

**Christ United Methodist Church**  
**Snyder, New York**  
*"Living Christ's ways and exploding with love and service"*  
**UPDATE**  
**December 27, 2011**

**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](http://www.Christchurchamherst.org)

716-839-2460

Dr. B.J.'s blog is [www.drbitthoughts.blogspot.com](http://www.drbitthoughts.blogspot.com)

Hi Everyone:

I am still coming down from a great Christmas weekend (celebration of the Feast of the Incarnation). There are dozens of people to thank: our musicians (especially the choir and our string quartet – including our own Mr. Suggs and Mr. Smith) thank you to Julie Wisley and her Alter Guild/Worship team for decorations and poinsettias and all the rest of the color and pieces that make the Sanctuary look so great. I want to thank all of you who agreed to be readers on Christmas Eve and the brave souls that volunteered to help out with the "Instant Christmas" on Christmas morning. Thank you to my candle lighters and all the ushers. We were 247 evening and morning – a great showing. Thank you Elizabeth Holt Cutis for all the extra musical work that makes Christmas Eve/Day so very special. Thank you to Sally Pollard who pulled the items together for Instant Christmas and so much more to make our celebration and post celebration gatherings excellent. Thank you Rachel for the extra bulletins and to Dave who keeps the place nice and clean and looking great! Thank you Christ Church family for making me and my family feel so very welcome this Advent/Christmas. It was a bit strange being in a new town for the first time in nearly 30 years . . . you made me feel like I was a part of the family from the very beginning: thank you. And, finally, thank you for the Christmas gifts – the bonus from the church and all of the other little remembrances from cookies and cards to golf balls. I am deeply blessed.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Christmas Eve and Day – 170 at the 10:00; 12 at the 11:30; 75 on Christmas morning – that totals 247. Well done everyone. Next year we'll double it. (grin). If you ordered poinsettias you can now take them home.

Christmas is not a day it is a season on the church calendar. It is a season that stretches for 12 days (today being the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Christmas) to the 6<sup>th</sup> of January which is called Epiphany. Happy Christmas season, everyone!

2. This Sunday is January 1, 2012. We are back to our regular worship schedule: 9:00 praise and 11:00 "traditional". I am going to be preaching from Philippians 3:12-16. St. Paul says: this I do, I forget what

lies behind and I press on toward the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. January 1 is a great day to unpack our bags from the previous year and see what we would like to leave behind so that we can press on into the new year.

We will be celebrating communion as well.

3. Monday January 2, 2012 – we begin **through the New Testament in a Year**. We will be reading one chapter a day on weekdays. Next week's readings are: January 2 – Mark 1; January 3 – Mark 2; January 4 – Mark 3; January 5 – Mark 4; January 6 – Mark 5. I will be posting on my blog <http://www.drjthoughts.blogspot.com> my daily thoughts on each days reading. I will be posting today: Tuesday, December 27, 2011 a brief introduction to the Gospel according to Mark (and the Gospels in general) to get us started.

How to access a blog: click on the link above (or cut and paste it into your browser) and you will see the postings. They are listed the most recent first. Scroll down to see previous postings. If you wish to comment on the post there is a spot at the end of the post that says "comments" click there and you will be able to add your comments to the discussion. You can also post comments to me (or questions) via e-mail ([drbj@christchurchamherst.org](mailto:drbj@christchurchamherst.org)) or in person or you can call the church office. I will be taking time in my bible studies to explore any questions or issues that you may have.

4. IN OUR PRAYERS: Don Parsons, Nicky Sebastiano, Mary Emens, Barbara McCray (continuing treatments); Erik Schmitz; Carmen Ticconi (continuing treatments) those who are battling illnesses or any kind; families in crisis; those looking for work. Our friend Rev. Davis Matovu launched the new Church on Christmas Day in the village of Seeta. We continue to pray for Davis and this (and other) new projects.

5. The Food Collection is going great: there are dozens of jars of Peanut butter from Christmas:

**This week: bring Macaroni and Cheese!**

6. 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.

