

Weekly Update: April 12, 2016

A Word From Pastor Darryl

Last Sunday we talked about *"Fleas of Doubt, Fleas of Faith."* In our Scripture lesson from John 20:19-31, the disciples are a pathetic, thoroughly dispirited, little group. Then Jesus suddenly appears. Jesus has two purposes in appearing to his disciples. The first is the assurance of his abiding peace. The second is to offer a new purpose for their faith - *"...As the Father has sent me, so I send you."* He gives disciples not just a missionary task, but also a lifetime commission. The encounter provides us with the remarkable story of the disciple Thomas. We sometimes call him "Doubting Thomas," and yet there are a number of positive things we can say about him. Few of us realize that Thomas was a spokesperson for the disciples. If Thomas had no faith in Christ at all, he would not have been there at all. He would not have remained among the followers of Jesus. Thomas, despite his new role as "outsider," does not give up the faith. Instead, he expresses genuine, deep-seated doubts while remaining a part of his faith community. As Christians we are led to doubts about many things. True doubts grow naturally out of true faith. Here is the problem. We cannot prove God. If we could prove the existence of God, we would not need to have faith in God, we would know that God exists. Unfortunately, it seems to be the nature of things that we can never have absolute proof of God, at least proof in any scientific or rational sense. Thus we must live by faith. We are intended to live by faith, not by fact. And because we do not have proof, there will always be some 'fleas' of doubt in our faith. This can be good. Doubts can move us to think about our faith and to grow a deeper faith. Honest doubt should not be suppressed. Thomas voiced his doubts about Jesus' miraculous return. But he continued to remain in the midst of the company of the disciples. Even so we should not be afraid of being honest with God, even as we continue in the company of God's faithful people. The conclusion is that we need not get excited about a few 'fleas' of doubt in the faith. As always, I am praying for you and with you daily. May God's love and blessings be always with you, and my love to all of you. Invite someone to join us for worship this and every Sunday!

What is the General Conference and Why Is It Important?

In May, 2016, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church will convene for a 10-day session in Portland, Oregon. The General Conference, which meets every four years, is the body that governs The United Methodist Church and approves the mission, organization, policies, agencies and The Book of Discipline – the document that guides the church in its global mission.

How is it structured? Who votes? What proposals and issues are on the agenda for the 2016 General Conference? How will the decisions of the General Conference affect the local churches, annual conferences, and program and administrative agencies of the church in fulfilling the mission of the church "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?"

On two Saturday mornings, April 23 and April 30, you are invited to participate in “An Overview of the 2016 General Conference. The sessions will be led by Rev. James Pollard, and meet from 9:30 am – 11:30 am on each Saturday at Christ UMC. Conference Lay Leader, Scott Johnson, a delegate to the Conference will also be present for details and questions.

Session 1, on April 23, will describe the organization and process of decision-making of the General Conference, and will begin an overview of the major reports and recommendations on the agenda. You will also be invited to share in a district-wide prayer vigil for the General Conference.

Session 2, on April 30, will continue a review of the various proposals .that will be in consideration.

Although not essential, it will be helpful to you if you download and print a General Conference Guide, which is available at http://s3.amazonaws.com/Website_Properties/general-conference/2016/documents/gc2016-guide.pdf (Note: 50 pages).

You are invited...
To a Recital of Great Masterworks
and Victorian Confections
by Paul Staley, organist
Sunday, April 24 at 4:00 pm
at Christ Church

Sleepover!! Children and Youth! – Saturday, May 14 - 4 pm

We'll be filled with the Spirit for this sleepover – preparing the church for Pentecost Sunday – May 15. Projects include tie dying, banner & pin wheel making, cupcake baking & more! Join us and celebrate the birthday of the church!

Sign up on the bulletin board located at the bottom of the stairs.

Daily Bible Reading – 2016 Shaping Our Life Experience

Excerpts from both the Old and New Testament are included each day. This is a great way to support your ongoing growth in faith and the Christ Church community as well.

