

**Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York
"Living Christ's ways and exploding with love and service"**

**UPDATE
June 4, 2012**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH
9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship with the new worship team.
10:00 – Faith Express and Soul Strength will return in September
Vacation Bible School is July 16-20
11:00 – Traditional Style Worship with Choir.
Bring a Friend this week and share the Love and Grace of God!**

www.Christchurchamherst.org

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Dr. B.J.'s blog is www.drbitthoughts.blogspot.com

Hi Everyone:

I was deeply blessed to witness Leanne Paddock and Brandon Miller's confirmation this past Sunday. It was a great joy to be a part of their first public profession of faith in Christ and to celebrate with them and their families. The Christian faith is not something we inherit or something we can absorb by osmosis. The Christian faith is chosen. When we hear the truth of the gospel; when we are touched by the grace and mercy of Jesus; when we experience the world changing presence of the Holy Spirit; we are placed in a position to choose. Will we choose the life, love and grace that God is offering? It is always great when two young persons have made the choice. I want to give special thanks to Tom Weaver (Brandon's mentor) and Michele Sciolino (Leanne's mentor) for their faithful work. Thank you to Sally Pollard who coordinates our confirmation process with exceptional excellence!

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Attendance Sunday was 150 (23 and 127). Thank you to Lee Watson for setting up communion, to our choir (who will resume in September), and to all who assisted and worked to make our worship time significant.
2. This Sunday is June 10. I will be preaching from Acts 11:19-29. The message is titled "Some Encouragement from Barnabas". Come and join us at 9:00 and 11:00.
3. The youth group reports that they raised over \$1100 on the barbecue and over \$800 on the Sunday evening Concert. Well done team! Funds will be used for their mission trip this summer.
4. Special thanks to Ron Corsaro and his group (plus the vocalist, plus the horns) for a great evening on Sunday.

5. The Men's Club (and friends) is going to "Star Wars Night" with the Buffalo Bisons this Saturday at 6:00 p.m.

6. In our Prayers: Dave Bechtel (now home from hospital); Jean DiDeminoco; Nicky Sebastiano; Mary Emens, Barbara McCray, Carmen Ticconi, Ed Maker, Alicia Ticconi, Habitat Women Build Team, youth mission team this summer and the Uganda Team (October); remember to pray for those with unspoken needs, those in harm's way, those looking for work.

7. It was great to see Courtney Cataudella and Jessica Lawson in church Sunday back from their mission trip to Nicaragua. Watch for information on a time when Courtney and Jessica will be telling their stories and sharing experiences.

8. SUMMER Adjustments:

Office Hours will be from 9:00 to 3:00 beginning June 18 and running through August 17. Hours will return to 9 to 5 on the 20th of August.

Dr. BJ will be on vacation June 14 through July 4 – Contact the Church office if you are in need of pastoral care.

Guest preachers in Dr. BJ's absence: June 17 Roger Johnson; June 17 Rev. Gail Lewis; July 1 Rev. Jim Pollard

9. Happy Birthday this week:

June 4 – Richard Ball

June 5 – Barbara Clinton; Diane Poe Shroeder; Nina Shanley

June 6 – Carol Gundlach; Woody Rhinehart; June Traquair

June 7 – Karen Hoffman; Ross Markello

June 8 – John Lopez, Nicole Takac

June 9 – Charlotte Davis

June 10 – Samantha Willhauck

June 12 – Patricia Zaleski

10. Happy Anniversary this week:

June 8, 1974 – Gene and Jayne Kremzier

June 9, 1956 – Woody and Jan Rhinehart

11. HANDS 4 NY – the goal was to feed 1 million people between June 1, 2011 and May 31, 2012. It was announced at Annual Conference that the United Methodist Churches of Upper New York fed (drum roll, please), over 1,818,000. Let's keep it going!

12. Congratulations to Stephen Mugel who was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

13. MORE JUNE EVENTS:

June 19 – Christ Church is hosting the Harlem/Kensington/Cleveland year end party for the end of School. Celebration begins at 6:00. Cost is \$1 for the kids. If you would like to help out see Sally Pollard.

June 22 – Red Cross Blood Drive from 2 to 6

June 23 and 30 – Youth Car Washes at the church from 10 to 2

REMEMBER: July 16 through 20 – VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!!

14. We will make space in future weeks for Roger Johnson to report on Annual Conference: here is a brief synopsis:

We met at the OnCenter in Syracuse New York, May 19, 31 and June 1 and 2.

We approved an Annual Conference Budget for 2013 of over \$10 million dollars which included new staff positions for New Church Development and Congregational Revitalization – there was no dollar change in the total budget from 2012 to 2013. The budget drew the most debate and conversation.

