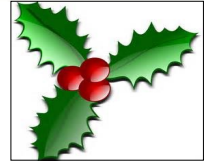


Central Christian Church **Banner**



**CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF MINISTRY IN MID-TOWN
MEMPHIS**

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December 2013

A Note from Pastor Bill Russell



I just returned home from a wonderful Christmas concert where the dilemma that we, as Christians, are faced with smacked me full in the face. There was a wonderful rendition of 'Santa Claus Is Coming To Town' followed immediately by a marvelous arrangement of 'O Holy Night'. To me, that begs the question: Which is the real Christmas? Is it the Christmas of Santa with toys and gifts, and glitz and glitter, or is it a joyous, yet solemn, recognition and celebration of the birth of the one we call the Christ, the Savior of the world? Christmas poses some hard decisions: do we spend our money lavishly and unwisely on stuff (that most likely is not needed), or do we give generously to the Christmas offering?

Do we spend our precious little free time doing extra, probably unnecessary, shopping, or do we call, or write, or visit someone who needs to know that they are not forgotten? Do we hear the angels sing "O come let us adore Him", or do we allow the world to drown out the angels in its appeal to us to party more, and spend more, and push aside what Christmas truly is about? Tough decisions! My guess is that the vast majority of you have a beautiful Christmas tree, and at the top of that tree is either a star or an angel. We top our trees with a holy symbol that speaks to the deepest meaning of Christmas. I urge you, this Christmas, find your own symbol among the many found in the scriptures, maybe a star, maybe an angel, or maybe something as insignificant as a lamb. Claim that symbol as yours for this Advent and Christmas season, and let it lead you in your decision making as we all join hands together in this journey to Bethlehem. I wish each of you the happiest and holiest Advent and Christmas ever as we look forward to His return, and as we celebrate His birth. BILL

Spotlight on Giving

Mark Rutledge bought us the following message on December 1st. Each of us has a favorite literary character, either from childhood or from our adult lives. There's one that, favorite or not, we all love to hate - or should we? I'm talking about good ol' Ebenezer Scrooge - Charles Dickens' immortal character that we associate with greed, stinginess, covetousness and a few other traits that are none too pleasant.

Very few people remember that Ebenezer Scrooge was in the beginning of Mr. Dickens' tale a miser. But, by the end of the story Ebenezer had found redemption - he became a changed man and "kept Christmas in his heart throughout the years". Though the author doesn't speak of it directly, Scrooge's heart became "Christ-like", he began to give of himself. Isn't that the message of the season? That Christ came to give Himself to the world, that through Him, all may be saved? So, as the Advent season begins, let us remember the "reason for the season", and that, just maybe, being called a "Scrooge" is not a bad thing after all.

Memorial Gifts

It is always sad to lose members of our Church family, but it is also wonderful that their friends and family, in turn, remember the Church, that was their spiritual home, in their memorial gifts.

During October we were blessed with memorial gifts from Jack & Mary Artman, Jane Bond, C & S Brown, John & Connie Bennett, Russ & Shula Shaw Congelosi, Judy Dorsey, M Furrh, George & Debra Goodnight, B D Hall, M & K Hasty, H S & B S Hayes, J. Walker Hayes, Clara Holton, Gloria Jeffrey, Amy Lindeman, Memphis Dermatology, S & M Oshinsky, William Pickel, Bill Russell, Carol & Floyd Scarberry, C & J Sebelius, M S Shuette, Dr. William Slayer and Ann Smith.

These gifts honored the lives of Dr. Herb Butts, Dot Olivi and Peter Russell.

It's a Cracker not a Popper!

A lady came into the store where I work asking for Christmas Poppers. Thinking she referred to the party accessory in which you pull a string and colored streamers are ejected, I told her we didn't sell them. "Oh yes you do" she replied, "I can see them on that display" pointing to the Christmas crackers. So I believe it is my duty to educate people about this Christmas tradition. Firstly what is a cracker? It's a cardboard tube rolled in colored paper, resembling an oversized toffee, with a card strip running down the middle. This strip incorporates chemicals similar to those in cap guns. The tube usually contains a party hat, a terrible joke, (the more terrible the better) and a small toy or trinket. Traditionally they are pulled just before the Christmas meal and, as they break unevenly, one person gets the whole tube and keeps the contents.