7. SUNDAY JANUARY 8 – Dr. B.J. will show pictures and share stories of his October trip to Uganda. We will gather at 12:30 for soup and bread (a light lunch).

8. NEW CLASSES COMING IN JANUARY 2012

Beginning Wednesday, January 4 – Pastor B.J.'s daytime bible study – will meet at 11:00 a.m. in the Wesley Room (open for all and all ages)

Beginning Sunday, January 8 – Pastor BJ's evening class resumes at 6:00 – open for all (and all ages)

Beginning Sunday, January 8 the AOL class at 10:00 will begin a study of Christianity's Family Tree using a book by Adam Hamilton. Class will run on Sunday's through February 26.

9. UNITED METHODIST MEN: Saturday, January 14 – Bill Bauza will present a narrated slideshow of a recent visit to Honduras, Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. See Sunday's bulletin for more information.

10. UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: Tuesday, January 10, the UMW Executive Board will meet at 4:00 p.m. in the Wesley Room. See Sunday Bulletin for more.

11. Happy Birthday this week:

December 27 – Laurie Hannon; Emily Scaringi

December 28 – Teresa Watson

January 1 – Marie Miller; Phyllis Nicholson

January 2 – Alice Richards

12. Happy Anniversary this week:

TODAY Happy 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to Joseph and Carolyn Day

13. 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.

14. **UGANDA PROJECTS UPDATE:**

A. Several of you have asked about sponsoring the orphans at the Blessed Primary School in Kirimandagi, Uganda (Pastor Grace's school). We are putting together a display. Sponsors will get a photo of the orphan they have sponsored. \$100 sends a child to school for a year. **See the new bulletin board in the Café or contact Rachel for more information.**

B. UGANDA PHOTO'S and STORIES – Sunday January 8 at 12:30. Come for a soup and bread light lunch. Dr. B.J. will be showing photographs and sharing stories of his October journey to Uganda. Program should take about an hour.

C. I will be returning to Uganda in October 2012. Feel the call of God leading you in this direction? See me

D. I NOW HAVE the DVD on the Kirimandagi Well Project. Watch for more information on showing.

15. The Bloodmobile is coming: January 20 from 1-6 in Crafts Hall. Anyone 18 and over can donate. All donors will be given a coupon for a free pound of Dunkin' Doughnuts coffee – give a pint get a pound – (and everyone knows a pint's a pound the world around!).

January 1 is one of those significant dates on the calendar. It is when the numbers change. We stop writing 2011 on our checks and start writing 2012. We switch our calendars over (throw out the old, bring in the new) and we "start a new year". It is customary in our country to make "New Year's Resolutions" – these are promises we make to ourselves to "drop a few pounds" to "get back to the gym" to "finish that class" or start something new. Resolutions are good as they can often serve as motivation for change. However, as we have all discovered over the years, resolutions don't really help if we don't have a plan for change. If you are going to drop a few pounds: how? What's the plan? Are you joining weight watchers or are you going to download that new fitness app? Will you do it alone (that's the really hard way) or will you join a group, a process or a team? What's the plan? Is your resolution to "read the bible" or draw closer to God? What's the plan? Will you Join a class, or start the

New Testament reading? What will you do to keep the interest up? Will you join with others? Don't just make a resolution: have a plan and follow through. Make an accountability partner – give someone permission to ask how you are doing. Give someone permission to check on your progress toward whatever your goal. The keys to successful change: Have a vision (a picture of the preferred future). Set a goal. Have a plan. Have a way to evaluate the plan and modify the plan as necessary. Finally, don't wait for motivation, just do it and the motivation will follow.

I am looking forward to a great 2012 for the Christ Church community. There is terrific energy at the church. I believe a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit is blowing among and through us. I believe great times and greater ministry are in front of us. We have a vision: 100 in Sunday School 500 in worship by 2015. We have some intermediate goals. We are working on a plan that will have ways to evaluate our progress! With God's help and the power of the Holy Spirit we are launching into a great future.

Here's to a better us in 2012,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, coach

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