

UPDATE

August 19, 2014

Christ United Methodist Church

Harlem Road at Saratoga Road

Amherst, New York

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

EVERYONE is WELCOME

SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH

9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship

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

Or call us at: [716-839-2460](tel:716-839-2460)

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

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Hi Everyone:

I read this morning that a 90-year-old holocaust survivor was arrested for protesting the situation in Ferguson, Missouri. I am not an expert on race relations, interreligious dialogue, or the imbalance of wealth and poverty in the United States. I am a Christ follower. I don’t think purely human solutions will

ever right the wrongs of our society or any human society. It is easy to watch violence around the world, around our own country and around town and despair. Or, what would be worse, to oversimplify both the problems and the solutions. Saying, “why don’t we all just get along” or “live and let live” or “they should get over it” does not address the underlying injustice (or the experience of injustice) that pervades the lives of so many human beings. For example, the typical human response to the current blow-up in Ferguson, MO reveals once again the deep racial divide in our country. On the one side there are attempts to justify the shooting of an unarmed man six (6) times. On another side there is the airing of unjust grievances that date back generations. On still another side is an attempt to address the underlying socioeconomic and historic narrative. On still another side are those who would take advantage of the pain and struggle of others for their own grandstanding, ratings, personal fame and fortune. I am convinced that purely human solutions cannot work. Unless the human heart is changed (and, I am convinced, that change only comes by the power of the Holy Spirit through a committed relationship with Jesus Christ) and we begin to see every human being as a creature of divine worth and deplore every act of violence, there is no way out of these deadly patterns. When I became a Christ follower I did not know the whole story. I thought becoming a follower of Christ was all about the meeting of my needs, my pain, my guilt, etc. As I matured in the faith and began to more deeply read the gospels and the teaching of Jesus, I began to seriously consider what living life in the Kingdom of God might look like. Jesus was not saving me, Jesus was investing me in bringing Kingdom values to all that I am and all that I do. At that point I realized that I had to make a commitment to making this a better planet and working for justice for all persons. I suspect this is the kind of thing Jesus was talking about when he spoke about “counting the cost” of discipleship.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was in the 80s (isn’t it about time to come back to church?). Deep appreciation to Kevin Durkin and his “fantasy and variations on the theme: Isle de Gilligan” postlude. You knocked it out of the park!

We sent Sally and Jim Pollard off on a well-deserved vacation to Alaska.

2. This Sunday is the last of the 7 attitudes that kill the soul. This week we talk about Lovie Howell (Mrs. Thurston Howell III). Lovie represented the last of the deadly sins: Sloth. We generally associate sloth with laziness. The three toed sloth is one of the most inactive creatures on the planet (after most domestic felines). But the older Latin word translated sloth is acedia and acedia means indifference or apathy especially toward things of the spirit. We shall see what God has for us.

Kevin Durkin closed on his house this week and we will have guest organist Adam Baber playing for us this Sunday as Kevin gets settled in.

3. **DID YOU KNOW . . .** that every Sunday message (By Pastor BJ or others) is recorded and is available for listening through our church website? Go to <http://www.christchurchamherst.org> at the top right of the home page is the word "Worship" move the cursor there and a drop screen labeled "Sermons" will appear. Click on "Sermons" and a screen will appear that lists every sermon of this year by date and title and preacher. Click and listen to any and all.

4. Sally Pollard, Sandy Cumming, Janelle Martin and Pastor BJ attended the Global Leadership Summit on Thursday and Friday of last week. We heard teaching on having crucial conversations, on the inner dialogue of a leader, on how passion drives our leadership and much more. The Summit will be held on August 6 and 7 in 2015. Registration is only \$139 (before November 1) a savings of \$80. Why not plan to increase your leadership capacity and join us next summer?

