

Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York
“Living Christ’s ways and exploding with love and service”
UPDATE
January 3, 2012

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH
9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship with the new worship team.
10:00 – FaithXpress, Soul Strength, youth Sunday school and AOL
11:00 – Traditional Style Worship with Choir.
Bring a Friend this week and share the Love and Grace of God!

www.Christchurchamherst.org

716-839-2460

Dr. B.J.’s blog is www.drjthoughts.blogspot.com

Hi Everyone:

A blessed a joyous New Year to all of you in the Christ Church family. We are beginning a New Year and the continuation of a great adventure together. Over 50 of you covenanted with me on Sunday to participate in the “Read through the New Testament in 2012”. **Note:** if you were not in worship Sunday I asked people to make a covenant with me to read the New Testament according to the plan I have outlined and to join, at some level, in the discussion. If you would like to join the covenant – reply to this email saying you will join us. I have asked all those in the covenant to pray for me and I will be praying for all of you. We “cleared the decks” and prepared our hearts to be better followers of Christ in 2012. I am enjoying the fact that winter has apparently finally arrived (with some decent cold and snow).

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. We were 110 in worship Sunday (not bad for New Year’s morning). It was good to have the 9:00 worship team back to work. Thank you to all who assisted in worship – especially my communion setters and servers. We are profoundly blessed to have so many willing to make a difference in big and small ways. I never remember to say “thank you” to our “Tech” guys – especially Tom Weaver and Scott Smith – they do a great job with the sound and running the power point. SO: Thank You Tech guys! Thank you also to Valarie and Keith Suffoletto who put the power point presentations together for us on a week to week basis; they have been GREAT!
2. This Sunday, January 8, I will be preaching from one of the first five chapters of Mark (from the readings we have in this first week of through the New Testament). I really liked this morning’s reading of the four friends lowering their friend through the roof into the presence of Jesus – but I am waiting for the Holy Spirit to give me a nudge.
3. **Through the New Testament in 2012:** we are reading 1 chapter a day from the New Testament on week days. We began with the Gospel according to St. Mark on Monday, January 2. The schedule for this

week: Jan 2 – Mark 1; Jan. 3 – Mark 2; Jan. 4 – Mark 3; Jan. 5 – Mark 4; Jan. 6 – Mark 5; Jan 9 – Mark 6; Jan 10 – Mark 7.

I will be posting some observations on each day's reading on my blog: www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com. You can read the blog and at the bottom of each post is place to add questions or comments. Join the conversation and enjoy the reading. Schedule will be posted on the web site (www.christchurchamherst.org) in the weekly bulletin and in this update.

4. UGANDA PICTURES AND STORIES: This Sunday at 12:30 we will have a soup and bread lunch followed by a presentation of pictures and stories from my (Dr. B.J.'s) October journey into Uganda. This is open for everyone. I hope that you can make it.

I am planning to leave for Uganda on September 24/25 of this coming Fall. Is God calling you to join me? Let me know.

We have orphans to sponsor from the Blessed Primary School in Kirimandagi Luweero district in Uganda (this is Pastor Grace's school) see Rachel or the bulletin board in the Café for more information on how \$100 a year can send an orphan to school.

5. I am launching two new bible groups this week:

- 1) Wednesday, January 4 at 11:00 (in the Wesley Room) and
- 2) Sunday, January 8 at 6:00 (beginning in the Wesley Room). These groups are open to all who are interested and at whatever level of Bible knowledge people may have. It is a new year: why not begin by working on your relationship with God and the depth of your spiritual journey?

6. ADULT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING:

- Thursday's at 10:00 a.m. with Diane Klenk
- Sunday morning at 10:00 – studying Adam Hamilton's "Christianity's Family Tree" beginning January 8 (through February 26).

