

**Christ United Methodist Church**  
**Harlem at Saratoga**  
**Amherst, New York**

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

**EVERYONE is WELCOME**

**June 3, 2014**

**UPDATE**

**EVERY 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)  
**716-839-2460**

**Dr. B.J.’s blog is [www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com](http://www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com)  
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Hi Everyone:

Roger Johnson, Jim Pollard, and about 1000 of our closest friends gathered in the OnCenter in Syracuse for Upper New York Annual Conference this past week (May 29-31). We heard some great preaching, participated in some great worship, made some new friends, reacquainted ourselves with some old friends, and took care of the business of the United Methodist Church in Upper New York (basically everything north and west of the Catskills). We are over 900 churches in that region. We heard inspiring preaching from our Bishop Mark Webb, from visiting Bishop Mike Lowry from Central Texas, and from Cathy Hall Stengel (at the Memorial Communion Celebration). We remembered those pastors, spouses and lay members who died in the past year. We celebrated the commissioning of 4 new pastors and fully Ordained 7 others. We closed a few churches and welcomed the

beginnings of several new faith communities. We approved mundane things like the budget and received many reports from our ministry and mission groups and their work for the past year. Annual Conference used to be a fairly dull extended business meeting (and something of an annual wrangle) but Bishop Webb and others have worked hard to make it a renewal experience and an event that had explicit value to all attendees.

I left encouraged and ready to do my part to bring the kingdom of God on earth.

Here is what is happening at Christ Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was just under 120. We celebrated graduates from college and high school (many of whom were in attendance) and learned what it means to be called to community. Thank you to Sally Pollard and the Education Team for preparing gifts and the celebration.

2. This Sunday is PENTECOST (remember to **WEAR RED** in observance of Pentecost).

This Sunday is also **CONFIRMATION SUNDAY** – At 11:00 we will confirm

Jonathon Miller

Robert Paddock

Paige Shupe

We are grateful to their mentors (Brad Loliger, Lynn Ramsey and Laura Smith) and will celebrate their public profession of faith in Jesus Christ at our 11:00 worship celebration.

3. “Sunday at Christ Church” is a music and image presentation based on photographs taken by Ian Webber and Ross Markello and arranged by Janelle Martin. The show can be accessed through our web site: [www.christchurchamherst.org](http://www.christchurchamherst.org) (just click on the “Sunday at Christ Church” button on the home page). Or you can go direct to the YouTube link by clicking here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pwlk9G1g7M>.

4. In our prayers: are with Debbie Fiebelkorn on the passing of her step-father William Erick; Sue Cataudella is recovering from a fall; Jan Rhinehart is also recovering from a fall; Brian Martin (Janelle’s brother) has begun treatments for Leukemia at Roswell; : Bob Jackiewicz; Tom Davis; Janet Hill; Caroline Hess, Fred Painton, Guy Castellino, Mitch Mooney, Bim Rowlands, Glenn Hurst, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice Schmidt, Diane Lovejoy. Remember those serving overseas, remember families in

crisis and all who are looking for work. Pray for our students and their teachers as the school year begins to wind down.

5. Thank you to the 50 or so who came out for the Ron Corsaro and friends concert on Sunday evening. The offering supported our youth ministry.

6. This Week at Christ Church:

Wednesday – June 4 – 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday – June 5 – 10:00 bible Study

5:30 – Confirmation Dinner and Rehearsal

Saturday – June 7 – UMM Buffalo Bisons Game at 6:00

Sunday June 8 – Confirmation Class (last Class of the summer)

7. FOOD PANTRY – this week is collecting Canned Fruits and Vegetables!

8. BLOOD DRIVE is coming June 20 at Christ Church. Anyone 18 and older is encouraged to donate. Free hot dogs for all donors!

9. Happy Birthday this week:

June 4 – Richard Ball

June 5 – Barbara Clinton; Diane Poe Schroeder

June 6 – Carol Gundlach; Woody Rhinehart

June 7 – Karen Hoffman; Ross Markello

June 8 – John Lopez, Nicole Takac

June 9 – Charlotte Davis

June 10 – Samantha Willhauck

10. Happy Anniversary this week:

June 5 – Dave and Patti Bechtel (43);

Bob and Marcia Snyder (55);

June 7 – Kent and Michelle Panasiewicz (6)

June 8 – Jayne and Gene Kremzier (40)

June 9 – Woody and Jan Rhinehart (58)

11. UMW Conversation: *Immigration and Radical Welcome* is June 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00  
All are welcome to join the conversation as we explore stories of migration and the surprising ways God works through us to welcome the stranger. This gathering is led by Peggy Bermudez and is open to everyone (radically open).

12. MISSION OF THE MONTH in JUNE is “Dress our People”

This ministry began at Christ Church in the spring of 2012. This summer many people are needed to gather, cut, sew and package dresses and shorts for children in Uganda. Donations are needed to purchase t-shirts to be sent with the shorts. Last year we sent over 300 articles of clothing to Uganda!. If you would like to help contact Peggy Nye (648-1850). **Donations of Cotton fabric or cotton/polyester blends no less than 1 yard in length, thread, bias tape, and trim are needed.** Donations may be placed in or near the Dress our People mailbox outside the church office. Thank you.

