



Weekly Update: December 22, 2015

Christ United Methodist Church

Harlem & Saratoga Rds
Amherst, NY 14226

"Living Christ's ways and exploding with love & service."

Church Office Hours - Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm

SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH

Praise Worship at 9 am Traditional Worship at 11 am

10 am FaithXpress for children

10 am Apprentice for Youth

10 am A.O.L. @ CUMC - Adult Opportunities for Learning

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A Word From Pastor Darryl

This past Sunday – the Fourth 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! We had a spirit-filled and inspiring Christmas Pageant filled with the warmth and beauty of the story of the Christ-Child. Our children, our young people, and adults offered their many gifts in song, music and poetry on the *Christmas Presence*. While Christmas can go galloping off with spending and presents, we know that the power of Christmas is God fulfilling our longing and we are no longer alone. God is now with us. We know and experience the power of a God who wished not to remain far away in heaven, but to come down to earth to dwell with his people in

the flesh. In the Christmas Pageant, we learned that the power of Christmas is not in Christmas presents, but in Christmas *presence*. Yes, God sent God's midnight Son. Because of Emmanuel, God with us; "*The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.*" Let's listen to the neighborhoods around us, learn to plant new things, live generously, and wait for spring! A blessed Christmas season to all of you!

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 Christ Church...

Thank you to all of the participants in this year's Christmas pageant, "Christmas Presence." We dedicated the pageant to the memory of Nicoletta Sebastiano who died on December 15 at 103 years old. She loved God and her church and she loved and encouraged all of us. Her soul magnified the Lord!

Thank you to Scott Smith our sound technician, **Jeff Crane**, organist and other musical talents, **to all of the parents and grandparents** for their support and presence, and to the **members of the Christian Education Team** for their planning and leadership and for providing the "Wrap Party." We also thank **Tom Weaver, Marshall Rhinehart, Dave Wolf, Peggy Bermudez and other assistants who offered their help.** And thank you to the Choir and Praise Team for adding their special gifts of music and giving of their time.

It was a joy to listen to the instrumental pieces offered by **Ashley Miller**, piano; **Quartet members - Ari Castellino**, violin; **Becca Lopez**, oboe; **Jacob Rhinehart**, tuba and **Ryan Lopez**, french horn; Duets by **Brandon Miller** on Trumpet and **Jeff Crane** on sax; and **Leanne Paddock**, violin and **Robert Paddock**, cello.

Church Conference

At the Church Conference held on December 21 Karen Hoffmann and Tom Brunner were elected as Trustees. A Clergy Housing Exclusion Resolution was approved and a Leadership Development report was accepted which includes members of all ministry teams of the church.

Church Council News

A preliminary spending plan was approved to begin 2016. A plan to review and revise, including ideas for added funding for mission and ministry was mapped out and will be brought to the next Council meeting on January 26.

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In our prayers

The family of Nicoletta (Nicky) Sebastiano who died on December 15. Nicky was 103 years old.

The family of Allen Lesswing who died on December 15. A service celebrating his life was held on Saturday, December 19.

Ralph Rumer (former member) whose daughter Sherri, died recently after living with cancer.

The Bonar Family - Conrad Bonar, grandfather of Apprentices Jamie, Emily and Zoe Bonar - recent surgery

Chuck Gilbert - recent hospitalization, now home

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Food Pantry

Local food pantries are always in need of canned and packaged food items as well as paper products and toiletries.

This weeks suggested items:

December 20 - Rice and Pasta

December 27 - Cereal (hot, cold and bars)

Hearts and Hands - Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Links willing volunteers with older or physically challenged adults for basic services such as transportation for medical appointments, errands or social activities,; caregiver respite, companion visits, wellness checks, phone pals and minor home maintenance. Call 406-8311 or visit

www.hnhcares.org

Consider becoming a Hearts and Hands volunteer. Call 406-8311 to sign up for a volunteer orientation (about 1 hour).

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**Wednesday, December 23 –
Choir rehearsal at 7:30 pm**

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**Christmas Eve Schedule -
Thursday, December 24**

8:30 pm Organ Recital
Music by Jeff Crane

9 pm The Evening of Christmas
Readings, Carols and Candlelight

Coming on Sunday, December 27...

11 am worship (one worship service)
A Festival of Song -

Join us for singing Christmas songs and discovering how they came to be beloved Carols. *There will be an opportunity to request your favorite carol!*

*** * * No FaithXpress on Sundays, December 27
and January 3 * * ***

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"Even now we simply do not expect to face the world armed with love."

Christ Church is a Community Center for Faith & Service

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