AA

## Tuesday, December 11

10:15 a.m. Staff Meeting  
 1:30 p.m. Library Ministry Team  
 5:30 p.m. Fiscal & Property Committee  
 6:00 p.m. Amnicon Phone Calling  
 6:30 p.m. Youth Ministry Team

## Wednesday, December 12

9:30 a.m. Ruth Circle  
 10:00 a.m. Heritage Ministry Team  
 11:00 a.m. Pictorial Directory  
 Planning Team  
 12:00 p.m. Thrivent – Mpls Chapter  
 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal  
 7:15 p.m. Central Choir Rehearsal

## Thursday, December 13

11:00 a.m. Grief Coalition Planning  
 Meeting  
 1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet  
 5:30 p.m. Worship Planning Team  
 6:00 p.m. Amnicon Phone Calling  
 6:30 p.m. Group Qi Gong Exercise  
 7:30 p.m. Central Pacific AA

## Friday, December 14

12:00 p.m. Downtown Bible Study

## Saturday, December 15

9:30 a.m. Minneapolis Brass  
 Rehearsal  
 3:30 p.m. Music Association of  
 Minnetonka Concert

## Sunday, December 16

7:30 a.m. Prayer of the Heart  
 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
 9:30 a.m. Augsburg Nursing Center  
 9:45 a.m. Sunday School Classes  
 9:45 a.m. Life Long Learning Forum  
 9:45 a.m. Confirmation Class  
 9:45 a.m. Senior High Youth Group  
 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion  
 3:00 p.m. Salt of the Earth Storytellers  
 6:00 p.m. 8 – 80 AA  
 7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer with  
 Holy Communion

## Monday, December 17

9:30 a.m. Clothes Closet Christmas  
 Worship Service  
 10:00 a.m. Clothes Closet Christmas  
 6:00 p.m. Health Ministry Team  
 6:00 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study  
 6:00 p.m. GLBT Advocacy  
 Ministry Team  
 7:00 p.m. Nurses Helping Nurses AA

## Tuesday, December 18

10:15 a.m. Staff Meeting  
 10:30 a.m. Fine Art Ministry Team

## Wednesday, December 19

11:00 a.m. Pictorial Directory  
 Planning Team  
 5:00 p.m. UCAM Board Meeting  
 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal  
 7:15 p.m. Central Choir Rehearsal

## Thursday, December 20

6:30 p.m. Group Qi Gong Exercise  
 7:30 p.m. Central Pacific AA

## Friday, December 21

12:00 p.m. Downtown Bible Study

# Celebrate. Discover. Share.

## **Sunday, December 23**

7:30 a.m. Prayer of the Heart  
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion  
6:00 p.m. 8 – 80 AA  
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer with  
Holy Communion

## **Monday, December 24**

*Church Office Closed*  
4:00 p.m. Twilight Service of Blessing  
10:30 p.m. Candlelight  
Holy Communion

## **Tuesday, December 25**

*Church Office Closed*  
10:00 a.m. Holy Communion

## **Wednesday, December 26**

*Church Office Closed*

## **Thursday, December 27**

6:30 p.m. Group Qi Gong Exercise  
7:30 p.m. Central Pacific AA

## **Friday, December 28**

12:00 p.m. Downtown Bible Study

## **Sunday, December 30**

7:30 a.m. Prayer of the Heart  
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion  
6:00 p.m. 8 – 80 AA  
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer with  
Holy Communion

