

the TORCH

February 20, 2017

Central Church of Christ

www.centrollive.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.

Father/Daughter Sock Hop

All Jr. High and High School girls are invited to join us with your Dads to a 1950's evening of food, games, stories and dancing. We are bringing out the poodle skirts, letterman jackets and LP records!

Our goal is that you come away from this event with a renewed connection with your father/daughter, encouraged with great ideas to having a Godly relationship, and a positive memory that will last a lifetime.

Sign ups will be in the foyer at the Involvement Desk with April Christensen on March 12, 19 and 26. See you there!



Saturday, April 1, 2017

5:30-8:00 pm

Fellowship Hall @ Central

\$6.00 per person

Winter Euchre Tournament

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.



The Haiti Mission Team

is having their next fundraiser on March 18, right here at Central.

Doors open at 6:00

p.m. when you can grab a snack and start bidding on the silent auction items. Trivia will begin at 7:00 p.m. for teams of up to 10 people. Don't miss this fun night and a chance to support missions!

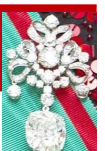


The Women's Ministry will be hosting "A Special-Tea Party"

on Sunday, April 9 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. This event is for girls and ladies of every age--so bring your daughter, mother, granddaughter or grandmother! We are excited for this multigenerational fellowship and simply ask that you sign up at the Involvement Desk in the church foyer.

Christian Women's Conference — "Royal Treasures"

Lincoln Christian University's Christian Women's Conference is set for Wednesday, April 26 at their campus. Featured speakers include Liz Curtis Higgs, author of more than 30 books, and talk radio host, national speaker, and author Susie Larson. Both women come with a passion to see women everywhere strengthened in their faith and awakened to the depth of God's Love and the height of their calling in Christ Jesus. There is more information for this posted on the Information Kiosk in the foyer and then sign up at the Involvement Center.



Fellow Co-workers,

Dr. Rory Christensen

God's really been speaking Acts 18:9-10 over me lately, and I wanted to give it to you. It's one of those good passages, where you have to go 5+ chapters on either side to get other "red-lettered" words of Jesus. But, in this spot God shows up with clarity. Get the context, and Paul is skirting the Aegean Sea on his second missionary/church planting journey. He's experienced disagreement, imprisonment, abuse, encouragement, distress, debate, rejection, success, conversions, positive response, derision (Acts 15:36-18). He hit Corinth and continued his pattern of going to the Jews first. They reject him. But, he doesn't let that stop him. He just moves to the Gentiles (his habit; cf. Acts 13:46-47). He has some success on that front, many believe and are baptized, including Crispus (a synagogue ruler) and his household.

And then it comes. At the point where Paul has come to expect persecution (tensions heating following his success), instead comes this dramatic, mysterious charge and reminder from God: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10). Red letters in a sea of black. A reminder from God intended to turn the tide of opposition and fuel him for the future. Acts 18:9-10. An overwhelming sense of the presence of God, and a dramatic reminder of the provision of God. "I am with you." And, because God is with him, he doesn't have to be afraid, but can live and follow Jesus with confidence and courage. "I am with you." Four words that change so much. God Exalted, Sovereign, Holy, Almighty, Eternal, Immovable, Unshakable, All-Powerful, Far Transcendent and Near Transcendent . . . God . . . is . . . with . . . him. Fact. Now for the feeling-wrapped-around -another-fact. "I have many people in this city." Paul has a support base that he may know nothing about. Just because they aren't vocal, present or persistent, it doesn't mean that they aren't there, that they aren't "on Paul's team" or "in Paul's corner," struggling with him to advance the gospel, supporting him, praying for him, expecting with him for God to do dramatic things!

With that understanding, the circle is complete. God is with Paul. And, God is surrounding Paul. With a few red letters, God brings the fact of his presence to overcome fear and uncertainty. God brings in the feeling of companionship, the fact that He has more people than even Paul knows about, standing with Paul, a fact that gives him courage to stay the course. Encouraging. You bet. For us too? Good question. It's easy for us to let life get to us, and mess with us on a deep level (and I do mean deep!). It's easy to let negative voices get to us (especially if they are persistent and familiar and passionate). If it takes 5 positives to counter 1 negative, I often times think we're in for it! But, maybe in the midst of it, this vision of the Lord shows up, a few red letters come through. You know how it goes. It's the presence of God, the voice of God: "I am with you; I have people [supporting you] that you may not be aware of." Because that's the case, "Be strong and courageous (Josh 1:9). Be strong. Be. Be still and know that I am God (Ps 46:10). Be still and know. Be still. Be."

Be bold. Stay faithful. Be.

Rory



Central's College Scholarship Application Deadline is April 1

Central's College Scholarship applicants need to pick up an application in the Church Office, from the kiosk and return it to the office, completed by April 1, 2017 to be considered for the Fall 2017 college semester.



