



The Spirit of Central

News about the mission of Central Lutheran Church
Downtown Minneapolis

March 5/6, 2011

Interfaith collaboration works to end homelessness 2010 accomplishments indicate mission of Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness is succeeding

"We work with the man holding a sign on the 11th exit ramp and we engage the governor of this state," said Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, describing the wide range of efforts and impact of Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH), a unique interfaith collaboration of 15 congregations, including Central—Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Universalist—working to end homelessness. Rolf, Central's Director of Community Ministries, currently serves as chair of the DCEH Steering Committee. His remarks were addressed to the senior clergy of the DCEH congregations who gathered on February 24 to review the accomplishments of the organization in 2010—accomplishments that indicate the mission of the collaboration is succeeding.

"We do this work of ending homelessness because we are people of faith," Rolf told the clergy. "It is the right thing to do morally and it is also the right thing to do economically. Serving our neighbors and housing people in need is about human dignity and it is about creating a healthier community all around."

"Our collaboration encourages, motivates and inspires! The fact that we have come together is something to celebrate and it is a testament to God at work in the world."

The 2010 DCEH Annual Report, which was distributed at the meeting, lists some amazing accomplishments by an organization that is just three years old. Chief among that is the Currie Avenue Partnership, an unprecedented collaboration between the downtown business community and the faith communities of DCEH. Within a month the partnership raised \$130,000. As of December 31, 2010, the case workers hired with those funds have moved 110 persons out of homeless shelters to permanent housing.

The Downtown Journal named the Currie Avenue Partnership as "one of the ten best things to happen in downtown Minneapolis in 2010!"

Other efforts and accomplishments were:

- A gubernatorial forum that drew over 350 people to Temple Israel to listen to eight candidates for governor address issues of housing, health care and jobs—issues which impact people experiencing homelessness.

- Two advocacy workshops were held during the 2010 legislative session—training members of DCEH congregations about how to do effective advocacy while working for justice. As of December there were over 850 advocates from DCEH congregations in the organizations "Advocacy Network."

- Two events gathered people from the community to discuss how to respond to panhandling and what will end it. The events drew over 500 people and received media coverage from WCCO Television, MinnPost, Minnesota Public Radio and Fox News.

- Over 50 members of DCEH congregations participated in "Day on the Hill," sponsored by the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, and met with legislators to discuss affordable housing, healthcare, jobs and more.

- A unique organizing model was piloted in Senate District 41. Two volunteer district leaders organized 16 advocates, who contacted their legislators a total of 43 times on the

issue of homelessness.

- And, in partnership with Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), an exhibit was created called "Scratching the Surface," featuring photos taken by MCTC students of the direct services provided by the congregations of DCEH, such as Central's Restoration Center.

"I love this cooperative venture with other faith communities who share a common passion for those un-housed in our city," said Pastor Rick Nelson. "It is a vital and massive undertaking. This effort together is an important expression of our deep desire and intent to live out our faith in loving activity—engaging hearts, minds, voices and wallets on behalf of those needing meaningful employment, affordable housing and medical care. I believe DCEH to be a movement that God will bless and multiply in reach and affect."

In the photo: Ann Oyen and Janet Krofta at the "Take Five Table" at Central on February 6—a monthly activity in all the DCEH congregations, providing information on issues facing the legislature.

in pictures

Snapshots of Our Life Together in Mission



Welcoming new volunteers

On Monday, February 28, Central's Community Ministries welcomed a new group of volunteers from the Equipment Leasing Division of Wells Fargo, recruited by Central Member Clarence Smith

(right) who masterfully cubed over 70 pounds of chicken for the day's tacos! Thank you Clarence and colleagues!



Confirmands on retreat

Members of Central's Confirmation class traveled to Camp Ononmia for one of their two yearly retreats last weekend. Pictured, from left, are Sam Jacobson, Daniel Peterson, Austin Stanley, Greer Cherney, Maggie West and Hannah Jacobson. Lucy Jacobson (front) just wanted to be in the photo with her brother and sister!