## **Monday, December 31**

*Church Office Closed*  
8:00 p.m. AA Pass It On Marathon

## **YOUTH UPDATE**

### ***A Place Apart for Central's Youth***

During the last weekend of October and the first weekend of November, Central's Confirmation and Senior High youth left the Twin Cities for the shores of Lake Superior to play, rest and experience God's beautiful creation at Camp Amnicon's "place apart." Crisp, cool weather and brightly-colored leaves marked the annual fall retreats, as did a large harvest moon that rose over the water at campfire on the Saturday evening of the Senior High trip. During their stay, the youth enjoyed an array of activities, together with Amnicon's retreat hosts and Central's adult leaders, including day—and night!—nature hikes, group-building games, prayer, Bible study and reflection. On the first night, the youth were asked to think about, in particular, the things they wanted to "leave behind" while at camp, and what they hoped to receive or gain in exchange. Many shared a desire to let go of the worries and anxieties they felt at school or home, while wishing to experience peace and rest. By the end of the retreats, it was clear from their laughter, prayer and renewed friendships, that the youth had indeed discovered the quiet refuge and, of course, fun they hoped to find at Amnicon. In the words of one camper, "This is my second home and I know that I always belong here."

### ***Light One Candle***

As they did last Advent, the Junior and Senior High youth will again have two special events this December to celebrate the season and serve others in the name of the Christ child. First, on Sunday, December 2, from 12:30-3:30 we will participate in The Aliveness Project's Holiday Basket Program in coordination with our fellow Minneapolis T.R.U.S.T. churches. The Aliveness Project is a community center located in South Minneapolis that provides services and programs to the HIV/AIDS community. The baskets will consist of new clothing, toys, food, and hygiene items needed by individuals and families. After we shop for gifts and assemble the baskets, we'll deliver them to the Aliveness

Project and learn more about the Project's purpose and mission. All youth are asked to bring \$5-\$10 to help in buying the basket items.

Then, on Thursday night, December 6 (also St. Nick's Day) at 7 p.m. the youth will participate in and help to lead a contemplative, candlelight Advent worship service. Joined by the pastors and Mark Sedio, we will sing, pray and worship together in anticipation of Jesus' birth. Parents are invited to join us, and the night will conclude at 8:30 with cookies and hot chocolate in the newly-renovated, cozy youth room.

**Amanda Highben**

Youth & Family Minister



Central's Confirmation Group gathers together at Camp Amnicon.

# President's Column

Dear Partners in Ministry:

As we come to this last month of the calendar year and the beginning of a new Church Year, we rejoice in this wonderful season of Advent and Christmas. Let us also take a moment to look back in thanksgiving for another year of God's blessings.

We at Central Lutheran Church are blessed with a rich past that sustains us and guides us into the future. The list of those early leaders (and followers) is long and filled with countless individuals both noteworthy and unknown. But we are doubly blessed with the wonderful gifts, diversity, talents and willing involvement of countless staff members and volunteers today who make our church function as we do ministry together and answer God's call to love and serve others.

Over the past months I have served as your president, I have been afforded the wonderful opportunity of attending countless meetings – council, executive committee, task forces, new member classes, ministry teams, as well as social events sponsored by church groups and individual members. It has been a joy! I feel very blessed! All of this, has confirmed what I had suspected. Central Lutheran Church is blessed with many incredible members that make this church what it is. The commitment to God and to this church and congregation is remarkable. The willingness to share talents, time, resources and expertise to further the ministry of Central is working among us constantly.

Throughout this same time, I have also experienced the pleasure of working with pastoral and lay staff of amazing and wonderful talents, skills and commitment to Jesus Christ and this church. Many regularly go above and beyond to meet the needs of our members as well as the community in which we serve. Their exemplary work and leadership can be seen every Sunday morning in worship, in our educational programs, in our youth programs, in our service to the Clothes Closet community, in the countless pastoral acts each day, in the pleasantness with which they greet and assist everyone, in the care and concern of the physical building and many, many other examples of their expertise and service.

As we move into the Advent season in preparation to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ once more, remember to express your thanks and appreciation to Central's pastoral and lay staff and to one another as we work together. It is good for us to give thanks to and for one

another. We are all blessed to be together in this wonderful place called Central Lutheran Church.

With the many seasonal worship services, there are many opportunities for you to provide hospitality in welcoming guests and members to Central. Remember, hospitality is everyone's responsibility! Your service is needed.

Let us celebrate our unity in Christ. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." *1 Corinthians 12:27*

May you experience anew the joy of our Savior's birth! God's blessings to you, and my sincere thanks for your service to Central Lutheran Church.

