

The Torch

Central Church of Christ

Dec. 20, 2016

www.centrallive.net

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STAFF

Dr. Rory Christensen,
Lead Minister

Tony Ross,
Creative Arts Minister

Jessica Pastirik,
Director of Involvement
Ministries

Chelsea Davis,
Children's Minister

Rico Diaz,
Director of Student
Ministries

Abby Carrow,
Christian Education Intern

SUNDAY WORSHIP

1st Worship:
8:15 a.m.

2nd Worship
& Bible classes:
9:30 a.m.

3rd Worship
& Bible classes:
11:00 a.m.

New Children's Minister and Directory of Student Ministries

We have exciting news to share with you!

On Sunday, November 27, it was announced that the elders have hired Rico Diaz as our new Student Minister. He has served serving for several years within our youth ministry, and made this transition on Monday, December 5.

The second part of this announcement was to officially welcome Chelsea Davis, who has served the past four months as our Interim Director of Children's Ministry, as our full-time Director of Children's Ministries, effective January 1, 2017.



Chelsea Davis
Children's Minister
children@centrallive.net

Chelsea has been attending Central since 2001 and joined the staff in July 2016. She is a 2010 graduate of Lincoln Christian University with a B.A. in Intercultural Studies with a focus in Children's Ministry. Chelsea has travelled the world doing cross-cultural ministry work and loves going on mission trips.



Rico Diaz
Director of Student Ministries
youth@centrallive.net

Rico joined the Central staff in December of 2016. He, and his family, has been involved at Central since they moved to Streator in 2012. Before moving to Streator, Rico lived in Colorado Springs, Colorado where he and his wife, Ashley, were on staff with Every Home for Christ (EHC). Rico and Ashley's vision is to see students who are confident in their identity that is found in Jesus Christ alone. They are hopeful that God has big things in store for Streator! Rico and Ashley have 3 children, Reece, Graham and Glorie.

Results from the Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting was held after each of the services on Sunday December 11, 2016 with board chairman Todd Galyen presiding. The two items on the agenda were:

- Election of Elders/Deacons/Trustee
- Approval of the 2017 Budget

The entire slate of Elders/Deacons/Trustees and the 2017 Budget were approved by majority vote. Our Elders are Jim Blalock, Jim Bressner, Troy Dimmig, Larry Evans, Todd Galyen, Tom Hallam, and George Smith, Jr. Our Deacons are Brad Austin, Mike Benner, Charles Bivens, Bob Brown, Jim Cox, Lyle Follmer, Erik Gallick, Vince Magana, Kevin Missel, Mike Pastirik, Glen Peters, Joe Skaff. Our Trustees are Jim Blalock, Tom Hallam, Larry Evans and Jim Bressner.

Fellow Co-workers,

Dr. Rory Christensen

You know how it goes. The new year begins, and we start to focus on taking on the upcoming months in an intentional way. And, you know why we do that: we all want our lives to be progressing and not regressing. This is true of our family and relationships, our health, our finances and financial freedom, our journey of faith. No matter the area, one concern remains constant: progressing, not regressing. We want to take ground and not give ground. We want to move beyond and not stay behind. Progressing.

The same is true of our ministry at Central. In this new year we want to be progressing and not regressing here as well. We want to expand our ministry and take ground for the Kingdom. We want to reach lives with the truth of the gospel. And, like we do in our individual lives, we have several means for ensuring that we move in that purposeful direction (remember: we're about progressing and not regressing). I want to share a couple weeks now. The first means we have for moving forward any purposeful direction is this year's theme, the thing that shapes our weekend services throughout the year. For this year's thing, we are borrowing a word or two from Northpoint Ministries and going with "Brand: New." We will use this theme to focus our conversation around the new life that Christ brings (cf. 2 Cor 5:17), a life of complete forgiveness, living hope, intentional growth, enthusiastic service, and clear mission. Get excited about this one! It should be great!

