

# The Central Visitor



Vol. XCVIII

Decatur, Illinois, March 11, 2026

No. 5

## Nursery Update

Our Nursery has been undergoing some changes in the past six months. We wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to the families of Tom Ritter and Nancy Hanover. Tom and Nancy chose to give to the Nursery a gift from their mother to bless the children and families of Central. In our newly renovated nursery, you will see new vinyl flooring, carpet, paint, all new custom cabinetry, and several other special touches. The choice of color scheme was to add light and peace to the Nursery, and to serve as a constant reminder of the love and wonder of God's world. The blue of the walls compliments the beautiful mural that our children love, as well as bringing the calmness of nature to the room. The custom cabinetry was all designed just for our Nursery by new member, Ryan Clark. Ryan worked with us to make sure every need was met. On the upper cabinets, you will see our butterfly knobs. These were chosen in honor of Tom Ritter, a lover of butterflies and a soul whose journey and generosity will always be remembered and honored.

In addition to our stunning renovation, we have been fortunate to add three new staff members to our Nursery. Kate Neumann has attended Central with her family and been an active participant in Youth Group for several years. Kate is an amazing artist and has brought fun and creativity to the Nursery. Kaylee Sommer is a student at Eisenhower High School and is an accomplished violinist. Kaylee shares her love of music with our littlest ones and has been an invaluable asset to our staff. Abigail Clark is a student at Richland Community College, and the daughter of new members Ryan and Jamie Clark. Abigail brings years of experience working with children and has been the perfect addition to our Nursery staff. We are now fully staffed with four regular staff members and two part-time staff members. Jolie Witts and Abigail Smith have stayed with us to work on an as-needed/as-available basis, and we are truly grateful for their dedication. You will notice our Nursery staff now has uniforms, identifiable by the adorable baby giraffe on the shirts. The logo was designed especially for Central's Nursery.

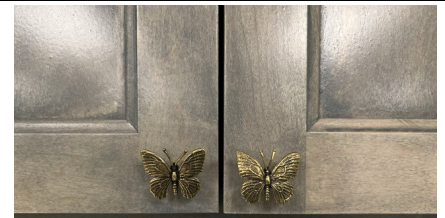
## SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026

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

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

## Sermon for 3/15/26

John 6:35, 8:12, 10:11, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1  
"I Am.. (In All Things)"  
Michael E. Karunas



### Easter Egg Prayers, 3/8/26

These are the Easter Egg Prayers we received on March 8. Please join us in praying these prayers this week. You are invited to share a prayer with us this coming Sunday.

Dear God,

I hope my aunt's foot is okay.

In Jesus' name, you will be loved.

"So now faith, hope and love abide, but the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

I want a dinosaur robot. Thank you.

I want my mom to get better.

You are loved by God.

Love the Lord with all your heart.

God loves you.

Love God and love our family. God loves you.

I hope my mom's foot is okay.

I hope for my test to be well!!

Help me to be more like you.

Please forgive us for the times we forget to love one another. Amen.

### Easter Lily Insert Update

This year Central will be making a change in one of our long time Easter traditions.

Due to individuals with severe allergies, we are transitioning to silk Easter Lilies. We will continue our Easter insert and will collect \$10.00 for the names of loved ones you would like listed. These contributions will be placed in the "Altar flower" designated fund to help defray costs of the silk flowers and future flower needs of Central.

You may sign up for the memory insert at the Welcome Desk and in the Great Hall on March 15th, 22nd and 29th. Thank you for your support.

### In Sympathy

We mourn with the family of Misty Mochel, who passed away on 3/5/26, after a long, brave battle with cancer. She joined us in December 2023. Thank you for joining us in prayer for her family.

### Counting On You

#### **Sunday, March 8, 2026**

Total worshipping online = 124

Total worshipping in-person = 291

#### **Sunday, March 1, 2026**

Total worshipping online = 126

Total worshipping in-person = 265

## Minister's Article

### Listening in our Everyday Lives

By now, you expect to hear from me about spiritual practices after our two years together. But I am a practical theologian. How does our whole life – our spiritual life and our everyday life – integrate into more Christ-like living? We are relational human beings, after all. Gracious communication, and more specifically, true listening is my focus for us.