**Joyce Anderson**  
Congregation President

## ASSOCIATE PASTOR CALL COMMITTEE

A team has been appointed by Council to serve this congregation by assisting Pastor Nelson in a search for an Associate Pastor (remember that Pastor Christopherson is serving currently under an "interim" agreement). A thorough position description is available through the Church Office for this pastoral call that will have special focus in Worship and the Arts, Hospitality, and Pastoral Care. The committee that will assist Pastor Nelson consists of **Karl Starr, Kris Stedje, Bobbie Spradley, Chris Lyle, Susan Troselius, Patrick Egan, and Erik Kaaya**. In this prayerful process, they will be seeking the best candidate to submit to the congregation for call in the capacity of Associate Pastor, with gifts for ministry especially in the afore-mentioned areas.

After studying this document, if you know of a candidate that might be a good fit, there is a form by which you may submit names also at the Church Office. Suggestions will be received throughout the month of December, and will be considered along with the names that the Synod supplies. Please pray for this group of Call Committee members AND for God's leading in our search for the right Associate Pastor who will serve us well for years to come!

# ttCelebrate. Discover. Share.

## Congregation Council

October 16, 2007 Meeting Highlights

**SUCCESS & RECOGNITION:** David Alexander's presentation to the Central's Men's Fellowship Breakfast; the pipes for the organ are in the building; the blessing of the animals; the installation of the welcoming banner; re-development of the vestry space in the Lower Narthex; the completion of the Church Office space re-do; a good group of regular confirmation attendees.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** An Agape Fund has been established for the use of Central's pastoral staff in assisting members and friends with emergency and short-term financial needs.

David Alexander reported that he interviewed a second audit firm and has one additional firm to interview.

**SENIOR PASTOR'S REPORT:** Pastor Nelson reported that he will be participating in the upcoming Interfaith Forums on Thursday nights. Global Fare (November 17) is a new multi-cultural congregational event. Pastor Jacobson will be installed on November 11. Wednesday Night Live! is up and running—6 sessions in the fall and 6 sessions after Easter. Central's Saturday *Star Tribune* advertisement is receiving an experimental makeover in both style and placement in an effort to reach non-members and invite them to worship. Central's Sunday morning worship service will be broadcast on a new station, WMIN 740, beginning January 6, 2008 at 11:00 am. The station will also promote Central's worship service throughout the week.

The Council approved the recommendation of Joelene Baker and Pastor Nelson to hire **Kelly Bartnick** to fill the position of internal communications coordinator.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**New Members:** The Council voted to receive the following adult persons as members of the congregation:

|                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Lisa Anderson      | Steven Hanneman  |
| Megan Bentley      | Melissa Melnick  |
| Katherine Bezanson | Heruy Mesfen     |
| Jamie Caputa       | Gregg Papke      |
| Mark Forsberg      | Norma Ringham    |
| Roberta Groening   | Elizabeth Sample |
| Christie Gross     | James Sample     |
| Douglas Gross      | Mae Widness      |
| Kristin Hanneman   |                  |

The Council voted to receive the following children with their parents as members of the congregation:

**Osa Hanneman**  
**Austin Stanley**  
**Christopher Stanley**

President Anderson also noted that the following adults have been received into membership of the congregation through Holy Baptism:

**Christopher Meyers**, June 24, 2007;  
**Mark Butler**, August 12, 2007  
**Thomas Butler**, August 12, 2007

**Personnel Committee:** President Anderson reported that Pastor Nelson is in the process of filling a position on the Personnel Committee. Anderson noted that in an effort to be as inclusive as possible the position will be posted in the *Spirit Weekly*, on the website and on the bulletin board. Interested members would need to meet qualifications, fill out an application and take part in an interview.

