



the Spirit weekly

News about the mission of Central Lutheran Church
Downtown Minneapolis

Special Easter Edition Sunday, April 12, 2009

90th Anniversary Launched on Palm Sunday

April 5 Observed as "Founders Day"

Special Celebration Planned for May 17 (see page 3)



Central's founding pastor, J. A. O. Stub, said that Central must strive to be a real church home for people of all conditions and ages. It must, he said, "teem with activity."

"Its door must be open to welcome all, irrespective of antecedents or social position. It must be 'our Father's house' where all can feel at home. The Church does not exist so much for its members as for the opportunity that it gives them to serve the common Lord," said Stub.

For 90 years the people of Central Lutheran Church in downtown Minneapolis have been living out Stub's vision, making Central a place where all are welcome.

Today, nearly 50 ministry teams, consisting of hundreds of people, carry out the day to day mission of this remarkable faith community.

And, in this 90th anniversary year, Central will again have the rare opportunity to "welcome the whole church" as it offers significant hospitality to the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, meeting across the street at the Convention Center in August. We've done this before including the 1957 meeting of the Lutheran World Federation, the 1960 constituting convention of the American Lutheran Church and the 1995 ELCA Churchwide assembly.

This will be a year to celebrate the past in order to become empowered for the future as we live out the vision to bring hope and healing to the world in the name of Christ our Lord.



The people of Central enter the Great North Doors in procession to start the 11:00 service on Palm Sunday, reflected in the glass of the Minneapolis Convention Center across the street.



Pastor Christopherson blesses the palms and instructs the marchers before the procession in the South Commons.

The coffee bar, "Holy Grounds," in the South Commons, along with remodeled rest rooms and the new Central Nursery made their debut on Palm Sunday. The improvements were paid for with funds from Central's Forward in Faith campaign.

Central's Restoration Center is a place where relationships are built; hope reborn

"Central's newly-opened Restoration Center is quickly becoming a place that people in need are turning to for help in crisis times, reports Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, community ministry coordinator. He says that on a typical day many people are in line when the doors open at 7:30 a.m., many of them mothers and children who have been "released" from homeless shelters for the day and have no place to go.

The Restoration Center, born out of Central's strategic plan, combines previous community ministries, such as the Clothes Closet, in operation since 1967, with new efforts of hospitality, counseling, financial assistance and spiritual formation. And, it does it all from a new dedicated space, something Rolf says is unique among the outreach ministries of downtown Minneapolis congregations.

"This is already becoming a place where community is being created," said Rolf. "People need community in order to succeed."

He also said that having the Restoration Center in a church creates a "trusting environment" as people "trust a church and feel that a church can help them."

Rolf said the ministry of center is to work for restoration both physically and spiritually, with counseling available from retired clergy to those skilled in offering financial advice.

Rolf says that he is personally involved in one-on-one counseling everyday and often it is about money. The center provides a variety of financial assistance for needs ranging from bus tokens to prescriptions to dental work.

Central has invested \$50,000 of funds from the Forward in Faith Campaign to renovate and furnish the space, including the purchase of two computers with Internet access where guests can search for jobs and file job applications online. A recent guest, an out of work



Central's Community Ministry Coordinator, Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, shows volunteer Nalani Lavedure how to find the best job posting sites on the Internet so she, in turn, can assist the many guests coming to the center to search for work.

Photo by Joe Björda

immigrant in his mid-thirties, even used a computer recently to send a letter to Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, decrying the lack of state aid in helping those who are out of work and homeless.

Volunteers are key to ministry

While Rolf gratefully reports the involvement of over 40 volunteers to date, including many who are not members of Central, he says the need for more is great in order to fully staff the center, which is open Monday to Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Volunteers are needed for the following tasks: front desk reception, computer guide, spiritual guide, educator, Clothes Closet volunteer, community meal preparers and servers (served every Monday) and advocacy organizer. Retired or part-time clergy are also needed to offer pastoral care.

Full information about volunteer opportunities is available by contacting Rolf at 612-767-9214 or rlowenberg-deboer@centralmpls.org.

"Being welcomed is the first piece toward restoration," said Rolf, "from moving out of crisis to stability. Our hope is that that is exactly what is going to develop here."

