

Christ United Methodist Church

August 27, 2014 UPDATE

**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

Dr. B.J.’s blog is www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com
Like us on Facebook!

Hi Everyone:

I noticed that some American church foundation has declared September 14 as “National Back to Church” Sunday. Nice idea. The foundation promotes this with videos about how to “go back to church” and for churches on how to welcome those returning. The flaw in the idea is the assumption that everyone goes “back to church.” What about the significantly high percentage of Buffalonians who have never, in any intentional way, been to church? Even so there is merit in declaring a “general amnesty” for those who have wandered away from worship for a few months or more extended time. People leave for a variety of reasons: personal issues, someone said something and their feelings got hurt, don’t like the new pastor, didn’t like the previous pastor, the music is too loud (or not loud enough) or too old or too new or “I’ve been coming for 25 years and they keep singing the same unfamiliar hymns” or the pastor mumbles his punch lines or

seems to talk about Jesus too much (or not enough). So, here is my proposal. No matter how long you've been away, no matter why you left, no matter why you have stayed away, we at Christ Church promise to NOT SAY "where have you been" and WILL SAY "it is great to see you! Welcome home". Spread the word and prepare to welcome and be welcomed any Sunday but specifically on September 14. It would be a great day to invite new friends and old, neighbors, co-workers, golf buddies, sewing circles, and random strangers to join us for worship and check out this Jesus person and who he claims to be.

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was in the low 80's. We finished the 7 attitudes that kill the soul and are no longer slothful. Special appreciation goes to Kathy Weaver (guest Liturgist) Lisa Lawson (guest children's moment provider) and Adam Baber (guest organist). Everyone did a great job!

2. This Sunday I am preaching a message titled "Inside Out". Religion brings change to a person's life by imposing laws that control behavior from the outside. Following Jesus is about being remade from the inside out. As we become more Christ-like our inner nature is transformed and this transformation is revealed in a change in our values, priorities, attitudes and behaviors. Take a look at Romans 12:1-2 and Matthew 7:15-20.

The Summer Film Fest concludes this Sunday at 10:00 a.m. with "Justice for the Poor". Jesus' life and teaching shows a deep compassion toward the poor and the marginalized. What can we learn from the poor? What is our responsibility to care for the poor and to advocate for justice on their behalf? All are welcome. We meet in the Wesley Room.

UMW MISSION RECOGNITION PIN – will be presented this Sunday at 11:00 a.m. The Christ Church UMW special Mission Recognition pin goes to an individual who works for and is committed to mission.

DID YOU KNOW . . . that every Sunday message (By Pastor BJ or others) is recorded and is available for listening through our church web site? 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.

3. September 1 is this MONDAY. It is back to school and other stuff time . . . Here is what is coming as we move into September:

September 3 – 7:30 Christ Church Choir rehearsal resumes

September 6 – Valerie Elbersen/David Lewandowski Wedding

September 7 – How do you Imagine God? Has your image of God changed over time? Adults, youth and kids are invited to come and share their story at 10:00 in Crafts Hall. Add your art work to the Clothesline Gallery!

September 7 – Disciple Bible Study resumes at 6:00

September 12 – Michelle Brunner/Jeremiah Cordero Wedding

September 13 – MISSION YOUTH – Meet at 4:00 for dinner; Bible study; fun and planning.

September 14 – National Back to Church Sunday (isn't it about time?)

September 14 – FaithXpress and Soul Strength resume

September 14 – **Bible and book bag blessing**: bring your Bibles and book bags on Sunday September 14 for a special blessing as a new school year begins.

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

September 26 – Spaghetti Dinner/Silent Auction (over 30 baskets) to support the 2014 Uganda Mission Team

September 27 – 2015 Uganda Mission Team meeting at 10:00 to 2:00 p.m. at Christ Church. There will be at least 11 of us traveling June 28 through July 10.

4. In our prayers: In our Prayers: Glenn Hurst; 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.

5. **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 pay roll). 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.

6. **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!!!**

7. **DRESS OUR PEOPLE:** We will be cutting fabric into patterns to be sewed into clothing for Ugandan orphans on Thursday, August 28 at 1:00 p.m. in the Youth Hall (downstairs). Please bring your own cutting shears.