**Appointment of Associate Pastor Task Force:** Pastor Nelson reported that in accordance with Central's Constitution and Bylaws the Council should appoint at least three non-council members and up to two council members to serve on a task force to assist him in seeking and interviewing candidates for the Associate Pastor for Worship, Arts, Pastoral Care and Hospitality call. Council members agreed to thoughtfully consider candidates for this task force. A job description for this position was reviewed by the Council.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
**Kathryn Holum**, Secretary

### PLEASE, touch that dial!

Beginning January 6, 2008, Central's Sunday morning worship service will be broadcast on a new station, WMIN 740 at 11:00 a.m. each week. WMIN ("The True Oldies Channel") is a daytime-only oldies radio station serving the Minneapolis-St. Paul area of Minnesota. In addition to the actual Sunday broadcasts, the station will also promote Central's worship service throughout each week.

# Celebrate. Discover. Share.

## *What's on your gift list for Christmas?*

Our family - with our kids in their twenties, grown, and on their own - still ask this old question. Instead of a childhood list, the gift ideas come by cell phone or most likely by email saying: "Mom would like the iPod speakers and Erik mentioned the book."

In their eighties, my parents don't ask for any gift list - they just give. They live far from their four kids and families, yet all of us receive boxes of presents, usually delivered in early fall, wrapped with lots of love. They give personal gifts to every one in the family (at age 56, I still get excited to open gifts from Mom and Dad.) They send Christmas gifts to extended family and write to hundreds of friends with words of love and blessing. Their giving starts on Halloween with pumpkin pies for next door neighbors and extends to celebrations for others at Thanksgiving and Christmas. They give extra to their church and other places they care about. It seems that the folks' "gift list" is really a "giving list" - in their giving, they receive. Maybe this is what it means to live "overwhelmed with joy" like the Magi who saw the Christ child in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:7-12.) I still have much to learn about gifts and giving. How about you?

*As the days of Christmas come and the calendar year ends, here is a list of things you are invited to do at Central to experience the joy of the Magi!*

- *A gift of prayer.* Pray for the people of Central: worshipers, homebound people, staff and pastors, musicians, second language students and teachers, volunteers of all kinds, neighbors who find warmth and meals and clothes here, visitors, families, our youth, the sick, those who grieve....there are many to lift up in prayer. Pray for peace and hope in our community and world.
- *A gift of spirit.* Come and worship often. Anticipate the Christ Child in the journey of Advent. Invite a friend. Even better invite two friends. Give a gift of Central's spirit so others might discover Christ's love.
- *A gift of money.* Central does the Lord's work 24/7 all year long. Your weekly offering to God's work at Central keeps the ministry going. A gift to the General Fund, above the amount you usually give at this time of the year, makes a big difference in the lives of people whom we serve.

- *A "special" year end gift of money.* There are year end "tax-wise benefits" from our federal government that encourage giving to Central. You can stretch the power of your dollars by giving appreciated stock. If you are over the age of 70½ - during these last days of 2007 - the federal government allows significant tax free giving opportunities from IRAs. What gifts the wise men would have given if they had tax deductions!
- *A gift of You!* Give of your unique abilities and talents. Central is a community of believers called to share God's blessings entrusted with us. Say "Here I am Lord!" and call Central's volunteer coordinator **Karen Knox** at the Church Office and put your gifts into action. Whatever gifts you give, share Christ's love.

Need help with your "Central Christmas giving" list? Just imagine what it means to live "overwhelmed with joy!"

### **Rev. Mark Halaas**

Central Lutheran Foundation

### **Did you know?**

According to Charles Lundquist of the World Mission Prayer League, the Twin Cities is home to more Chinese scholars and students than anywhere else outside China. Our community of Hmong and Somali immigrants is also the largest in the United States. In addition, 200,000 African immigrants, 5,000 Iranians, 900 Burmese, and 400 Afghans also call this area home. There are groups of Sikhs, Jains, and Zoroastrians, 62 Buddhist temples, 21 Hindu temples and groups and about 125,000 Muslims worship in nearly 80 mosques.

Article submitted by Central member, **Arne Sovik**

This demographic data is derived from *The Cityview Report* by John A. Mayer (Mpls, 2006) and Charles Lundquist's *November Prayer Letter*.

