

# The Central Visitor



*A weekly visitor to your home bringing you news from Central Christian Church  
Our mission ... Sharing Christ,  
Changing Lives, Delivering Hope*

Vol. XCVIII

Decatur, Illinois, February 11, 2026

No. 3

## Millikin Opera Theater Fundraiser

Come support the Millikin Opera per Tutti student organization as they perform art songs, arias and opera scenes. The concert will be held at Central this Sunday, February 15 at 4 p.m. One of Central's choir interns, soprano Morgan Reckamp, will be among those performing. Proceeds will support the cost of the students' trip to the Lyric Opera of Chicago this Spring to see two professional operas. A suggested donation is \$20.



All donations are greatly appreciated and will be accepted at the door.

## Special Presentation at Central to Demonstrate A.I. Eyewear!



On Thursday afternoon, February 19, at 1:00 p.m. a special demonstration of Meta glasses will be hosted at Central. Robin Richard of the Illinois Assistive Technology Program (Assistive Technology Resources for Illinois Residents) and two other staff

members will join our own Marla Winkleblack to demonstrate the many benefits of artificial intelligence eyewear for visually impaired persons. In addition to reading braille, Marla has been using these glasses and will be able to speak from personal experience as to the many ways they have helped her. Anyone with visual impairment (or with a family dealing with visual impairment) is sure to find this beneficial. All are welcome, though we do encourage you to RSVP so that we can have adequate seating. Please contact [central@cccdisciples.org](mailto:central@cccdisciples.org) or 217-428-4336 to let us know you are coming.

## Fun at the Children's Museum!

Central families are invited to join us at the Children's Museum for an afternoon of fun on Sunday, February 15, from 2-4pm. Central will pay for your family's admission, but if you already have a membership to the Museum, please let us know. Come have fun with other Central families – and there will be snacks. Wear your Central t-shirt if you have one.



## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP  
IN-PERSON (SANCTUARY)  
AT 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM  
AND LIVESTREAMED ON  
[WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG](http://WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG)  
AND FACEBOOK LIVE  
AT 10:30 AM

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP  
IN-PERSON (GREAT HALL)  
AND LIVESTREAMED ON  
[WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG](http://WWW.CCCDISCIPLES.ORG)  
AND FACEBOOK LIVE  
AT 9:15 AM

## Sermon for 2/15/26

John 14:1-3

Acts 1:7-11

Michael E. Karunas



## Happy Birthday!! (2/14–2/28)

Celia Johnston, Linda Shambaugh,  
Pat Glasscock, Clint McLeod,  
Linda Hill, Ella Redden, Ethan Clark,  
Mary Little, Marla Eovaldi



**Save the dates for VBS  
June 15-18**



**Save the date for  
a Celebration of Women and Girls -  
Friday evening, May 8.**

**In Sympathy**

- We continue to pray for Karen Wade and family, upon the passing of Larry Wade on February 2.
- We continue to pray for Nedra Brintlinger and family, upon the passing of Dan Brintlinger on January 28.
- Thank you for praying with us.

**Usher Help Wanted: 8:00 Service**

We have an 8:00 AM service Usher team that could use 1-2 more volunteers. If you're interested, contact the church office at 217-428-4336 or email [central@cccdisciples.org](mailto:central@cccdisciples.org).

**Counting On You**

**Sunday, February 8, 2026**

Total worshipping online = 120  
Total worshipping in-person = 268

**Sunday, February 1, 2026**

Total worshipping online = 152  
Total worshipping in-person = 275

**Minister's Article**

**Lent and Ash Wednesday**

Lent is a six-week season in the church year that precedes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. It is a time to focus on our own spiritual growth. As we journey with Jesus toward the upper room of his Last Supper, to the cross of his crucifixion, and ultimately to the empty tomb of his resurrection, we are invited to grow in our commitment to following him. Lent always begins with Ash Wednesday (February 18 this year) and concludes with Holy Week - Palm Sunday (March 29), when Jesus arrived in Jerusalem; Maundy Thursday (April 2), when Jesus held the Last Supper with his disciples; and Good Friday (April 3) when Jesus died on the cross. Lent and Holy Week culminate with Easter Sunday (April 5) and his triumphant resurrection.

For Ash Wednesday this year, we will be partnering with our fellow Disciples of Christ churches in the area, and worshipping together. This is a great way not only to support our fellow Disciples churches but to experience a greater sense of Christian camaraderie as well. Together we will offer two (2) opportunities for you to receive ashes:

12:00 p.m.	Central Christian Church
7:00 p.m.	Christian Church of Illiopolis

The noon-time option at Central will be briefer (approx. 25-30 minutes) and is meant for those who can get away for the lunch hour but not in the evening. The evening service will be a bit longer (but less than an hour) and is meant for those preoccupied during the day. Pastors Vicky, Melinda, and I, along with Rev. Melissa Ebken (of Illiopolis) will lead both the noon and evening services. At both services, we will impose ashes (on the back of the hand or the forehead) for anyone who wishes to receive them. We will also have communion.