The second means we have for ensuring that we move forward in a purposeful direction is targeted communication. I've talked about this with you before, so I'll be brief about what we're doing. Beginning with this issue, The Torch is becoming our quarterly church publication, one that we're gearing for the members of our church (and those who are heavily involved with our ministry!). It will be heavy on communication concerning upcoming events, and will feature targeted articles by our ministry leaders. You should be able to check The Torch, and get up to speed on what's happening in the next quarter and beyond. Alongside it will run Central News, our weekly e-blast concerning what's happening at the church. This one is geared internally as well, and should keep us focused on areas of celebration, concern, and communication while we are in the thick of ministry. Given the fact that communication is essential for healthy ministry to thrive, we're praying that God blesses this direction, and we're hoping that you join us in it.

As we kicked the new year off, my prayer is that we witness and experience solid progression, in our individual lives and in our ministry. May God bless you richly as you move in this direction!

Be bold. Stay faithful.

Rory



You CAN take control of your money!

When it comes to managing money, this class will teach you how to:

Become Debt Free

Pay off your credit cards, car loans, mortgage, and student loans.

Prepare for the Future

Save for financial emergencies and confidently plan for retirement.

Get on a Plan Together

Create a budget that actually works for you AND your spouse.

This life-changing class starts Thursday, January 12, 2017 in the Upper Room of the Ministry Center. The class is taught by Dave Ramsey and the FPU teaching team on video and coordinated by **Kyle Decker** at **Central Church of Christ** in **Streator, IL** will help you achieve your financial goals by showing you how to eliminate debt, save for the future, and give like never before. You will be challenged and motivated to make a plan for your money and change your family tree forever. \$93 covers cost of materials. For more information, contact Kyle Decker 815-979-9285. You can register at the Involvement Desk between Sunday services or by clicking on the Financial Peace Sign-Up Link on our website www.centrallive.net



Thank You Note

My family and I, at the loss of husband, Dad and Grandpa, would like to thank everyone who sent many cards, memorials, flowers, gave hugs, words of love and encouragement, many prayers, and phone calls. And even with Bethlehem Walk being set up, the kitchen ladies still overwhelmed us with the wonderful meal they served us. I love you all so much. God bless you all.

-Patsy Krocker

-Rob Krocker and family

-Amber Dummitt and family

Connect in 2017

Interested in learning more about getting connected to Central? We have numerous opportunities for you.

If you are new to Central join us for **starting point**— a time for lunch and conversation after the third service on:

- *Sunday, January 15
- *Sunday, February 26
- *Sunday, March 26

If you want a better understanding of who we believe God has called Central Church of Christ to be as a church join us for a two-step experience:

firststep— January 22, 2017 in the Upper Room of the Ministry Center at 5p.m.
secondstep— January 29, 2017 in the Fellowship Hall at 4:45p.m.

RSVP to Jessica by calling 815-673-1581 or by emailing involvement@centrallive.net

If you want to be intentional about growing in Christ in 2017, what better time to join a small group? Contact Jessica Pastirik (involvement@centrallive.net) or Abby Carrow (acarrow@centrallive.net) about how you can find the right group for you. Small groups provide both discipling, care and encouragement as we grow closer to God and with one another.



The Bethel Series is a carefully planned adult Bible study program that offers a unique approach to the Scriptures. If you are looking to expand your knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, you will be led into a disciplined study in such a way that you grow in understanding of the meaning and mission of the church in today's world. This class, led by Jim Allen and Jane Cavanaugh, will meet on Sunday mornings at 11:00 am in the Chapel starting January 8.

*We are excited to share and equip with this great growth resource.
 It's our gift to you . . .*

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 GIGANTIC.**

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If you haven't already received an invitation through your email, please email Jessica Pastirik at involvement@centrallive.net.



Winter Euchre Tournament

(Sign-up at the Involvement Desk starting January 8, 2017)

January 27, 2017

February 24, 2017

March 24, 2017

*Must sign up as a team of two.

*Please bring a snack to share.

*We need to start at 6:00 p.m., so please arrive early.

See Bob Snedden or Jessica Pastirik for more details.



Rico Diaz,

Director of Student Ministries

Central Youth exists for the community of young people in the LaSalle/Livingston County area. We are a community who looks up to God and encourage by God to look out and to be the change we wish to see in our neighborhoods, schools and churches. Central Youth is a Student Ministry of Central Church of Christ. We are calling a generation of young people to be captivated by a Great God! Our desire is to cultivate a community of young people who push each other to an authentic fascination with Jesus. We make disciples who make disciples. We will equip our students to become leaders in their schools, churches, and communities.

