

**UPDATE - July 9, 2014**

**Christ United Methodist Church**

***Harlem at Saratoga  
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:

Karen and I are back from our wanderings. Actually, we didn’t wander much. We mostly did some work around our home in Liverpool; I played some golf with Dad (and friends); we took a little excursion to western Massachusetts and eastern New York State and we took some “day trips”. Mostly I hung out, took long walks, read several books and relaxed. It was good to be away. It is good to be home and back to work at Christ UMC. I wanted to express my appreciation to Roger Johnson, Peggy Bermudez and Rev. Jim Pollard for preaching for me in my absence. From all that I heard you were all well received: THANK YOU!! I also wanted to express my thanks to Janelle Martin and Sally Pollard and Kevin Durkin who excellently held down the fort in my absence. It is a lot easier to be away and to relax when I know how well the congregation is cared for when I am away. Thank you, everyone.

Here is what is happening around the Christ Church community:

1. **Worship Attendance** last Sunday was in the mid 80's. Thank you, again, to Rev. Jim Pollard for preaching and presiding at communion on Sunday.

2. **This Sunday** I am beginning a 7 part Summer Sermon Series on the Seven Deadly Sins. These attitudes are murderous to the human Soul: Pride, Anger, Avarice, Glutton, Anger, Envy and Sloth (acedia). The TV sitcom "Gilligan's Island" was written as an attempt to put the seven deadly sins on an island and watch them interact. This week we begin with the king of all the deadly sins: Pride. C.S. Lewis argued that Pride really drives the rest. Pride is what underscores all human broken behavior. Pride, in this sense, is not having a strong ego or a positive self esteem. Pride in this sense is fundamental rebellion against the purposes of God in creation. This kind of pride is competitive in nature and is best summarized by a line from Milton's Paradise Lost. In Lucifer's speech the evil one says, "Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: Here we may reign secure, and in my choice to reign is worth ambition though in Hell: *Better to reign in Hell, than serve in heav'n.*" The Gilligan's Island character who represents Pride is the Professor. The cure for pride is found in Philippians chapter 2.

3. Here is some **good news**:

    Congratulations to Ian Johnson and Nicole Langenfeld who became engaged on July 4.

    Brandon Miller is currently in Hungen, Germany.

    Mission Youth raised \$940 with a couple of dinner theaters back in June!

4. **In our Prayers:** Paula Kreib's Aunt Audrey, died on July 2. Audrey was Betty Kreib's brother Jack's wife. She was in Hospice for about 2 weeks; Kevin Johnston, Ross Markello, Sue Cataudella, Molly Reed, Mac Sabol, Dave Mitchell, Brian Martin (home from the hospital and waiting for 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 and end to turmoil and unrest around the world.

Remember to pray for pastors and congregations who began new relationships this week. It was just three years ago that we were deeply into cottage meetings at Christ Church getting acquainted, hearing stories, beginning to explore ministry together. Pray for those who are in those initial conversations this week.

5. **Summer Film Fest:** On Sundays in July and August at 10:00 in the Wesley Room we'll be exploring a variety of topics through short films. July 13 (this Sunday) we will be viewing the short film "Shells" by Rob Bell. Good is often the enemy of the best. Too many of us strive to do a variety of good things which can often prevent us from doing God's highest and best. These gatherings are open for all.

6. **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** Begins on Monday July 14 at 9:00 a.m. The theme is "Workshop of Wonders: Imagine and Build with God". All children Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to come and grab a hammer, find a paint brush, put on their creative thinking cap and discover how the ordinary becomes extraordinary with God! To register call the church office (839-2460) or <http://cokeburyvbs.com/christumcamherst>.

7. **ATTENTION ASBURY POINTE RESIDENTS and FRIENDS:** Tuesday, July 15 at 2:00 in the Activity Room at Asbury Pointe, Dr. B.J. Norrix will be meeting with anyone interested in forming a new faith exploration/development/enhancement group. Details will be worked out with the group. This could be a Bible discussion group or a prayer exploration group or a . . .

8. **STOP STRESS AND SEE – An Introduction to Living Well:** Monday, July 21 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. presenter Tom DeLoughry of Second Half Life Ministries will teach participants strategies to reduce stress and reduce "stress blindness." You'll review and consider topics that include prayer, finding more love, coaching conversations, healing, hope and hospitals, end of life, the law, new beginnings, and more. You'll also learn about opportunities to help yourself, your loved ones, and your community through a Living Well ministry. Join us and bring your friends of all ages and life stages!

