

**February 17, 2015**  
**Christ United Methodist Church**  
**UPDATE**

**Harlem Road at Saratoga Road  
Amherst, New York**

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

**EVERYONE is WELCOME**

**SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH**  
**9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship**  
**10:00 FaithXpress, Soul Strength and 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](http://www.Christchurchamherst.org)  
Or call us at: 716-839-2460

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

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Hi Everyone:

The winter of 2014/2015 continues in all of its glory. About 55 brave souls made it to worship in the sub-zero temperatures this past Sunday (yea for the brave 55!!). Several people called late Saturday and early Sunday to ask if we were having “church” on Sunday. The answer to that question is always YES. I will be here to preach/teach/pray and whatever else might be necessary so long as I can make it across the parking lot. My policy is pretty simple: I won’t make decisions for you. If you believe it is unsafe to venture forth then you should stay home and join us in prayer from the comfort of your own home. If you are of the more hearty variety (like the brave 55) I will be here. Methodists have long had the reputation for their hardiness. In the old days Methodist

preachers were out on the roads at all hours and in all weather striving to make their preaching rounds and working hard to bring the Gospel to the American frontier. Many of them died young due to the dangers of the roads, the danger from animals, the dangers from highwaymen, the dangers from illness, and whatever other dangers they might have encountered. The average life expectancy of a Methodist Preacher in 1820 was just under 30 years old. In the mid-South when it is cold and rainy and generally nasty out they have an expression: “weather’s not fit but for crows and Methodist preachers!” Anyway, moving forward, we will gather to worship God and hear the word on Sundays at 9:00a.m. and 11:00a.m. for whoever chooses to make the journey!

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Yes attendance was a lustrous 55 this past Sunday. Thank you to all who made the effort and to all who wished they could. I quoted Jesus in Matthew 22:14 (paraphrased, of course) many are COLD but few are FROZEN. The message was about not worrying!

Special appreciation to Mac Sabol for the offering of the solo from Hayden’s “Creation” we accidently (?) left the recorder on so the music is recorded following the message.

**DID YOU KNOW?** That every Sunday sermon is recorded and is available for listening or down load through the Church’s web site: [www.christchurchamherst.org](http://www.christchurchamherst.org). Click on worship then sermons. They are listed in chronological order and by title.

**2. Wednesday is ASH Wednesday (February 18):**

Lenten Supper at 5:30 p.m.

Lenten Study begins following supper

**Ash Wednesday service is at 7:00p.m. (brief service with the offering of the imposition of ashes).**

3. This Sunday is the first Sunday in Lent – I will be preaching from Matthew 7:1-12, a message about priorities. Jesus says “do not judge” he says “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” he says “your father desires to give good things to his children.”

4. . In our Prayers: Pray for spiritual renewal in our midst that would draw people to Jesus; Pray for **Todd and Mary Jo Evans** – they were both in the hospital for respiratory issues and Todd has further complications; Pray for **Sue and Harley Estee** undergoing radiation treatments; **Jan Rhinehart** undergoing tests; **Sharon Ferrelli’s** cancer surgery

on February 13 was successful; **Dr. Robert Nachbar** is moving to Blocher this week; new address will be made available when we have it; **Julianna Sabol** is having outpatient surgery this Friday in Syracuse; Dorothy Brown; Dona Dalton; Brian Martin for continued healing; Glenn Hurst, Edmond Wrycza (Julianna Sabol's father in nursing home in Fort Erie); Lois Lewis, Barbara Clinton, Tom Davis, Fred Painton, Guy Castellino (and Guy's mother and father who are both dealing with major health matters); Mitch Mooney, Bim Rowlands, Nicky Sebastiano, Marion Steve, Ruth Kitson, Ruth Luss, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice Schmidt, Diane Lovejoy; and all those who are dealing with colds, flu and bronchitis. Remember our service men and women (domestic and foreign) especially: Alex Dunbar, Ian Johnson and Lindsey Darling (all serving in the US Navy). Pray for the members of our congregation who are headed south for some winter reprieve (and for the rest of us who have to stay here!).

5. This Week at Christ Church:

Tuesday February 17 – 2:00p.m. BJ at Asbury Pointe

7:30p.m. Trustees

Wednesday Feb. 18 – 5:30p.m. – Lenten Super and Study

7:00p.m. Ash Wednesday service

7:30p.m. (ish) Choir rehearsal

Thursday Feb 19 – 10:00a.m. Bible Study

1:00 to 5:00p.m. – Dress our People

Friday Feb. 20 – 10:00a.m. Books we have loved

Saturday, Feb. 21 10:00a.m. Crafting for a Cause

Monday, February 23 – Disciple 1 Class (FIRST CLASS ROOM FOR MORE!)

6. Sunday February 22 – Blood Pressure Screening – Nurses will be available in the Library and Wesley Room to check your blood pressure.

7. CRAFTY PEOPLE – MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Thursday, February 19: Dress our People: All are invited to help cut out fabric into patterns to be sewn into clothing for children in Uganda. We will be meeting on Thursday, February 19 from 1:00 to 5:00p.m. in the Youth Hall. Come for all of it or part of it! Bring cutting shears and pins.

Saturday, February 21: Crafting for a Cause at 10:00 a.m.