5. In our Prayers: Glenn Hurst spent Saturday night in the hospital but is now home; Edmond Wrycza (Julianna Sabol's father in a nursing home in Fort Erie) soon to be 97 and not doing well; Lois Lewis, Barbara Clinton, Mac Sabol, Dave Mitchell, Brian Martin (his bone marrow transplant is scheduled for September 17 – **here's another way to help: Brian is in need of platelets people can donate through Roswell – it is a lot like giving blood only it takes a little longer**); Donna Hammond, Tom Davis, Caroline Hess, Fred Panton, Guy Castellino, Mitch Mooney, Bim Rowlands, Glenn Hurst, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice Schmidt, and Diane Lovejoy. Remember those who are serving in the armed forces (especially Alex Dunbar and Ian Johnson). Pray for the citizens of the Ukraine and Gaza and Israel. Pray for the West African nations that are battling the Ebola virus. Pray for the ongoing situation in Iraq. **Pray for our college students who are making their way back to**

classes in the next week to ten days. Pray for our primary and secondary students and their teachers as they begin another year.

6. TREASURER NEEDED – We've been praying for someone to come forward to fill the vital position of church treasurer. Familiarity with Quick Books would be helpful. Most of the "clerking" work is done by the Office Manager (entering bills, printing checks, and mailing payments, calling in payroll). The treasurer needs to sign checks, oversee the accounts, and report to appropriate groups. If you are feeling a calling to this work please contact pastor BJ (839-3260) as soon as possible.

7. UGANDA SILENT BASKET AUCTION – Fundraiser theme Baskets: Donations of Theme baskets or individual items are needed for the Spaghetti Dinner scheduled for **September 26**. Theme suggestions include: Movie night, Kid's crafts, snack attack, pet, book club, holiday, etc. Gift cards are also welcome. Leave theme baskets or other items in Pastor BJ's Office. **THANK YOU FOR THE DONATIONS SO FAR!!!**

8. SUMMER FILM FEST: This week: "The Stranger", which profiles three immigrant stories and includes interviews with national Christian leaders. All are welcome to join the conversation as we explore stories of migration and the surprising ways God works through the stranger. Film is at 10:00 in the Wesley Room.

9. There are now 10 of us signed up for **Uganda 2015**. Three high school students, three young adults (early 20's) and four of us older folks. I have room for a few more and could use an additional "older person." Is God calling you to join us? Let me know.

10. DRESS OUR PEOPLE – All are invited to help cut fabric into patterns to be sewn into clothing for children in Uganda. We will be meeting **Thursday, August 28 at 1:00** in Youth Hall (downstairs). This party is BYOCS . . . (bring your own cutting shears).

11. MISSION RECOGNITION PIN – Each year the United Methodist Women of Christ Church give a special Mission Recognition Pin to an individual who works for and is committed to mission. This year, at the 11:00 a.m. worship service on August 31, the 2014 recipient of the UMW Mission Pin will be revealed! Plan to attend worship that day to help us honor that special person.

12. This Week at Christ Church:

Today at 2:00 – Asbury Pointe Discussion group with Pastor BJ (at Asbury Pointe)

Thursday, August 21 – 9:30 Caller Collation in Wesley Room

10:00 Bible Study

13. The Trustees are having a special meeting to approve the contract on the new Roof following worship this Sunday (Noonish or whenever worship ends).

14. COMING IN SEPTEMBER

September 3 – Choir Rehearsal Resumes at 7:30. First Worship will be the 14th (followed by a party at the Fishers)

September 6 – Valerie Elbersen/David Lewandowski Wedding

September 7 – FaithXpress/Christian Education celebration “launch” gathering.

