



Weekly Update: December 14, 2015

Christ United Methodist Church

Harlem at Saratoga Rd.

Amherst, NY 14226

"Living Christ's Ways and Exploding With Love and Service."

Church office hours - Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm

SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH

Praise Worship at 9am

Traditional Worship at 11 am

10 am: FaithXpress - Children

Apprentice - Youth

A.O.L.-Adult Opportunities for Learning –

“Advent - Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Advent & Christmas with Charles Wesley - based on his hymns

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IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Church Conference

Monday, December 21

7:00 pm

Purpose: To elect Trustees and receive a leadership development report.

All members of the church are encouraged to participate.

Church Council meets at 7:30 pm

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A word from Pastor Darryl

This past Sunday – the Third Sunday of Advent - we continued our reflections on our holy adventure toward the preparation for the Celebration of the Birth of the Christ Child – the Season of Christmas awaits! Our reflection was on the sermon topic “Watching and Waiting.” Watching and waiting are a perennial part of life. Such intervals challenge us and reveal a great deal about the structure of our character, the strength of our love, and the depth of our faith. Various writers refer to such waiting and watching as “The Test” or “The Ordeal” or “The Moment of Truth.” To watch and wait is to stand on a threshold, poised betwixt and between. It is to exist in an interim status, to feel suspended between what has been and what will be, to confront and affirm new meanings that take us beyond cherished opinions and familiar points of reference. Advent is such a threshold – a season of passage and discovery, a time of waiting and watching. Advent celebrates the coming of God, the entrance of the Holy One into human history in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ’s coming always creates a threshold, for through him God opens new horizons, inaugurates a new age, and so unsettles us into greater becoming and deeper understanding that we experience a new life. In this new life we leave what once was and we venture forth to what is yet to be fulfilled. So watching and waiting continue to be threshold experiences in our spiritual quest and journey of faith, even as they are part of life itself. No one can avoid them. To each of us come experiences and intersections where we must watch and wait. We wait for the answer, the outcome. We wait for verdicts to be handed down. We wait for school to begin, for weddings to take place, for babies to be born. We watch for the postal delivery worker and for the plane’s arrival. We wait for the phone to ring, for the word of promotion, for the pain to ease, for the doctor’s diagnosis, to stand watch over a sick child. We wait for the storm to end, for the light to come, we wait for Christmas morning. Scientists wait for the results of the experiment. Farmers wait for the harvest. Space crews and technicians wait for the launch and then the final orbit to be reached. Photographers wait for just the right light and the right composition. Novelists wait for words that will develop characters and delineate plot. Bakers wait for dough to rise and, in lonely forest lookout towers, Rangers watch for the first sign of fire. Standing watch demands an awareness of surroundings, for even when it seems as though there is nothing out there to watch for, we must be ready for anything. Standing watch builds anticipation. Children wait for summer and teenagers wait for their drivers’ licenses. Parents wait through all kinds of vigils and crises. And sometimes we even wait to die. So what does Christ’s coming mean for us and for the world? We keep vigil at Bethlehem, that we may hold God’s light in Christ against the present darkness, that we may stand for truth, share his love with those who have given up on love, and live in eternity’s sunrise. So be ready, to be on alert, to be spiritually alive, to watch and wait expectantly in this holy season of Advent!

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!

Happening at church...

Beth Sweet lit the candles on the Advent Wreath at the 9am worship service and **The Lopez Family- Pam, John, Ryan & Becca**, lit the candles at the 11 am worship service. Becca and Ryan are Apprentices in our Confirmation group.

Our worship was enriched by the music of **Jeff Crane**, our guest organist & choir director. His wife, Eileen, sang with the choir. Jeff will be playing again at the 11 am worship service on December 20th.

The Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who brought gifts for recipients of our Giving Tree- Habitat for Humanity families, Veterans, Family Justice Center and Primera Iglesias UMC (3 Kings celebration).

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Food Pantry

The Outreach Team is collecting the following items for our local food pantries:

December 20 - Canned Fruits & Vegetables

Hearts and Hands

Hearts and Hands is a not-for-profit, neighbor-helping-neighbor organization which pairs volunteers with care receivers for door through door transportation for medical appointments and routine errands. Volunteers also can provide companion visits/caregiver respite, wellness checks/phone pals, and minor home repairs and maintenance. Christ Church is a partner church. **If you or a family member or friend need some help, call 401-8311. If you'd like to become an H & H volunteer call the same number.**

Coming this Sunday, December 20...

4th Sunday of Advent

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Sunday, December 20 - "Christmas Presence"

Christmas pageant featuring children, youth and adults and young musicians.

Join us for the Wrap Party at noon in Crafts Hall!

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Christmas Eve - Thursday, December 24th

9 pm Christmas Eve Worship

"The Evening of Christmas"

In our prayers...

Betty Kreib celebrated her 90th birthday!

Richard Mestler and **Chris Klenk** - both having medical procedures this week.

Kayleen Hannon - concussion from an accident at cheerleading practice

Keep **Nicky Sebastiano** in your prayers.

Elvira Gonzalez - brother died on December 11 in Cuba. He was 85 years old.

Tom and Evalise Swist - baby **Sophia Evelyn** was born on November 25th. Sophia joins her big brother, **Johnathan**.

Happening this week:

Tuesday, December 15 - 10 :30 am - Rachel Circle meets at
Asbury Pointe

Wednesday, December 16 - **Choir**
Rehearsal

Thursday, December 17 - 10 am Life Lessons with
Pastor Darryl

Saturday, December 19 - 10 am Christmas Pageant rehearsal

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Coming on Sunday, December 20....

"Christmas Presence"

Christmas Pageant - 11 am
12 noon - **Wrap Party**, Crafts Hall

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Jeremiah spoke in the name of the Lord: "the days are surely coming when I will fulfill the promise I made to Israel." It was a promise of "a future of justice, freedom, reconciliation and wholeness." And the people of Jeremiah's day didn't get that message any more than the people of our day get it.

But make no mistake--the message of Christmas is a promise--the promise of a future of justice, freedom, reconciliation and wholeness.

Christ Church is a Community Center for Faith & Service

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DRB/sjp

