

**Christ United Methodist Church**  
**Snyder, New York**  
*“Living Christ’s ways and exploding with love and service”*  
**UPDATE**  
**February 21, 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](http://www.Christchurchamherst.org)

716-839-2460

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

Hi Everyone:

In the middle ages today marked the big transition day. On the church calendar today we leave the designation of “Ordinary Time” and the color green and we transition to the Season of Lent and the color purple. Lent was observed with varying degrees of discipline but for the faithful Christian it was observed with disciplined dedication and focus. People fasted for one, two and even three days a week. Some persons abstained from meat for the entire 40 days of Lent. Others picked a meatless day (usually Friday) while others chose to give up other allowed activities and/or foods to signal the season of fasting. In modern times this has been reduced to the “giving up something for lent” and has become an act of self denial that is somewhat disconnected from the ancient practice of fasting. The fast was supposed to help us focus our prayers and our attendance to God. The belief was that denying our physical desires would help us focus on our spiritual desires. While I believe this is an important discipline, my suspicion was that the end result of the fast is that by Easter people were hungry. One final point, during the fasting season of Lent the Sunday’s are exempt. The ancients believed that one should never fast, perform acts of penitence or hold funerals on Sunday because Sunday was always a celebration day, a resurrection day, a day of rejoicing. People who can count days will note that Lent is actually 46 days long (February 22 through April 7 is 46 days). We call Lent a 40 day fast because we don’t count the Sundays. Ever Sunday is a little Easter and Easter is the GREAT Sunday!.

We begin the Season of Lent with an **ASH WEDNESDAY OBSERVANCE: at 7:00 at the Church.** We will begin with a light supper at 5:30 and our Lenten Study “Three Simple Questions” then we will gather at 7:00 in the Sanctuary for our Ash Wednesday Observance.

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was 139. Special appreciation to Dorothy Brown. The choir’s anthem this week featured a poem that Dorothy wrote.
2. This Sunday is the First Sunday in Lent and we will be looking at Luke 4:1-13 the temptation of Jesus following his baptism. The sermon is titled “Some Tempting Possibilities”.

We are receiving **new members this Sunday** at both morning celebrations. If you are not yet a member of Christ Church and would like to be please contact me as soon as possible.

### 3. ASH WEDNESDAY OBSERVANCE FEBRUARY 22 AT 7:00

We begin the evening at 5:30 with a light supper and our Lenten Study: "Three Simple Questions".

4. At Christ Church this week:

Tuesday, February 21	7:00 – Christian Education Team
Wednesday, February 22 –	11:00 Pastor's bible study
	5:30 Lenten supper and Study
	7:00 Ash Wednesday observance
	7:30 Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, February 23	9:30 – Caller Team
	10:00 Bible Study
	6:00 Make a Difference Team
	7:00 Church Council

Friday through Saturday the Youth Group is at Camp Asbury on a 30 hour famine for world hunger.

5. COMING MARCH 3 "Mugsy Sent Me" – a prohibition era dinner theater to be held at Christ Church. Put on by the Amherst Players **the show is at 4:00 and tickets are \$22 in advance or \$25 at the door.** Ticket includes door prize, spaghetti dinner/dessert and the floor show. Go to [www.amherstplayers.org](http://www.amherstplayers.org) or call 791-7529 to order tickets. This event is a fund raiser for Christ Church Missions.

6. In our Prayers: Nicky Sebastiano, Pam Lopez, Mary Emens, Barbara McCray, Erik Schmitz, Carmen Ticconi, and Ed Maker. Remember those who are struggling with other health issues, those who are in harm's way, families in crisis and all who struggle with addictions.

7. Christian Education Team fund raiser: Pizza Sale!! March 11, 2012 take out or eat in. Order forms are in the Sunday bulletin.

8. Christ Church UMW is hosting the WORLD DAY OF PRAYER on Friday, March 2 at 1:00 p.m. Watch for more information.

9. Happy Birthday:

- February 23 – Abby Johnson
- February 25 – Viki Smith
- February 26 – Caroline Hess
- February 27 – Janice Beckwith, Michele Sciolino
- February 28 – Ashton Hannon

10. There are no Anniversaries listed for this week.

11. Local Mission Need: a young family is need of large and small appliances and household furniture. The couple has been married a year and is soon adding a baby girl to their small family. If you can help please contact Rachel in the church office 839-2460.