### 13. Summer Schedule at Christ Church

1. Office Hours to begin June 16. From June 16 to mid August the office will be open 9 to 3 p.m.
2. Worship times will remain at 9:00 and 11:00 all summer.
3. There is no FaithXpress in the summer but there will be Vacation Bible School (see #14)

### 14. Vacation Bible School: WORKSHOP OF WONDERS – July 14 through July 18 from 9:00 to Noon

Workshop of Wonders: imagine, and Build with God. Discover how the ordinary becomes extraordinary with God!

Register online at <http://www.christchurchamherst.org/education/vacation-bible-school-2014/>

### 15. SOME MISSION NEWS

1. At the Mission Youth (MY) gathering on May 9 with Rev. Davis Matovu we passed out Application Forms for the 2015 Mission Youth journey to Uganda. This 11/12 day trip will connect our youth (and adults) with comparable aged Uganda youth for worship, mission work, some evangelism and a little play time. Applicants must be 16 by the end of June (or be travelling with a parent). See BJ for further information regarding cost and other matters. We are planning to leave the last Sunday of June in 2015.

2. Jessica Lawson is currently in India on a mission from American University; Courtney Cataudella is currently in Costa Rica;

Pastor BJ Norrix and Joe Forte will be returning to Uganda in October 2014.

3. Our friend **Davis Matovu** is home in Uganda and everyone there is doing well.

### 16. Through the Bible 2014

June 3 – Hosea 9-11 and Matthew 19

June 4 – Hosea 12-14

June 5 – Jeremiah 1-2 and Matthew 20  
June 6 – Jeremiah 3-5  
June 7 – Jeremiah 6-8 and Matthew 21  
June 8 – Jeremiah 9-11  
June 9 – Jeremiah 12-14 and Matthew 22  
June 10 – Jeremiah 15-17  
June 11 – Jeremiah 18-19 and Matthew 23  
June 12 – Jeremiah 20-21 and Matthew 24

17. Family Justice Center - Voices Ending Violence Fundraising Breakfast

Date: Friday, June 13, 2014

Time: Registration: 7:30 am - Program: 8:00 - 9:00 am

Location: Buffalo Convention Center 153 Franklin Street, Buffalo, NY  
14202

Mary Travers Murphy and others will speak about domestic violence in our community and the Northtowns Satellite will be highlighted. There is no charge for the breakfast. You will have an opportunity to give a donation in any amount at this event. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Peggy Bermudez by Friday, June 6th. 626-4897 or [bradbermudez@hotmail.com](mailto:bradbermudez@hotmail.com).

18. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT – August 14 and 15, 2014. This event, put on by the Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago, is an annual gathering of leaders from a wide variety of disciplines and expertise. It is an event I try to attend every year. The nearest satellite location is in Rochester. Sally, Janelle and I are preregistered but there is room for plenty more. Current registration is \$189 (\$199 after May 20). If you would like to attend with us please let me know ASAP and we'll get you signed up. Scheduled speakers include: Louis Giglio, Erica Ariel Fox, Carly Fiorina, Patrick Lencioni, Susan Cain, Tyler Perry, Jeffrey Immelt and Bill Hybels (Pastor at Willow). This event was attended by nearly 200,000 people worldwide last year.

19. COMING EVENTS

June 7 – Star Wars Night at the Ball Park

June 8 – Confirmation Sunday

June 22 – Guest Preacher Mr. Roger Johnson, SPRC Chair at Christ Church

June 29 – Guest Preacher Ms. Peggy Bermudez, Lay Leader at Christ  
Church

July 6 – Guest Preacher Rev. James Pollard

20. CHANGE TO CHANGE THE WORLD: Save up your loose change for the Family Justice Center! We will be collecting change every day to make a positive transformation in the lives of those affected by domestic violence.

### *Parting Thought*

I was reminded this week that one of the critical functions of leadership is that leaders give hope. I don't want to be part of an organization that has given up and I certainly don't want to be the pastor of a dying church. In watching both Bishop Webb and Bishop Lowry teach, preach, and lead, I was struck with their unwavering sense of hope for the future. Yes there are challenges, yes there are difficulties, yes, getting to the preferred future will not be easy. But there is hope. The promise of Jesus Christ is a promise for a hope-filled and better future. I have found that the hardest part of helping a faith community transition to vitality is the restoration of hope. When the halcyon days of yore and what we live on but we do not see a better brighter future we have given up hope. When we look back longingly to days long gone by, rather than looking forward, longingly, to good days yet to come, we have given up hope. Hope gets me out of bed in the morning. I rise every morning with a prayer on my lips that today, somehow, somewhere and in some way, my life will lead one more who has lost hope or who is about to give up hope to try one more time, to get up one more time and to see that the power of the resurrection driven by the passion of the Holy Spirit of Pentecost is life-giving, life-changing and unabashedly hopeful. I want my Christ Church community to know that I am filled with hope. Yes, sometimes I get discouraged, yes, sometimes the fire is down to coals and the coals are barely glowing. But it is then that I remember who I belong to. I belong to Jesus who took the worse the world had to offer and got up! I belong to the one who not only sends encouragement but who sends Fire/Power/Energy in the person of the Holy Spirit to change me as I seek to introduce the world to the one who transforms us – Jesus. That knowledge is fire-breathing and hope-restoring!

I'll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, purveyor of hope

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