Tom Smith of London, a London candy manufacture, invented crackers in 1847 as a development of his bon-bon sweets, which he sold in a twist of paper (the origins of the traditional sweet-wrapper). As sales of bon-bons slumped, Smith began to come up with new promotional ideas. His first tactic was to insert "love messages" into the wrappers of the sweets. Smith added the "crackle" element when he heard the crackle of a log he had just put on a fire. The size of the paper wrapper had to be increased to incorporate the banger mechanism, and the sweet itself was eventually dropped, to be replaced by a trinket; fans, jewellery and other substantial items. The new product was initially marketed as the Cosaque (i.e., Cossack), but the name "cracker" soon became the commonly used name, as rival varieties came on the market. The other elements of the modern cracker —the gifts, paper hats and varied designs— were all introduced by Tom Smith's son, Walter Smith.



Outreach Committee

December brings many things to our congregation. One of the many is our Christmas Special Day Offering which will be December 15 and 22.

This year be reminded that your Christmas Special Offering will help “refill the pitcher” from which we receive our support through out the year. All through the year, our cups are filled with care and communion poured out to us and our congregations from our Regional Center. Help refill the pitcher with a gift to the Christmas Special Day Offering. Our gifts to the Christmas Special Day Offering will help our ministry in Tennessee in a multitude of ways.

Outreach Committee

Christmas Cook-Book

Reprinted Cookbooks will be available for purchase on Sunday, December 8, 2013. The cost is \$15.00, and the proceeds go to support the Disciple Women's Ministries of Central Christian Church in their effort to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. These cookbooks will go fast, as they make wonderful Christmas presents and contain so many cherished recipes that have been served to our Church Family and friends. To reserve your copy, contact John Bennett Church Administrative Assistant at (901) 276-2708

If you previously purchased a cookbook, please contact John Bennett at the above number for a complimentary reprinted copy.

Christmas Party

On December 1st, Carol and Floyd Scarberry hosted a Christmas party for the congregation. They provided a fantastic variety of food and drink and their house was beautifully decorated, including their model village display that was better than ever. Thank you both, so much, for your generosity and hospitality.



Thanksgiving Service

On Tuesday, November 26th, we had our first Service of Thanksgiving. Pastor Bill had hoped that we could interest a number of our neighboring Churches in joining us in worship but in the event we were blessed by being able to have a joint service with St. Francis Old Catholic Church who honor us by holding their services in our education building.

The service, conducted jointly by Bill Russell and Father Tommy Sheppard, opened with an introduction by our Chairman, Debra Goodnight, a remembrance of Thanksgiving by Amy Lindeman and, most moving of all, a poem read by young Henry Lindeman. The service incorporated some of the Catholic rite and ended with communion.

It was a wonderful, and meaningful, way to start the Thanksgiving celebration and we all hope that next year not only will we have a similar service, but that other nearby faith communities will be willing to join us.

Thanksgiving Baskets



Thanksgiving Dinner Baskets were provided to 10 families of "Rachel's Kids." It was a true blessing to see the joy on their faces, as they received their baskets!

Additionally, we provided Thanksgiving Dinner Baskets and all the trimmings to 3 other needy families in the community. Their reception was equally joyful!

Thanks to our church members and friends who took the opportunity to "step away" from their own Thanksgiving tables to help feed the needs of others by contributing money to purchase food, donating turkeys and other food items, baking cakes and pies, and delivering all the other wonderful things we enjoy at Thanksgiving.

Church Notice Board

Kitchen Notice: Central will be closing down the Fellowship Hall kitchen for cleaning, repairs and painting from after church on December 29 to Wednesday night dinner on January 15. There will be no access to the facility during that time.

