

Christ United Methodist Church

Harlem at Saratoga

Amherst, New York

“Living Christ’s ways and exploding with love and service”

April 8, 2014 UPDATE

EVERYONE is WELCOME

EVERY SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH

9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship

10:00 – FaithXpress/soul Strength/AOL (Adult Opportunities for Learning)

11:00 – Traditional Style Worship

Bring a Friend this week and share the Love and Grace of God!

Visit us on the World Wide Web at: www.Christchurchamherst.org

716-839-2460

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

Like us on Facebook!

Hi Everyone:

Sunday begins the week around which our faith pivots. Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday are the key points in an 8 day stretch we call Holy Week. Holy Week is the time we tell the central story of Christianity: Jesus’ entry, betrayal, trail, conviction, execution (crucifixion), death, burial and resurrection are the events around which the entire faith revolves. Christianity has less to do with teaching and more to do with experience. Christianity has less to do with what our Lord and Savior said (although this IS important) and much more to do with who Jesus is and what he did. The octave of Palm Sunday through Easter tells of events that happened in a real place in real time with real people (and, dare I add, with real consequences). Holy Week is our core story. Christmas does not matter unless the events of Holy Week unfold. The Church has no birth and no reason to be without the events of Holy Week. In my 30 plus years of ministry one of my deepest concerns for the modern church is a deplorable ignorance of the central events of the Christian faith. Here is my challenge: wherever you are, and whatever else you might be doing MAKE time to remember, to relive, to re-

experience, to commemorate, to walk with Christ through these eight days. Here at Christ Church we will be gathering at all the key points to remember and contemplate the implication of Jesus Christ's offering for us.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was in the 120's. Special appreciation to Ian Webber and Ross Markello for taking pictures all day on Sunday. It is our plan to convert these photos into a digital "photo essay" titled: "Sunday at Christ Church" which will be shown at various places and be available through our web site:

www.christchurchamherst.org. Thank you, also, to Pat Noyes (our communion steward this month) and to the Confirmation Class and mentors who prepared our communion bread.

2. This Sunday is **PALM SUNDAY**. Palm Sunday marks the beginning of HOLY WEEK and the eight days that changed the world. On Palm Sunday Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem to the cheers of palm waving crowds. We will remember by gathering in Crafts Hall, receiving our palm branches and making our way into the sanctuary to begin Holy Week. The reading is the passion narrative from the gospel according to St. Matthew 26:14-27:66. The reading will be done with multiple voices. There will be special music from the choir.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES 2014

Palm Sunday – Procession with Palms at 9:00 and 11:00

Holy Thursday (April 17) worship at 7:00 with Holy Communion

Good Friday (April 18) "Stations of the Cross" at NOON and 7:00 p.m.

EASTER (April 20) Festival celebration at 9:00 and 11:00

3. **KEVIN DURKIN ORGAN RECITAL** is this SUNDAY at 3:00

Kevin will be giving an Organ Recital on the Arrison Organ at Christ Church Palm Sunday, April 13), at 3:00 p.m.

This event is free and open to the public (costs have been underwritten by patrons).

Kevin became our Minister of Music 5 months ago. The program includes works by Josef Rheinberger, J.S. Bach, Daniel Pinkham, Cesar Franck, Samuel Barber and Luis Vierne. An informal reception will follow.

4. In our Prayers this week: remember the family and friends of Jim Luss; Fred Painton, Guy Castellino, Mitch Mooney (and Sissy), Bim Rowlands, Glenn Hurst, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice

Schmidt, Diane Lovejoy and Caroline Hess. Pray for all who are looking for work. Pray for families in transition and in crisis. Remember all who are in Harm's way.

5. FOOD PANTRY is collecting Pasta and Sauce this week. Leave them in the shopping baskets by both main doors.

6. FLOOD BUCKETS – we are still in need of some items to complete the 25 flood buckets. Watch for information on what is needed.