8. **Advance Notice:** We have been working on scheduling a concert that would feature all of the groups who rehearse at Christ Church. The "350 Saratoga" Concert will be held on the first Sunday of November at 3:00 in the afternoon. It will feature selections from the "Red Blazer Chorus"; the Bel Canto choirs; the Ballroom Dance studio; the Christ Church Choir and praise band and some select surprises. Admission will be a canned or boxed item for the food pantry.

9. **Speaking of November** – Ron Corsaro's trio will be doing a concert on Friday November 7 (coffee house format) as a fund raiser for Mission Youth (in particular the 2015 mission team) . . . plan to come and enjoy the evening.

10. **YES we are still seeking a treasurer.** This volunteer ministry position needs to be filled by September 15 (and if Pastor BJ hasn't called you to step up don't be too surprised when he does). If you have knowledge of QuickBooks (or can learn

quickly) and are good with numbers . . . 839-3260 is the number call (operator is standing by now!).

11. This Week at Christ Church:

Thursday August 28 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
1:00 p.m. Dress our People
Friday August 29 – Game Night 7:30p.m. in Wesley Room
Tuesday September 2 – 2:00 Pastor BJ at Asbury Pointe
7:30 Trustees

12. The Trustees are having a special meeting to approve the contract on the new Roof at 7:30 on September 2.

13. Happy Birthday this week:

August 27 – Dave Bechtel; Sandy Cumming, Chris Pollard
August 28 – Shaun Carier
August 29 – Heather Loliger
August 30 – John Yungbluth

14. Happy Anniversary this week:

None listed for the week ahead

15. through the Bible 2014

August 27 – Psalms 120-122 and 2 Corinthians 6
August 28 – Psalms 123-125 and 2 Corinthians 7
August 29 – Psalms 126-128 and 2 Corinthians 8
August 30 – Psalms 129-131 and 2 Corinthians 9
August 31 – Psalms 132-134 and 2 Corinthians 10
September 1 – Psalms 135-136 and 2 Corinthians 11
September 2 – Psalms 137-139
September 3 – Psalms 140-142 and 2 Corinthians 12
September 4 – Psalms 143-145 and 2 Corinthians 13

16. ON THE MISSION FRONT:

1. **UGANDA 2014:** Pastor BJ Norrix and Joe Fort are under **6 weeks** away 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 5 persons under 20 (possibly more) and some parents travelling to Uganda to work with our projects there. For more information contact Pastor BJ.

17. 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. All youth, 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.

18. There is a special session of the Upper New York Annual Conference on Saturday, September 6 at 10:00 a.m. at the Rush United Methodist Church (Rochester area) in Syracuse at 2:00 and on Sunday September 7 at 3:00 in Saratoga Springs. The purpose of this Special Session is to consider the purchase and renovation of a building on Henry Clay Blvd. in Liverpool, New York. This building will be used as the Upper New York Conference Office and will be the location of the Upper New York Conference Episcopal Offices as well.

Parting Thought

I have a confession to make. Here it is. I am not a very patient man. I don't like to wait in line, I don't like to sit in traffic and I want things to be the way I want them to be and I want them to be that way yesterday. I have found that my growing edge, spiritually, is actually learning to wait. I have found in my 30+ years of ministry that I need to wait for several things before I can proceed with what I think my plans might be. First I need to wait on God. I don't do anything for God

(and neither do you). Biblically God works through us. God uses my voice, my hands, my feet to do some amazing things but I must remember that it is God who is at work in and through me. Therefore, I have to wait for God's hand to move me. I do this waiting in prayer, in bible study, in spiritual conversations, in worship and in accountable relationships. These are the themes of my messages through September. I have also discovered that I have to wait for God to move in other people as well. No one flies solo on the Christian journey. God moves in me and God moves in others and discovering that movement in others is how new life and new possibilities begin to emerge. It is quite exciting and, at the same time, can be profoundly frustrating (because, as Freddy Mercury so aptly put it "I want it all, I want it all, I want it all and I want it NOW!") But, I am learning. The Bible (in Isaiah) says "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. . ." I am learning and I find that the better I get at waiting the stronger my spirit grows.

Have a great week!

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, patiently impatient patient