Notice of Congregational Meeting on December 15: There will be a Congregational Meeting after worship on Sunday, December 15 for the purpose of voting on the 2014 Church Budget and the 2014 Church officers. All members are requested to attend.

Disciple Women's General Meeting : The DWM will hold their December meeting on Sunday, December 8th after worship. The congregation is invited to join in a Pot Luck lunch with Ham provided by the DWM and to stay for the program and installation of the new 2014 DWM officers. To be installed: President: Linda Johnson; Vice-President: Dorothy Feimster; Secretary/Treasurer: Kathy Young; Worship: Daphne Brown; Service: Carol Scarberry/Micki Artman.

Christmas Card Exchange: Share the joy of the season with your church family by bringing your Christmas Cards to exchange. There are tables set up for the card exchange at the back of the Fellowship Hall.

Building from the Board

The General Board Meeting was held on November 24, 2013, immediately after the Sunday Worship Service, and was opened by the Board Chair, Debra Goodnight, with a Thanksgiving poem. No changes were made to the October 20, 2013 Minutes and they were approved as submitted.

A number of forthcoming events were discussed including the Thanksgiving Service, the distribution of Thanksgiving baskets and the decoration of the Church and Fellowship Hall for Christmas.

Pastor's Report: Bill Russell reported having run into Johnny Ray, former Director of the Week of Compassion (Disciples of Christ), who reminded him of how special Central Christian Church was to him and he sent his warmest Thanksgiving wishes to all. Pastor Bill Russell expressed pride and heartfelt thanks to the Board for all that Central accomplishes.

Property and Grounds: Mark Rutledge reported on various repairs that had been completed and plumbing work that needed to be done. An estimate for this work was under consideration. He also commended John Rainey, the Janitor, on the work he has performed outside the call of duty in assuring that all lights are turned off, and thermostats adjusted, at the end of the day. Several groups have requested use of the gym but they were either not a good fit or times requested conflicted with groups already using the gym. Additionally he discussed an upcoming meeting on Tuesday with a remodeler about the kitchen doors and Peabody doors, stating that the next project to look at will be the Peabody doors. He stated that he has already received a couple of donations designated for the Peabody doors.

Treasurer's Report: John Bennett presented the Financial Report in Richard Brown's absence and remarked that October had been a remarkable month due to a very generous donation. He stated that the total income for October was \$22100, expenditure was \$9370 and therefor we had a surplus for the month of \$12730.

Elders' Report: John Johnson, Chairman, reported that a Thanksgiving offering will be taken at the Thanksgiving Service on November 26, 2013, and will be donated to Rachel's Kids. He also reported that a short Christmas Eve Service is scheduled for 5:00 PM on December 24, 2013.

Diaconate Report: No report was given.

Disciple Women's Ministry: Mary Artman reported that the DWM met On Sunday, November 10, 2013, following a delicious pot luck luncheon and stated that Debra Goodnight presented the Thanksgiving Program. She also announced the 2014 slate of officers as follows, with installation of officers at the December meeting:

President:	Linda Johnson	Vice President:	Dorothy Feimster
Secretary/Treasurer:	Kathy Young	Worship/Study:	Daphne Brown
Service:	Carol Scarberry/Micki Artman		

Additionally, Mary Artman reported that the Thanksgiving Baskets will be delivered immediately following the Board Meeting.

Outreach: Mary Artman reported that the Trunk or Treat event led by Linda Johnson, Carol Scarberry and Micki Artman had been a huge success.

Various other brief committee and ministry team reports were given.

Old Business

Capital Campaign: The roof over the library has been satisfactorily repaired and Debra Goodnight requested that the remaining balance of \$1000 be paid in full on Monday, November 25, 2013.

Budget Committee: Wesley Goodnight, Chair of the Budget Committee, presented a modified budget which was approved and this will be placed before the Congregation at the December Meeting.

