



Christ United Methodist Church - Amherst, NY

"Making Connections & Offering Opportunities for Faith, Love & Service"

## Weekly Update – December 18



### *Open Horizons*

This is a time of year when the mind stretches and opens. I am not sure if this is related to the opening of the environment with barren trees and open hillsides, less daylight and so more time for reflection, darker nights with bright stars and moon, or the mesmerizing dance and glow of the hearth fire. Whatever it is, it creates the circumstances for big, deep thoughts.

I think it little surprise that this is the time when we are immersed spiritually and liturgically in prophecies, angelic visitations, and ultimately setting and circumstance of the nativity. They ask deep questions probing into our faith as reflected in our lives. They invite our imaginations to stretch toward the horizon of possibility, of something new, of hope born. Stories have grown relative to this with figures like George Bailey or Ebenezer Scrooge, visited by angel or apparition encouraging such deep thoughts and analysis ultimately leading to change. Perhaps it is the same for us as we hear the familiar story of God's entry into history in the person of Jesus.

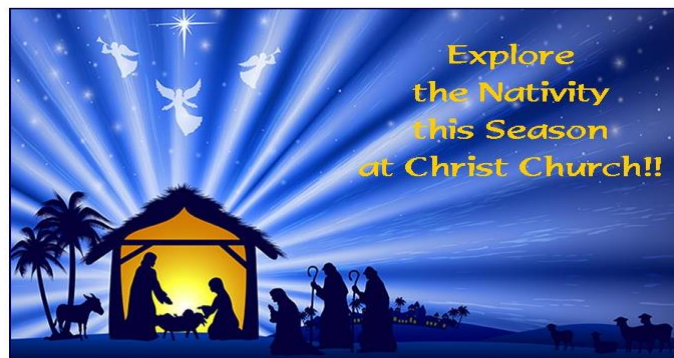
Whether it is looking out at the horizon, upon the night stars, at the hearth fire, or the familiar story - may our minds stretch, our imaginations dance, and our hearts be open to the possibility. May we let those big thoughts and hopes grow with the light of each day. And may our lives be shaped by them, shaped into Christ. **-Pastor Daven**

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## Pledge Update

Thank you to all who have participated in Vision 2020. We truly are seeing how God is using Christ Church to help us and others see hope and possibility. If you have not yet had a chance to respond, please do so at your earliest convenience. We are putting the final touches on our plan for ministry for 2020 and every single pledge in any amount helps us to plan and achieve our goals for Vision 2020.

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## *Music & Meditation*

Friday, December 20

5:30 - 6 p.m.

Join us for our final Advent Music & Meditation - 30 minutes of meditative songs, Scripture reading, and prayer in a quiet, candlelit setting.

## *Christmas Eve*

"A Candlelight Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols"

Tuesday, December 24

8 p.m.

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## *Ways to Make a Difference*

### ***Food & Supplies Needed for Local Families***

In addition to the food that goes to local food pantries, Christ Church serves local families in need. The following items are needed: **cleaning supplies, paper towels, toilet paper, personal hygiene products, deodorant, and soap.**

The Tiger's Den is **collecting pasta (wheat and gluten-free), tomato products (spaghetti sauce, tomato paste, crushed and diced tomatoes), and cereal (not Cheerios, please)** during **December**. also request **paper bags** and **reusable shopping bags (NOT plastic bags)** to pack groceries.

Collecting carts at Christ Church are marked for Tiger's Den Food Pantry and for local families.

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### *This Week at Christ Church*

*Church Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. – 9 am to 5 pm, Thurs. – 9am to Noon*

#### **Wednesday, December December 18**

- 7pm- Choir Rehearsal

#### **Thursday, December 19**

- 1pm - 'Thirstaid' Thursday Study
- 5:30pm - Men's Group Dinner & Theater Outing

#### **Friday, December 20**

- **5:30pm - Music & Meditation**

#### **Sunday, December 22**

- **10am - Worship Service**
- 11am - FaithXpress & Community Youth Group
- 11:30am - Choir Dress Rehearsal

***Supervised Child Care, Sky Box and Family Worship Space available***

Visit the **Café Connection** each Sunday morning and enjoy delicious, fair trade, **New Day Coffee**, morning treats and friendly conversation.

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***Daily Bible Reading – 2019 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.

December 19: Micah 1-3; Revelation 10

December 20: Micah 4-5; Revelation 11

December 21: Micah 6-7; Revelation 12

December 22: Nahum 1-3; Revelation 13

December 23: Habakkuk 1-3; Revelation 14

December 24: Zephaniah 1-3; Revelation 15

December 25: Haggai 1-2; Revelation 16

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***In Our Healing Prayers***

**Sheldon Merritt** - surgery today

**Herb Wilber** - surgery on Friday

**David Brown, Barbara Carier, Helen Peacock, Mary Parsons, Dick Ball, Al Wrisley, Bruce Burr, Sissie Mooney, Dave Mitchell, Barbara Weaver, Jan Rhinehart, Pat Zaleski, Inez Beachley, Joe & Carolyn Day, Bob Varian, Inez Beachley, John Ladowski, Chrissy Merrill, Joyce Moser, Janet Hill, Mary Jane Shanley, Sue Estee, Frank Annunziata, Jean Ericson, Kevin Cetola**

\*Those who are **care partners** with others

\*Pray for Chris Maliken, Lindsey Darling & Ian Johnson, serving in the US Navy

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## *"Something Like a Christmas Play"*

A big THANK YOU to all of our cast, directors, and helpers for putting on a delightful Christmas play this past Sunday during worship! Check out pictures from the play [on our Facebook page!](#)

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### *Searching the Scriptures*

**Tuesdays at Noon**

Each Tuesday Pastor Daven leads a time exploring the upcoming Sunday's Scripture. This will provide context to the Scripture(s) being explored and ultimately enrich the experience of worship itself. All are welcome anytime!

### *Thirstaid Thursdays*

**Thursdays from 1-2:30 p.m.**

**Through December 19**

**"Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem"**

A study by Adam Hamilton

Led by Peggy Bermudez & Paula Kreib

Spend some time with Mary during this Advent season. In "Not a Silent Night", Adam Hamilton looks at Jesus' life through the eyes of his mother. Imagine what Bethlehem must have looked like from Mary's point of view. Focus your own gaze on the Savior she knew as her beautiful child! Beginning with the crucifixion and resurrection, then backtracking through Jesus' life and ministry, Hamilton paints a fresh and moving portrait of the Messiah's life in this 5-week Advent study.