OWLS planning

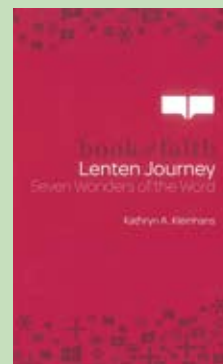
The planning team for Central's Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors (OWLS) met on March 2 with special guest Pastor Rick Nelson. Pictured clockwise from bottom center are: Karen Knox, Bob Ylvisaker, Judy Korogi, Pastor Chuck Anderson, Dorothy Sorbo, Lloyd Grinde, Millie Jung, June Engleson, Pastor Rick, Bob Jung, Muriel Dostal and Pramila Nelson.

Photos by Joe Bjordal

Daily Bible Readings

Monday, March 7 — Psalm 78:17-20,52-55; Exodus 33:7-23; Acts 7:30-34
Tuesday, March 8 — Psalm 78:17-20,52-55; 1 Kings 19:9-18; Romans 11:1-6
Wednesday, March 9 — Isaiah 58:1-12; 2 Corinthians 5:20b — 6:10; Matthew 6:1-21
Thursday, March 10 — Psalm 51; Jonah 3:1-10; Romans 1:1-7
Friday, March 11 — Psalm 51; Jonah 4:1-11; Romans 1:8-1
Saturday, March 12 — Psalm 51, Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 18:1-7
Sunday, March 13 — Genesis 2:15-17; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

Take a Lenten journey into God's word



Pastor Kristen Jacobson invites you to pick up a copy of the Book of Faith Lenten Journey, *Seven Wonders of the Word*, to use as a devotional during this season. She further encourages inviting a friend or two or more to meet weekly to

connect and to follow the "journey with others" suggestions in the book. Central will make space available between 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays to meet in small groups. People are also encouraged to meet in their homes or coffee shops. "Use this season to break out of the hibernation or isolation that often becomes our pattern in the cold months," said Pastor Kristen. — *The books are available for \$5.00 in Fellowship Hall this Sunday or at the Church Office.*



Gardening Corps Appeal underway

Central's Gardening Corps has launched an appeal to replace aging outdoor planters and add fountains and bird baths. Read about the appeal in a brochure available in the information racks or at the Church Office.

Seminary class to study Central

A group of students enrolled in a class called "Reading the Audiences" at Luther Seminary has decided to make Central Lutheran Church its "class project." A team of six students will visit Central over the coming weeks to interview members, study the congregation's finances and giving patterns, and dig into our history. The group will also observe Central's Community Ministries.

Central Lutheran Church

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EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA www.elca.org

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FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS NEWS@CENTRALMPLS.ORG

Building a firm foundation in the faith

Someone stopped Pastor Kristen Jacobson once and suggested that we are “raising a generation of biblically-illiterate youth because Central does not have a confirmation program.” The fact is that Central has a strong confirmation program; the class meets on Sunday mornings; 14 middle school youth are currently enrolled; and Pastor Kristen is the teacher! (That’s the reason you won’t find Pastor Kristen greeting worshippers after the 8:30 service or socializing at coffee hour. She has to hightail it to Room 228!) She says that teaching confirmation is one of the most important things she does as a pastor.

“The opportunity to study scripture with children is a true blessing and I would go so far to say that it may be my favorite part of ministry,” said Pastor Kristen. “I love and look forward to this hour of learning and discovering God’s promises with our young people. Each Sunday I have the great privilege of meeting with these eager students, who really want to learn about God’s grace and love for them in Christ.”

Central’s confirmation program—for students in grades 6, 7 and 8—spans three years. One year each is spent studying the Old Testament, the New Testament and catechism. A curriculum called *Here We Stand*, published by Augsburg Fortress is used. In addition to the weekly classes, the program involves two retreats in the fall and spring. The trips are provided free of charge to the students thanks to generous support from the congregation and the Central Lutheran Church Foundation.

Each spring the 8th graders in the program are confirmed. Three students will be confirmed on May 29 this year. After completion of the confirmation program, the youth move into a different Sunday morning learning experience led by Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, centered around service in the Restoration Center.

Greer Cherney, Central’s Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator, said the confirmation program allows our youth to learn about our Lutheran faith at a formative time in their lives, “teaching the faith of our fathers in the language of our children.”

