



## Weekly Update: January 5, 2016

### Christ United Methodist Church

Harlem & Saratoga Rds  
Amherst, NY 14226

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

**Church Office Hours - Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm**

#### SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH

Praise Worship at 9 am

Traditional Worship at 11 am

10 am FaithXpress for children

### January – Jesus & The Children

10 am Apprentice for Youth

10 am A.O.L.@ CUMC - Adult Opportunities for Learning

### 5 Marks of a Christian

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### A word from Pastor Darryl

I shared with us this past Sunday that we have the thought in our minds that Christmas is over! There is often the urge to pack everything up and get it out of the way. But, sometimes, I think we rush away from it too quickly, we do too good a job at cleaning up after it, and in that we run the risk of removing it from our lives. What if after Christmas we could *keep life from getting back to normal again*? What if we could really hang on

to it and take it with us into these good days ahead of us in the new year? **Wednesday January 6<sup>th</sup>** is the Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord - this great festival on which Christians, for at least fifteen hundred years, have celebrated the manifestation, (or as it is more literally translated in the Greek) the showing forth) of the glory of God in Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word of God made flesh. First, the coming of the wise men from the East to worship at the cradle of the Infant Christ; then, the Baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan by John the Baptist, with the voice from heaven declaring that Jesus is the beloved son of God; then the visit of Jesus, at twelve years old, to the Temple at Jerusalem, where the learned doctors were astonished by his understanding and his answers; and then, a series of Jesus' miracles: the changing of water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana; the healing of a leper, and the centurion's palsied servant; and the calming of the troubled sea. I will be sharing on many of these themes during the next five (5) weeks. It doesn't get back to normal again; rather it is a continuing meditation upon the meaning of the Christmas miracle - the miracle of God with us, God in our flesh, Emmanuel, God visible to human eyes, God audible to human ears, God tangible to human touch, God manifest in human life, judging, restoring, and transforming it by the grace and truth God brings. *"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, (one version has it "the Word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood) and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth."*

Faith in the light of hope and devotion bids us find Jesus in ordinary places like a stable, among ordinary people like the story of a homeless generous man. Faith bids us find God's word in human words; faith bids us see the Son of God in one another regardless of a person's skin color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or economic status - in the least of these of God's children, like the ones that same homeless man was giving a loaf of bread and a bottle of water; to see and to declare God's glory shining there. But faith ever calls us back, to work out our relationship with God in the common, everyday life of Christian fellowship, in the disciplined routines of worship, in prayer and study, and in our works of Christian charity with grace for justice. *The miracle of God with us doesn't allow for things to go back to normal, my dear friends.*

As always, I am praying for you and with you daily. May God's love and blessings be always with you, and my love to all of you. Invite someone to join us for worship!

## Happening At Christ Church...

We celebrated the new year 2016 by welcoming **Paul Staley as our Minister for Music** and sharing in the service of Communion and a Covenant Renewal. In the words of John Wesley's Covenant Prayer—"And now O glorious and blessed God...You are [ours] and [we] are yours. So be it! "

We have renewed our commitment to follow Jesus Christ. If the words spoken reflect our thoughts and attitude, then our participation will be a natural response. No church, no person, is perfect. But we serve and participate in God's purpose anyway, not out of obligation (in a legalistic way) but out of gratitude that flows from us because of what God has done in our lives through Jesus. Because of him, we **all** are cherished sons and daughters of God, worthy of love and respect. God's desire to work through human lives has never changed. It's an exciting and enlivening time as we open ourselves to the opportunities before us, discerning and deciding where God would have us go and what we will do in ministry with and for others as Christ Church. It only works when we make a decision and a commitment.

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## Daily Bible Reading – 2016

Excerpts from both the Old and New Testament are included each day. This is a great way to support your ongoing growth in faith and the Christ Church community as well.

January 1: Genesis 1-2; Matthew 1

January 2: Genesis 3-5; Matthew 2

January 3: Genesis 6-8; Matthew 3

January 4: Genesis 9-11; Matthew 4

January 5: Genesis 12-14; Matthew 5:1-26

January 6: Genesis 15-17, Matthew 5:27-48

January 7: Genesis 18-19; Matthew 6

January 8: Genesis 20-22; Matthew 7

January 9: Genesis 23-24; Matthew 8

## Food Pantry

Local food pantries are always in need of canned and packaged food items as well as paper products and toiletries.  
This weeks suggested items:

**January 3 - Cereal (hot, cold and bars)**

**January 10 – Canned meats**

## Red Cross Blood Drive

**Friday, January 15 2 – 6 pm**

The goal is 20 units. Please invite your family and friends to donate. Call Geoff Hill (316-1522) with questions or to make an appointment. Give the gift of life!

*Sponsored by the Health & Wellness Team*

## In Sympathy

Our prayers are with the families and friends of –

**Nicoletta (Nicky) Sebastiano** – died December 15

**Bob Lovejoy** – died December 24 (brother of Diane Lovejoy)

**Norman Weiler** – died December 25

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## In Our Prayers

**Brennan Johnson** – Medical procedure on Monday,  
doing well at home

**Diane Klenk** – broke her leg in a fall in her home

**Frank Annunciata** – at home, recovering following surgery

## All who are caregivers for others

**Alex Dunbar, Lindsey Darling & Ian Johnson (deployed)** –  
all serve in the US Navy

## This Week at Christ Church

Tuesday, January 5 -

Wednesday, January 6 - 6:30 pm – Praise Team rehearsal

7:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 7 - 10 am – Life Lessons with Pastor  
Darryl

7 pm – Circle of Joy

7 pm – Elizabeth Circle

Friday, January 8 - 10 am – Books We Have Loved

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## Flowers for Worship - A beautiful gift

Flowers given in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a person or event may be donated for Sunday morning worship. A chart is available on the bulletin board in Crafts Hall to sign up.

*Contact Beth Reilly 839-5919 with questions.*

## Celebration Walkway

The brick walkway through the Celebration Garden is a way to celebrate life and remembering special people and milestones in life. It's a way to stay connected to the life and ministry of Christ Church. Order forms for bricks are available on the bulletin board in the Cafe or from the church office.

## Men's Outing - Saturday, January 16

All are invited to carpool at the church at 11 :45 am to go tour the Flying Bison Brewery. The tour begins at 1 pm (free of charge). The group will enjoy a late lunch after the tour.

Contact Richard Mestler (830-1175) or Tom Nye (213-3642) with any questions.

## Hearts and Hands -

### Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Links willing volunteers with older or physically challenged adults for basic services such as transportation for medical appointments, errands or social activities, caregiver respite, companion visits, wellness checks, phone pals and minor home maintenance. Call 406-8311 or visit [www.hnhcares.org](http://www.hnhcares.org)

***Consider becoming a Hearts and Hands volunteer. Call 406-8311 to sign up for a volunteer orientation (about 1 hour).***

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"Therefore...I urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received with all humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love, diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds us."

*Paul writing in Ephesians 4:1-3*

## Christ Church is a Community Center for Faith & Service

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**DRB/sjp**

