



The Spirit of Central

News about the mission of Central Lutheran Church
Downtown Minneapolis

November 27/28, 2010

In Advent we wait, we practice

Second in a Series

by Pastor D. Foy Christopherson

We live in a hard time. We live in the in-between time. We live between the promise and its fulfillment. Between the first resurrection and all the rest. Between the birth announcement and the delivery. Between the gift presentation and its unwrapping. Between the confession and the forgiveness. Between the cease-fire and the peace. Between Good Friday and Easter. Between dying and rising. Between first light and sunrise. All of our days are lived in the in-between time. In mystery, we wait:

“Lo, I will tell you a mystery,” Paul writes, “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...”

“Let us proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again,” the liturgy says.

“Keep awake.” (Matthew 25:13)

“How long, O Lord?” How long? (Psalm 13, 80; Habakkuk 1)

If you hear images of Advent in all that, you’re tracking with the Seasonal Worship Team who selected our Advent theme for this year. In mystery, we wait. We spend our whole lives living in an “Advent posture” really: waiting in mystery for God.

While we wait, we practice. We practice seeing Jesus – in the face of the poor, the homeless, our neighbor – so we will recognize him when he comes. We practice getting ready, so we will be prepared when he knocks. We practice dining together – so we’ll know how to dine with him in the Kingdom of God. We practice singing so we can join the angels in their Glorias. We practice welcoming all who come through our doors to be sure we’ll welcome Jesus. We practice telling the story to our children, to one another – so we’ll all know how to recognize him. We practice forgiving and being forgiven so we can join in God’s activity of reconciling the world to himself. We practice prayer so we will have the words to greet him when he comes.

May God bless your waiting, and your practicing.
Come Lord Jesus. Come soon.



Restoration Center Christmas Appeal underway

Targeting the needs of 30-40 families

The annual Restoration Center Christmas Appeal for special over-and-above regular giving is now underway with some changes this year, according to Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, Central’s Director of Community Ministries.

“In the past we have collected monetary donations specifically for toys to distribute to families in need. This year we are shifting the paradigm a bit as we believe we can do better for families during this difficult time with the funds entrusted to us,” he said.

This year funds received will supply food for the traditional Christmas meal and provide some winter gear and gifts for families. But a significant portion of the funds will provide family housing and financial assistance—an effort directly aimed at preventing homelessness.

“Shifting the paradigm is sometimes difficult,” said Rolf. “What we have learned is that there is so much more that people need—more than straight charity—more lasting things like a place to live and

a job. Yes, kids need toys, but I just know that they would be better off in a home without toys than in a shelter with toys.”

Rolf points out that purchased toys may be donated directly to the Clothes Closet where they will be given to families in need during this holiday season. Funds given to the Christmas appeal will be designated for the Christmas meal, winter clothing and financial assistance for families.

Special over-and-above regular giving for this focused Christmas appeal should be noted for “Restoration Center” and may be placed anytime in the offering plates, delivered or mailed to the Church Office, made at the Restoration Center table in Fellowship Hall on Sundays, November 28 or December 5, or online, using Visa or MasterCard at www.centralmpls.org.

Read a longer article about the Restoration Center Christmas Appeal in the November 21 issue of *The Spirit*, available in the information racks or online at www.centralmpls.org



in pictures

Snapshots of Our Life Together in Mission



A Thanksgiving meal for the community

On Monday, November 22 a small army of volunteers and staff produced something wonderful: the annual Thanksgiving Community Meal—a day when the usual Monday Community Meal gives way to linen table cloths and napkins and a traditional turkey meal with “all the trimmings.”

More than 300 of our community neighbors partook of the feast (top left), which was served up by a virtual production line of servers (bottom left).



Perennial volunteer Dave Dahl (top right) helped slice the nearly 200 pounds of turkey breasts. Staff members David Alexander and Dave Rodriguez (bottom left) helped deliver the pumpkin pie.

Photos by Joe Bjordal

Decorating for Advent

There are no magical church elves to do this. Rather it's a collaboration between staff and volunteers. Staff members Dave Rodriguez and Brad Meyers (left) worked to string lights on trees along 12th Avenue this past week in bitter cold. On November 27 Michael Larson, a professional rigger from the Guthrie Theater, and Dave Rodriguez (center) assembled the Advent Wreath, which weighs 500 pounds! Michael Wickman (right) was one of the members of the Seasonal Design Team that decorated the sanctuary for this season.



Daily Bible Readings

Monday, November 29 — Psalm 124; Genesis 8:1-19; Romans 6:1-11
Tuesday, November 30 — Psalm 124; Genesis 9:1-17; Hebrews 11:32-40
Wednesday, December 1 — Psalm 124; Isaiah 54:1-10; Matthew 24:23-35
Thursday, December 2 — Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 4:2-6; Acts 1:12-17, 21-26
Friday, December 3 — Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 30:19-26; Acts 13:16-25
Saturday, December 4 — Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 40: 1-11; John 1:19-28
Sunday, December 5 — Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

Central Lutheran Church

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FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS NEWS@CENTRALMPLS.ORG

Centralites are among "10,000 Voices"

As a faith community, voicing concerns and hope for the future of Minnesota; conversation continues at Convention Center on Sunday, December 5

During the month of October seventy members of the Central Lutheran Church faith community met in nine house meetings to talk about concerns, fears and hopes for the future of the State of Minnesota—just as citizens were getting ready to elect a new governor. The discussions were part of "10,000 Voices for One Minnesota," a project of ISALAH, an ecumenical organization made up of over 90 congregations in the Twin Cities and St. Cloud that works for racial and economic justice.

