

Weekly Update: August 30, 2016

A Personal Word ...

Understanding the religious environment:

As Christ UMC enters a year of discerning the leading of God for the future ministry of the congregation, it's important to take note of some broad trends in America's religious landscape. The Pew Research Center for Religion and Public Life is a recognized reputable source for information on the changes and trends that are affecting all religious traditions in the United States. Understanding the trends can inform Christ UMC's life and mission in our own community.

Some findings in the 2014 survey report that catch my attention are:

- “The Christian share of the U.S. population is declining, while the number of U.S. adults who do not identify with any organized religion is growing...”
- “While the drop in Christian affiliation is particularly pronounced among young adults, it is occurring among Americans of all ages.”
- “...the major new survey of more than 35,000 Americans by the Pew Research Center finds that the percentage of adults (ages 18 and older) who describe themselves as Christians has dropped by nearly eight percentage points in just seven years, from 78.4% in an equally massive Pew Research survey in 2007 to 70.6% in 2014.”
- “While many U.S. religious groups are aging, the unaffiliated are comparatively young – and getting *younger*, on average, over time. As a rising cohort of highly unaffiliated Millennials reaches adulthood, the median age of unaffiliated adults has dropped to 36, down from 38 in 2007 and far lower than the general (adult) population's median age of 46.⁴ By contrast, the median age of mainline Protestant adults in the new survey is 52 (up from 50 in 2007), and the median age of Catholic adults is 49 (up from 45 seven years earlier)”
- “...the number of religiously unaffiliated adults has increased by roughly 19 million since 2007. There are now approximately 56 million religiously unaffiliated adults in the U.S., and this group – sometimes called religious “nones” – is more numerous than either Catholics or mainline Protestants, according to the new survey. Indeed, the unaffiliated are now second in size only to evangelical Protestants among major religious groups in the U.S.”
- “The new survey finds that the atheist and agnostic share of the “nones” has grown to 31%. Those identifying as “nothing in particular” and describing religion as unimportant in their lives continue to account for 39% of all “nones.” But the share identifying as “nothing in particular” while also affirming that religion is either “very” or “somewhat” important to them has fallen to 30% of all “nones.””
- “While the mainline Protestant share of the population is significantly smaller today than it was in 2007, the evangelical Protestant share of the population has remained comparatively stable (ticking downward slightly from 26.3% to 25.4% of the population). As a result, evangelicals now constitute a clear majority (55%) of all U.S. Protestants. In 2007, roughly half of Protestants (51%) identified with evangelical churches”.
- The United Methodist Church (UMC) continues to be the largest denomination within the mainline Protestant tradition. Currently, 25% of mainline Protestants identify with the UMC, down slightly from 28% in 2007.

Why do I call these findings to our attention? Because they help us to understand the “current reality” in the culture in which we live and seek to minister as a church. I've quoted the hymn-verse before...“New occasions teach new duties; time makes ancient good uncouth...” How will we address our new occasions? What “new duties” will God call forth from us?
-Jim

Quotes are from the Pew Forum website. To access the full report, see:

<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>

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.

August 30: Psalms 142-144; 1 Corinthians 10:14-33

August 31: Psalms 145-147; 1 Corinthians 11:1-15

September 1: Psalms 148-150; 1 Corinthians 11:16-34

September 2: Proverbs 1-2; 1 Corinthians 12

September 3: Proverbs 3-4; 1 Corinthians 13

September 4: Proverbs 5-6; 1 Corinthians 14:1-20

September 5: Proverbs 7-8; 1 Corinthians 14:21-40

In Our Prayers

Joy! New Vision Circle attended the recent concert by the Friends of Harmony in Island Park featuring David Lawson, and many members of Christ Church enjoyed great music at the Lewiston Jazz Festival. Ron Corsaro is a planner of this event, ably assisted by Scott Smith and Rubin Malpica. *Thanks for bringing music and joy to many people!*

Alicia Ticconi – upcoming surgery for breast cancer

Carolyn Day, Peter Zaleski, Janet Hill, Susan Schauer, John Yungbluth – recovering at home

Jean Ericson – at home at Asbury Pointe

Carol Corsaro, Patty Keller, Charles Terranova, Richard Mestler, Guy Ferrelli, Fred & Lynda Painton, Gaetano Castellino Sr., Castellino Family

Elvira Gonzalez –Bristol Village on Clarence Center Rd.

Glenn Hurst and Florence Stengel – residing at Beechwood Continuing Care

Chris Maliken, Alex Dunbar, Lindsey Darling & Ian Johnson – all serve in the US Navy

Louisiana flooding victims *

College students and children and youth preparing to return to school.

Teachers and administrators too!