“With this education our youth will be equipped to live out their faith, basing their lives on a firm foundation,” said Greer. “Allowing youth to learn at this age welcomes them into a faith practice that will be life long.”

Pastor Kristen said the confirmation students “enjoy flipping through their Bibles and when we open scripture together they open their hearts and minds, sharing questions, ideas and hope.”

“Most importantly they come to class with hope—hope for their lives, their faith, their families and hope for what it means to be the church.”

Lenten Bible study to focus on human suffering

Pastor Rick Nelson will lead a six-week Bible study series during Lent called “Where is God in My Suffering?” The series—a look at biblical responses to the basic questions asked regarding human suffering—begins Sunday, March 13 at 10:00 a.m. in the Community Room. Weekly topics include “Do I Deserve This?,” “My God, Have You Abandoned Me?,” “Can Anything Good Come from This?,” and others.

The series is part of Central’s participation in the Book of Faith Initiative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In a September article announcing the initiative, Pastor Rick explained the importance of scripture in the life of Israel, known as “the people of the book,” and how helping children of the next generation learn this book was the greatest task and highest calling of everyone in that family of faith.

“With some significant additions, and the life, ministry, and salvation activity of “the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jesus), this book has now become ours,” said Pastor Rick. “Now, we are the stewards, its rabbis, prophets, teachers and hearers. We don’t worship the book, but we believe the book holds the Christ—points to Jesus—as Luther said, much like a cradle that holds the baby. Therefore, might it not be important for us to become acquainted with this Book of Faith? Might it not be vital to our calling, identity and partnership in God’s mission to the world to handle the book, learn from it, view life through its lens, and become familiar with what it says?”

“Since we remain a “People of the Book,” these opportunities are things you should be participating in!”

Youth and Family Ministry Happenings

No classes for High School or children (age 3 to grade 5) Sunday, March 6. Confirmation class meets as usual at 9:45 am.

NORMAL SCHEDULE RESUMES NEXT WEEK

Ash Wednesday, March 9

Families are invited for a family-friendly dinner at 6:15 p.m. in Room 222. Receive a Family Lent Devotional Packet to use at home during this season. At 7:00 head to worship to hear Pastor Kristen preach and receive the mark of ashes on your forehead.

RSVP with Greer by Tuesday, March 8 for the dinner.

Mission Trip Training Session #1 Sunday, March 13, 12:15 to 1:15 p.m.

If you have committed to participate in this summer’s high school mission trip to Montana, please mark your calendar.

Gather in the Youth Room following worship for lunch. Youth will prepare for the trip, build relationships and learn together. It is important you attend as we begin this journey together.

Communion Class

All Ages Welcome

Saturday, April 2

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Pastor Kristen will lead you in faithful learning about Holy Communion. Children will practice in the sanctuary and go “behind the scenes” in the sacristy to learn how communion works. Lunch will be served. All are welcome to take this as a First Communion Class or as a refresher course. *RSVP: Greer Cherney at gcherney@centralmpls.org or 612-767-9206.*

Each weekend during this “Year of Water,” the C3 Team is offering a brief bit of information or tip about water.

Producing the average North American or Western European diet requires about 1,320 gallons of water per day. By comparison, producing the more vegetable-based diet of Africa and Asia requires between 475 and 870 gallons per day.

—Source: *Earth’s Water Crisis* by Rob Bowden

This Weekend

Saturday Worship — 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Worship — 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

NOTE: There will be no children's or youth education classes on Sunday, March 6. Confirmation class will be held.

**Book of Faith Forum
 Sunday, March 6**

Central's Book of Faith Initiative welcomes the Rev. Dr. Karoline Lewis, assistant professor of biblical preaching at Luther Seminary. Her presentation is titled "Bible Basics: What is It, Why We don't Read It and Why We Should." The forum is part of Central's participation in the Book of Faith Initiative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. —9:45 a.m. in Room 222

**Global Mission Forum
 Sunday, March 6**

The work of Global Health Ministries will be presented by Scott Lien, director of operations, who has recently returned from Tanzania and Ethiopia. He will give an update on the accomplishments and needs he has witnessed. Global Health Ministries ships sea containers packed with medical equipment and supplies from its Fridley warehouse to hospitals and clinics on several continents. —9:45 a.m. in the Community Room