Blessings, Michael

**Girl Scout Cookies Available for Purchase on February 15**

Our church members involved in Girl Scouts of America will have boxes of cookies for sale after all three services on Sunday, February 15. Look for them in the Friendship Center. There will also be an opportunity to purchase a box(es) of cookies to be sent to our troops serving overseas. Those donations will be collected February 15 and then gathered into a larger donation to be shipped overseas. So even if you're not a "cookie monster" yourself, consider supporting our troops (and the Girl Scouts) with a purchase on February 15.

**DONUTS with DORCAS Returns with LOVE!**

All Central women are invited to the February 17<sup>th</sup> Dorcas meeting in the Disciples Room at 10:30 a.m. You don't want to miss this mid-winter gathering for a warm "pick me up" of coffee and Casey's donuts, fellowship and special "Bible Love Trivia" game. We'll learn about upcoming mission-based meetings. Contact Sandy Garver at 217-454-2111 or [revrag@comcast.net](mailto:revrag@comcast.net) for more information about Dorcas Disciples. Hope to see you February 17th!

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### Meetings with Melinda for Spiritual Development

This year I will be offering one-on-one sessions of 45 minutes for people interested in formulating a plan for your personal spiritual development. This is not just for Lent, but for growing your faith – for the year. ***What does it mean for you as a person to live a life in the spirit of Jesus Christ?***

These meetings will take the place of a Lenten Quiet Day. Traditionally, these six weeks before Easter have been a time for Christians to study scripture more in-depth, to examine their lives, to draw closer in relationship to God, and to participate in activities that can deepen/widen spiritual growth.

Topics we will discuss include possible star word activities (if applicable), looking at a list of spiritual disciplines to see what might appeal to you, lectio divina guidelines, visio divina guidelines, how to engage an examen process, and glancing at a few online devotionals/worship opportunities that I personally can commend.

#### Individual appointment times still available:

Thursday, Feb 12 - I have 2 pm & 4 pm.

Tuesday, Feb 17 - I have 2 pm & 4 pm.

Thursday, Feb 19 - I have 2 pm, 3 pm, 4 pm.

Saturday, Feb 21st - 10 am, 11, Noon, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm.

Each session begins on the hour and is limited to 45 minutes. Please be on time or let me know if you cannot meet with me after all – via email or text. [melinda.mcdonald@cccdisciples.org] **I will accommodate other times; just email me or call the office.** We will meet in the friendship center and go to the library to the left of the sanctuary.

Follow-up inquiries may be conducted by phone or zoom so we can see how you are doing. I hope we can have another in-person time together before mid-November of 2026.

I hope you consider letting me explore with you how to follow Jesus a little farther along the way. This is not simply a book recommendation time but a time for us to discuss finding spiritual practices that you will be motivated to do. If you do not use email, simply call the church office at 217.428.4336. My email is Melinda.mcdonald@cccdisciples.org. I will reply and confirm your appointment.

Grateful to be alongside you,  
Rev. Melinda

### Keeping God in everyone's corner

Our community came face-to-face with disaster six weeks ago. An EF2 tornado hit Mount Zion Dec. 28, tearing off eight roofs among widespread property damage that stretched as far as Elwin and Long Creek. As Christians, we long to help our neighbors.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) offers a way. Besides offering assistance to local disaster victims, its Week of Compassion offering provides emergency help elsewhere in the United States and the world and long-term help to people working to re-build.

In 2025, Week of Compassion's partners provided flood relief in California and emergency relief in Cambodia and kept supporting recovery efforts from devastating floods in Maryland and deadly tornadoes in Kentucky.

Through our Week of Compassion Offering, to be collected Feb. 15 and 22, we continue to imagine an unimaginable world where the love of God is felt in every corner.

Please consider giving generously. If you have an offering to give, you may place it in the brass bowl in the Narthex, give online or take it to the church office.

