

**Christ United Methodist Church**  
**Snyder, New York**

***“Living Christ’s ways and exploding with love and service”***

**UPDATE December 27, 2012**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH**

**9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship**

**10:00 – FaithXpress and Soul Strength and AOL**

**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](http://www.Christchurchamherst.org)

**716-839-2460**

**Dr. B.J.’s blog is [www.drjithoughts.blogspot.com](http://www.drjithoughts.blogspot.com)**

Hi Everyone:

It looks like Buffalo winter has returned. I read someplace today that this is the first major storm since 2010. It looks wonderful out there and I hope and pray you are all safe and secure. Today is the third day of Christmas (French hens for dinner tonight?) as the celebration of the birth of Jesus takes us right up to January 6 (Epiphany). Now that the busyness of the “Holidays” are slowing down, now would be a good time to make some time for prayer and find some time to connect with others and seek to do a little good in the world in the name of Jesus. Karen and I had a wonderful time at my Sister’s on Christmas day – except for when Cheryl cut her finger in the food slicer making cole slaw and the run to the urgent care and back – we enjoyed hanging with nieces and nephew and nephew in law and prospective nephew in law and, of course, the great nephew. Life is fun and simple and filled with amazing joy.

Here is what is happening at church:

1. We had a great couple of days. Attendance on Sunday (23<sup>rd</sup>) was 240. Special appreciation to all of the children and youth and adults (and the young musicians orchestra) and all who made the Christmas pageant a wonderful success. Thank you Lynn and David and Mac and Valarie and Mary, Pam, Lisa, Chris, Laura, Marie, Kay, Sharon, Scott, Elizabeth, Sally and the entire education team for their great work on this event.

On Christmas eve (24<sup>th</sup>) we had 205 of us here for worship and celebration. Special appreciation to the choir and our guest musicians and the worship team for creating a beautiful and meaningful celebration of the birth of Jesus. I want to express my deepest appreciation to Sally Pollard and all the great work she does, to Elizabeth Holt Curtis who also did double duty on Christmas eve, and to all of you who so warmly greeted, celebrated and rejoiced in the birth of our Savior Jesus. It was great to see all of the family and friends from out of town who came to celebrate with us – especially the young folks who have been away at college (or overseas).

2. This Sunday is the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas. I will be preaching from Luke 2:41-52 about “increasing in wisdom and stature”. The last Sunday of the year is a good day to “unpack our bags” and make some choices about what we will or will not carry with us into 2013. Are there some habits, negative thoughts, broken relationships, difficult experiences that you have had in 2012? Join us this Sunday as we “repack our bags” and clear the decks for a coming new year.

3. There are still copies of “Let’s Remember Together” Christ Church people’s stories and memories of Christmas celebrations at Christ church past. Pick them up in the back of the Sanctuary.

4. In our prayers: Jan Beckwith following shoulder surgery (at Suburban); Glenn Hurst (at Suburban); Don Munson Nicky Sebastiano, Barbara McCray, Bim Rowlands; Ed Maker; Marian Steve; Ruth Kitson; those looking for work; all who are in harm’s way; the families of the firefighters killed and wounded in Webster; families in crisis; Pastor Samuel Mwesigwa from Kikyusa Christian Centre. Mwesigwa, by the way, means “Faithful” in Lugandan.

5. FaithXpress begins a new theme “Hero Quest: Powered by Faith” on January 6, 2013. We have designated January 6 as “Super Hero Sunday.” We are all invited to come on the 6<sup>th</sup> as our favorite super hero” at 10:00 a.m. Find the faith hero in all of us!

6. Through the Bible: on December 27 we finished our “Through the New Testament” reading. We read one New Testament chapter a day on week days and read the entire New Testament this year: Beginning January 1 I am challenging the Christ Church congregation to read the entire Bible this year. This will take 3 to 4 Bible chapters a day every day. Don’t get bogged down if you miss a day just pick up on that days reading and move forward. I will print here the schedule for each week ahead. The schedule is also printed in the caller and copies are available through the church office.

Here is the schedule beginning January 1

January 1—Genesis 1 and 2; Luke 1

January 2 – Genesis 3,4,5; Luke 2

January 3 – Genesis 6,7,8; Luke 3

January 4 – Genesis 9,10,11; Luke 4

7. Happy Birthday this week:

December 27 – Laurie Hannon; Emily Scaringi

December 28 – Teresa Watson

January 1 – Marie Miller; Phyllis Nicholson

January 2 – Alice Richards

8. Happy Anniversary this week:

December 27 TODAY – Joe and Carolyn Day (61 years)

9. Shirley Downey's daughter, Debbie Petri, called hoping we might be able to help her find someone to help with her mother. She is looking for someone in our community from about 40-60 who would be interested in working M-F 9a-2p. This would include being with her mother, picking up medicine, grocery shopping, and preparing lunch along with other light jobs around the house. She is looking for someone trustworthy, honest, and dependable and she would like to meet with whomever is interested as soon as possible. Position begins in January. This is a paid job, but I'm not sure what they are offering. If you are interested contact Debbie Petri at 374-0457.

10. **Seneca Street Church After-School Program needs YOU!!!** During part of December and during the month of January we are without the college students that help our program survive. In addition, this year we will be without our Director during this time because she will be out on maternity leave enjoying her newborn baby girl!

