

Christ United Methodist Church

Snyder, New York

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

UPDATE

December 5, 2013

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH

9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship

10:00 FaithXPress/Soul Strength/Youth Group AOL (Adult Opportunities for Learning)

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

[716-839-2460](tel:716-839-2460)

Dr. B.J.’s blog is www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com

Hi Everyone:

I took a stroll around the Washington DC national mall yesterday. I dropped my folks off at the Lorton, Virginia Amtrak station (where you have to go to catch the “car train”) and had about 5 hours before my flight back to Buffalo so I took the Metro into town and wandered about. The National Mall on a Wednesday in December looks pretty much like it does at other times. The capitol dome dominates the skyline, the Washington Monument is still under repair from the earthquake of a few years back and there are a variety of protests going on. I saw the hunger strike for immigration reform and said hi to a few folks there and there was one man facing the capitol building praying in a tongue I did not understand

(so I guess I only assume he was praying). Not terribly exciting but always an interesting walk through. I am finding, on my journey through Advent, that these little side journeys are essential to my spiritual growth. In the “Christmas Season” I can get so “destination” focused that I forget to slow down, walk around, and see what is out there. A famous theologian once said “Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.” It seems to be a perfect Advent exercise – step out of the hustle and bustle and take a look around.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was about 130 as we ended the Thanksgiving holiday and began our observance of Advent. It was nice to be able to introduce Janelle Martin to the congregation on Sunday as she joined us for worship.
2. This Sunday is the 2nd Sunday of Advent and I am preaching a message titled “The Once and Future King” from Isaiah 11 and Romans 15.
3. In our Prayers Guy Castellino (recovering from a back procedure); Mitch Mooney, Richard Ball, Bim Rowlands, Glenn Hurst, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Carl and Jean Ericson, Art Gundlach, Alice Schmidt, Diane Lovejoy: Sandy Cumming is having foot surgery Dec. 6, Fred Painton was hospitalized last week with an immune disorder, Sally Pollard's mother fell and suffered an undisclosed injury, Kevin Johnston has moved into a group home. He needs our prayers that this change will work out for him. Pastor BJ's mother-in-law (Dolores Bellimer) fell but is now home and doing fine; Remember Alex and Ian in the Navy and all who are serving; pray for our College students as they approach final exams and end of semester work;
4. Coming December 22 at 11:00 – **Bed, Bethlehem & Beyond** – join us for this Bed and Breakfast event. Breakfast will be served in Crafts Hall. Sponsored by the Christian Education team. This is our Annual “Christmas Pageant!”
5. Annual Church Conference Report – our Annual Church Conference was held on Monday, December 2 here at Christ Church. The Annual Church Conference is the legal entity of the Church and, as such, certain decisions can be made only by this group: 1) we approved the Pastoral support for 2014; 2) we elected three trustees; 3) we added two new members to the Staff Parish Relations Committee; 3) we approved the certification of a Lay Servant (Peggy Bermudez); 4) we received two bequests (one from the estate of Geraldine Alexander and one from the estate of Jean DiDomenico); we received the pastor's report and a financial report on the church.

6. The Mature Years Ministry Christmas Dinner and Program is Friday, December 6 from 5:30 to 8:00 in Crafts Hall.

7. Advent/Christmas at Christ Church

December 15 – 3rd Sunday of Advent (the coming of Christ turns the world upside down . . .)

December 22 – 4th Sunday of Advent – “Bed Bethlehem and Beyond”
Christmas Pageant at 11:00 a.m.

December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship is at 9:00 p.m. candles, carols and choir and a message from Pastor BJ

and 11:00 p.m. candles, carols and communion and a message from Pastor BJ

8. Happy Birthday this week:

December 4 – Mary Parsons

December 5 – Jean Ericson

December 6 – Christian Kennedy, Diane Klenk

December 7 – Alicia Ticconi

December 8 – Michael Keller, Rachel Wenner

December 11 – Ed Fisher, Gavin Gabel, Geoff Hill

9. Happy Anniversary this week – there are none listed.

10. **Leadership needs:** Christ Church is seeking a volunteer treasurer. Knowledge of Quicken is a huge plus. Position works with the Office Manger (who will be doing most of the “clerking and data entry work”) to pay the churches bills and give periodic status reports. If you are interested see me.

11. This week at Christ Church:

December 5 – Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.

December 6 – Books we have Loved at 10:00 a.m.

MYM Christmas Dinner at 5:30

December 7 – Men’s Group at 10:00 a.m.

December 9 – Praise Team at 6:00

12. Through the Bible in a year – this week

Have you noticed that you completed the Old Testament (with the exception of a Psalm) a few weeks ago??

December 4 – Ephesians 5-6 and Psalm 119:1-80

December 5 – Philippians 1-4

December 6 – Colossians 1-4

December 7 – 1 Timothy 1-4

December 8 – 1 Timothy 5-6 and Titus 1-3

December 9 – 2 Timothy 1-4

December 10 – Philemon, Hebrews 1-4

December 11 – Hebrews 5-8

December 12 – Hebrews 9-11

13. Coming in January . . . a couple of ideas

1. Disciple Bible Study – 34 week Bible Survey course. B.J. Norrix and Jim Pollard will be team teaching this class that will likely meet on Sunday evenings – watch for information meeting and start up.

2. Would anyone be interested in a Breakfast group (a before work Bible/Faith discussion). We could meet at a local restaurant . . . see BJ

3. We have read through the New Testament and the whole Bible . . . do you want another reading schedule? Let me know. We could, for example, read the Bible Chronologically. . .

14. Beginning January 5 AOL (Adult Opportunities for Learning) will begin a series titled “The Wesleyan Way: A Faith that Matters.” This class meets in the Wesley Room on Sunday’s at 10:00 a.m.

15. Beginning this Sunday we will have some more of those “Uganda Necklaces and bracelets” for sale. The necklaces are \$5 and the Bracelets are 2/\$5. All proceeds go to support Moses Wasige’s Women’s ministry in Jinja, Uganda (where the Nile River begins)

Parting Thought:

I’ve been thinking about “building the church” and am once again reminded that church renewal and revitalization always boils down to the same thing: changed lives change lives. The renewal of a Christian Church community is an “inside job”. We who are part of the community rediscover the reason, power and purpose of our relationship with Jesus Christ and becoming compelled to tell others about it. Complacency is the primary enemy of the Christian Faith. When we get comfortable and satisfied we also get inward focused and preservation focused. When a Christian community rediscovers its love for Jesus Christ it also rediscovers its love for people (the two are inextricably intertwined) and its focus changes from what is inside the walls (and how to preserve it) to who is outside the walls and why do we have walls and how do we bring the love of Jesus Christ to others. The question to ask is a simple one: have you invited anyone to worship with you lately? Advent/Christmas is a time when people are open to such invitations. . .

Have a great Advent,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, faith explorer, missionary

Oh, and yes the quote in the first paragraph is from Ferris Beuller’s Day Off . . .