7. The Finance Team would like to thank everyone for their quick and generous response to our “Interim” Pledge campaign. If you have not yet returned your response please do so at your earliest convenience. Christ Church is “Living Christ’s ways and exploding with love and service!” Your support enables us to live out our mission together. **Offering Envelopes** are now available in the Parlor.

8. MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY – sign-up sheets are out and ready to be filled up. Projects as varied as gardening, cooking, sewing, cleaning, painting, moving dirt, and many more are available for our “MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY 2014 – May 18, 2014” It is only 6 weeks away.

9. **WE WANT YOUR SHOES – A REALLY BIG SHOE UPDATE:** Shoe collection is underway. Pick up a collection bag (instructions are on the bag) and gather as many pairs of shoes as possible to support developing countries AND the ministry of Christ church. Shoes may be dropped off at the main entrance of Christ Church now through Make a Difference Day (May 18). Any style, any size, any condition! ***Why not recruit your family, friends and co-workers to help out?*** As of April 6 we have filled nearly 35 bags of shoes (25 pairs per bag makes 875 pairs already collected). We are on our way to 300 bags (or 7500 pairs of shoes!).

10. This Week at Christ Church

Tuesday, April 8 – 7:00 Stewardship and Finance Team

7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, April 9 – 5:30 to 7:30 – Lenten Supper and Study Café/Parlor

Thursday, April 10 – 10:00 a.m. Bible Study

Saturday, April 12 – 10:00 a.m. Crafting for a Cause (Wesley Room)

Sunday, April 13 – 3:00 KEVIN DURKIN Organ recital

Tuesday, April 15 – 7:00 a.m. Men’s pre work breakfast at Sheridan Family

Rest.

11. **EASTER FLOWERS:** Easter flowers can be ordered this Sunday, April 13 following both services in the parlor. Flowers are \$8. If you have any questions please see Beth Reilly Brown.

12. **DRESS OUR PEOPLE:** Will begin sewing clothing for the Ugandan children on Make a Difference Day, Sunday May 18. Donations of Cotton fabric or cotton/polyester blends no less than 1 yard in length, thread, bias tape, and trim are needed. Donations may be placed in or near the Dress our People mailbox outside the church office. Thank you.

13. **CRAFTING FOR A CAUSE:** will gather on Saturday, April 12 in the Wesley Room from 10:00 to Noon. Everyone is welcome to join. Current projects: cooling scarves for the troops, blankets for veterans and Gateway-Longview, mittens and scarves for Seneca Street UMC, and prayer shawls. Please bring whatever you will be working on and join us for fellowship, crafting and refreshments.

14. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK**

April 10 – Larry Burdette and Don Critoph

April 11 – Julie Jackson Janecek and Alexia Malpica

April 12 – Mary Jayne Nehrboss

April 14 – Wendy Johnston

April 15 – Linda Rekate

15. Men's pre-work breakfast group will meet again on April 15 at 7:00 a.m.. **We are moving** our gathering to the **Sheridan Family Restaurant** on Sheridan near Harlem Road. There were 6 of us at the last gathering and there is plenty of room for more.

16. Through the Bible this week's readings:

April 8 – Leviticus 11-12

April 9 – Leviticus 13; Hebrews 10

April 10 – Leviticus 14; Hebrews 11

April 11 – Leviticus 15-16

April 12 – Leviticus 17-18; Hebrews 12

April 13 – Leviticus 19-20; Hebrews 13

April 14 – Leviticus 21-22; Revelation 1

April 15 – Leviticus 23-24; Revelation 2

April 16 – Leviticus 25; Revelation 3

April 17 – Leviticus 26-27; Revelation 4

17. MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES (ministry is what we do for the existing church community)

Opportunity 1: **I would like to build a new Hospitality team. Interested? See me (BJ)**

Opportunity 2: We are putting together a worship “creative” team. Want to be a part of this group? Let BJ know.

Opportunity 3: **A New small group for singles is being discussed: want to be a part of the discussion? Let me know.**

Opportunity 4: New “Senior Adult” ministries and groups are being discussed: want to be a part of the discussion? Let me know.

