

UPDATE

March 31, 2015

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

**10:00 FaithXpress, Soul Strength and Adult
Opportunities for Learning**

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
Or call us at: 716-839-2460

Dr. B.J.’s blog is www.drjthoughts.blogspot.com

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Hi Everyone:

We have entered Holy Week. Sunday we waved our palm branches and sang Hosannas and then heard the Passion narrative according to St. Mark. I want to especially appreciate Brad Loliger, Tom Nye, and Mac Sabol, with extra appreciation to Kathryn Weaver (who read in both morning celebrations), for assisting in the reading of the Passion. The different voices and inflections help us

hear the story in fresh and new ways. THANK YOU. Thank yous are also due to the Altar Guild/Worship Team for the palms and other arrangements that make our journey through Holy Week deeply meaningful.

It is Holy Week:

Holy Thursday (April 2) Communion at 7:00p.m.

Good Friday (April 3) "Meditations on Seven Phrases from the Cross" at Noon and 7:00p.m.

EASTER – Festival Celebrations at 9:00 and 11:00a.m. (special music!)

Take time to walk with Jesus in real time this week as we observe the pivotal story of our Faith.

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was about 140. Again, thank you everyone for making it a deep and meaningful time.

2. This Sunday is Easter! It is Resurrection Day! One of the ancients wrote that every Sunday is a little Easter and Easter is the GREAT Sunday. All that we believe hinges on the event of Easter morning. Make space to celebrate, to experience the grace and love, and to bask in the renewal of our victory through Christ.

3. HELP NEEDED TOMORROW: We are helping move Diane Lovejoy to her permanent residence on Wednesday at 1:00. We could use some helping hands and, perhaps, a good truck or two to help get her things moved. Contact Sally if you can help or show up at 1:00p.m. at the church. THANK YOU!

Also, we need a few hundred dollars to get her into this final placement. If you can help, tell me or Sally TODAY. Funds are for a security deposit.

4. In our Prayers: **Dave Lawson** following eye surgery; Sue Estee is now HOME following her surgery; Ruth Swenson (broken shoulder after a fall); Pray for **Todd and Mary Jo Evans** – Todd is now at Beechwood and will be consulting at Roswell in early April; **Mary Jo is at Blocher Homes; Mitch Mooney**, following a recent hospital stay is now at Wesley Rehab; **Glenn Hurst** following a recent hospital stay is at Elderwood; **Tom Davis** has been at Suburban Hospital; **Laney Fuller** has returned to Asbury Pointe; **Jan Rhinehart** undergoing tests; **Sharon Ferrelli**

continues cancer treatments; **Dr. Robert Nachbar** has moved to Blocher Homes; **Chuck Gilbert**, following a recent hospital stay; **Dorothy Brown; Dona Dalton; Brian Martin** for continued healing; **Edmond Wrycza** (Julianna Sabol's father in nursing home in Fort Erie); **Lois Lewis, Barbara Clinton, Fred and Linda Painton, Guy Castellino** (and Guy's mother and father who are both dealing with major health matters); **Bim Rowlands, Nicky Sebastiano, Ruth Kitson, Ruth Luss, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice Schmidt, Diane Lovejoy**. Remember our service men and women (domestic and foreign) especially: **Alex Dunbar, Ian Johnson and Lindsey Darling** (all serving in the US Navy). Pray for **Christ UMC** in this time of transition. Pray for Pastor BJ and our new Pastor to be named later in this season of transition. Pray for renewal and a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit!

5. The UMW District Memorial Communion Service on Saturday was well attended and featured Rev. Ann Cole as the guest speaker. Christ UMC UMW hosted with their customary excellence!