**The Art of James Quentin Young
 Now on Exhibit in the
 South Commons Gallery**

The Fine Art Ministry Team is proud to present an extraordinary exhibit for Lent: 40 crosses created from recycled material by James Quentin Young. Mr. Young creates his art from old wood, metal, and found objects. He has been an early advocate for recycling and renovating discarded items. His skill in restoring furniture, his study of jewelry making, and an MFA in painting are combined to create beautiful and provocative works of art. They may tell a biblical story or simply be unique artworks in which the viewer recognizes bits and pieces from his own past. He demonstrates his Christian faith with the cross as the primary symbol of his work. Using discarded and broken items, the art portrays Christ's acceptance of our flawed and rejected lives and the transformation through His death and resurrection.

The Coming Week

**Central Meetings, Events
 and Community Service**

Monday, March 7
 Campus Master Plan Task Force, 7:30 a.m.
 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
 Men's Bible Study, 12:00 Noon
Tuesday, March 8
 General Staff Meeting, 10:15 a.m.
 Heading Home Central Team, 6:00 p.m.
 Nominating Committee, 6:15 p.m.

**Celebrate Your Birthday Sunday
 March 13**

Persons with birthdays in March and April are invited to bring treats and celebrate with your Central family during coffee hour in Fellowship Hall beginning at 9:45 a.m. For more information contact Patti Brestrup at 952-893-1557 or Karen Knox at 612-767-9211.

**Lenten Bible Study
 Begins Sunday, March 13**

Pastor Rick Nelson will lead a six-week Bible Study for Lent called "Where is God in My Suffering"—a look at biblical responses to the basic questions asked regarding human suffering. (See more information on page three.) —9:45 in the Community Room

Looking Ahead

**A Different Kind of Book Club
 Thursday, March 10**

A Different Kind of Book Club will be studying China in the next meeting. Arne Sovik, who grew up with missionary parents in China, will lead a discussion of the book *Country Driving: A Journey Through China from Farm to Factory* by Peter Hessler. For more information, call Judy Erdman at 651-488-8442. —2:00 to 3:30 p.m. in Fireside Lounge

**OWLS Book Talk
 Thursday, March 14**

Join Central's Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors for a special presentation by Dr. Odell Bjerkness, who will discuss his book, *The Prince and the Nanny*, based on a journal kept by his aunt, who was the nanny to the current King of Norway. —1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall; Cost: \$7.00 (includes speaker and refreshments); Sign up at the OWLS Table between services or after the 11:00 service

**"Living Deeply in the Faith"
 A Half-Day Retreat
 Saturday, March 26**

Dr. Brad Holt from Augsburg College will present a retreat on prayer—an inspirational time to be spiritually nourished and to deepen your prayer life. The retreat is presented by the Prayer Ministry Team. All are welcome! —8:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon in Fellowship Hall

**OWLS to see "Jesus Christ Superstar"
 Saturday, April 16**

Join Central's Older Wiser Lutheran Seniors for a trip to the Chanhassen Dinner Theater to see a performance of "Jesus Christ Superstar." Cost: \$30 (includes lunch and play). Motorcoach leaves Central at 10:30 a.m. and returns by 5:00 p.m. —Reservations taken Sundays, March 6, 13 and 20; One guest per person; Payment required at time of sign up.

Wednesday, March 9
 Heritage Ministry Team, 9:00 a.m.
 Clothes Closet opens, 10:00 a.m.
 Ash Wednesday Worship, 12:00 Noon
 Ash Wednesday Family Night, 6:00 p.m.
 Ash Wednesday Worship, 7:00 p.m.
 Central Choir Rehearsal, 8:00 p.m.
Thursday, March 10
 Fiscal and Property Committee, 7:00 a.m.
 Open AA Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
 Augsburg Nursing Women's Group, 10:30 a.m.
 Clothes Closet Opens, 1:00 p.m.
 Book Club, 2:00 p.m.
 Central Choristers, 5:15 p.m.

Next Weekend

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS
 SUNDAY, MARCH 13. SET YOUR CLOCKS
 FORWARD ONE HOUR!

Saturday Worship — 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Worship — 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.