

**Christ United Methodist Church  
Snyder, New York  
“Living Christ’s ways and exploding with love and service”**

**UPDATE  
July 23, 2012**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH**

**9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship**

**10:00 – Faith Express and Soul Strength will return in September**

**11:00 – Traditional Style Worship: Choir resumes in September**

**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)  
716-839-2460

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

Hi Everyone:

The Christian journey is a life-long process of spiritual growth and transformation. Over the centuries Christian leaders and teachers have developed and promoted certain practices that are designed not to become laws and rules of behavior but to be routines and disciplines to lead us into the presence of God and to places where our souls could be transformed by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. In my message this past week (July 22) I extended an invitation to any and all who would be interested in experiencing and exploring these spiritual disciplines together. On Sunday eight (8) of you said you wanted to be a part of this. I realize that this was not a high attendance Sunday at Christ Church so I am extending this same invitation to our entire congregation. If you would like to explore these spiritual disciplines (not as an “academic study” but as a laboratory school) please respond to this e-mail or give me a call and I’ll sign you up and let you know when we will begin to meet. If there are a lot of us that want to take this journey we can have more than one group – there is no limit to the number of folks welcome! I am excited to begin moving deeper in our spiritual journey together.

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was 95 – special appreciation to Sandy Paddock for her gift of song.
2. Deepest appreciation to the Vacation Bible School team. The children clearly had a great week together, singing songs, hearing from an orange octopus named “Ocho”, participating in drama and stories, visiting the aquarium, eating interesting snacks, working on fun projects and over all “diving deep with God” in our “Operation Overboard”. There were dozens of people who made this event work and who worked hard to make it happen. THANK YOU to one and all. It was a great week!
3. This Sunday, July 29 I am preaching from Matthew 18 about forgiveness. The focus is really on the two word pivot in the Lord’s Prayer – we pray “forgive us our trespasses AS WE forgive those who trespass

against us.” The point is pretty simple: grace that is poured into our lives is supposed to be passed on to others. This “blessed to be a blessing” is a central theme of the entire Bible. I am looking forward to talking about it with all of you.

4. In our Prayers: Nicky Sebastiano, Gary Weeks (friend of BJ’s), Barbara McCray, Bill Watson, Beverly Hurst, Katy Cady, Carmen Ticconi, Ed Maker, Alicia Ticconi, Don Critoph, all those looking for work, those battling addictions, those who are in harm’s way and, most especially, the victims in Colorado following the shooting there this past weekend.

5. THIS SUNDAY IS ***Peanut Butter and Jelly Day*** for our food collections! Bring them, and any and all non perishable items to the Church for distribution to local food pantries.

6. WELCOME TO OUR NEW BISHOP: on Friday, July 20, it was announced that our Bishop, Marcus Matthews has been reassigned to the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference effective September 1, 2012. Newly elected Bishop, Mark Webb, has been assigned to the Upper New York Annual Conference and will assume his duties on September 1, 2012. Bishop Webb was elected at Jurisdictional Conference this past Thursday (July 19). He is currently serving as the District Superintendent of the York District in the Susquehanna Conference (Central Pennsylvania). We will have an opportunity to meet Bishop Webb sometime this fall.

7. **Holy Land 2013** registration deadline is approaching. We are leaving on January 28, 2013 for a 10 day excursion to the Holy Land. We will be on the Sea of Galilee and walk the streets of Old Jerusalem. We will visit the place of Jesus Birth, Bethlehem and the place he grew up, Nazareth. We will the Jordan River and the Dead Sea and will see many archeological sites along the way. There is room for plenty more passengers. For more information see Pastor BJ. Right now there are 9 of us signed up (including Rev. Davis Matovu). I’d like to see 15 or more of us going . . .

8. Uganda Mission Team 2012 fund raisers:

Beginning this Sunday there will be a table in the Café. We have available

1. Ugandan handmade necklaces -- \$5 each. Proceeds benefit a women’s ministry in the town of Jinja for our friend Moses Wasige.

2. Anderson’s coupon books: \$5 for the booklet with many times that value in coupons for Anderson’s food and ice cream (we get 4 of every 5 dollars)

3. Spaghetti and Meatballs dinner and Silent Auction tickets – the Dinner is September 14 – tickets are \$7.50 (all you can eat).