Effective and gracious communication is not easy. And it requires genuine listening which requires a heart that cares to listen! Nowadays, in our world, "A deep yearning for peace and unity persists amid the turmoil of a world divided by conflict and opposing interests. To assuage that intense longing, we must seek common ground, which can be achieved through respectful listening." (Listening Hearts Ministries website, February 2026))

And each of us as individuals have a part to contribute toward facilitating a harmonious ethos in our various relationships – family, church, workplace, and society. At the foundation of all our relationships is the love and respect that we have for one another. Breaking down barriers between/among us happens when we can set aside judgment and simply try to understand each other. We may not agree about many things, but we do love each other.

Here are the seven most applicable principles of Listening Hearts Discernment practices. The original ones were designed for group deliberations particularly for vocational discernment. I hope to get to have an opportunity to share more in-depth with small groups what these guidelines mean in practice. These have been reformulated to address the needs of life in everyday situations

1. Relax and totally let down your defenses so you can fully receive what the speaker is saying.
2. Listen with your eyes, your ears, and your entire self.
3. Before responding, take a moment to absorb what the person has said.
4. Refrain from interrupting.
5. Do not formulate what you want to say while the other person is speaking.
6. Ask thoughtful questions to deepen your understanding of what has been said.
7. Perhaps invite the person to say something about their life experience that has informed what they are saying.

The [Discernment Listening Guidelines](#) from which these seven steps were derived first appeared in the book *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations*.

Please note these guidelines are undergirded upon the foundation of God and Christ's compassion and love for all people. Listening to God means we listen for hard things, too.

My invitation for you in this season of life together is to read, mark, and slowly digest these seven guidelines as we journey onward. I challenge us all to adopt these into our minds and hearts. Listening in everyday life with the goal of living peaceably with those with whom we differ is part of the Christian way.

Melinda

### Weekend with the Crowders

We enjoyed a wonderful weekend with Rev. Dr. William Crowder and Dr. Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder. They participated in the Saturday afternoon table-top team trivia event, dined with some Disciples clergy from central IL on Saturday evening and then, of course, Rev. Dr. Crowder preached on Sunday at the 10:30 a.m. service. Thank you to the fellowship committee, those involved in making all our music special during worship, and to everyone for helping to make the Crowders feel so welcome.



### Please RSVP to Join Us

Let us know if you would like to be a part of this outreach opportunity. On Sunday, March 22, we will gather at 2pm at church to create handmade cards and write notes/draw pictures. Then at 3pm, we will take the cards, along with a small gift, to some of our church members who are not able to get out and would love a visit.

Come for either part of the afternoon or for both parts – for the card making and/or for the visits. Please let us know that you are coming, so we can schedule the visits. RSVP to the church office (217-428-4336) by Friday (3/13) at noon.

This will be a wonderful way to connect with one another in our church family.

### St. Patrick's Day Get-Together

All Central women are invited to attend our Dorcas Disciples meeting on Tuesday, March 17th. We'll gather in the Disciples Room at 6:00 p.m. for a special Heritage Behavioral Health Center presentation about the many services provided by this valuable community agency. Following CEO Mary Garrison's presentation we'll enjoy yummy St. Patrick's Day-themed refreshments. Join in for an evening of fellowship, information and service. RSVP by Friday, March 13th to Nancy Ellen Taylor at 217-872-9174 or xstr@sbcglobal.net to make sure we have enough goodies. Contact Sandy Garver at 217-454-2111 or revrag@comcast.net for more information about Dorcas Disciples. Hope to see you March 17th!

### Central's Safe Church Policy

At Central we are committed to providing a safe and sacred space where children, youth and families may grow and be nurtured in their faith, knowing that they are loved by God. One way that we do this is by providing and following our Safe Church policy. Every person who spends time with our children and youth is required to take Central's Safe Church training every three years, and in addition, to take online training as a Mandated Reporter every two years.

We are currently in the process of scheduling these trainings. If you have previously taken Central's Safe Church training, you will receive an email with information about when the next trainings will be offered. If you have not taken this training and are interested in serving in the ministries we provide for our children, youth, and families, please contact Pastor Vicky to talk about the training process.

We appreciate the dedication of so many adults here at Central that share God's love with our youngest members, and who follow Jesus' example and welcome the children.