Mission Possible is a favorite event around here; and we want this year to be bigger than ever. So we're turning it into all week event--with 3 days of prayer followed by two days of service! So mark your calendars for Mission Possible 2017:

April 25-29.

Central Youth

Rico Diaz, Director of Student Ministries

Central Students had a great February! We had our annual Big Party for the Big Game (Super Bowl). We had over 75 people show up to this event! It was more than we expected, but that is a problem I don't mind having. I know we had a handful of brand new students say that they'd be interested in coming to theGathering since they got a feel for how we do things.

We also had two other big events in February, WinterJam and Rock River's Encampment Retreat for high schoolers. Both events were a major success. We had such amazing seats for WinterJam, and for the first time in many years we all got seats together! Encampment was a lot of fun and also helped our students grow in their walk with Jesus.

In March we are participating in CIY Believe for junior highers on March 3 and 4. Then in April we will have a Movie Night fundraiser for our high school students who will be going to CIY Move this summer. The movie night will be on **Friday, April 7** at 6:00 p.m.



WinterJam is an annual music tour featuring Christian rock, Christian rap, and contemporary Christian music bands, stunt and/or comedy performances, and a speaker.



Chelsea Davis, Children's Minister

New name, same mission. At Central Church of Christ we have Central Teams, Central Groups, Central Students, Central News, and now.....Central Kids! So why the name change? The name change is a natural progression for our children's ministry. We want to align the children's ministry with the rest of the church and put Central in front of kids, keeping Christ at the center of everything we say and do. Central Kids is our new name, but our mission stays the same. We want to connect children to God and others in a safe, fun, and high-energy environment.

This past week I had the privilege to talk to a few families about baptism, it's so exciting to see God working in the hearts of children and their parents. Three new volunteers have also joined our team this past month! God is good!



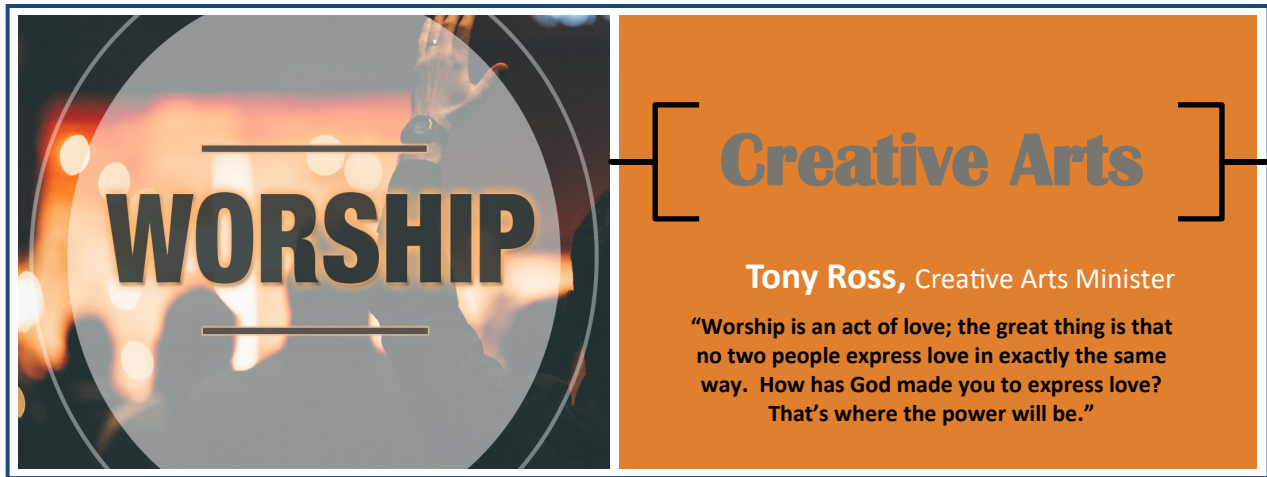
**Central Kids Vacation Bible School
for ages 4-years-old through 8th grade right here
9:00 a.m. to noon!**

It is time to think of SUMMER at Rock River Christian Camp

To get the best deals for camp, make sure you register early! There are camp booklets in the foyer by the camp display. Each booklet includes a schedule, a description of each camp offered, the camp rules and a registration form.

Central is offering a Super Early Bird Special of a \$10 discount for those registered before March 31. This is in addition to the Early Bird Discount of \$20 being offered by Rock River Christian Camp for registering before May 1, 2017. The camp has other discounts available as well and they are explained in the camp booklets.

Camp is a wonderful experience for kids as they meet new kids, have an unplugged week learning about God and His Word, plus all the other camp stuff, such as campfires, games, swimming, crafts, hikes, zip line, and tons of fun.



