

Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York
"Living Christ's ways and exploding with love and service"
UPDATE
March 13, 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

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Dr. B.J.'s blog is www.drbitthoughts.blogspot.com

Hi Everyone:

I am looking at the weather forecast for this week and I am thinking it must be spring. I saw huge flocks of geese flying over the Montezuma Wildlife refuge on Monday. I can see the yellowing of the willows in the valleys. My house in Liverpool has several dozen crocuses in full bloom. The tulips and daffodils are up and growing. There are flocks of robins bouncing around and we are supposed to be in the 60's through the weekend. Now the New Yorker in me is driven to give a negative answer to all of these signs. It is that part of us that feels compelled to say something like: "oh we'll pay for it eventually" or "it can still snow, you know – "I once saw snow on Mother's Day!" I refuse to be taken down. I am planning to fully enjoy every gorgeous day that comes my way and when the flowers bloom I will stop and give them all a good sniff! I hope your week is blessed!

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was 149. It was great to see several of our college kids home on break. Thank you Patti for your gift of song in the offertory this week! Thank you Tim Reed for tell us about the people who helped to form and shape you. Thank you Peggy Bermudez and all of our scouts for helping us celebrate scouting on Scout Sunday – Yesterday, March 12 marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of Girl Scouts in these United States. We were profoundly blessed!

2. This Sunday we are talking about our "Bucket Lists." On my visitation bucket list is a desire to see Angel Falls. I have seen the world's largest water fall by volume (we live down the road from Niagara Falls). I have seen the world's widest water fall – Victoria Falls in western Zimbabwe. Angel falls is the world's tallest continuous drop and is in Venezuela – some day. Bucket Lists are often those things we must do before we die. The sermon is about vision. Vision is a picture of a preferred future. The Bible readings are: Joel 2:28; Matthew 6:33 and Colossians 3:1 and the message is titled "Vision and Hope are Imaginations of the Heart."

We will be celebrating Nicky Sebastiano's 100th Birthday this Sunday in Crafts Hall – come have some cake and celebrate with Nicky and family!

THIS SUNDAY is the ***One Great Hour of Sharing*** special offering. One Great Hour of Sharing underwrites the administrative costs of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Because of this annual offering UMCOR can send every dollar it raises directly to disaster relief around the country and around the world. UMCOR has been near and dear to my heart for decades and is worthy of your support!

3. In our Prayers: Carol Gundlach (following hip replacement); Barbara Carier (surgery Monday); Nicky Sebastiano, Mary emens, Barbara McCray, Carmen Ticconi and Ed Maker; we continue to pray for the Kellner family following the death of Jean on March 3.

4. Special thanks and appreciation to the Deborah Circle (and all who helped out). The memorial service and luncheon for Jean Kellner was deeply appreciated by family and friends and your ministry of hospitality was an enormous contribution to this.

5. The Christian Education team made and sold over 100 pizzas on Sunday! Way to go team!

6. The SPRC in consultation with the Audit and Finance teams has decided to eliminate the staff position of Treasurer at Christ Church. Mr. Dennis Scaringi has filled this role for the past two years (filling a gap very much in need of being filled). We are grateful to Dennis for his years of service and will be honoring him at a later date. The clerking portion of this job will be moved to the Office Manager's responsibilities (with some financial accommodation) and the position of Treasurer will become voluntary effective immediately. We believe this has the double benefit of becoming a more efficient and effective process and will free up a few thousand dollars from salary for other ministries of the church.

7. AT CHRIST CHURCH THIS WEEK:

Tuesday, March 13 – 6:30 – Membership Team

Wednesday, March 14 – 11:00 – Pastor's Bible Study

5:30 – Lenten Supper, Study and Reflection

Thursday, March 15 – TRUSTEES Meeting has been cancelled

Friday, March 16 – 10:00 – Books Loved

8. THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT IN A YEAR: We begin the Gospel according to John TODAY. We are reading 1 chapter in the New Testament a day on week days. This will take us through the New Testament together in 2012. Follow Pastor BJ's comments on his blog: www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com. This week's reading: March 13 – John 1; March 14 – John 2; March 15 – John 3; March 16 – John 4; March 19 – John 5; March 20 – John 6; March 21 – John 6.

9. Happy Birthday this week:

March 15 – Joanne Gilbert

March 17 – Clair Lines; Marshall Rhinehart

March 19 – Karen Arrison; Marjory Gibson; Florence Stengel

March 21 – Nicky Sebastiano (100); Barry Wood

10. Sugar and Spice and Everything Nice: All Women of Christ Church are invited to an evening of sweet and savory morsels, relaxation and conversation on Monday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m. in the parlor. RSVP to Peggy Bermudez at 626-4897 or Beth Sweet at 210-8966.

