

# DIVIDENDS

Celebrating Generosity at Central Christian Church

Henderson // Summerlin  
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## vital statistics

There are a few vital statistics that we track as a church. The first is our attendance and the second is our finances. Below is a report on how we are doing in each of these areas.

	Quarter Ending 12/31/2007	% Change vs. PY	Year to Date as of 12/31/2007	% Change vs. PY
Average Weekly Giving	\$195,177	-3%	\$185,098	-3%
Average Weekly Giving / Adult	\$22.16	-12%	\$22.53	-13%
Average Weekly Budget	\$214,000	9%	\$214,000	12%
Average Weekly Total Attendance	11,806	11%	11,225	12%

The church prepares an annual budget each fiscal year which begins on July 1. All budgets are approved by the Elder Board and presented to the church body in June of each year. Monthly, the Elder Board reviews the church's financial statements. The church's financial statements also are audited each year by an independent accounting firm.

If you have any questions or would like further information regarding the church's financial matters, please email Geoff Sage, our Treasurer at [geoff.sage@centralchristian.com](mailto:geoff.sage@centralchristian.com) or call him at 440-8329.

In the past, the IRS allowed people to deduct charitable contributions under \$250 without the need to have a receipt for the gift. However, new federal rules for the 2007 tax year – which took effect January 1, 2007 – disallow tax deductions for charitable donations unless the taxpayer can prove the donation through receipts or other official financial records.

Each January, Central mails out itemized statements of all charitable gifts for each household. Any gift that can be associated with the household is included. These gifts include checks, online donations, gifts of appreciated assets, and gifts of cash, as long as the cash was in an envelope with the household information included. If you need one of these offering envelopes, stop by Information Central or ask one of the seating ushers.

## caring for people

The enthusiasm God generated in the Central family these last few months has surpassed even our optimistic expectations.

**You will rejoice with us to know that, to date, 1,713 households participated in the 2007 Caring for People Year-End Ministry Offering and \$990,000 has been committed toward these initiatives.**

It's not too late to join us in giving! If you are led to make a commitment, you may bring it with you to any weekend service.

We look forward to the exciting things God has in store for Central in the year ahead as we continue Caring for People in increasing ways!

Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration and for Caring for People!

**Dawn Prendes**

**Caring for People  
Coordinator**



## a note from Jud



**Dear Central Family,**

With the start of the new year, I want to take a look ahead at all of the great things that I believe God is doing in our church and in the Las Vegas Valley. Our "Caring for People" campaign is wrapping up, and we have already put some of the funds to work to meet the needs and improve the lives of children and adults in our valley. Coming up, we have two great opportunities for you to invite a friend,

family member or co-worker to come check out your church. First up is the Paul Tetul, Jr. weekend, February 9 & 10, where we are giving away an official Orange County Chopper, followed by Easter on March 23. Many studies have shown that 90-95% of people who come to church do so because they are invited by someone they know.

This Dividends newsletter is more than just a celebration of the generosity of the Central Family, it is also a peek into how we are using your contributions to impact the world for Christ. We could probably fill hundreds of pages with the stories of changed lives, restored relationships and strengthened families that we receive each week, and we hope this newsletter gives you confidence in our stewardship of your generous contributions.

I am grateful for your continued generosity, even in the midst of the housing crunch and the softening economy. This reminds me of the passage in 2 Corinthians 8, verses 1 - 9, where the Macedonians, although being tested by many financial struggles, "are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity." My prayer for you in this new year is to experience the abundant joy which flows from a lifestyle of generosity.

"...those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed"  
-Proverbs 11:25b, NLT

## changed lives

Here at Central we take the numbers of people who have made decisions to accept Christ as their savior and be baptized very seriously. We strive to be a place where people who are far from God can come and be introduced to His uncensored grace. The statistics below are only those people who have submitted a card to let us know of their decision to follow Christ.

Last year was an amazing year with:

- 2,150 Decisions for Christ
- 1,415 Baptisms
- Over 4,000 Bibles distributed

## did you know ...

... Central has developed an intentional system to assist people from the moment they make a decision for Christ until they are baptized, attend Starting Point, or are referred to one of Central's ministry. This generally lasts about one year. During that year, the person is contacted either by phone calls, written notes or email an average of 18 times. Our goal is to help this person to move towards full devotion to Christ. As part of this process, over 37,000 calls were made to people who had made decisions or got baptized.