6. This Week at Christ Church:

Wednesday, April 1 – 5:30p.m. Lenten Supper and Study

7:30p.m. Choir rehearsal

Thursday April 2 – 10:00a.m. Bible Study

7:00p.m. – HOLY THURSDAY Worship (Sanctuary)

Friday, April 3 (OFFICE IS HALF DAY)

Noon and 7:00p.m. "7 last phrases meditation"

Sunday, April 5 – RESURRECTION DAY

7. FOOD PANTRY – is collecting Cereal (hot, cold or cereal bars) this week!

8. We celebrated the birth of Sullivan Bartlett Teague, the 17th great grandchild of Joyce Moser, with a rose bud this Sunday.

9. MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY IS just 7 weeks from Sunday: check out the video from last year's event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8yiUQxxgNc>. Signup sheets will be out on Easter Sunday. We are still looking for a "construction" type project (any ideas???).

10. On the ***Wish List: the Church's snow blower*** - we may have a donor, watch for more information (THANK YOU). The Trustees would like to purchase a new,

commercial grade snow blower that would cost about \$2500. Is this something you'd like to purchase for your church? See me or Tom Weaver if you'd like to help. I am calling this the "be kind to Dave Wolf" project. Dave is the one who wrestles that old and often repaired machine most days of the week!

11. AARP Driver Safety Class: Christ Church will host an AARP Driver Safety Class on Friday, April 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Class is \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members (paid by cash or check on the day of the training). Lunch will be available for \$5. Register by contacting Janelle at 839-2460 or cumc350@gmail.com.

12. **Uganda Team Fundraisers and events** (come and help us out)

A. We are selling handmade Ugandan bead necklaces for \$5 each. Contact Janelle (839-2460) for more information. Proceeds support two ministries in Uganda.

B. **Krolic's Fish Fry – is scheduled for April 10 here at Christ Church –** Tickets are \$12 and will be available in advance at the Church

C. We are planning a chicken barbecue/silent auction in early May (watch for more details as the date approaches).

13. DID I MENTION: Krolic's Fish Fry – April 10 from 4 to 7 p.m. Eat in or Take Out. Tickets are \$12 and include fish, coleslaw, potato salad, roll and butter. Tickets can be purchased in advance between worship services or through the church office (839-2460).

14. **UGANDA TEAM NOTES:** John and Brandon Miller, Viki and Hannah Smith, Janelle Martin, Erisawe Briere, Kathryn Weaver and B.J. Norrix will depart for Uganda on Sunday June 28 and will return on Tuesday, July 14.

FOCUS: We will be working with two clinics (at Lusanja and Nabukondo) we will be leading two Nexus graduations (at Rakai and Nakasangola) we will be working on a church building at a school and holding at least one youth rally. We will be dedicating a new well (at Gombe) and a new church at Seta. There will be time taken to visit the source of the Nile River in Jinja and a Game Preserve near Rakai.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP: A. Help out at and/or bring friends to the three remaining fund raisers: 1) the Krolic's Fish Fry on April 10; 2) a chicken Barbecue on May 2nd; 3) a Ron Corsaro Trio concert in early June.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP: B. Collect supplies for us to take with us: 1. **school supplies (pencils, colored pencils, erasers (NO CRAYONS OR PAPER))**; 2. Basic medical supplies (gloves, bandages, etc.); 3. toothbrushes; 4. toys (stickers, small items); 5. Bibles, bible resources (ask BJ if in doubt); 6. Silent Auction Basket items for May 2.

15. Happy Birthday this week:

March 31 – Warren Hammond, Jan Rhinehart

April 3 – Caleb Parete

April 5 – Kathy Weaver

April 6 – Charles Gilbert, Stephen Mugel, Julianna Sabol

April 7 – Tom Brunner

16. Happy Anniversary this week:

Todd and Mary Joe Evans (47)

17. Through the Bible in a year readings:

March 31 – Judges 9-10; Psalm 49 and 1 Corinthians 16

April 1 – Judges 11-12; Psalm 50 and 2 Corinthians 1

April 2 – Judges 13-16 and 2 Corinthians 2

April 3 – Judges 17-18; Psalm 89 and 2 Corinthians 3

April 4 – Judges 19-21 and 2 Corinthians 4

April 5 – Ruth 1-2; Psalm 53 and 61 and 2 Corinthians 5

April 6 – Ruth 3-4; Psalm 64-65 and 2 Corinthians 6

April 7 – 1 Samuel 1-2; Psalm 66; 2 Corinthians 7

April 8 – 1 Samuel 3-5; Psalm 77 and 2 Corinthians 8

April 9 – 1 Samuel 6-7; Psalm 72 and 2 Corinthians 9

HERE'S A WAY TO ENHANCE YOUR BIBLE READING: Try keeping a Journal.