Weekly Events:

Tuesday Night Hoops – Every Tuesday 7pm-8:45pm

Wednesday Morning Prayer (Streator High School) – Last Wednesday of the Month

Sunday School Classes – 9:15am

Sunday Night Youth Group – Every Sunday Starting January 8 6pm-8pm

Special Events:

Valentine's Day Dinner Fundraiser – February 10 5pm & 7pm

WinterJam in Peoria IL – February 12 Doors open at 5pm

Rock River Christian Camp Encampment Retreat (High School) – February 24-25

CIY Believe (Jr. High) in Springfield IL – March 4-5

Communications

Thomas Emerson, Technical Director

Over the last few months the team and I have been making some changes in technology around our facility. We have received equipment by donation from multiple vendors and we have been implementing them to improve our network stability in the building. Because of these upgrades the internet connectivity throughout our facility is much more stable. With these improvements we will be able to allow our guests to connect conveniently to the internet and other resources.

Beginning in 2017, Central will be extending an invitation to our new online software Church Community Builder! This software will provide members with countless tools and communication opportunities and it will also allow our team to connect with everyone easier than ever before! As you log into the CCB website, you are immediately able to connect to your small group, view your giving history and find places to serve in a safe and secure environment.

We look forward to launching this software to everyone early this new year!

Evangelize. Equip. Empower. Encourage.

Partnering with Haitian Christians to transform a culture for Christ.



Summer 2017, Central will be sending a short term mission team to work alongside Haitian Christian Outreach. Several fundraisers are planned over the coming months. Mark your calendars for the following dates:

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17 FROM 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. PIZZA HUT FUNDRAISER

Come let the team wait on you as you enjoy a delicious pizza buffet at Pizza Hut in Streator.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 5:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.- VALENTINE DAY DINNER

This dinner event is a joint venture between the mission team and the youth group. A delicious three course meal will be enjoyed by you and your loved one. (Larger tables are also available for small groups or Sunday School classes wanting to attend together.) Proceeds are shared between both the youth and mission trips. Sign-Ups and meal selection will be available mid-January at the Involvement Desk in the foyer.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 7:00 p.m. TRIVIA NIGHT AT CCC

Enjoy a night of trivia, laughter, and fellowship. This event is held in the fellowship hall. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Trivia starts promptly at 7:00 p.m.

We will be having snacks and a silent auction.

Childcare available with advance notice.

Please be praying for the following members (as of 12/19/16) of this short term mission team as they prepare: Ellie Eccleston, Jessica Pastirik, Dave Lawless, Heather Smith, Mike, Leanne, Mollie and Madison Benner, Dan Bieck and Janelle Hackathorn.

Sunday Check List

Tony Ross, Creative Arts Minister

Preparation. We live in a world where we prepare for things. When we go on a trip we make lists and check them twice. We make sure we have our plans in place, know where we're staying, have all our clothes ready with clean socks and underwear. When we are in school we study and prepare for tests and quizzes and final exams. At least, we should... When young lovebirds decide to get married the bride to be generally whips out the binder that she's had since she was twelve years old that is filled with the dreams and aspirations that will be her wedding day. We prepare. We prepare for everything. We need to be putting the same type of preparation into our Sunday morning gatherings. Although it's a good thing to have clean socks and underwear when attending church, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about preparing our hearts and mind to worship God the Father in a corporate setting. I'm talking about being able to walk in the doors of the church, take a deep breath from the week and focus on what God wants from you as you worship and what God is going to teach you about His character and desire for you. Here are three easy steps you can take to begin to prepare yourself for worship on Sunday.

"Ask God to open up your mind and heart to what His desires are for you. You have no idea what you will hear in the music, sermon or conversations that might be the thing you needed to bring clarity to a situation you're in."

1. Read your Bible throughout the week. It may seem like a Sunday school answer, but reading your Bible is important. We can't know God's heart without being in his word. Jesus' words in Matthew 4:4 are true, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" The Bible is God's words to us. If we're going to know Him more, we have to be reading His words to us.