We have tracked the costs associated with this intentional process, where we provide a Bible, a Next Steps DVD, a "Forgiven" t-shirt and other tools and resources to help them on their journey. We found that on average, \$90 per person is spent during the course of the one year follow up.

Thanks to the generosity of the Central Family, thousands of people have come to know Christ in the last year and are in the midst of this process.

... 1 Corinthians 4:2 says "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." We took that verse to heart over the course of the last 18 months. During that time, we led our whole staff through the Crown Ministries Biblical Financial Study. This in-depth study of God's word in the area of finances and resource management will allow us to better steward the resources so generously given to the church. This study helped us each to take a good look in the mirror to ensure we were living up to expectations, both in our personal lives and in our roles at the church. It has also helped us to be more intentional about managing our contributions and resources.

## generosity snapshots

A quick look at how your generosity is impacting the lives of people both inside and outside the church walls.

- The program provided an opportunity to improve the well-being of the students and provided a sense of hope for them. Students would often break down in the counselor's office and share how difficult it is to get food. We saw an improvement in many of the students' behaviors from lots of negative attention to more positive. – Ruby Thomas Elementary School
- One student was so happy to get the food bag, he would check in her office to volunteer to help her with any work that needed to be done. Another 5th grader was so thankful to have the food bag that she chose to write about it in her end of the year essay. – William E. Ferron Elementary School
- My sister works with this gal who went to church every Sunday, but her son doesn't like going. So my sister suggested she try going to Central. Her co-worker said she loved it and really enjoyed Jud's teaching. She said most of all her son loves it. Everyday he asks "can we go to church today." She is so thrilled because that was a major concern for her.
- Last year, when Central was doing the Backpack drive, I saw a couple bring in about 10 to 15 backpacks. At that time, I was just returning back to work after three months of being let go from my previous job, and money was very, very tight. I prayed to God that I would have the money to do something for the backpack drive this year, and GOD PROVIDED FOR ME!!
- First, I brought in my tithe to the church, then I signed up electronically, and now I've set it up to come out every 2 weeks. I feel free, and as if a load has been lifted. I know that I still have to do my part and make some adjustments here and there. However, I don't feel as if I'm telling God that I don't trust in him or that I don't have any faith in him. That would be heartbreaking after all that he has done and continues to do for myself, my son and my family and friends.
- Thank you, for all your prayers for my special daughter. She is the one who impacted me a lot to keep coming to Central. Thank you for being our home away from home!

## eternal investments

One of the best ways to see how your generous investment in the ministry of Central Christian Church is returning dividends is through sharing stories of life change. The story below is just one of the eternal dividends resulting from the generosity of the Central family. If you would like to share a personal story with the church, you can log onto our website at [centralchristian.com](http://centralchristian.com) and click on the Inside Central tab and then on the Tell Us Your Story link.

God uses people, as well as gifts from people, to transform lives. It happens here at Central all the time.

The week before Christmas, Jerry and Jodi walked into the church needing food. Jerry had just lost his job and Jodi was expecting a baby girl in January. They had nothing for the baby. Jerry and Jodi were encouraged to get connected into the church, and told that as they got connected and honored God by their lifestyle, God would make a way to assist them.

That day, our Care Ministry gave them a bag of food and the last turkey that was available for Christmas dinner. Also, they were given some pink, newborn, baby clothing that someone had just donated. Jodi also received a purse filled with all kinds of toiletries, lotions, brushes, and devotionals which had recently been given to Central's Care ministry.

The most outstanding thing happened as one of our counselors prayed with them for God to open a door for a job for Jerry. A lady walking out of the ladies restroom heard her praying and came up and told Jerry that she had a job for him. She spoke to him and determined he'd fit the qualifications. All he had to do was show up at the job site at 6 am the following day and the job would be his. To say the least, they were "blown away." Jerry's direct quote was "that's what you were just talking about." They were so excited and couldn't believe what just happened. They started coming to Central, and were here for the Christmas services.

This story was emailed to our Family Ministries team.

I wanted to email you to say thank you to the Central Christian Church family for being such a huge influence in my life as well as both of my young son's lives. My youngest son is in the 3rd grade and he is in the family ministries at the fun factory and he loves it so much that he is up early every Sunday morning at 7:30am asking if its time to get dressed and ready for church. He talks about church all of the time. On one Sunday afternoon, after the last service was over, my sons saw some bags of food sitting by the front entrance and they asked me "Mom why is there food just sitting in front of the door?" I explained that the church has a very large pantry that they are trying to fill with food for people that are struggling and having a hard time feeding themselves and their families.