12. Through the New Testament in a year: This week's reading list: February 22 – 2 Thessalonians 1; February 23 – 2 Thessalonians 2; February 24 – 2 Thessalonians 3; February 27 – 1 Timothy 1; February 28 – 1 Timothy 2; February 29 – 1 Timothy 3; March 1 – 1 Timothy 4; March 2 – 1 Timothy 5. Follow the conversation at [www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com](http://www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com).

13. **MISSION NEWS AND NOTES:**

1. **THANK YOU for helping sponsor 14 orphans** at Pastor Grace's school in Kirimandagi. If there are more opportunities we will let you know. \$100-110 sends a child to school for the year. I received the following note from Pastor Grace at Kirimandagi just this morning:

Dear Pr BJ

**We convey our sincere greetings from in the name of our lord to the Church and your family and all friends there.**

**We thank you for loving and blessing us through the funds that you sent us for the orphans at Blessed Junior School.**

**The number of orphans has almost doubled from the beginning of the year. Some come from distant areas and we planning for an orphanage to help cater for these cases.**

**May God bless you. We look forward to see you and the team again.**

**Yours Pr Grace**

2. DVD's of the Hope for Africa Children's choir are available in the café on Sunday mornings. You may have one of the DVDs for a free will offering (you decide how much to give). Proceeds will be used for scholarships for our African friends.

3. Hands for New York – this week's collection: **February 26 is peanut butter!**

**We have provided over 4000 meals since July 1!!!!**

4. UGANDA PROJECTS UPDATE:

A. Dr BJ will be travelling to Uganda to continue his work with the Nexus Seminary this fall (September 30-October 16). Kathy Weaver of our congregation will be joining him on this journey.

B. I have three DVD's from last year's Uganda journey. I would be glad to lend them to you.

a. is me teaching a series of lectures on Palestine of Jesus time

b. is Kikyusa graduation

c. is the well project at Kirimandagi

5. **Habitat for Humanity:** Christ Church was one of the original Habitat Sponsors in Erie County. We continue our participation in several ways:

a. We contribute \$1000 annually to Habitat

b. We have several women who participate in the WOMEN BUILD

Friday March 23 at 6:00 in the Main Ballroom of Statler City there will be a

**Women Build Roof Raiser.**

Event is \$30 (tickets purchased before March 16) and \$35 at the door. It includes: beverages, appetizers, desserts, wine tasting, silent auction, live auction and a raffle for a Smokey Mountain Vacation. Business casual for the event. See Marg Bauza or Peggy Bermudez for more information.

By the way: did you know I know the family that lives in Uganda's Habit Home #1. . . . his name is John Baptist and he is a graduate of the Nexus training I am involved with in Uganda.

14. **An UNUSUAL opportunity:** as many of you may know I have written a book for my Ugandan friends. It is a biblical and theological primer that will be translated into Lugandan and will be published in English and Lugandan. My friend, Rev Davis Matovu has written an excellent commentary on the book of Revelation. It is my hope to be able to publish and distribute these books to our Nexus Seminary students for free. However, to publish and print 2000 copies of both volumes is going to cost between \$5000 and \$6000. I am looking for partners. . . . see me if you'd like to help. ***Thank you to those who have contributed several hundred dollars so far.***

15. Coming Later in Lent:

Palm Sunday is April 1 – we will have a procession with palms and a reading of the Passion narrative.

Holy Thursday is April 5 – we will gather at 7:00 for an observance of the Last Supper (no Seder this year).

Good Friday is April 6 – we will have the Stations of the Cross at Noon and again at 7:00 p.m.  
Easter festival celebrations at 9:00 and 11:00 on April 8.

I am getting ready for the Season of Lent. Being a good follower of Jesus and a student of John Wesley, I am always looking for balance in my spiritual life. That is why I believe only “giving something up” for Lent only addresses half of the spiritual growth opportunity. If I only focus on myself and my own spiritual journey I am out of balance. Here is my suggestion: practice the Lenten discipline and practice some form of self denial – give up something allowed for the forty days, engage in a more formal prayer routine, or join a class or other study. **THEN** find a way to do something for someone else. Take the deep dive inward but make sure it has an outward expression of mercy, justice and charity. The evidence of a deeper inward journey can only be seen in the outward expression of the love of God. There are places that could use a hour of your time, a helping hand. There are people in your life that could use you to walk quietly with them, to speak a word of encouragement to them to give some small assistance. One way to do this is if you practice the Fasting discipline in Lent: take the money saved from the meal and give it away.

I'll see you when the church gathers,

B.J. Norrix, lead servant, missionary, Lenten observer

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