Creative Arts

Tony Ross, Creative Arts Minister

“Worship is an act of love; the great thing is that no two people express love in exactly the same way. How has God made you to express love? That’s where the power will be.”

I was reminded of a quote from a prominent worship music writer and leader, Brian Doerksen. He said this in the book *Heart of Worship Files*,

“Worship is an act of love; the great thing is that no two people express love in exactly the same way. How has God made you to express love? That’s where the power will be.”

How often have we thought about worship as an act of love? How often have we thought about *how* we express that love to our Creator? I have a unique perspective every Sunday in that I get to look out at the congregation and see acts of worship. Some people raise their hands, some people sing along, some people just stand there and look bored while others tap their feet or fingers to the beat. Which one of these is the right way to do it? Yes. The answer is yes. We cannot judge people based upon the way they express themselves in worship. The way each individual expresses themselves is as unique as each individual. What is far more important is the heart behind the act. The person behind the act. I’ve seen people that seemingly looked like sitting in a service is the last thing they’d want to be doing but, in talking with them, I found that they were struggling personally. Of course these conversations had to be deeper than a, “Hey, how you doing?” conversation.

I encourage you to get out of your comfort zone a bit in our worship services. Raise your hands, clap, sing out. You may find a gear that you never knew you had. I also encourage you to develop relationships with people and get to know the story behind the act. You never know what God is doing in the life of the people around you and what he has planned for you. I’ve seen some amazing wins over the past couple of months. I’ve seen people dealing with hardship and illnesses that seemed insurmountable. Through those things however, I’ve seen growth, dependence on God and a more focused faith. That’s what worship is. Our response to God as we grow, depend on Him and focus on what truly matters . . . saving people by showing them what worship is and who God is.

Involvement Ministries

Jessica Pastirik, Director of Involvement Ministries



A five-day/four-night relaxing, fun-filled retreat. Senior Saints held at Johnson University, Knoxville, TN, will refuel your soul, tickle your taste buds, and have you rolling on the floor laughing. The best part is you can enjoy all these things from May 22-26, 2017 and more for a price of \$250 (early bird). This price includes your room, meals, and entertainment (transportation will be calculated at a later date). To attend at this rate, please make your payment in the office by noon on March 10. Call Jessica Pastirik at 815-673-1581 with questions.

Spring Giveaway is coming!

Do you have more stuff than your house can hold? Even if not, sometimes it feels that way! If you’re ready for spring cleaning, we’re holding a giveaway on April 8. Drop off donations will be accepted Monday, April 3 through Thursday, April 6 from 9am-5pm or by appointment after hours. All donations from the giveaway will benefit the mission team to Haiti. **Please no clothing.*



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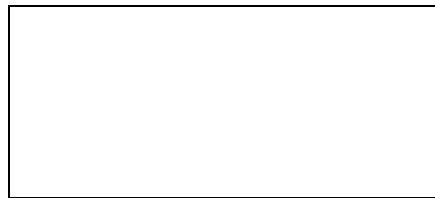
CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST
2001 E MAIN ST
STREATOR IL 61364
PHONE: (815) 673-1581

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

**US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO 296
STREATOR IL
61364**

Dated Material

Return Service Requested



Baptized

Rich Dutko
Sharon Dutko
Brian Emerson
Rachel Baker
Michaela Brazek



Our sympathy and prayers go out to:
Brad (Karen) Austin and family at the
loss of his step father, Richard Sipe who
passed away February 6, 2017.

Statistics for Jan. 29, 2017

1st Worship	84	
2nd Worship	257	
3rd Worship	121	Total 462
Bible Classes	174	

Statistics for Feb. 5, 2017

1st Worship	75	
2nd Worship	268	
3rd Worship	104	Total 447
Bible Classes	157	

Statistics for Feb. 12, 2017

1st Worship	75	
2nd Worship	280	
3rd Worship	103	Total 458
Bible Classes	174	

Statistics for Feb. 19, 2017

1st Worship	75	
2nd Worship	305	
3rd Worship	119	Total 499
Bible Classes	166	

Transferred

Greg and Marilyn Holl



Exercise Class for women

Exercise Class for women happens here
Mon. Tues. and Thurs. at 5:30 p.m., and
Wed. at 5:00 p.m. and Sat. at 8:00 a.m.
Doing the 21 day FIX video- class is ap-
prox. 40 minutes. If you have any ques-
tions please contact Dee Allen or the
Church Office (815) 673-1581.

Offerings

E Giving

Since April 2016 25 Givers



Offerings needed to meet Budget-Y-T-D
for 2017:

\$92,190

Offerings given to-date:

\$92,889

Financial Statement available at the
Information Kiosk or the Church Office