11. MARCH 24 – the Amherst Lions Club is holding their **20th Annual Pancake Breakfast** from 8:00 to 1:00 at Christ Church. Proceeds benefit the Lions' work with the blind, sight and hearing impaired and other important community needs in Western New York. Tickets are 6:00 for adults; 3:50 for children 12 and under.

12. HABITAT WOMEN BUILD – next meeting is March 15 at 7:00 at North Presbyterian Church. All women who want to participate are encouraged to attend.

13. **HOLY LAND (ISRAEL) 2013 INFORMATION MEETING APRIL 1 at 12:15 in Wesley Room – Several of you have indicated an interest in making this journey. If you are interested see me for brochure.** I am planning a journey to the *Holy Land (10 day tour) leaving January 28, 2013*. I now have brochures with the essential information. See me for more. Watch for an information/travel meeting in the near future. Questions? See me. 10 day trip includes air travel (from New York's JFK); hotel, two meals a day, ground transportation, etc. I am estimating cost to be about \$3000 (2700 for trip plus incidentals).

14. MISSION NEWS AND NOTES:

1. Hands for New York – this week's collection: **March 18 collection is RICE – big bags, little bags, all Rice is good!**

We have provided nearly 5000 meals since July 1!!!!

The goal is to feed 1million people in 1 year (July to June). If each congregation in Upper New York Conference fed 1050 people We would reach our goal. Christ church will well exceed that goal knowing that some congregations will not be able to feed 1050!

2. UGANDA PROJECTS UPDATE:

A. Dr BJ will be travelling to Uganda to continue his work with the Nexus Seminary this fall (October 1-October 17). Uganda 2012 team: Rev. B.J. Norrix, Rev. William Mudge (Adirondack District Superintendent), Kathy Weaver (Christ Church), Esther Keeney (of Pulaski) and Rev.

Clair Mosher (Erieville and Ononativia United Methodist Churches in Onondaga County) – and **ONE MORE from Christ Church** (watch for announcement!) **PLEASE KEEP us all in your prayers.**

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 graduation in the village of Kikyusa.

c. is of the well project at Kirimandagi

3. **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 or the Sunday bulletin or web site for more information.

15. ***A Biblical and Theological Primer***, written by Dr. B.J. Norrix is in the translation phase of its publication. This book was written for the Nexus Seminary students in Uganda and will be printed in English and Lugandan. ***I have just learned that I may have a sponsor who will underwrite the entire cost of this project. Watch for more information. In the mean time . . . there are other projects to sponsor and support!.*** The total cost to publish the first 2000 copies of this book will be around 5-6,000 US dollars. Rev. Davis Matovu has also written a commentary on the Book of Revelation that we will be publishing as well. Total Cost of both projects is 8-10,000.

Biblical Resources in Lugandan are nonexistent. There is a Lugandan translation of the Bible that we provide for our graduates but actual Bible study materials do not exist. This produced the need for more materials. Rev. Matovu and Dr. BJ wrote their documents to respond to this need. We are hoping that these will be the first of many resources developed for the rural pastor in Uganda.

16. 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.

Christ Church is growing. We are seeing a steady stream of guests in worship (**see someone you don't know? Remember to say "HI" and welcome!**) and many of them are coming back and becoming a part of our family. I am especially excited because this is one of many critical signs that we are moving forward. The next sign is a bit more complicated. The number ONE indicator of a health church is the percentage of the congregation that is actively engaged in mission and ministry. I am convinced that EVERYONE is capable of doing SOMETHING. Whether it is sending cards or offering prayers; whether it is visiting the sick; whether it is hands on mission and outreach; or providing music, teaching children and adults, planting flowers or help, cooking food, helping with administration, etc.; whatever it is we are all capable of utilizing our spiritual gifts, our time and talents in ministry to and with others.

Here are Two needs I am exploring: 1) A "pastoral care team" – this would be a trained team of laity who would assist with nursing home and hospital and home visitation, carry communion to nursing homes and shut ins and generally augment the caring ministries of the church. I will be providing training. Is this what God has wired and called you to do? See me. 2) "Pastor's Prayer partner team" – we need to more intentionally and directly hold our church our churches leaders (and especially me) in our prayers. Are you a person of prayer? Is God calling you aside our church's leaders to provide prayer support? Again, see me.

Have a great week!

BJ Norrix, Missionary, lead servant, Coach