

**UPDATE - July 23, 2014**

**Christ United Methodist Church**

**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  
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)  
Like us on Facebook!

Hi Everyone:

I’m just getting back from a 24 hour overnight with my covenant group. We met at Camp Asbury (Courtney and Jessica say “hello”). My covenant group is working on being more attentive to the care and keeping of our souls. Since the soul is our essential self and because all quadrants of my life (body, mind, spirit and relationships) are all interrelated, caring for all aspects of one’s life is critical to the care of the soul. We are striving to hold one another accountable for our physical health (diet and exercise); for our intellectual health (what are you reading, what are you studying); for our relational health (how are your vital relationships, where are they broken/how can they be reconciled); and, of course, the feeding of our souls through our relationship with God that is nurtured through prayer and Bible study and worship and Christian fellowship, etc. It is an interesting journey we are on (and have been on for the past 10 years) but these men help me to be a better me and a more integrated soul. Who is in your life

that is helping you on this journey? Would you be interested in gathering with others to do some of the covenantal work together?

Here is what is happening at Christ Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was about 90. Special appreciation to Julianna Sabol for her gift of song.

2. We completed Vacation Bible School “Workshop of Wonders” last Friday. The two dozen children who participated (and the many who assisted) had a great time and learned a lot about imagining and building with God! The props and decorations were packed up on Tuesday and sent on to the Amherst Community Church where their VBS will be in a week or so.

3. This Sunday is part three of “Seven Attitudes that Kill the Soul”. This week we are talking about Lust. The Gilligan’s Island character that represents Lust is Ginger (the Movie Star). Lust, as a soul killer, is less about natural physical desire and has more to do with the objectification and possession of another. When all we see are a person’s physical attributes we neglect to consider the wholeness of the other (and their divine worth!). I think I can keep this one PG rated.

4. In our Prayers: In our Prayers: Lois Lewis, Barbara Clinton, Mac Sabol, Dave Mitchell, Brian Martin (home from the hospital and waiting a bone marrow transplant), Donna Hammond, Tom Davis, Caroline Hess, Fred Painton, 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 our men and women serving in the armed forces (especially Ian Johnson and Alex Dunbar). Remember to pray for those looking for work, for families in crisis, for an end to turmoil and unrest around the world.

5. **New Treasurer needed at Christ Church:** First the good news. Eric Dokken, our church treasurer, has accepted a promotion that will take him to Charlotte, North Carolina. Eric has done excellent work for us but his relocation leaves us in need of a new treasurer. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving Christ Church in this capacity please contact Pastor BJ as soon as possible. Eric and his wife Christine are hoping to relocate around Labor Day. (Computer experience

and familiarity with Quick Books are essential). **We are grateful** to Eric for his service and wish he and Christine well on their new adventure.

6. **Lost & Found:** A ring has been found on the church property. If you have lost a ring, please contact Janelle in the church office with an accurate description to claim it.

7. **Stop Stress & See: An introduction to Living Well:** was held on Monday, July 21 with Tom DeLoughry. We are exploring a series of workshops to help us all “live well” and the creation of some covenant discipleship groups that would help one another grow; care for the care giver, etc. Watch for more information.

8. **UGANDA SILENT BASKET AUCTION – Fundraiser theme Baskets:** Donations of Theme baskets or individual items are needed for the Spaghetti Dinner scheduled for September 26. Theme suggestions include: Movie night, Kid’s crafts, snack attack, pet, book club, holiday, etc. Gift cards are also welcome. Leave theme baskets or other items in Pastor BJ’s Office.

9. Pastor BJ met with residents of Asbury Pointe on Tuesday July 15 to explore the formation of a new “Spiritual Discussion” group. This new group will meet at the Pointe on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 in the afternoon beginning August 6.

10. **Summer Film Fest:** This Sunday at 10:00 a.m. we will be viewing the film “Playing for Change: Peace through Music”. The work of musicians on four continents is combined into one global song in an inspirational tribute to the remarkable power of music to unify and bring out the best in humanity. All are welcome.

11. **ON THE MISSION FRONT:**

1. **Summer Programs at Seneca Street Church:** volunteers are need to help at Seneca Street Church July 28-31; August 4-7 and August 11-14 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you can help please contact Cheryl Bird at 491-2200 or [cbird@daemen.edu](mailto:cbird@daemen.edu).

