

Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York

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

UPDATE January 15, 2013

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

716-839-2460

Dr. B.J.'s blog is www.drjthoughts.blogspot.com

Hi Everyone:

In preparing to lead a small group of pastors through the Hand to Plow training, a revitalization initiative of the Upper New York Annual Conference, I am being reminded of some key elements of revitalization. The role of leadership in renewal, revitalization, reenergizing (fill in your favorite re-) and is fundamentally about reconnecting. The first reconnection is to God through Jesus Christ. Churches can choose to be about many things (education, ministry, mission, self preservation) but there can only be one primary focus. Helping people enter, deepen and live out their relationship with Christ is why we are here. On a congregational level the task is to reacquaint the community with the reason the church exists. Our Annual Conference summarizes it this way "to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." Clearly there are two markers here one is to make disciples and the other is to transform the world. Churches, therefore, need to be reenergized about that transformation. Disciples are fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who know their gifts and are using them in mission and ministry. The goal is not to raise up members because members only help the institution. The goal is to raise up disciples because Jesus said this was our task (see Matthew 28) and because disciples change (transform) the world. What reconnection, rekindling, reacquainting is your next step?

Here is what is happening at Christ Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was right at 140. We learned of the second primary American idol (Sex) and talked of apocalyptic romance and Jacob and Rachel and Leah. Sermon podcast should be available through our web site (www.christchurchamehrst.org) by the end of the week. Go to the worship button and you will see “sermons” click there and it will take you to a list of available messages from the last year.

2. This Sunday one of our lay leaders, Peggy Bermudez, will be our preacher as I will be at a Denominational training event in Nashville, Tennessee. Peggy’s message is titled “Out of Egypt” and is from Exodus 13 and Matthew 2. Come and here what the Holy Spirit is revealing through Peggy.

FaithXpress and Soul Strength (Christian education for elementary and middle school children continue their “Hero Quest”

AOL (Adult Opportunities for Learning) is studying Leslie Wetherhead’s classic The Will of God – this group meets Sundays in the Wesley room at 10:00

3. The Sunday evening “Going Deeper” group is concluding its initial study and will be exploring next steps. Are you interested in a small group community dedicated to spiritual growth and mutual encouragement? Watch for more information.

4. Congratulations to John and Marie Miller who completed the Disney Marathon over the weekend. 26.2 miles is a long way to run!

5. In our prayers: Don Munson, Jean DiDomenico, Nicky Sebastiano, Barbara McCray, Bim Rowlands (good to see him in Church Sunday), Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Jan Beckwith, Mitch Mooney begins radiation and chemotherapy today, remember my friend Rev. Bill Mudge this week as Bill’s mother is in the end stages of her illness, remember those looking for work, families in crisis and all who struggle with addictions.

6. FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER MEETING is tonight, January 15, at 7:00 p.m. at Calvary Episcopal Church in Williamsville. All are welcome.

7. Christ Church This Week:

Tuesday, January 15 – Family Justice Center meeting at Calvary Episcopal Church

Wednesday, January 16 – Choir Rehearsal at 7:30

Thursday, January 17 – Outreach Team at 7:00 p.m.

Trustees meeting at 7:30 p.m.

8. ***The Bloodmobile is at Christ church*** on Friday January 18 from 2-6. All donors will receive a coupon for a free pound of Dunkin Doughnuts coffee and a cup of Geoff Hill’s famous chili. To sign up contact Geoff at 316-1522.

9. January 21 from 7:00 to 9:00: **Conversation on Immigration: Exploring our family stories:** facilitated by Beth Sweet and Peggy Bermudez and sponsored by the Christ Church UMW. Why did your ancestors leave their home country? When did they arrive here? What was happening in history at the time? What experiences did they have after they arrived here? Do our stories connect with today's new arrivals? Do you see God at work in these stories? Bring documents, photographs, artifacts, keepsakes to help tell your story. Everyone is Welcome.

10. Happy Birthday this week:

January 17 – Kimberly Gabel, Joel Jackson, Bob Snyder, Carol Teresi

January 20 – Nicole Sciolino, Jasen Wilson

January 22 – Marian Steve

There are no Anniversaries listed for the month of January.

SOME NEW ITEMS FOR YOUR CALENDAR

11. Sewing "Bee" – Sunday February 3rd from 12:30 to 2:30 (you'll be done in plenty of time for the Super Bowl). Bring a bag lunch and stay after church. New projects for the Dress our People team are: Cancer caps for the American Cancer Society and Roswell AND Tube pillowcases for the Ronald McDonald House. The goal is to make 50 of each by May 15. See Molly Butler for more details. Supplies needed: Rotary mat and cutters, fleece or stretch knit material for caps, cotton or cotton/polyester blends for pillowcases – must be 30" wide and 4" to 30" long).