**All proceeds will support the 2012 Uganda Mission team members from Christ Church (Kathryn, John and BJ) and our mission partners in Uganda.**

9. DRESS OUR PEOPLE – is meeting this Wednesday, July 25 in Crafts Hall. We need sewers and helpers as we strive to make 300 pieces of clothing for the Uganda Team to take with them in October. See Molly butler for details or call her at 716-204-8993.

10. Through the New Testament in 1 year – one chapter a day on week days. Here are this week’s readings: July 24 – Matthew 15; July 25 – Matthew 16; July 26 – Matthew 17; July 27 – Matthew 18; July 30 – Matthew 19; July 31 – Matthew 20; August 1 – Matthew 21. Follow Pastor BJ’s comments and insights through his blog: [www.drbitthoughts.blogspot.com](http://www.drbitthoughts.blogspot.com).

11. The Church Council will be meeting this Thursday, July 26, at 7:00. This is an open meeting and all are welcome.

12. The Deborah Circle is taking a Lockport Cruise field trip. They depart at 8:30 (not 10:30 as reported in the Sunday bulletin). If you are interested contact Caroline Hess at 892-0546.

13. 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

14. Happy Anniversary this week:

July 24 -- Chris and Michele Sciolino

15. Mission Prayers: Habitat Woman Build Team (ongoing) ; the Uganda Mission Team (**BJ, Kathy, John, Esther, Clair and Bill**) – leaving on October 1; the dress our people team

16. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT – August 9 and 10. Sally, Rachel and BJ will be travelling to Syracuse to participate in the Global Leadership Summit. This annual event is provided by the Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago, Illinois. Cost is \$169 (and you will need to cover one overnight and food – unless you want to camp at Pastor BJ's house – bring cot, sleeping bag, etc.) For more information see ME or to register contact Rachel in the church office at 839-2460.

17. I got this from our District Superintendent, Rev. Wayne Butler:

Our District Administrative Assistant, Debbie Parise is leaving to take another position. This will create an opening for a District Administrative Assistant. The job is to support the District Superintendent in his/her work. The District Office is local. This is a half time position with paid holidays and sick days. After one year the person in this position will be eligible to participate in the pension program. The position is open to either clergy or laity. Details and application are available at this link on the Annual Conference website: <http://www.unyumc.org/jobs>. The deadline for applications is August 5<sup>th</sup>, with the hope that this position would be filled by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

18. This from our friends Bill and Marg Bauza:

The Cheektowaga Food Pantry needs volunteers on WEDNESDAYS in shifts from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to help pack non-perishable foods. Many needy families benefit from this WNY Food Bank local pantry. Director Janet Ensmenger can be reached at 392-2318. The Pantry is located at 47 Ellwood Place 14225.

19. Coming Soon:

August 9-10 – Global Leadership Summit

August 13 – Caller Deadline

August 20 – return to normal office hours (9-5) from Summer schedule

September 8 – UMW General Meeting at 10:00

September 9 – Faith Express, Soul Strength and Youth Sunday School resumes

October 1 – Uganda Mission Team departs

October 5-7—Mature Years Ministry Autumn Days at Chautauqua Institution with Rev. Jim Pollard leading.

I'm preaching about forgiveness this Sunday, especially the aspect of forgiveness that we pass on to others. I think most of us are pretty clear that forgiveness from God is available and offered to us at all times. There is nothing beyond the grace of God. What we often miss is that "always available grace" is to be extended by us to each other. Many people struggle with the concept of forgiving others because they do not understand the biblical concept. We think that forgiving someone is saying what happened didn't hurt or didn't matter. This could not be further from the truth. Biblically, forgiveness is nothing more or less than surrendering my right to revenge. Forgiveness is not optional – it is expected of us. Reconciliation – the restoration of the relationship with the one who has offended is not assumed but is always the goal. How many of us harbor ill will and negative emotions toward someone who has injured us? (I'll bet at some point in all of our lives this is all of us!) How many of us actually believe that harboring that ill will and negativity in any way harms the other? It seems silly to read it that way but many of us do think this. Forgiveness is letting all of that go so that I can get on with my life and not be carrying the poisons of ill will and negativity through my own life. I look forward to discussing this with all of you this Sunday.

Have a great week,

BJ Norrix, missionary, coach, lead servant

(this e-mail is a communication ministry of the Christ United Methodist Church, Snyder, New York. If you do not wish to receive this communication please reply: remove!)

Feel free to share this with your friends.