Sometimes, when you are reading, something in the reading will speak to you or stand out to you. Take a moment and write down the **SCRIPTURE**. Then make an **OBSERVATION** (what spoke to me??). Thirdly, ask "How would I **APPLY** this to my life. Finally, make what you learned into a **PRAYER**. This method of bible reading is called the **S.O.A.P.** method and allows us to ask "how will I be different because of what I just read?"

18. THE UNITED METHODIST APPOINTIVE SYSTEM FOR PASTORS (an unofficial primer). Many of you have asked how the new pastor is found for Christ Church with my departure. Here is the short form of what happens. First, it is an appointive process. Unlike Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists and to some degree Lutherans and Episcopalians, who vote for and hire their pastors, in the United Methodist Church all clergy are members of the Annual Conference (in our case Upper New York Annual Conference) and serve at the discretion of our Bishop. We are sent to serve. We are under appointment. There is an extensive consulting process where the church, through the Staff Parish Relations Committee, submits a profile and identifies leadership needs, plans, hopes and desires. Every pastor fills out a similar profile that identifies their strengths, weaknesses, interests, experience, etc. Every November every church and every pastor fills out a form that indicates whether the church is seeking a change in pastor or the pastor is seeking a change in appointment. There are multiple retirements every year and new pastors are graduating from seminary and coming in to serve – there is a constant coming and going in a system as large as ours. When there is an opening (such as Christ Church experienced with my announcement on March 22) the Bishop (Mark Webb) and the Cabinet (our Superintendent Wayne Butler and the 11 additional superintendents from the Upper New York Conference) match the best available pastor for each open congregation. The Superintendent consults with the SPRC of the “open” church to verify and confirm and then, at a separate meeting, will bring the new pastor for an introduction (technically, not an interview, but refusal by the pastor or the SPRC is possible and does, occasionally, happen). Like any human system it has its flaws but it also has enormous advantages. Unlike our congregational neighbors who often have to endure a search process that can take up to two years to complete, United Methodists Pastors can be deployed quickly and effectively. It helps to remember that there are over 900 United Methodist congregations in Upper New York and the task of matching for maximum effectiveness is a monumental task. All appointments are “fixed” and, with few exceptions, everyone moves to their new churches on July 1. I want you to know that the cabinet bathes all of their decisions in prayer and takes their work VERY seriously. Please pray for Bishop Webb and Superintendent Butler and their colleagues as they go about their work on our behalf. When an appointment is made (such as my appointment to the Syracuse United Methodist Church) the appointment is announced during worship on the next available Sunday.

19. MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

A. MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY we are beginning to set up projects and mission opportunities for our annual Make a Difference Day the third Sunday of May. Have an idea or a project? Let Janelle know at your earliest convenience.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8yiUQxxgNc>.

B. Uganda Bibles: For our graduates in Rakai and Nakasangola, I need to purchase a case and a half of Lugandan language bibles (every graduate of Nexus Seminary, Uganda, receives Bible study resources, a Bible (English or Lugandan), and a copy of my Bible Primer (in English or Lugandan). The purchase price for 33 of these bibles is \$400. **Would you like to be the donor of these bibles?** Please see ME (BJ) if this is something you'd like to make this gift.