9. **Happy Birthday this week:**

July 10 – Tom Cataudella; Peggy Nye

July 11 – Tom Davis; Garrett Lesswing; Trevor Smith; Frank Parete; Frank Willhauck

July 13 – Courtney Cataudella

July 14 – Tom Nye

July 16 – Hannah Smith

**10. Happy Anniversary this week:**

July 8 – Tom and Darcie Beyer (36 years)

July 12 – James and Lisa Juergens (11 years)

July 14 – Ed and Cindy Fisher (52 years)

July 15 – Bob and Betty Kreib (64 years); Chris and Laura Smith (8 years)

July 16 – Rubin and Lisa Malpica (26 years); John and Marie Miller (20 years)

**11. FOOD PANTRY** – remember that hungry people are hungry 12 months of the year. Thank you for your regular contributions to the food baskets!

**12. Through the Bible: this week:**

July 8 – Deuteronomy 32-34

July 9 – Obadiah 1; Acts 8

July 10 – Ruth 1-4

July 11 – Psalms 1-3

July 12 – Psalms 4-6; Acts 9

July 13 – Psalms 7-9

July 14 – Psalms 10-12 and Acts 10

July 15 – Psalms 13-15 and Acts 11

July 16 – Psalms 16-17 and Acts 12

July 17 – Psalms 18-19 and Acts 13

**13. Men's Breakfast group:** meets this Friday at 7:00 at the Sheridan Family Restaurant. Come join us before work.

**14. 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.

15. **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.

16. **This Week at Christ Church:**

Tuesday, July 8 – Stewardship and Finance meets at 7:00

Thursday, July 10 – Bible Study in the Wesley Room at 10:00 a.m.

Discussion/Action group at 7:00 in Wesley room.

Friday, July 11 – Men’s pre-work breakfast Sheridan Family Diner

Monday July 14 through Friday July 18 – Vacation Bible School!

17. **Mission notes:**

1. BJ Norrix and Joe Fort will be off to Uganda in just 3 months! Watch for updates and opportunities to help.

2. 1 year from now (June 28-July5, 2015) a group of youth and adults are planning a mission to Uganda with Dr. BJ. To obtain an application for this journey contact BJ. Initial registration deadline is August 1.

3. Mission Youth’s next gathering is September 5 (watch for more information)

4. A “Uganda Mission” fund raiser is scheduled for late September. This spaghetti dinner and silent auction will support Joe and BJ and the Nexus Seminary mission. We are collecting items for the silent auction: please leave appropriate items in the Pastor’s office. (THANK YOU)

18. MISSION OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH: This from Jessica Lawson who is working at Camp Asbury this summer. **Reach Out: Community Mission Experience** at Camp Asbury, taking place the week of **July 13th to July 17th**. This would definitely be a perfect experience for Mission Youth, for those going to Uganda next summer, or for anyone of any age that would like to go on a mission trip that's not too far away from home. Here's a [link](#) to the page on the website if you'd like some more information!

19. LEADERSHIP SUMMIT is August 14/15. Sally, Janelle and I are attending this event in Rochester. There is room for more – Contact Janelle for more information.

20. MEN’S CLUB – upcoming events:

July 19 – Boarding the Miss Buffalo: car pool leaves at 10:20 for Erie Basin Marina. Women are also invited to join us! Cost is \$15 (with AAA card \$16 w/o). Boarding begins at noon and sails at 12:30. Contact Don Critoph for more information. Lunch to follow at the The Hatch or Templeton Landing.

August 9 – Going to Erie County Fair. Car pool leaves at 10:00 a.m. Tickets are \$7 Contact Tom Nye for more information. Lunch at the Fair!

**Parting thought:**

The rhythm of the spiritual life requires us to disengage from time to time. On a weekly basis this is called the “Sabbath Principle”. We are designed to rest one day in seven. Muscle builders and health advocates know that one should not work out the same muscle groups every day – time is needed to recover, and rebuild. Business people know that productivity begins to diminish after so many consecutive days of work (time is need to rest and recover). In the spiritual life the need to disengage normal activity and to be away, unencumbered, for a season is an essential part of the rhythm of the spiritual journey. I began my vacation by spending 4 days at Camp Casowasco’s Proskin Cabin with my covenant group. We spent our four days in prayer, in discussion of how to better keep one and another’s souls, some play time and finding ways to better support and encourage one another. After a long stretch of no time away, this was balm for my weary soul and was truly life enhancing and soulfully restful. However, the point of taking time away is not just to be away (that would be self indulgent). The point of having time away is to be renewed, refreshed and revitalized so that we can return to service, mission and ministry. I am deeply blessed to have been away and have made some changes in my rhythms and patterns to better enhance my spiritual growth and health. I am now ready to re-engage, lead and be about the calling and work of God. Are you finding rest for your soul? Are you finding the rhythm and pattern that is optimum for your soul’s connection with God and effectiveness in mission, ministry and service?

I’ll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, rested soul

This email is a communication ministry of the Christ UMC in Amherst, New York. If you do not wish to receive this email please let me know.