8. FOOD PANTRY – this week we are collecting RICE and boxed mashed potatoes.

9. We collected \$217 for Blanket Sunday (THANK YOU).

10. LENTEN SUPPER AND STUDY – Wednesdays, February 18 through April 1 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. You are invited to use the Lenten season to create a space in your life that will enable you to grow deeper in your faith. Following a shared meal, Dr. David Pliss will lead us in a mini retreat time using the book Mosaic by Shane Stanford. We will explore how God wants to use the broken pieces of our lives to reframe our purpose. Books are available from Sally Pollard.

11. Happy Birthday this week:

February 17 – Marilyn Welker

February 20 – Ben Bermudez

February 21 – Matthew Ronan

February 23 – Abigail Johnson

February 25 – Viki Smith

12. There are no anniversaries listed for this week.

13. Through the Bible this week's readings:

February 17 – Numbers 1-2 and Acts 24

February 18 – Numbers 3-4 and Acts 25

February 19 – Numbers 5-6; Psalm 22 and Acts 26

February 20 – Numbers 7; Psalm 23 and Acts 27

February 21 – Numbers 8-9 and Acts 28

February 22 – Numbers 10-11; Psalm 27 and Mark 1

February 23 – Numbers 12-13; Psalm 90 and Mark 2

February 24 – Numbers 14-16 and Mark 3

February 25 – Numbers 17-18; Psalm 29 and Mark 4

HERE'S A WAY TO ENHANCE YOUR BIBLE READING; Try keeping a Journal. Sometimes when you are reading something in the reading will speak to you or stand out to you. Take a moment and write it down the SCRIPTURE. Then make an OBSERVATION (what spoke to me??). Thirdly, ask "How would I APPLY this to my life. Finally, make what you learned into a PRAYER. This method of bible reading is called the S.O.A.P. method and allows us to ask "how will I be different because of what I just read?"

#### 14. MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

**Uganda 2015** – The team is set. Dr. BJ Norrix will be leading a team of 8: John and Brandon Miller, Viki and Hannah Smith, Kathryn Weaver, Janelle Martin, and Erisawe Briere. We will be travelling to Uganda for 2 weeks the end of June/July 2015. Your prayers are desired and appreciated. They will be visiting schools, presiding at Nexus graduations, dedicating water projects and a church, visiting an animal preserve, working in a health clinic and on a school and much, much more.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY** we are beginning to set up projects and mission opportunities for our annual Make a Difference Day, the third Sunday of May. Have an idea or a project? Let us know.

**Anderson's Coupon Books – Uganda team** is selling these books for \$4. They contain over \$60 worth of coupons and all proceeds benefit the Uganda 2015 trip. They are also selling handmade Ugandan bead necklaces for \$5 each. Contact Janelle (839-2460) for more information.

**Krolic's Fish Fry – is scheduled for April 10 here at Christ Church – all proceeds going to support the Uganda Team.**

15. A new **prayer group** is forming. The group will come together to learn to pray and to specifically pray for the ministry of Christ Church and where God is calling us to be in the future. Is God calling you to be a part of this? Contact Pastor BJ. I've had **2** responses so far. That makes three of us are there more? We will begin meeting soon.

#### 16. COMING SOON

February 26 – Discussion/Action Group at 7:00p.m.

March 13 – Ron Corsaro and friends in concert, Crafts Hall Coffee House (bistro?)  
watch for more information

March 29 – Palm Sunday

April 2 – Holy Thursday

April 3 – Good Friday

April 5 – EASTER – RESURRECTION DAY!! –

April 10 -- Uganda Team Fish Fry

May 2 – Uganda Chicken BBQ

May 17 – MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY!!

17. Christ Church's Mission footprint (AKA our "Salt Map"): Peggy Bermudez (and friends) has put together a couple of maps. One is Erie County and the other is the rest of the world. On the map is a representation of the agencies and ministries that the

Christ Church community is engaged with around town and around the world. The display is in the parlor. Take a look and see that Christ Church people are in ministry in a multitude of places and ways!

18. **THAT DISCIPLE I** Class – Rev. Jim Pollard will be leading this new class that will officially begin meeting on **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23** at 7:00p.m. This is still an open group. Disciple is an in-depth Bible survey course. Haven't you always wanted to learn your way around the Bible, understand its central themes, and thereby deepen your relationship with God? Here is your chance. Contact Jim Pollard, Pastor BJ or Sally Pollard for more information.

**Parting thought:**

Ash Wednesday is one of the few “solemn” assemblies left on the church calendar. It is a day that should make us feel just a bit uncomfortable. We are reminded that we are mortal and we have a tendency to do bad stuff (a.k.a. sin). It is a day to spiritually “clear the decks” and enter a season (40 days) of introspection, prayer, and self-denial. The introspection, prayer and self-denial are not ends unto themselves. They are a means to an end. The end we seek is a deeper walk with Jesus. Coming to terms with our own tendencies (greed, lust, gluttony, envy, sloth, anger, pride) through refusing to surrender to those tendencies opens us up for a greater awareness of God's amazing grace. When we become aware of how much we are loved, we are led to repentance (that is, we choose to change and begin to live into God's love and grace).

The symbol of ashes dates back to ancient (Old Testament) times. When a person was in mourning or sorrow they would put dust and ashes on their heads and wear rough clothing (sackcloth). We receive the ashes as a sign of our mortality and as a reminder of God's abundant and forgiving grace. I wouldn't recommend the sackcloth but if you feel strongly about it feel free to try it out. These symbols help us remember that human life is fleeting and challenge us to lift our eyes to things of eternal value (rather than temporary satisfaction).

My prayer is that we would observe a holy Lent together.

See you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, coach, missionary