# Celebrate. Discover. Share.

## CENTRAL'S CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

A tradition at Central for many years has been to offer members the opportunity to honor and/or remember loved ones by contributing to Christmas decorations in the Sanctuary. The poinsettia garden not only adds a beautiful touch to our worship, but later brightens the lives of homebound members who will receive a plant following our services.

To participate, please complete this form and

- Bring it with your donation to the Floral Guild information desk in South Commons following Sunday morning services on December 2, 9 or 16.  
OR
- Mail the form and donation to Lillian Weiss, 2535 Aquila Avenue North, Golden Valley, MN 55427.



Please make checks payable to CLC Floral Guild (\$10 per plant).

Donor's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

## Year-end Giving

Advent is upon us and so is the calendar year for giving. As with most churches, December is the time of the largest gifts to the church and its ministries. Many of you donate appreciated stock in payment of pledges or special gifts. We have a request of you: Please send a letter to the church business office when you are giving a gift of stock through your broker. The letter should contain the purpose of the gift: budget or designated. It is most helpful if you make a timely transfer so that the stock can be sold and proceeds received before December 31, 2007, to apply to this calendar year.

Also, 2007 is the last scheduled year for persons over the age of 70½ to make a distribution from their IRA to a charitable organization like Central without a withdrawal penalty. Many Central members have taken advantage of this change in the law to make extra gifts to both the budget and Forward in Faith program.

Your generosity is always appreciated and especially during this season of giving. We desire to keep your records as accurate as possible and apply your funds to the correct account. If you have any questions, please call David Alexander, Business Manager at (612) 767-9220 or Jennifer Fischer, Bookkeeper at (612) 767-9221.

PLEASE NOTE: IRS guidelines require that all contributions for 2007 must be received in or postmarked 2007. Contributions received in 2007 but earmarked for the year 2008, will be added to your 2007 contribution record. Any questions, please call Jennifer Fischer at 612-767-9221 in the Business office.



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **Worship at Central**

“All Earth is Hopeful” ...we wait in hope. With all the earth this advent, we wait quietly under the advent wreath for the coming of God. Our advent theme hymn “All Earth is Hopeful” will accompany us along the way, with much of our worship being led from the midst of the assembly and under the advent wreath. Our gospel readings will come from Matthew who seeks to link Jesus to all that was prophesied about him. Our worship will seek to be reflective and simple. Our art and environment will pick up simple images from the earth... trees awaiting spring, the globe, colors of the earth from space. On Advent 3 we will be treated to Buxtehude’s cantata entitled “Magnificat in D.”

### **December 2**

*The sudden coming of salvation*

8:30 and 11 a.m.

Holy Communion

7 p.m.

Intergenerational

Advent Evening

Prayer with

Holy Communion

### **December 6**

*St. Nicholas*

7 p.m.

Youth worship

### **December 9**

*Prepare the way of the Lord*

8:30 and 11 a.m.

Holy Communion

9:45 a.m.

Sunday School

Christmas Program

7 p.m.

Advent Evening

Prayer

with Holy

Communion

### **December 16**

*The forerunner of Christ*

8:30 and 11 a.m.

Holy Communion

Buxtehude cantata

“Magnificat in D”

7 p.m. Advent

Evening Prayer with

Holy Communion

### **December 17**

*Clothes Closet*

*Christmas worship*

9:30 a.m. Join

Central’s community

ministry for this a

festival of carols

### **December 23**

*Our God near at hand*

8:30 and 11 a.m.

Holy Communion

7 p.m. Advent

Evening Prayer with

Holy Communion

### **December 24**

*Christmas Eve*

4 p.m. Twilight

service of blessing

10:30 p.m.

Candlelight Holy

Communion

### **December 25**

Christmas Day

*The Word became flesh*

10 a.m.

Holy Communion

### **December 30**

*The child is named Jesus*

10 a.m.

Holy Communion

(one service)

7 p.m. Evening Prayer

with Holy

Communion

Blessing of the New

Year