"The Restoration Center is poised to do a whole lot of good in this community," said Rolf. "It's something that Central can be very proud of."

The Restoration Center is just one part of Central's community efforts, which also include involvement in "Heading Home Hennepin," a move to end homelessness and "Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness." Rolf will talk about Central's community ministries at the Lifelong Learning Forum on Sunday, May 10.

The Restoration Center will be open for tours following the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. services today!

URGENT NOTICE: The Clothes Closet desperately needs men's clothing, sheets and towels.

Please donate soon!

On Easter Sunday 1935, people were lined up down Third Avenue waiting to enter Central.

Photo Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society



Events and Opportunities

90th Anniversary Celebration Sunday, May 17



One Service at 10:00!

There will be one morning service on this festive day as we celebrate 90 years of "living the vision."

Join the choir for a very big birthday song!

Central Choir, soloists and members of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra will present Mozart's "Missa brevis in D" as a part of the festival service. We're inviting any interested singers to come and join us. Rehearsals will be held for one hour every Wednesday, beginning April 15 at 7:15 p.m. in the choir room. No audition is necessary but note reading ability is extraordinarily helpful. Can't make all five rehearsals? Contact Director of Music/Cantor Mark Sedio at (612) 767-9230 or msedio@centralmpls.org. What a great way to welcome spring and to celebrate our life together!

Stay for brunch!

A celebration brunch will follow the service. All are welcome free of charge! The brunch is a gift to the community by the Central Lutheran Church Foundation. Please reserve your place(s) as soon as possible. Call 612-870-4416 or email reservations@centralmpls.org.

New Member Orientation is April 19

The New Member/Discipleship team invites anyone who is interested in becoming a member of or learning more about Central to the spring 2009 new member orientation session. Please join us for one session on Sunday, April 19. We invite you to start the morning with the 8:30 a.m. worship service. The session begins at 9:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. in room 123. Lunch will be provided. Questions? Please contact the church office at 612-870-4416. We look forward to meeting you!

Join a mission trip to Iowa with Camp Noah

Have you felt helpless when watching news coverage of natural disasters? If you care about children, here is your opportunity to make a difference. As part of the Forward in Faith campaign, Central has provided money (more than \$50,000) to make possible Vacation Bible School all summer for children affected by natural disasters through LSS's Camp Noah. To put action to our gift of money, a group from Central is being organized to staff a Bible school for one week in Iowa or possibly Fargo area. What a great way to make a difference in the lives of children who have lost hope and live in fear!

When: July 20-24

Where: Somewhere in Iowa, or if needed, Fargo area

Who: Several staff plus you! Hopefully, a group of 15-20

What: Serve as a camp counselor, food worker, storyteller, teacher, childcare worker, crafts, parish nurse, mental health professional---lots of possibilities!

How much: Five days of your time and talents, misc. expenses for some meals, share in carpool expenses.

Contact Barbara Brown if you are interested or if you have questions at bbrown@centralmpls.org or 612-767-9210.

An information meeting will be held between services, 10am, Sunday May 5th, in the Fireside Room.

Support Youth for "A Night on the Street"

Did you know that more than 22,000 youth are homeless in Minnesota every year? Please join our Central youth in helping to end youth homelessness by making food and financial donations to A Night on the Street. On April 24 our youth will gather with 400 teens from 31 congregations to spend the night sleeping in cardboard boxes to raise awareness about this issue. Your contributions will help to build local, affordable housing through the Plymouth Church Neighborhood Foundation, and all food will be donated to the Groveland Food Shelf. Please stop by our cardboard box display on April 19 to make your donations and to learn more from our youth about the event. You may also drop off financial and food contributions at the front desk prior to April 19. Questions? Contact Amanda Highben or Rolf Lowenberg DeBoer.

The new nursery opens today!

It is located just up the stairs from our south entry (formerly Room 122). Completed with funds from the Forward in Faith Campaign, the decor and convenient location (not to mention caring volunteers) makes a clear statement that children are important in our faith community!