#### **Sunday (15)**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

9:15-Sunday School

9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online

10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online

4:00-Millikin Opera fundraiser, Sanctuary

#### **Monday (16)**

**No Preschool**

**No DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room**

9:15-Prayer Group, 401

#### **Tuesday (17)**

7:00-Journeymen, Conn. Café

9:30-Card Ministry, 411/412

9:30-Christcare Stitches, 3R

10:30-Donuts with Dorcas, Disciples Room

#### **Wednesday (18) - Ash Wednesday**

12:00-Ash Wednesday service, Sanctuary

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407

1:00-Prayer Shawl Ministry, Fireside Room

5:30-Church Council, Disciples Room

7:00-Ash Wednesday service, Christian Church of Illiopolis, Illiopolis, IL

#### **Thursday (19)**

8:00-Emmaus Reunion Group, 401

9:30-Card Ministry, 411/412

10:00-Alanon, 401

1:00-IATP presentation on Meta glasses, GH

6:00-Fathers & Sons small group

7:00-Chancel Choir

#### **Friday (20)**

#### **Saturday (21)**

9:00-Faith Quest

#### **Sunday (22)**

**No Children's Sunday School**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

9:15-Sunday School

9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online

10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online

#### **Monday (23)**

9:15-Prayer Group, 401

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407

#### **Tuesday (24)**

7:00-Journeymen, Connection Café

9:30-ChristCare Stitches, 3R

11:45-Macon Co. Interagency, Great Hall

12:00-Personnel

#### **Wednesday (25)**

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407

1:00-PR/Evangelism committee

6:00-Contemporary Worship committee, FR

#### **Thursday (26)**

10:00-Alanon, 401

1:00-CACS committee, Connection Café

6:00-Fathers & Sons small group

7:00-Chancel Choir

#### **Friday (27)**

#### **Saturday (28)**

#### **Sunday (March 1)**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

9:15-Sunday School

9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online

10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online

**Serving Schedule — Sunday, February 15, 2026**

**Elders:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Christine Lyman-Harm, Gail Prince  
9:15 - Gail Prince

**Outreach Communion Elders:** Angie Ingram, David Martin, Kim Miller,  
Krista Rohrscheib, Shirley Swarthout, David York

**Feb. Prep Deacons:** Christine Lyman-Harm, Denise\* & Matthew Swarthout

**Offering Deacons:**

8:00 - Gary Horvath, David King  
9:15 - Ron Ingram  
10:30 - Scott Bicknell, Andrea Shartzter

**Ushers:**

8:00 - Team 3 - David King, Capt., Nancy King  
10:30 - Team 8 - Diana Ritter, David Sheffer

**Greeters:**

8:00 - Carolyn McCall, Gail Prince  
9:15 - Andy & Theresa Fulk  
10:30 - Martha Fast, Suzie Miller

**P.A. Operator:**

8:00 - Bobby Munos  
10:30 - Jordan Backes

**Liturgist:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Andy Fulk  
9:15 - Travis Wilcoxon

**Contemporary Snack Table:** Ryan Damery

**Contemporary Perishable Snacks:** Donna Rutherford

**Nursery and Children's Sunday School Schedule**

**Sunday, February 15**


**Nursery:** Abigail Clark, Stephani Martin, Kaylee Sommer

**Children's Sunday School:** TBA

**Sunday, February 22**

**Nursery:** Abigail Clark, Stephani Martin, Kaylee Sommer

**Children's Sunday School:** No Children's Sunday School today



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[www.facebook.com/CCCDecatur](http://www.facebook.com/CCCDecatur)

**Serving Schedule — Sunday, February 22, 2026**

**Elders:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Jeannie Backes, Rebecca Monroe  
9:15 - Jeannie Backes

**Feb. Prep Deacons:** Christine Lyman-Harm, Denise\* & Matthew Swarthout

**Offering Deacons:**

8:00 - Doug Blakey, Mike Munos  
9:15 - Marci & Steve Baumann  
10:30 - Mary Little, Diana Ritter

**Ushers:**

8:00 - Team 4 - Hazel Perry, Capt., Karen Penn  
10:30 - Team 9 - Suzie Miller, Capt., Martha Fast

**Greeters:**

8:00 - Sandy Garver, Karen Penn  
9:15 - Marci & Steve Baumann  
10:30 - Dale & Judy Ford

**P.A. Operator:**

8:00 - Donna Dash  
10:30 - Mike Kirby

**Liturgist:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Linda Rowden  
9:15 - Marci Baumann

**Contemporary Snack Table:** Marci & Steve Baumann

**Contemporary Perishable Snacks:** Theresa Fulk

**“Like” and “Follow” us on Facebook**

To “like” hit the thumbs-up icon.

To “follow” click on the ellipse icon (...).

You will see a list of options pop up.

Find the option marked “follow” and click on that.



**Prayer Request Text-In!**

Have a prayer request? Text PRAY to 217-212-2173, or use the QR code to the left.

*“PRAY” is the only word you should type.*

Your phone then sends you a link to the prayer request form to fill out. We would love to pray with you and follow up, if you wish.

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