New Church Officer Committee: The committee minutes were read by Kathy young and various nomination were made. After discussion and amended list of nominations will be placed before the December Board Meeting. John Johnson was nominated as a Trustee.

Clothes Closet Evaluation: A decision was made to defer the Clothes Closet Ministry until after the June sale in order to rebuild the clothing inventory. Additionally, setting an item limit per family member was also discussed and agreed upon due to the inordinate amount of clothing taken the previous two months. This will be revisited again before it reopens after the June sale.

Trunk or Treat Evaluation: The event was felt to be a huge success and plans are to do it again next year with an increase in the amount of church participants, an increase in the amount of candy to be distributed and a plan for ingress and egress to allow for a smoother traffic flow for the children.

New Business:

Christmas Eve Service: Debra Goodnight announced that a short Christmas Eve Service will be held on Tuesday, December 24, 2013, at 5:00 PM, and encouraged everyone to attend. Signs announcing the service will be placed on the church lawn.

Nominating Committee for Board Officers: Nominations for 2014 Board Officers will be presented at the December Board Meeting.

Adjournment and Prayer: The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM, with Debra Goodnight, Board Chair, leading the closing prayer and remembering our sick and shut-ins.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Johnson, Board Secretary

Trunk or Treat



The weather threatened to stop us from our first Trunk or Treat but we persevered and won out. It was a “Howling” success with cars, trucks, SUV’s and a trailer all decked out with skeletons, spiders and other spine chilling decorations. There were lots of volunteers in fancy dress and more children than we ever imagined. The candy soon ran out despite two trips to the store to replenish our stock!

We received many compliments from our neighbors for what we are doing for the community and this event should become a fixture in our calendar. What do you think, should we do it again?

School Supplies for Gordon Elementary



The DWM service project to collect school supplies for Gordon Elementary was, as you can see from all the happy faces, a success. We thank everyone contributed for their generous donations and the DWM particularly thanks Floyd Scarberry for delivering the supplies to the school.

Carol Scarberry
Linda Johnson



The Church and the Fellowship Hall Decorated for Christmas



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This Month at Central

Sunday 1st

9:45 am Bible Class
10:30 am Coffee in the Narthex
10:45 am Worship Service
12:00 noon Fellowship

Worship Leader: Mark Rutledge

Loaf: Richard Brown

Cup: Carol Scarberry

Wednesday 4th,

6:30 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Bible Study

Dinner Prepared by: Carol and Floyd

Scarberry

Bible Study: Bill Russell

Sunday 8th

9:45 am Bible Class
10:30 am Coffee in the Narthex
10:45 am Worship Service
12:00 noon DWM Luncheon

Worship Leader: John Johnson

Loaf: Daphne Brown

Cup: Debra Goodnight

Wednesday 11th

6:30 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Bible Study

Dinner Prepared by: Linda Johnson &

Katrinka Hall

Bible Study: Bill Russell

Sunday 15th

9:45 am Bible Class
10:30 am Coffee in the Narthex
10:45 am Worship Service
12:00 noon Fellowship

Worship Leader: Carol Scarberry

Loaf: John Johnson

Cup: George Goodnight

Wednesday 18th,

6:30 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Bible Study

Dinner Prepared by: Debra & George

Goodnight

Bible Study: Bill Russell

Sunday 22nd

9:45 am Bible Class
10:30 am Coffee in the Narthex
10:45 am Worship Service

Worship Leader: Kathy Young

Loaf: Mark Rutledge

Cup: John Johnson

Tuesday 24th

5:00 pm Worship Service

Sunday 29th

9:45 am Bible Class
10:30 am Coffee in the Narthex
10:45 am Worship Service

Worship Leader: Debra Goodnight

Loaf: Daphne Brown

Cup: Kathy Young



December Diary Reminders

15th

Congregational Meeting
(see "Church notice Board")

19th

Meetings of Elders and General Board

24th

Christmas Eve Service
5:00 pm

Birthdays

7th

Daphne Brown

14th

Pat Hammond

26th

Amy Lindeman