These Central youngsters received their First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 9. They are pictured here with Pastor D. Foy Christopherson on Saturday, April 4, making the Communion bread for the occasion.
Photo by Kris Stedje

Events and Opportunities

Family Vacation Bible School 2009: a week of fun, learning and worship

Monday, June 29 – Thursday, July 2

We are shifting this year to an evening format from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. beginning with dinner, followed by an intergenerational hour, followed by separate Bible Study times for and adults. Thursday evening will also feature an outing to and cookout at Como Park in St. Paul.

This will be an intergenerational, family-style program. All children must be accompanied by a participating parent(s) or adult family member(s). This is a wonderful opportunity for children and their families to grow in faith together while experiencing Jesus' love and having a fun, safe, and memorable week at the same time!

All families with children between the ages of preschool (4-5 years old) and those entering sixth grade are invited. Beginning April 14, registration forms will be available at the receptionist desk throughout the week. May 10 is the registration deadline. The cost is \$30 per person, not to exceed \$75 per family. Scholarship assistance is available. Adult volunteers are also needed to help with a variety of opportunities including preparing and serving meals, spending time with the preschool children, and helping with games and crafts. To request scholarship assistance, volunteer, or if you have questions, please contact Amanda Highben, Youth & Family Minister, (612) 767-9206; ahighben@centralmpls.org.

Men's Fellowship Group to Meet May 2

Central's Men's Fellowship will gather for breakfast on Saturday, May 2 and will hear David Johnson speaking about "Sprawling, Trawling, Even Brawling: Higher Education in Minnesota 2009." For more information, contact Bob Tufford at btufford@tufford-hughes.com.

New ways to keep in touch!

Are you on Facebook? If so, please join Central's new Facebook group! Just search Facebook Groups for "Central Lutheran Minneapolis" and join in! **You can also subscribe to our new weekly e-newsletter, the "e-Spirit."** Go to the front page at www.centralmpls.org and enter your email address. Very soon Central's website will also contain updated event and opportunity notices in a more-accessible fashion.

Next Sunday at Central: April 19

2 Easter

- 7:30am - Upper Room Open (Room 206)
- 8:30am - Holy Communion
- 9:30am - Augsburg Nursing Center
- 9:30am - Volunteer Recognition Fellowship Time (Fellowship Hall)
- 9:45am - Sunday School Classes (Room 222)
- 9:45am - Confirmation Class (Lower Narthex)
- 9:45am - Senior High Youth Group (Youth Room)
- 9:45am - New Member Orientation (Room 123)
- 9:45am - Global Mission Forum (Community Room)
- 10:30am - Fellowship Time (South Commons)
- 10:30am - Ivory Coast Bible Study (Elbow Room)
- 11:00am - Holy Communion (Sanctuary)
- 11:15am - Ivory Coast Worship Service (Room 222)
- 12:00pm - Confirmation Retreat (Room 128)
- 12:10pm - Global Mission Ministry Team (Fireside)
- 12:30pm - Peace with Justice Forum (Fellowship Hall)
- 3:00pm - Salt of the Earth Storytellers (Fireside)
- 6:00pm - 8 – 80 AA (Community Room)
- 7:00pm - Evening Prayer with Holy Communion (Sanctuary), followed by fellowship time

Join the Coffee Ministry Team!

You and your team can be part of the new Sunday Morning Coffee Ministry Team. No experience necessary. Contact Diane Nimmer at 763-529-7662 or diane@nimmerfamily.com or Karen Knox at 612-767-9211 or kknnox@centralmpls.org.

Remember a loved one by planting a tree!

The Gardening Corps will purchase, plant, and water an Autumn Blaze maple along the east side of the surface parking lot. The cost for a 1-3/4 inch #25 pot tree is \$315, and includes a one-year guarantee. The trees will be planted each spring and fall until the space is filled. Contact Connie and Dick Adair at (612) 374-3456 or adair001@umn.edu.

Building Closed Easter Monday

Please note that the Central offices and building will be closed on Monday, April 13.

Regular hours resume on Tuesday, April 14.

For a detailed weekly meeting and event schedule, log on to www.centralmpls.org and click on "Church Calendar" in the right column.

Central Lutheran Church, in the Heart of the City, Welcomes All People to Celebrate, Discover and Share the Love of Christ . . . as we have done for 90 years!