2. **Uganda 2015 youth experience** (June 28 through July 10, 2015). Deadline for declaring interest in this gathering is August 1, 2014. Pastor BJ has application forms available. This journey will have at least 5 persons under 20

(possibly more) and some parents travelling to Uganda to work with our projects there. For more information contact Pastor BJ

3. **UGANDA 2014:** Pastor BJ Norrix and Joe Fort are under 3 months away from their journey to Uganda and Kenya (depart October 5 return October 23). Please keep them and our Ugandan partners in your prayers as they prepare. They will be teaching and preaching in multiple sites, presiding at a Nexus Graduation, opening a new teaching location and reconnecting with our friends there. They will be travelling to Mombasa, Kenya (on the Indian Ocean) to work with a group of Anglicans there. A **Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction** in support of this journey will be held in late September. Do you have items for the auction? Please leave them in the Pastor's office.

4. **FOOD PANTRY this week** soaps and cleaners.

12. **Church Council Retreat: July 26.** The Church Council is spending a day away (at the Miller's Camp) on Saturday July 26. All Members of the Church Council are expected to attend. Please hold this gathering in your prayers as we seek to build community and to move the Christ Church mission forward. Maps and further information are available through the Church Office.

13. **Summer hours** are in effect at the church office. During the summer the church office will be open from 9 am to 3 pm Monday through Friday. After 3 pm please use the answering machine to leave messages.

14. Happy Birthday this week:

July 24 – Laura Johnston

July 26 – Shirley Downey; Dede Johnson

July 27 – Greg Ramsey

July 28 – Ryan Carier; John Miller

July 29 – Brandon Miller

July 30 – Cindy Fisher; Bill Kearney; Alex Ladowski; Linda Ladowski; Ruth

Luss

15. Happy Anniversary this Week

July 24 – Chris and Michele Sciolino (21)

16. **WOMEN'S RETREAT COMING IN SEPTEMBER:** It takes place Sept 19-21 @ Camp Asbury. We will be studying "the Cup of Our Life" with Dee Finch. It costs

\$165 each and the sign-up is in the Café. Deadline now extended to sign up-- August 15th. For questions, they can call Beth Sweet (210-8966) or Peggy Bermudez.

17. Through the Bible: this week:

July 23 – Psalms 33-34

July 24 – Psalms 35-36 and Acts 17

July 25 – Psalms 37-39

July 26 – Psalms 40-42 and Acts 18

July 27 – Psalms 43-45

July 28 – Psalms 46-48 and Acts 19

July 29 – Psalms 49-50 and Acts 20

July 30 – Psalms 51-53

18. LEADERSHIP SUMMIT is August 14/15. Sally, Janelle and I are attending this event in Rochester. **I have one extra ticket. If you would like to Join Sally, Janelle and me please see me ASAP.**

19. This Week at Christ Church:

Thursday, July 24 at 10:00 – Bible Study

Friday, July 25 at Noon – Singles ministry discussion

At 7:30 – GAME NIGHT in the Wesley Room

Saturday, July 26 – Church Council Retreat

**Parting thought:**

I find myself wrestling with a number of theological questions this summer. One critical one is how the American expression of Christianity frequently under sells the difficulty of actually living our lives as disciples of Jesus. The cultural tendency is to focus on the “get out of hell free card” aspect of becoming a Christian or to focus on the “personal benefits” of knowing Jesus (and isn’t that just like us to make following Jesus all about us?). We don’t often talk of the cost of discipleship. We certainly don’t speak much of the intense personal struggle Christ followers experience in the battle between our broken nature and becoming the person Jesus is calling us to be. Or the struggle to actually lead this faith-filled life in the public arena. Rather than talk of the struggle we either 1) ignore it; or 2) turn the Christian life into a legal process about rule keeping and

public behaviors. In reality my life is transformed moment by moment and day by day by the choices I make to live into the life to which Christ calls me. This transformed life works from the inside out and is a life-long journey. Our instant gratification driven society fails to recognize the benefit of delay and, more often than not, refuses to acknowledge that the denial of self has positive ramifications. We are, all too often, ruined and controlled by our consumer, me-istic, selfish nature and 'genuine relationship with Jesus based discipleship' is a serious struggle. Having said all of that I feel compelled to add: 'but what else is there?' There is a moment, in John 6, when Jesus has been teaching some difficult things to his followers and many of the early disciples choose to walk away and stop following him. When these followers leave Jesus turns to the others and asks "are you also going?" And the disciples respond: "where would we go? You have the words of eternal life." (see John 6:60-69) When I conclude the series on "7 attitudes that kill the soul" I will begin a series on the care and feeding of the soul. I am excited about how I see Jesus calling all of us to a deeper relationship with him, with each other, and with the world all around us.

I'll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, missionary, lead servant, soul searcher