7. January 11, 18, 23, 25, 29 and 30 – **FINANCIAL PLANNING WORKSHOPS**

- Jan 11 – What is Financial Planning
- January 18 – Basic Budgeting – Cash Flow Strategies
- January 23 – Accumulation Strategies
- January 25 – Distribution Strategies (how not to run out of money before you run out of life in retirement)
- January 29 – Charitable Gifting
- January 30 – Retirement Planning

Workshops are led by Patrick and Keith, local businessmen in the Harlem-Kensington-Cleveland Community. They are partnering with us to make these workshops possible. To reserve a spot call the church – 839-2460.

8. Outreach Team meets tonight at 6:30 (to discuss When Helping Hurts) regular meeting at 7:00

9. UMW's (United Methodist Women) Executive Board meets January 10 (Tuesday) at 4:00.

10. UMM (United Methodist Men) meets January 14 at 10:00. Bill Bauza will present a narrated slideshow of a recent visit to Honduras, Jamaica, and the Cayman Islands.

11. BLOODMOBILE is coming January 20 from 1 – 6 – sign up with Geoff Hill. Give a Pint and get a pound of Dunkin' Doughnuts coffee.

12. IN OUR PRAYERS: Don Parsons (out of hospital and now in rehab); Barbara McCray (treatments); Carmen Ticconi (radiation therapy); Nicky Sebastiano, Mary Emens, Erik Schmitz, those around the world in harm's way; those looking for work; families in crisis

We pray for the family and friends of Ruth Seymour. Ruth, who joined Christ Church in 1954, was buried on Friday, December 30. She was a member of the Martha Circle and was a past UMW President. Ruth has lived in Eastern New York for the past 7 years near her Brother. She was 91.

13. HANDS FOR NEW YORK: We are collecting **JUICE AND POWDERED DRINKS** this week. HANDS4NY has a goal of feeding 1 million people in one year. Thank you for your continued and most excellent support of these feeding projects. It makes a huge difference.

14. Offering Envelopes: New Envelops for the first four months of 2012 are available in the parlor. If you do not have envelops there is a signup sheet to order them. Following our spring finance campaign new envelops will be issued that will begin May 1.

Doris tells me that year end giving statements are in the mail this week.

15. HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK:

January 4 – Tom Weaver

January 5 – Guy Ferreli

January 7 – Mary Jane Shanley

January 9 – Jenny Groh, Pam Lopez

January 10 – Lindsey Darling

16. I have no ANNIVERSARIES listed for this week

I am excited about 2012. It is my prayer that we will journey deeper in our faith in Jesus Christ. I believe the primary way this happens is through direct contact – we go deeper through prayer, through our encounter with God's word (aka the Bible), and in the intentional living of life together in the Christian community. How will I know we are going deeper? Three things: 1) joy is increased – our life in Christ will be reflected in our approach and attitude to life; 2) our witness will increase – many times in the New Testament the one thing that draws people to the church community is "that these people have been with Jesus" we will know we are going deeper because people will want to join us; 3) our mission and ministry will increase. I am absolutely convinced that the deeper our personal relationship with God the deeper our commitment to building God's kingdom on earth. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, frequently taught that personal holiness had to be lived out as social holiness. That is the closer I am to Christ the more I want to make a difference for him in this world.

I am excited about two new class opportunities. I am not sure how these groups will evolve, but I am praying that God will draw to Wednesday Morning and Sunday evening men and women (and youth and, yes, even children) who want to grow deeper in their knowledge and relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other. I am excited that we have multiple opportunities for our community: there is the Thursday class with Diane Klenk, there is the AOL class on Sunday morning, there is a gathering at the Gavin's home every other Sunday evening. These growth opportunities should drive us to greater mission and ministry in Amherst, Buffalo, New York, the USA and to the ends of the earth.

The Christian Faith and Life is a journey – how go your travels?

I'll see you whenever the Church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, fellow traveler.

(This e-mail is a communication ministry of the Christ United Methodist Church, Amherst, New York. If you do not wish to receive this communication please reply: remove and I will take you off the list.)