

Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York

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

UPDATE

January 28, 2014

EVERYONE is WELCOME

EVERY SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH

9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship

10:00 – FaithXpress/soul Strength/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

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

Hi Everyone:

How do you change the world? Politics and ideologies aside, most of us would agree that the world in which we live is in need of change and of more love and grace. Pete Seeger, who died last night, believed he could change the world through folk songs. Whether he was singing at union rallies in the 1930’s or college campuses in the 1960’s or on the Hudson River in the 80’s Mr. Seeger wrote, sang and taught music that encouraged fairness and justice for all. Married for nearly 70 years, Mr. Seeger encouraged generations of musicians and challenged the rest of us to ask better questions and to work together to make the world a better place for everyone. Some of his best known songs include “We shall overcome”, a song adapted from earlier spirituals that became the anthem of the civil rights movement. “Where have all the flowers gone?” a song that was sung at many anti Vietnam war rallies in the 60’s and early 70’s. “If I had a hammer” which is a call

to fairness and justice. His songs were adapted and played by a multitude of others (and still are). He also wrote playful songs and children's songs and songs about life and songs to sing along the way. His concerts were sing-a-longs and little mini music festivals. His obituary in the New York Times concluded with the following: Through the years, Mr. Seeger remained determinedly optimistic. "The key to the future of the world," he said in 1994, "is finding the optimistic stories and letting them be known." What if, fellow Christ followers, we chose to tell the most optimistic story ever told in our music, through our lives and in all we do?

Here is what is going on at church:

1. We fell just short of 150 on Sunday in attendance. We celebrated the Baptism of Brennan Murray Johnson! We also heard, following the 11:00 worship from the 2013 Uganda Mission team.

2. This Sunday is part 5 of the "Fruit that is never out of season" series. This week we are talking about Kindness. What does it mean to be kind to one another? Why do acts of kindness have to be random? Why not intentional and consistent acts of kindness? What if, as this fruit is formed in us, we were becoming more kind in all our dealings, all our actions, all our ways?

This is also a Communion Sunday.

3. In our Prayers: Remember Greg Ramsey and family, Greg's father, William (Bill) Thomas Ramsey, Jr. died suddenly over the weekend. Details of funeral and memorial services will be published when we hear of them; pray for Jean Ericson and family on the death of Jean's husband Carl – Carl's memorial service will be held in the Spring; Kay Barber and family on the death of her mother Louise (committal was held yesterday, January 27); We've been asked to pray for Carmen Ticconi's son-in-law, Doug, and family on the death of Doug's grandmother; Remember also Fred Painton, Sandy Cumming, Guy Castellino, Mitch Mooney, Bim Rowlands, Glenn Hurst, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice Schmidt and Diane Lovejoy. Remember all who are serving in the military (especially Ian Johnson and Alex Dunbar); remember those looking for work, remember families in crisis and those who struggle with SADD – it has been a very cold, cloudy, snowy winter and it drags many of us down.

4. MEN interested in a pre work Bible Study/Conversation? Join John Miller and Pastor BJ at the Wehrle Diner Wednesday, January 29 at 7:00 a.m.

5. This Week at Christ Church:

Tuesday, January 28 – 7:00 Church Council in the Parlor

Wednesday, January 29 – 7:00 a.m. pre work men's gathering at Wehrle

7:30 – Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 30 – Bible Study 10:00 a.m.

Friday, January 31 – 7:30 GAME NIGHT

Monday, February 3 – 7:00 SPRC

6. FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION – rice and beans this week!

7. UGANDA ORPHANS – Many of us have been sponsoring orphan children at the Blessed Junior School in Kirimandagi, Luweero District, Uganda. Our friends Grace (pastor of the church) and Owar Naphtal (who is the school's headmaster), have taken in dozens of orphan children from the village and surrounding area and are providing basic elementary education for them. We partner with Grace and Owar by sponsoring many of these orphans. Those of you who have previously sponsored children will receive a letter this week inviting you to continue. The cost is \$125 a year for school fees. We have a few new faces to be sponsored and these will be on display for those who would like to participate. If you have any questions see Pastor BJ or contact Janelle Martin.