This Week at Christ Church

Monday, August 29 – 7 pm Christian Education Team
7 pm – Outreach Team

Tuesday, August 30 - 9 am Christian Education Team - room preparation
7 pm – Church Council

Thursday, September 1 – 7 pm - Circle of Joy at Canalside
7 pm – Elizabeth Circle at Mary Ball's home

Friday, September 2 – 10 am – Sorting the Outreach closet

Sunday, September 4 - 9 am – Informal Praise w/ Communion
11 am – Traditional Worship w/ Communion
Jeremiah 18:1-11 & Luke 14:25-33

Opportunities to Make A Difference

Journey's End Refugee Services

On September 15th, Christ Church will welcome an Afghan family of 5 to Buffalo. On Friday, September 2nd, at 10:00 a.m. we'll be sorting and organizing donated items at church. Help is welcome! Volunteers will also be needed to help move furniture and household items, set up an apartment, and welcome the family. A moving date will be set soon. If you can help in any way, please call Peggy Bermudez at 626-4897.

Uganda Wells of Love

An anonymous donor has generously agreed to make a matching gift to the Wells of Love project sponsored by our friend Rev. Davis Matovu from Uganda!! All gifts *up to \$5,000* will be matched to provide clean, safe drinking water to remote areas of Uganda. Your gift makes a difference! Donations and questions can be directed to the church office or Kathy Weaver.



Food Pantry - suggested items:

August 28 – Juices & Powdered Drinks

September 4 – Cereal – Hot, Cold, Bars

Hunger doesn't take a summer vacation!

Our food carts have been low. Food items are always needed.

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

Café – Food donations are welcome in the Café for use on Sunday mornings – baked goods, lemonade, fruit & cookies are useful!

Hospitality & Welcome

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.

***Relief and Clean Up Help for Louisiana**

Monetary donations to UMCOR for relief efforts may be made to Christ Church and designated **Louisiana Flooding Advance #901670** in the memo line.

Cleaning supplies for flood buckets will be collected all during September. The complete list is available on the church website and below. www.christchurchamherst.org

Cleaning Bucket

1 5-gallon bucket with re-sealable lid Buckets from fast-food restaurants or bakeries can be used if washed and cleaned. Do not use buckets that have stored chemicals such as paint or pool cleaner. Advertisements on the outside are acceptable.

Liquid laundry detergent two 25-oz. or one 50-oz. bottle(s) only

Liquid household cleaner 12-16 oz. liquid cleaner that can be mixed with water no spray cleaners

Dish soap 16-28 oz. bottle, any brand

1 can air freshener aerosol or pump

1 insect-repellent spray 6-14 oz. aerosol or spray pump with protective cover

1 scrub brush plastic or wooden handle

18 cleaning wipes handi-wipes or reusable wipes no terry cleaning towels –
remove from packaging

7 sponges no cellulose sponges due to mold issues remove from wrapper
5 scouring pads remove from wrapper **no** stainless steel, Brillo pads or SOS pads
(nothing with soap built in)

50 clothespins

Clothesline two 50-ft. or one 100-ft. cotton or plastic

24-roll heavy-duty trash bags 33-45 gallon sizes-
remove from the box

5 dust masks

2 pairs kitchen dishwashing gloves should be durable enough for multiple uses
remove from packaging

1 pair work gloves cotton with leather palm or all leather

A complete bucket costs approx. \$65

Money donations will also be received – put flood bucket in the memo line.

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Coming...



Community Youth – Sunday, Sept. 11
Middle & High School **1 pm**

Build A Hovercraft!

Be a human hockey puck!

With Mark Swihart –

Professor of Biological & Chemical Engineering at SUNY Buffalo

Invite your friends and neighbors. All youth are welcome!

Men's Group – Architecture tour

The “Masters of American Architecture” tour in downtown Buffalo has been rescheduled for Saturday, September 17. We will meet at 8:45a.m. sharp at Christ Church and carpool downtown to the Buffalo Niagara Visitor Center (Washington & Clinton Streets). The tour begins at 10 a.m.

Everyone is welcome! Wear comfortable shoes and weather-appropriate clothing, as the tour will take place rain or shine! After the tour, we will have lunch at 716 Restaurant.

For more information, visit www.explorebuffalo.org. The tour cost is \$15 per person, paid by check (made out to Christ UMC) or cash to the church office by September 12. This will be a great day for fun and facts about our hometown! Call Bob Snyder (741-6901) with any questions or concerns. Bob recently took this tour and can testify that it is a great experience!

Day of Dance Fundraiser

On Saturday, September 24, Christ Church and USA Dance WNY Chapter #3013 will be raising funds to support Habitat for Humanity Buffalo, Family Promise of WNY, Alzheimer's Association.

The event will be held at Christ Church and will include hourly dance lessons for children and adults from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. for \$5 per lesson. A Double Dance will be held in the evening from 7:30 – 10 p.m. featuring Ballroom Dance in Crafts Hall and Swing Dance in Youth Hall. Admission for the Double Dance is \$5.

Throughout the day and evening, Christ Church will offer concessions for sale in the Café. To make this event a success, please sign up to volunteer or provide items for concessions. Sign-up sheets are located on the Outreach bulletin board in Crafts Hall. Thank you for your generous support of this event!

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“What is joy without sorrow? What is success without failure? What is a win without a loss? What is health without illness? You have to experience each to appreciate the other. There is always going to be suffering. It's how you look at your suffering, how you deal with it, that will define you.”

~ Mark Twain