Disciple Bible Study resumes at 6:00

September 12 – Michelle Brunner/Jeremiah Cordero Wedding

September 13 – Mission Youth gathering at 4:00 at the Church (**note change of date and time**)

September 19-21 -- UMW Women’s Retreat at Camp Asbury

September 26 – Uganda Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction

October 5 -- Pastor BJ and Joe Fort depart for Uganda

15. Happy Birthday this week:

August 20 – Gene Kremzier

August 21 – Kathy Webb

August 23 – Nancy Hess, Robert Nachbar (89), Clarence Spitzer

August 24 – Michelle Panasiewicz, Megan Weaver

August 25 – Chris Johnson

August 26 – Jeffrey Gelormini, Marcia Miller

August 27 – Dave Bechtel, Sandy Cumming, Christopher Pollard

16. Happy Anniversary this week:

August 22 – Brad and Peggy Bermudez (33)

August 23 – Mac and Julianna Sabol (30)

August 24 – Glenn and Beverley Hurst (51)

August 26 – Bill and Andrea Kearney (53)

17. Through the Bible: this week's readings:

August 19 – Psalms 103-104 and Galatians 4

August 20 – Psalms 105-106 and Galatians 5

August 21 – Psalms 107-109 and Galatians 6

August 22 – Psalms 110-112 and 2 Corinthians 1

August 23 – Psalms 113-115 and 2 Corinthians 2

August 24 – Psalms 116-118; 2 Corinthians 3

August 25 – Psalms 119

August 26 – 2 Corinthians 4-5

August 27 – Psalms 120-122 and 2 Corinthians 6

August 28 – Psalms 123-125 and 2 Corinthians 7

18. ON THE MISSION FRONT:

1. **UGANDA 2014:** Pastor BJ Norrix and Joe Fort are under **7 weeks** away (on Monday) from their mission journey to Uganda and Kenya (depart October 5 & return October 23). Please keep them and our Ugandan partners in your prayers as they prepare. They will be teaching and preaching in multiple sites, presiding at a Nexus Graduation, opening a new teaching location and reconnecting with our friends there. They will be travelling to Mombasa, Kenya (on the Indian Ocean) to work with a group of Anglicans. A **Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction** in support of this journey will be held September 26. Do you have items for the auction? Please leave them in the Pastor's office.

2. **Uganda 2015 youth experience** (June 28 through July 10, 2015). Deadline for declaring interest in this journey was extended to **September 15, 2014 – I'm holding out for a few more applications.** Pastor BJ has application forms available. This journey will have at least 7 persons under 20 (possibly more) and some parents travelling to Uganda to work with our projects there. For more information contact Pastor BJ.

19. MISSION YOUTH – FALL LAUNCH EVENT – Saturday, September 13 at 4:00 p.m. We will have pizza, bible study, and lots of other fun stuff. Everyone 7th grade and up are invited and welcome to be a part of this new group. MISSION YOUTH (MY) Group has replaced the former Christ Church UMYF as Christ Church's Youth Group. The group will meet once a month for an extended time over a meal and an additional time each month for a hands on mission project. Contact Pastor BJ for more information. **NOTE: this is a different date and time than what was announced last spring!**

Parting Thought

The Erie Country Fair is concluded and the Great New York State Fair begins this week. Football preseason is underway. Baseball pennant races are heating up. Back to School sales are in full swing. College students are returning (or going for the first time) to their campuses. All of this suggests to the experienced Western New Yorker that summer is about to draw to a close (boo hiss, etc). We are a bit compulsive about our summer "away" time. A significant percentage of the Christ Church community are away on their boats, at their cabins, or just on the road for much of the summer. This is normal Western New York behavior. It is not

accidental that “National Back to Church Sunday” is September 14 – how convenient to have this event on the weekend most of us are getting back to our “normal (whatever normal is)” routines. Whatever the summer looked like, there is a different rhythm to life after Labor Day. There is a return to work, a return to routine and a return to the “non-summer” spaces and places of our lives. You will notice some adjustments and experimental changes around Christ Church when you return. I am looking forward to having everyone home and I am very much looking forward to focusing our worship times in September on the deepening and developing of our inner lives. I am praying that everyone enjoys the fine weather (and dodges the rain drops) and I look forward to our moving forward together.

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, autumnal anticipator