8. MYM (Mature Years Ministry) invites the entire congregation to see and hear SUSANNA WESLEY, mother of John and Charles Wesley (and 20 others). Sunday, February 9, a soup and sandwich event will be held featuring portrait artist Denise Reichard who will portray Mrs. Wesley. Tickets and details are in Crafts hall Sunday mornings.

9. The new Church Directories are now available. If you were photographed for the directory your new book is available through the church office or they are on at a table in the parlor on Sunday mornings. If you were not photographed and would like a directory see Janelle, she has extras.

10. CUMC Men's Group: Saturday February 8th, CUMC Men will be attending the "Buffalo Auto Show" tickets are between \$7 and \$9 depending on how we get them. See Tom Nye for details by this Sunday (February 2). Group will meet at 10:00 a.m. on the 8th in the Church parking lot. Lunch will follow at an area restaurant.

11. Happy Birthday this week:
January 31 – Sara Thomas

February 3 – Barbara Burr; Marion Rowlands
February 4 – Kelsey Reed

12. Happy Anniversary this week:

Peter and Mary Jane Shanley (52 years!)

13. Discussion/Action Group coming February 10 at 7:00 p.m.: What are the next stages of a church's revitalization? What is the best learning and best practices of churches that are effectively retooling their ministries to meet the needs and challenges of today's world? What will Christ Church need for the next 60 years of ministry? These questions, research information and exploration and implementation of necessary steps forward will be the focus of this once a month gathering. It is open to all who are interested in being a part of helping us all move forward.

14. Caller deadline for March and April editions is the 11th of the month (instead of the 13th).

15. Through the Bible in 2014

January 28 – Isaiah 17-19; Mark 5

January 29 – Isaiah 20-22;

January 30 – Isaiah 23-25

January 31 – Isaiah 26-27 and Mark 6

February 1 – Isaiah 28-29

February 2 – Isaiah 30-31 and Mark 7

February 3—Isaiah 32-33 and Mark 8

February 4 – Isaiah 34-36

February 5 – Isaiah 37-38 and Mark 9

16. **MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES**

Opportunity 1: We need people to sign up to host morning coffee hour – sign up is outside the Kitchen.

Opportunity 2: A chart has been posted in Crafts Hall for those wishing to sign up to donate flowers for worship in 2014.

Opportunity 3: We are putting together a worship “creative” team. Want to be a part of this group? Let BJ know.

17. **Mission Opportunities:**

Opportunity 1: A team is being formed to help the families in West Seneca whose homes were damaged by the flooding a few weeks ago – let BJ know if you

are interested in being a part of a clean-up or rebuild team and we'll get you connected.

Opportunity 2: **UGANDA 2014**. I am planning to travel in early October this Fall to continue our work in Uganda. Is God Calling you to join me? This journey is 9 months away so I will need to know soon – Tickets will likely be purchased in March/April.

18. MISSION YOUTH – meeting originally scheduled for February 7 has been postponed to February 28 at 6:30 at the Parsonage (aka BJ's house) at 320 Saratoga.

Parting Thought:

I was reading a brief essay by that famous British Theologian and philosopher Bono about the difference between Karma and Grace. Karma (what goes around comes around, tit for tat, an eye for an eye, you get what you give) is at the heart of religion. If you are good enough, if you do enough, somehow the universe (God) rewards you in this life and the next. If you are not good enough, if you do not do enough, it will not end well. Most of us, in our subconscious thinking, believe this. That is Karma. Jesus introduced an idea that was so profoundly revolutionary we try to ignore it or often give lip service to it while still living our lives as if Karma were the truth. Jesus idea is expressed in single word: Grace. Grace means I don't get what I deserve. Grace means that all of the crap of my life and of the cumulative lives of every human is now covered and forgiven. I have done some pretty stupid things, hurtful things, unloving things in my life's journey. No amount of "being good" will ever balance the cosmic ledger. The outrageous idea Jesus came to proclaim was that we are already loved, we are already forgiven, we are already freed from the need to be good enough – the ledger has been overbalanced in our favor by Grace. The bad news, from the Karma perspective, is that none of us get what we deserve. The good news, from the Grace perspective, is that none of us get what we deserve. I am glad I get to live into Grace and offer, teach, live, encourage, preach, give, Grace to others.

You are already loved,

I'll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, gratefully grace filled, missionary, lead servant

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