The goal of the initiative was to bring together 10,000 people from across the state to have an uncommon conversation about opportunity, the changes Minnesota is going through, faith and discipleship—the results of which to be shared with the newly-elected state leaders.

On Sunday, October 31 the hosts of Central's house meetings gathered to share the details of the conversations and to work on drafting a letter to the incoming governor of the State of Minnesota. Many of the hosts expressed shock about statistics of how Minnesota is dealing with racial equality—a state where, despite being more racially diverse, people of color have fewer opportunities and experience greater inequities. And, in the midst of sharing common concerns and fears for the future, the hosts reported that participants "felt hopeful to be part of this conversation."

"We were disappointed to learn of some of the racial inequities in Minnesota, and that our state is near the bottom of the list for graduating children of color from high school," said the hosts in a letter to the incoming governor. "We are deeply concerned about

their future and ours, as a result. Will Minnesota continue to have a well educated work force? Will companies come to Minnesota, or be grown here, if we don't? These issues have serious implications for the well being of everyone in our state, as we go forward together."

The hosts are hoping many members and friends of Central will join with them in physically signing a huge enlargement of the letter, which will be in Fellowship Hall on the mornings of Sundays, November 28 and December 5.

10,000 VOICES for one minnesota

The letter also summarizes some common concerns expressed in the meetings for children in Minnesota: "All-day pre-K and kindergarten classes can provide the early childhood education that is essential for effective learning

throughout the K-12 grades. Reinvestment will be critical for communities hardest hit by the recession. All children must have access to sound nutrition and good health care. No learning can take place when children are hungry or sick."

The letter will be displayed, along with those of other congregations who participated in "10,000 Voices" at a gathering on Sunday, December 5 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. An estimated 1,500 people are expected to attend "Shining the Light—A Faith Gathering for Minnesota's Future," from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Central's "10,000 Voices" team is hoping that 50 or more Centralites will participate and will be taking reservations in Fellowship Hall on the mornings of November 28 and December 5.

Call for nominations: Campus Master Plan Task Force

At a special meeting on October 31, members of Central Lutheran Church formally established the procedure for electing a task force that will—during the first six months of 2011—lead the congregation in "a prayerful process of discovery, listening, discussion, creative imagination and visioning" regarding Central's physical plant. The Task Force will propose improvements and changes to the campus that should be accomplished by 2020, either in total or in phases.

Nominations for the Task Force are being received through the month of November. Detailed information about Task Force, including a form for self-nomination or nomination of others, is available at the Church Office or on Central's website at www.centralmpls.org. Members of the Task Force will be elected at a special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, January 16, 2011.

Central's Christmas Poinsettias —be part of the tradition!

A Central tradition of offering members and friends the opportunity to honor or remember loved ones by contributing to our sanctuary decorations continues this year.

To purchase a Christmas poinsettia, complete the form inserted in this issue of *The Spirit* and bring it with your donation of \$10 per plant—made payable to "Floral Guild"—to the Floral Guild table in Fellowship Hall after both worship services on November 28, December 5 and 12. Or, mail this form to Lillian Weiss, 2535 Aquila Avenue North, Golden Valley, MN 55427.

The plants will be distributed to our shut-in members following worship services on December 25 and 26.

Help Wanted

Readers

If you are interested in serving as a Reader in worship, please visit the Reader table in Fellowship Hall on Sundays November 28 or December 5. New readers are welcome. Novices can receive training. For more information contact Clarence Smith at clarenc-smith@aol.com or 612-374-3554.

Library

Watch for major changes in the Library. In the meantime, help is needed. Consider working in the new children's library to be located in the Parents' Lounge in the Education Building. Small jobs are helpful and we are grateful for any amount of time. Please contact Librarian Elizabeth Shelver.

Security

Business Administrator David Alexander would like to assemble a team of persons with a security, police, military or other law enforcement background to assist with security needs during special events at Central. If interested, contact David at dalexander@centralmpls.org or 612-767-9220.

— events/opportunities —

This Weekend

Saturday Worship — 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Worship — 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
Children, youth and adult education,
9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Sunday fellowship/coffee times:
8:00, 9:30 and 10:30 a.m.; 12:00 Noon
(Various locations— check welcome monitor)

“Discover the Promises of God in the Psalms”

Adult Education Opportunity
Sunday, 9:45 a.m.