The After-School Program runs Monday-Thursday from 2:30-5:30. Any help during the week would be greatly appreciated. The dates that we will need help include: Dec. 10-13, Jan 3&4, Jan 7-10, Jan 14-17 and Jan 22-24. If you are interested in any day please contact Cheryl Bird at [716-491-2200](tel:716-491-2200) or [cbird@daemen.edu](mailto:cbird@daemen.edu) OR Jamie Ryder at [215-219-8765](tel:215-219-8765) or [ryder.jamie@gmail.com](mailto:ryder.jamie@gmail.com). Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you!

11. Christ Church will be participating in a church revitalization training experience in 2013 called "Hand to the Plow". The training has been developed by Upper New York Conference Director of Congregational Revitalization, Rev. Aaron Bouwens. The training will involve 9 sessions for clergy and 4 sessions for clergy and laity teams from participating congregations. I am looking for 10 to 12 Christ Church members who would be willing to participate in this event. All four sessions will be in 2013 and will be scheduled to accommodate normal work routines. If God is calling you to be a part of this training please see me. I have 5 on my list already. I believe this will help us to move toward our goal of 500 in worship and 100 in Christian Education by 2015 (1 and 5 by 15).

12. A word from the finance team: Just a reminder that year end gifts must be in the church office by this Sunday to be included in 2012 giving. We appreciate your faithfulness and

generosity in 2012! Thank you, everyone. We still appreciate any and all gifts after that but for some of us we like to get that last gift under the tax date. : )

### 13. Upcoming events:

January 3, 2013 – Thursday Bible Study resumes at 10:00 in Wesley room

Elizabeth Circle meets at 7:30

January 4, 2013 – Books loved group resumes at 10:00 a.m. in Wesley Room

January 7, 2013 – Praise Team rehearsals resume at 6:00

SPRC Team meets at 7:00

January 8, 2013 – United Methodist Women Executive Board meets at 4:00

January 12, 2013 – United Methodist Men meets at 10:00 to visit Historical Society

### Model Railroading

January 28, 2013 – Group leaves for tour of Holy Land

### 14. chchchch changes . . .

As of January 1 we have two new leaders stepping up in two key leadership positions at Christ Church:

1. Brad Loliger assumes the position of Chair of Stewardship and Finance. Brad has served on this team for the past few years and has served as Secretary for the team this past year. Brad replaces Nora Townsend-Wilber who has chaired the team for the past two years. THANK YOU Nora for your faithful service and welcome Brad!

2. John Miller assumes the position of Church Council Chair. John replaces Beth Sweet who has chaired the council for the past few years and is stepping down to focus more on her work with the United Methodist Women. John is new to the council and will bring some fresh ideas and leadership. He has served for the past several years as a member of the Staff Parish Relations Team and was part of the 2012 Uganda Mission Team. THANK YOU Beth for your faithful service and welcome John!

### Parting thought:

There is something about flipping the calendar over and starting fresh with a new year. 2012 has not been an easy year. There has been war and unrest around the globe, we have a divided country, murder and violence has reared its ugly head in Oregon, Colorado, Connecticut and, more recently, in Webster, New York. Many of you have had your struggles as well with the death of loved ones, battles through illness, work difficulties, family struggles and so much more to even discuss.

On the other hand 2012 had many positives as well. We welcomed babies, we saw some new emerging leaders, we have seen our church grow, we have seen new mission and ministry emerge in our midst, we have celebrated marriages and graduations and so much more. There have been heroic moments around the planet – include the above mentioned situations in Oregon, Colorado, Connecticut and, more recent, Webster, New York.

What will 2013 bring. Most of us are reactive in our lives. What I mean to say is we are good at reacting and responding when something happens around us or to us. What we often struggle with is being proactive, that is to say making the choice and taking the steps to seek positive change in ourselves, our families, our community and our world.

Here are some questions to ask as we enter 2013: 1) what change can I make in my own life that would make 2013 a much better year than 2012? Changes can be of the spiritual nature, physical nature, intellectual nature; it could include improving relationships, schooling, work situations . . . pick one and begin to work on it. Maybe you can join us in reading the Bible? Maybe you can join a class or prayer group? Maybe it is time to get back to the gym? Maybe it is time to take that class? 2) What change can I work for in my local community to make the place where my family lives a better place for everyone? Jeremiah 29 tells us to seek the welfare of the city in which we find ourselves. . . how can we make Amherst/Cheektowaga; Erie County, Greater Buffalo, New York State a better place for everyone? Perhaps you can join us at the HKCCA? Or you could join Habitat for Humanity or teach at Seneca Street or get involved in some of our other outreach ministries? 3) What one thing can I do to make this a better planet? Can I work toward the eradication of Aids, Malaria, cancer? Can I work toward providing clean water for those who have none? Can I join in a global prayer or dialogue or groups?

We can't do everything at once (that would be overwhelming). But we can all do something at once! What will that something be? The world is changed by small groups of people working incrementally for change.

I have been greatly blessed to serve as Pastor of Christ Church in 2012 am looking forward to a prosperous and blessed 2013.

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, change agent

This e-mail is a communication ministry of the Christ United Methodist Church, 350 Saratoga Road Amherst, New York. If you do not wish to receive this communication please respond: remove and I will do so. Feel free to share this e-mail with others.