2. People. People are the most important people in your life. You read that right. In a society that seems to be getting more and more divisive as we move along, I've found that if you treat another living beings with respect and treat them like a person, they will respect you back, regardless of your beliefs. I'm not here to change people, that is up to God. What I am here to do is live a life that is pleasing to Him so that others can see what it means to be a follower of Christ. I'm not always good at it, but I try. Our connection to the body of Christ is so important. The words of 1 Corinthians 12:27 are true when it says, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it." Don't discount the impact you have just by showing up on a Sunday morning. You have no idea the effect you may have on someone just by saying hello. You most certainly don't know how someone may effect you in a profound way. Don't miss our Sunday morning gatherings. It's more than just living through one more service. It's about being with the body of Christ.

3. Last, but not least, spend time in prayer. Ask God to open up your mind and heart to what His desires are for you. You have no idea what you will hear in the music, sermon or conversations that might be the thing you needed to bring clarity to a situation you're in. Prayer is something very personal and is good for us. When the church came into existence in the book of Acts, they established four things that were of the utmost importance. In Acts 2:42 it says they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. I don't think prayer is listed last because it is the least important. I think it is listed last because it is the thing that holds the rest together. You'll be surprised the answers you get when you start praying for God to work inside you. And although I put prayer last on this list, I believe it is the most important cog in this wheel. When you take that out, everything else crumbles.

So, in short, prepare yourself every week for our Sunday morning gatherings. When we do that, there really is no limit to what God can and will do in us and through us.



Chelsea Davis
Children's Minister
 Email: children@centrallive.net



Kid Central

January—March 2017

Happy New Year

As we look forward to the New Year, I am filled with excitement to see what God is going to do through you and this ministry! Our ministry partners love children and go above and beyond every week to show them how much God loves them and cares for them! We have about 40 hours as a ministry team this year to make an impact on children for the kingdom, let's make every second count!

Vision

Our vision at Kid Central is to connect children to God and others in a safe, fun, and high-energy environment. We want children to connect to God spiritually and fall madly in love with Jesus! Also, we know it is important for every child to have a friend so we want them to connect to other people who will continue to point them towards God.

Upcoming Events

January

13—Family Movie Night
 Featuring: "Finding Dori",
 rated 5 out of 5 by Focus on
 the Family.

February

12—Last day to register for
 SUPERSTART, \$90 per child

March

10 to 11—SUPERSTART in
 Bloomington, IL
 31—Last day for the Extra
 Early Bird Registration for
 Rock River Christian Camp

Awana—Every Wednesday night
 from 6:15 to 8:00 p.m.



Kids in Kid Central



THE TORCH

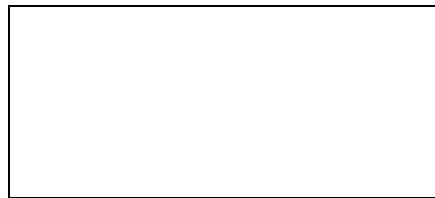
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Baptized

Payton Henson
Misti Heilman
Hannah Peters
Joseph Vickers
Laney Hunter
Emily Roberts



Statistics for Oct. 23, 2016

1st Worship 76
2nd Worship 224
3rd Worship 127 Total 427
Bible Classes 166

Statistics for Nov. 27, 2016

1st Worship 88
2nd Worship 257
3rd Worship 128 Total 473
Bible Classes 167

Transferred

Jeff and Ginger Walter

Statistics for Oct. 30, 2016

1st Worship 81
2nd Worship 231
3rd Worship 139 Total 451
Bible Classes 184

Statistics for Dec. 4, 2016

Woodland High School
Service Total 399

Offerings

E Giving

Since April 2016 23 Givers



Offerings needed to meet Budget-Y-T-D
for 2016:

\$635,150

Offerings given to-date:

\$649,412

Financial Statement available at the
Information Kiosk or the Church Office

Statistics for Nov. 6, 2016

1st Worship 97
2nd Worship 248
3rd Worship 127 Total 472
Bible Classes 192

Statistics for Dec. 11, 2016

1st Worship 69
2nd Worship 212
3rd Worship 106 Total 387
Bible Classes 158

Statistics for Nov. 13, 2016

1st Worship 91
2nd Worship 258
3rd Worship 135 Total 484
Bible Classes 174

Statistics for Dec. 18, 2016

1st Worship 70
2nd Worship 184
3rd Worship 76 Total 330
Bible Classes 153