April 11: 1 Samuel 7-9; Luke 13:1-21
April 12: 1 Samuel 10-12; Luke 13:22-35
April 13: 1 Samuel 13-14; Luke 14: 1-24
April 14: 1 Samuel 15-16; Luke 14: 25-35
April 15: 1 Samuel 17-18; Luke 15: 1-10
April 16: 1 Samuel 19-21; Luke 15:11-32
April 17: 1 Samuel 22-24; Luke 16:1-18
April 18: 1 Samuel 25-26; Luke 16:19-31
April 19: 1 Samuel 27-29; Luke 17:1-19

In Our Prayers

JOY! Women will be on a retreat at United Methodist House in Chautauqua this weekend, April 15-17. The facilitator for the retreat is the Rev. Mary Martin, retired clergy. Keep them in your prayers. **“Come Away to a Quiet Place” is the theme...but there will be some raucous good fun as well!**

JOY! Stephanie Fisher and Josh Ferry are being married in Valparaiso, Indiana on April 23. Stephanie is the daughter of Mark and Janet Fisher. Her grandparents are Ed and Cindy Fisher.

Elvira Gonzalez – now at Weinberg Campus

Glenn Hurst – Buffalo General Hospital

Guy Castellino’s father, Gaetano, Sr. – ICU at St. Joseph’s Hospital

Patty Keller – upcoming surgery

Nancy & Frank Annunciata - recovering at home

All who are caregivers for others

New pastor appointment process

Alex Dunbar, Lindsey Darling & Ian Johnson* (deployed) – all serve in the US Navy

This Week at Christ Church

Monday, April 11- 7 pm – Outreach Team

Tuesday, April 12 – 7 pm – Christian Ed team

7 pm – Stewardship & Finance Team

Wednesday, April 13 – “Caller” newsletter deadline

2 pm – Hearts & Hands Volunteer Training

6:30 pm – Praise Team Rehearsal

7:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, April 14 - 10 am – Life Lessons with Pastor Darryl

12 noon – Mature Years Ministry

7 pm – Staff Parish Relations Team

Friday, April 15 - 17 **Women’s Retreat at Chautauqua**

Saturday, April 16- 3 pm – Erwin Johnson Memorial Concert

Sunday, April 17 – 4th Sunday of Easter John 21:9-19

“The Charge to Peter “

Opportunities to Make A Difference

Welcome a New Family

Christ Church is preparing to welcome a new refugee family. Staff from Journey's End Refugee Services will be at Christ Church on **Monday, April 18th, at 10:00 a.m.** All who are interested in helping to welcome a new family are encouraged to attend and learn about this opportunity.

Food Pantry - This weeks suggested items

April 10 – Tuna, mushroom soup, pasta

April 17 – Canned Fruits & Vegetables (low sodium)

*All food items, paper products and toiletry items are welcome anytime.
Grocery carts are available in the church for your donations. Thank you!*

We're Collecting! - Check around your home as you do your Spring cleaning!

Baby Clothes – newborn to 6X - *for Baby Blessings*

Clothing Items – new & gently used - *for Clara's Closet*

Women's interview appropriate suits and blouses,

Professional separates, work appropriate shoes, jewelry, scarves,

handbags – reg. & plus sizes - *For Dress For Success*

Clothing & shoes in any condition – *for Planet Aid*

And don't forget the Shredding truck will be here on Sunday, May 15 to safely shred your documents, papers and files. (Provided by Allaire Financial Strategies)

Donate to the Church through your IRA

There is a provision allowed the taxpayer age 70½ or older to make direct distributions from an IRA account for a contribution to a qualified church or charity, bypassing recognition of the distribution as income. For more information see the [original article about charitable distributions from your IRA](#).

You can also donate to Christ Church online!

Visit the website at www.christchurchamherst.org It's easy!

Offer Hospitality - Host the Cafe

Sign up on the bulletin board in the café to host some Sunday morning! Invite your family, friends, ministry team or group to join you!

Share in this Café ministry of hospitality and welcome.

Hearts & Hands Training at CUMC – Wednesday, April 13 at 2 pm



Hearts and Hands - Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Links willing volunteers with older or physically challenged adults for basic services such as transportation for medical appointments, errands or social activities, caregiver respite, companion visits, wellness checks, phone pals and minor home maintenance. Call 406-8311 or visit www.hnhcares.org

Call 406-8311 to sign up for a volunteer orientation (about 1 hour).

* * * * *

It is love for Christ that will enable us to love His children. The “love of Christ”—our love for Him—is the only sufficient motivation that will enable us to stay the course, to continue to feed the flock of God.

* * * * *

DRB/sjp