12. RON CORSARO and FRIENDS – an evening of Jazz. Sunday, February 10 at 7:30. Donations to support the Youth Group's summer mission trip.

13. Through the Bible in 2013 – This week's reading

January 15 – Genesis 37, 38; Psalm 7 and Luke 15

January 16 – Genesis 39, 40, 41 and Luke 16

January 17 – Genesis 42, 43; Psalm 5 and Luke 17

January 18 – Genesis 44, 45, 46 and Luke 18

January 19 – Genesis 47, 48; Psalm 10 and Luke 19

January 20 – Genesis 49, 50; Psalm 8 and Luke 20

January 21 – Exodus 1, 2; Psalm 88 and Luke 21

January 22 – Exodus 3, 4, 5 and Luke 22

January 23 – Exodus 6, 7, 8 and Luke 23

I am occasionally posting comments on www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com if you would like to discuss any or part of a day's reading feel free to e-mail me, call me or stop by for some bible conversation.

14. UGANDAN ORPHANS – We are sponsoring a dozen orphans from Pastor Grace’s school in Kirimandagi, Luweero district, Uganda. At this writing we have one child who is not yet sponsored. Cost is \$125. This will cover the child’s school expenses for the entire year of 2013. If you would like to sponsor this child contact Rachel Vaughan in the church office. **We may have a few more orphans to sponsor, watch this e-mail communication for announcements.**

Ugandan Orphans Sponsor Meeting – will be held Sunday, January 27 immediately following the 11:00 worship in the Wesley Room. If you are sponsoring one of our orphans please plan to come and learn how we can connect with these children and communicate with them.

15. Christ Church will be participating in a church revitalization training experience in 2013 called “Hand to 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).

16. Coming soon to Christ Church

January 18 – Bloodmobile from 2-6

January 21 – Conversations about Immigration

January 28 – Israel team leaves (returns February 6)

February 3 – Dress our People resumes at 12:30

February 9 – Hand to the Plow Laity Session at Camp Asbury (10 to 3:30)

February 10 – Magic with Michael “A delightful Mixture of Mystery and Mirth”

sponsored by Mid Years + Ministry follows the 11:00 worship service. Cost is \$7 (or you can bring food – contact Marcia Snyder with questions at 741-6901 (under 10 are free) sign up beginning this Sunday.

An evening with Ron Corsaro and friends 7:30 – benefit the Youth Group

February 13 – ASH WEDNESDAY

Lenten Supper and Discussion at 5:00

Ash Wednesday service at 6:30

17. Next meeting of the Harlem Kensington Cleveland Community Association is Wednesday, January 23 at the Harlem Road Community Center at 6:00.

18. Trustees wish list: Here are some things the Christ Church Board of Trustees is wishing for in 2013. If you can help with one of these see Tom Weaver:

1. New Lawn Tractor – Commercial Grade with bagger (This one may be taken care of already)

2. New Flowering Trees for the Celebration Garden
3. Gas Powered Edge Trimmer
4. Multi-Ladder (currently borrowing Dave Wolf's ladder)
5. Parking Lot Repaving
6. Sanctuary Wing Hot Water Tank
7. Refurbish Sanctuary wing restrooms

And for the parsonage:

1. Gas stove/range
2. Back Yard Deck
3. Re-Wallpaper Guest Bedroom (now a TV room)
4. Lawn mower (so Pastor can mow the lawn)

Again, contact Tom Weaver if you would like to make any of these wishes come true.

PARTING THOUGHT

I am off to Nashville, Tennessee on Thursday to participate in a nationwide leadership training event for United Methodist leaders. The primary focus of this event is about leading adaptive change. We are all familiar with technical change – technical change is changing procedures, formulas or routines; it is the external adjustments we all make from time to time. Adaptive change is internal it is changing the “why” behind what we do. Congregations have been making technical changes for the last 40 years – we have changed worship times, we have changed musical styles, we have put up new signs, we have made a wide variety of external adjustments. Adaptive change is the “why of all this and until that changes congregations and denominations will continue the long slow decline to extinction. Why does the church exist? What is our core purpose? Why are we here? Many congregations say we are here to make disciples but we function like we always have functioned. It is not enough to put a mission statement out that says we are making disciples when in fact the ministry of the church continues to be business as usual. The change is one of the heart and purpose. A community has to begin to believe that its primary purpose is not survival or its own needs or keeping the tradition or any of many good reasons. When we are convinced that we are here for others and reaching out to a lost and broken world with the good news of Jesus Christ and a way to live this new life the internal changes necessary will begin. What is in your heart today?

I'll see you when the Church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, change agent

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