Later on that day we had dinner, and as I sat my son's plate in front of him he started crying. I asked him what was wrong and he said " Mom I feel bad, that I have all this food in front of me and a lot of people in the world does not have food or any money to buy food, and I feel really bad and sad about it and I wanna help them as much as I can." That alone touched me so much and all I could do was to sit down and think to myself "what was I doing to help." When dinner was over we all sat down and I asked them if they would like to go grocery shopping and buy some food for the pantry at church and help people, and they were both so ecstatic and willing to help.

## creative generosity

Over the course of the past few years, some of the Central Family have found creative ways to stretch their generosity to the church. Hundreds of families have made Central a beneficiary of their estate through the Designing Your Legacy estate planning workshops. Also, many people have made donations of appreciated assets, such as stocks and mutual funds, vacant land, and real estate. Other members have purchased life insurance policies where Central was named as the beneficiary. The most creative "gift" that we received were water rights that were able to be sold with the proceeds benefiting the church. God is the one who gives us creativity and it is great to see members of the Central Family using creativity in their generosity. Furthermore, many of these creative gifts come with beneficial income tax advantages. If you would like to find out more information or discuss your ideas for creative generosity please contact Jason Frame, our Director of Stewardship at 440.8337 or by email to [jason.frame@centralchristian.com](mailto:jason.frame@centralchristian.com).

"...Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."  
-2 Corinthians 9:6, NIV

## next steps

Maybe you've been coming to Central for three weeks; maybe three years. You've tested the waters and you've generously decided to invest in our mission and vision. We want to partner with you on your journey of growing more like Christ, so we have provided a few Next Steps for you to consider:



Are you looking for financial peace? If so, you will want to look in to our Crown Ministries Small Groups or Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University course.

Both courses will be taught here at the church starting in February. For more information, contact Jason Frame, Director of Stewardship at 440.8337 or pick up a flyer at Information Central.

Baptism is an outward expression of the internal decision you made to accept Christ. Here at Central we love celebrating new life through baptisms, so we try to make it as easy as possible for you to get baptized. We hold open baptisms at every First Wednesday, and many times throughout the year.



The next Open Baptism weekend is February 16/17. Contact Bob Moore at 735.4004 for more information.

For additional information on these Next Steps, call the church at 735-4004, check out the CB Weekly or stop by Information Central.

## looking back / looking ahead

An overview of the amazing way God has multiplied your generosity to impact lives through the ministry of Central Christian Church, and opportunities for you to generously partner with Central to impact people in the church and the Las Vegas Valley.

God's hands are all over Central, and we are amazed at how he is working throughout the Las Vegas Valley. The generosity of the Central Family has allowed us to accomplish so many great things! Here are some awesome happenings that we would like to share with you.

Throughout the whole year, we saw a record number of new families coming to Central for the first time. Our Guest Central area served over 10,000 first time guests. These new people were just a part of the tremendous growth in our weekend services, which averaged over 11,400 people, an 18% increase over the previous year. Just recently our Christmas at Central services had a record number of people in attendance with over 22,000 people.

On September 9, the Summerlin campus celebrated its one-year anniversary, with over 2,100 people attending service and participating in the festivities. There was a barbeque, games for the kids, and a block party for the students.

Your generosity also allowed us to care for many hurting people. We were able to provide 1,550 backpacks to children in need through our annual fall backpack and school supply drive. We served 16,956 meals to homeless people, provided 1,455 food boxes to families, and helped 80 families financially get back on their feet through our Care Ministry.

Jud, myself, and all of the Central staff believe this is just the beginning of what God has in store for this valley. In just a few weeks, Paul Teutul Jr. will be here at Central. I am sure this will be a historical weekend for our church. We are anticipating record attendance, and we recognize that God is up to something big with this weekend. Then Easter will be just around the corner. These two weekends are a great opportunity for you to invite someone who is far from God to come and experience his uncensored grace.

We are also looking forward to the launch of the new Southwest campus, scheduled to kick off in September. It may seem like a long time away, but we are already working full steam ahead to make sure everything is ready. Please stay tuned for more information as that time closer, and be praying that God will be working in the hearts of those who may be experiencing him for the first time.

I know that we all have many demands on our time and resources, and I want to thank you again for all that you do to generously support Central through serving and giving. You are the heroes of the church, and I am proud to be part of such a wonderful family.

- Mike Bodine, Senior Leader