Pastor Kristen Jacobson will present the **first in a four-part Advent series**. The Psalms make up the “book of praises” within our Book of Faith. Within these poetic communal works are words of great promise—promises that lead us to know God and God’s peace, love and joy. Come and discover the hope of this season through the ancient words of the followers who have led us to faith and lead us to Christ. —**9:45 to 10:45 a.m. in the Community Room**

The Coming Week

Central Meetings, Events and Community Service

CONSULT MONITOR OR OFFICE FOR LOCATIONS

Monday, November 29

Community Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Clothes Closet Opens, 11:00 a.m.
Community Meal, 11:30 a.m.
Women’s Bible Study, 12:00 Noon

Tuesday, November 30

General Staff Meeting, 10:15 a.m.
Community Outreach Team, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 1

Clothes Closet Opens, 10:00 a.m.
OWLS Planning Team, 1:00 p.m.
Silver Bells Rehearsal, 2:30 p.m.
C3 Ministry Team, 5:30 p.m.
Bell Choir Rehearsal, 6:00 p.m.
Central Choir Rehearsal, 7:15 p.m.

Thursday, December 2

Open AA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Nursing Center Women’s Group, 10:30 a.m.
Clothes Closet Opens, 1:00 p.m.
Central Choristers, 5:15 p.m.
Shared Ministry Team, 5:30 p.m.

Augsburg College Advent Vespers

December 3 and 4 (five services)

For the 31st year, Central hosts Advent Vespers presented by Augsburg College—a marvelous way to usher in the Advent and Christmas seasons with magnificent music and liturgy. Five performances on December 3 and 4 will bring 10,000 persons to Central. Seating envelopes are available by calling 612-330-1444 or by visiting www.augsburg.edu/vespers. *Note: Some services are sold out. Check the Augsburg website for current information.*

Next Weekend

Saturday, December 3
Children’s Education Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
Coalition for Grief Support, 9:30 a.m.

Men’s Fellowship Breakfast

Saturday, December 4

Central’s Men’s Fellowship will hear about “Four Approaches to Reading the Bible” from Dr. Diane Shallue, director of Christian education at University Lutheran Church of Hope in Minneapolis. Do you ever wonder why it’s hard to “get anything out of the Bible?” Shallue, with a doctorate in educational leadership, will introduce us to four different approaches. Breakfast is served at 8:00 a.m.—for \$6.00; no reservations necessary. All Central men of all ages are welcome!

He Qi posters for sale

Sunday, December 5

Central’s Fine Art Ministry Team will selling signed posters of prints by the famed religious artist in Fellowship Hall between services—perfect for Christmas gifts!

NOTE: There is no Saturday evening worship because of Augsburg College Advent Vespers.

Sunday Worship — 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Children, youth and adult education,
9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Looking Ahead

OWLS Christmas Luncheon

December 8, 12:00 Noon

Join Central’s Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors (OWLS) for the annual Christmas Luncheon and Program on Wednesday, December 8 in Fellowship Hall. The Minneapolis-based women’s choral group “Barrissima” will perform as will Central’s “Silver Bells,” directed by Jane Lien. Cost: \$12.00. Tickets on sale November 28 at the OWLS Table following both worship services.

OWLS to Visit Plymouth Playhouse

Thursday, January 13

Join Central’s Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors (OWLS) for a performance of “Away in the Basement—A Church Basement Ladies Christmas” at the Plymouth Playhouse. Cost: \$34.00, includes buffet lunch. Learn more and make reservations at the OWLS Table on Sundays December 5, 12 and 19.

A Different Kind of Book Club

Thursday, January 13

This new book club continues on Thursday, January 13 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Charles P. Lutz, who with Robert O. Smith authored *Christians and a Land Called Holy: How We Can Foster Justice, Peace and Hope*, will be present as our study of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict continues. The book, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, by Thomas Friedman will be discussed. For more information contact Joyce Anderson (952-440-4928), Judy Erdman (651-488-8442) or Eve Overby (612-822-3543).

Youth and Family Ministry Happenings

High School Youth: “Stepping Up on Sundays”

9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Enjoy donuts and juice with Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer and then head to the Restoration Center with Rolf to live out your faith in service to others: research job openings, sort clothing, prepare the Clothes Closet for the week to come. Enjoy a time in the Bible, in service and in fellowship every Sunday!

High School Youth: Urban Immersion Service Weekend

December 10 to 12

Come and serve in the Twin Cities with your friends. This is a weekend of service and faith-forming experiences. *Reserve your place with Greer by Sunday, December 5.*

Children’s Christmas Pageant and Family Dinner

“Camels’ Tales”

Sunday, December 19, 4:00 p.m.

It’s the story of Jesus’ birth as told from the perspective of the Wise Men’s camels—a comical tale about the adventure the Magi have following the star to the stable. Directed, staged and costumed by Sara Gunch. Original music composed and lead by Simon Husbands. Script from Augsburg Fortress “SPARK” rotation curriculum, adapted by Greer Cherney. Whether you have children or not, please come and support Central’s children!

The pageant is followed by the annual Family Christmas Dinner at 5:00. Everyone is welcome to enjoy this festive meal together. Free tickets for the dinner are available at the Church Office until December 19.

Clothes Closet Needs Winter Clothes!

The Clothes Closet, one of Central’s Restoration Center ministries, is in need of donations of winter clothing of all kinds—coats, gloves, hats, scarves and more. Donations may be delivered to South Commons during normal business hours.