We celebrated the retirement of nearly 2 dozen pastors.

We ordained 14 new Elders, recognized the orders of 2 others and commissioned 6 others (on their way to becoming Elders)

We celebrated Hands 4 NY; our institutions and organizations.

We heard a good bible study by the dean of Hendricks Chapel at Syracuse University

We heard great preaching from the President of Colgate Rochester Crozier Divinity School . . .

We remembered the passing of pastors and spouses in a memorial service

There are over 950 United Methodist Churches in the Upper New York Annual Conference.

15. **MISSION NEWS AND NOTES**

1. Hands for New York – this week’s collection: **Everything and anything! – The official tally was over 1.8 million fed.**

2. Habitat Women Build is underway with 10 from Christ Church leading the way! Lynn Ramsey, Marg Bauza, Kathy Weaver, Dede Johnson, Lisa Lawson, Joanne Gilbert, Patty Keller, Pat Noyes, Inger Darling, and Peggy Bermudez are the Christ Church builders!

3. Courtney Cataudilla and Jessica Lawson are back from Nicaragua – watch for an opportunity to hear them tell their stories.

4. UGANDA PROJECTS UPDATE:

a. Dr BJ will be travelling to Uganda to continue his work with the Nexus Seminary this fall (October 1-October 17). The 2012 Uganda team: Rev. B.J. Norrix, Rev. William Mudge (Adirondack District Superintendent), Kathy Weaver and John Miller of Christ Church, Esther Keeney (of Pulaski) and Rev. Clair Mosher (Erieville and Ononativia United Methodist Churches in Onondaga County)

b. Rev. Clair Mosher has formed a Uganda Youth initiative that will sponsor the training of youth leaders and hold youth rallies in Uganda. Pray for Clair’s work as well.

5. Several of our “Make a Difference – Be the Church” projects will be continuing. The “Dress our People” team is cutting, sewing and making clothing. See Peggy Nye or Molly Butler for more information or to help out.

If you would like to support the Christ Church Uganda Team or any of our Mission Teams directly: write a check to Christ UMC with the specific mission in the memo line.

16. There are now **8** of us officially signed up for **the Israel 2013 journey**. The tour is 10 days: we spend 3 days in the Galilee in and around the sea; we spend four days in and around Jerusalem, Bethlehem, etc. We will visit Jericho and the Dead Sea and walk the via Dolorosa. **We depart on January 28, 2013.** If you would like to join us see the Church office or Pastor BJ for brochure and more information. All Inclusive cost is \$2598 (transportation from New York; deluxe hotel accommodations; breakfast and dinner ground transportation, guide, deluxe motor coach and all entrance fees). There are extensions available for those who would like to visit Petra in Jordan or see the Pyramids of Egypt.

This will be my 5th journey to the Holy Land. Each trip I discover something new to illuminate my understanding of the Bible (Old and New) and the background needed for understanding.

If you know anyone who would be interested in joining us there is room for more.

There is plenty of room for more . . . see Dr. B.J. for more information and/or brochure.

17. HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE GRADUATES: We are compiling a list of Christ Church folks who are graduating this year. Let us know so we can let the whole Church know so we can all rejoice with you in your great accomplishments – Graduation Sunday is June 17.

Finishing up Annual Conference late Saturday afternoon I was reminded again of the importance of Christian community. The United Methodist Annual Conference is a diverse and often quarrelsome body. It is a gathering of pastors and lay persons who come from widely divergent communities that stretch from Jamestown to Plattsburgh and from the Pennsylvania Border to the Canadian Border. Any time that diverse a group of people gather together to hammer out a common purpose it can get interesting – and usually does. What I love most about the Annual Conference is not the political process. That hammering process is not at the core of my being. What I do love is seeing old friends, making new friends and spending the time learning about what others are doing, where God is working and what new ideas are floating about. This excites me and so, as Roger Johnson can attest, I don't spend a lot of time in my seat. Instead I wander about checking in with folks, seeing what they are up to, listening to stories and discerning how the spirit might be moving in so many diverse places and catching up with ongoing friendships. I thought, in the midst of the hammering, we made one very good decision. As an Annual Conference we decided to make a major investment in revitalizing those existing congregations that are seeking to grow; we did this by hiring a Director of Congregational Development. We also decided to make a major investment in the future by funding the hiring of a New Communities Director – someone who will train and lead us in the planting and starting of new faith communities (worship services, new churches, etc.). I think it is a significant and major step in the right direction. If the United Methodist Church does not begin to rebuild its communities and begin to launch new ones to replace the ones that are dying off . . . there will be no United Methodist Church in 25 years (if we last that long). It gave me hope and encouragement.

Have a great week:

BJ Norrix, missionary, lead servant, hopeful

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