18. Mission Opportunities: (Mission is what we do for those who are not yet part of the church community)

Opportunity 1: Rev. Davis Matovu (our Uganda Mission partner) will be in the US in April and May and will be preaching at Christ Church on the 2nd Sunday of May. He will be meeting with our Uganda travelers and supporters as well as the new Mission Youth group

Opportunity 2: MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY is only **6 Weeks** from this Sunday. Team leaders have been recruited and sign-up sheets will be going up this week!!

OPPORTUNITY 3: We have begun collecting items for the September Uganda Fund raiser “Silent Auction” baskets. If you have something to donate please bring it to Pastor BJ’s office.

19. Christ Church is blessed with excellent gathering and fellowship space. One of the most popular is the **Café on Sunday morning**. The café provides hot and cold beverages and tasty snacks before and following our Sunday worship gatherings. What makes this work is a lot of volunteers who “Host” the café by preparing coffee/tea, etc. and putting the snacks out and then cleaning up afterwards. Would you like to help in this vital hospitality ministry of our Church? Contact Sally Pollard at 839-2460 or by signing up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Café.

20. COMING EVENTS

Holy Week is April 13 through 20 – watch for more
PALM SUNDAY 9:00 and 11:00 Passion Narrative and procession
with Palms

Holy Thursday (APRIL 17) Communion/choir at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday (April 18) Stations of the Cross at Noon and 7:00 p.m.

EASTER (April 20) Festival Celebrations at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Palm Sunday – April 13 – Kevin Durkin Organ Recital at 3:00 p.m.
May 4 – Dinner in the Country – MYM at the White Inn in Fredonia
May 5 through May 12 – Rev. Davis Matovu of Soul Fishing Ministries and
President of Nexus Seminary, Uganda will be with us.
May 9 – Davis Matovu meets with Mission Youth
May 11 – Rev. Richard Davis Matovu guest preacher
May 16 – Church-Wide Variety Show (sponsored by UMW) – watch for
more
May 18 – Make a Difference Day SIGNUP NOW!
May 19 – Carl Ericson Memorial Service
June 8 – Confirmation Sunday

21. HOLY WEEK begins April 13

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procession with Palms

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22. CHANGE TO CHANGE THE WORLD: Save up your loose change for the
Family Justice Center! We will be collecting change on Make a Difference Day
(May 18) to make a positive transformation in the lives of those affected by
domestic violence.

Parting Thought:

Luke 9:51 is the turning point of the gospel. It says that Jesus resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. It is an acknowledgement that Jesus knows the pain and struggle that awaits him there and makes a choice to do what must be done. I have often wondered, as I wander through Holy Week, if I could ever have made the same choice. Would I have been able to take the steps knowing that each successive step takes me closer to day of painful betrayal, an abortion of justice (called a trial) and my eventual brutal beating, public humiliation and death by crucifixion? I am profoundly glad that I will never have to take Jesus' journey, a journey only Jesus could have taken. But, having said that, I am aware that I have to set my face to Jerusalem on a much smaller scale every day of my life. There are difficult things to face, things to say, work to be done that won't be pleasant and won't be easy. There are situations I will be called to "charge into" and there will be opportunities for justice and fairness to be stood up for and if I don't set my face

to resolutely go where I must go then I will never make the journey. The events of Holy Week not only changed the world through the cosmic work of Christ on the cross, the events of Holy Week change me daily by giving me courage to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and face my mini Jerusalems each and every day of my life. There's an old spiritual that says "Jesus walked this lonesome valley, he had to walk it by himself. Oh nobody else could walk it for him; he had to walk it by himself." The last verse says "You must go and stand your trial; you have to stand it by yourself. Oh, nobody else can stand it for you; you have to stand it by yourself." The difference between the first and last verse is that because Jesus walked the lonesome valley I have courage to walk my own.

I'll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, valley walker

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