### Happy Birthday!! (3/15—3/28)



Dick Cain, Christine Lyman-Harm, Karen McFadin, Katie Miller, Nancy Taylor, Mac Funk, Kim Miller, Shelby Baum, Gary Johnston, Luke Karunas, Calvin McLeod, Robin Ferree, Greg Lockett, Janice Woolen, Randy Trei, Kate

Neumann, Blair Moran, Archer Swarthout, Charles Watkins, Doug Blakey

### **Sunday (15)**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary  
9:15-Sunday School  
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online  
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online

### **Monday (16)**

9:15-Prayer Group, 401  
1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407

### **Tuesday (17) - General Primary Election**

7:00-Journeymen, Conn. Café  
9:30-Card Ministry, 411/412  
9:30-Christcare Stitchers, 3R  
6:00-Dorcas Disciples, Disciples Room

### **Wednesday (18)**

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407  
1:00-Prayer Shawl Ministry, Fireside Room  
5:30-Church Council, Disciples Room

### **Thursday (19)**

8:00-Emmaus Reunion Group, 401  
10:00-Alanon, 401  
6:00-Fathers & Sons small group  
7:00-Chancel Choir

### **Friday (20)**

### **Saturday (21)**

8:00-Good Sam volunteer opportunity  
9:00-Faith Quest  
4:00-Vocal Spectrum concert

### **Sunday (22)**

8:00-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary  
9:15-Sunday School  
9:15-Contemporary Worship, GH & online  
10:30-Traditional Worship, Sanctuary & online  
2:00-All-Church Card-Making service project

### **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 Stitchers, 3R  
11:45-Macon Co. Interagency, Great Hall  
12:00-Personnel

### **Wednesday (25)**

1:00-DOVE Inc. Children's Clothing Room, 407  
3:30-PR/Evangelism  
6:00-Contemporary Worship committee

### **Thursday (26)**

10:00-Alanon, 401  
7:00-Chancel Choir

### **Friday (27)**

### **Saturday (28)**

9:00-Faith Quest

### **Sunday (29)**

### **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

Free Concert!



## Vocal Spectrum

### International Quartet Champs

With special guests "Unaccompanied Minors"  
and "Rouge Et Noir" from Mt. Zion High School

Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026  
4:00 PM

Central Christian Church  
650 W. William St.  
Decatur, IL

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

**Elders:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Tom Spry, Matthew Swarthout  
9:15 - Matthew Swarthout

**Outreach Communion Elders:** Jeannie Backes, Linda Foltz, Gretchen Kirby,  
Christine Lyman-Harm, Rebecca Monroe, Gail Prince

**March Prep Deacons:** Mary Jane Linton, Linda Zinn\*

**Offering Deacons:**

8:00 - Jim Fitzpatrick, Bobby Munos  
9:15 - Deb & Randy Trei  
10:30 - David Martin, Rick Thomas

**Ushers:**

8:00 - Team 2 - Bruce Campbell, Capt., Liz Campbell  
10:30 - Team 7 - George Virgil, Capt., Linda Virgil, Hugh & Linda Rowden

**Greeters:**

8:00 - Donna Dash  
9:15 - Deb & Randy Trei  
10:30 - Andy & Theresa Fulk

**P.A. Operator:**

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

**Liturgist:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Shirley Swarthout  
9:15 - Marci Baumann

**Contemporary Snack Table:** Deb & Randy Trei

**Contemporary Perishable Snacks:** Deb & Randy Trei

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

**Sunday, March 15**

**Nursery:** Abigail Clark, Stephani Martin, Kate Neumann

**Children's Sunday School:** Gretchen Kirby, David Martin, Brittney Moran, Karen Penn, Diana Ritter, Deb Trei

**Sunday, March 22**

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

**Children's Sunday School:** Christine Lyman-Harm, David Martin, Brittney Moran, Karen Penn, Diana Ritter, Kaylee Sommer



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

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

**Elders:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Jim Fitzpatrick, Dave Wagner  
9:15 - Dave Wagner

**March Prep Deacons:** Mary Jane Linton, Linda Zinn\*

**Offering Deacons:**

8:00 - Sandy Garver, Sid Rohrscheib  
9:15 - Laura & Matt Moma  
10:30 - Julie Jones, Ron Oliver

**Ushers:**

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

**Greeters:**

8:00 - Debbie & Jim Hoffert  
9:15 - Laura & Matt Moma  
10:30 - Dick & Sue Ann Cain

**P.A. Operator:**

8:00 - Krista Rohrscheib  
10:30 - Mike Kirby

**Liturgist:**

8:00 & 10:30 - Janet Lyman  
9:15 - Rebecca Monroe

**Contemporary Snack Table:** Laura & Matt Moma

**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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