20. HOLY WEEK

Holy Thursday (April 2) – Worship at 7:00p.m. Holy Communion/Last Supper; remembering Jesus in the broken bread

Good Friday (April 3) – Worship at Noon and 7:00p.m. From the Cross, the Gospel records Seven Phrases from the lips of Jesus. What do these phrases say about Jesus what do they say about life what do they say about our lives in relationship with Jesus? We will gather in Crafts Hall.

Easter (April 5) 9:00 and 11:00a.m. festival celebrations of the Risen Christ with Communion at both gatherings.

21. Coming Soon:

April 2 – Holy Thursday worship at 7:00p.m.

April 3 – Good Friday – observance at Noon and 7:00p.m.

April 5 – EASTER – RESURRECTION DAY!!

April 10 -- Uganda Team Fish Fry, 4-7 p.m.

April 18 – UMW and UMM Meetings

April 25 – The Bach Children's Chorus and Bach Chamber Youth Choir of Ontario, Canada – in Concert (see more on #23 below)

May 2 – Uganda Team Chicken BBQ

May 17 – MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY!!

May 31 – First Responder's Celebration and Appreciation Day

June 14 – Pastor BJ's last Sunday

June 28 – Uganda Mission Team leaves for Uganda and returns July 14.

22. Christ Church's Mission footprint (AKA our "Salt Map"): Peggy Bermudez (and friends) has put together a couple of maps. One is Erie County and the other is the rest of the world. On the map is a representation of the agencies and ministries that the Christ Church community is engaged with around town and around the world. The display is in the parlor. Take a look and see that Christ Church people are in ministry in a multitude of places and ways!

23. BACH Children's Chorus and Bach Chamber Youth Choir of Ontario, Canada. There is a concert Saturday evening, April 25. The concert features singers ages 6 through university age are divided into three choirs. These award-winning choirs compete nationally; have released 6 CD's and recorded a song for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics! Mark your calendars – you won't want to miss this. For more information, **or to host children/adults from the group in your home**, contact Sally Pollard (839-2460).

24. Diane Klenk is working with our local Veterans Hospital regarding supplies for the in patient, day programs and homeless. Below are needed items. If you can help see Diane or bring these items to the church and leave them in the container provided in Crafts Hall. Needed items: Socks, underwear, T-shirts (White, L to XXXL, V-neck), towels, Toiletries (deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, disposable razors, mouthwash, nail clippers, body wash, combs, shaving cream, pocket mirrors, chap stick – be sure mouth wash and other items are "Alcohol free"; Gift cards (McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King, Wal-Mart, K-Mart, Tops); Patriotic throws or lap blankets, books and audio books, DVDs.

25. **ONE FINAL THING:** with my departure in mid June, the 9:00a.m. worship team is without a music leader. The team can provide worship leadership but will need a lead **guitar** or **piano** or drummer to hold the music together and to keep the team in focus. I know that many of you play or can play . . . we are praying for you to step up and join us. See BJ for more information.

Parting Thought

Holy Week is a roller coaster of hope and expectation through despairing failure and back to unimaginable hope. Resurrection day, as recorded in Mark, is so overwhelming for the first witnesses that they are unable to speak, unable to imagine – they are shocked with wonder. I remember a time when I was in

Seminary and incurred a financial debt that I could not repay. I was loaned the money to pay the debt. A year or so later when I had finally accumulated the funds to pay back the debt I was told that the debt had been forgiven. I was overwhelmed (and blessed with a nice little nest egg) that left me in grateful wonder of the goodness of God and generosity of friends. In some small way, this feels a little like the first resurrection morning. I came expecting to give. I came expecting to surrender something I had worked hard for. I came expecting to zero out the red in my ledger. I walked away with something completely different. I walked away blessed and grateful and overwhelmed. Can you see Mary and Mary and the others on Easter morning? They are going to a grave site to perform funeral rites and find themselves hearing unthinkable news. Can you walk with them Easter morning, remembering that all human hope had been crushed by the efficient brutality of the Roman Empire – crushed, nailed, crucified, dead, and buried? Can you walk with them Easter morning and see them journey from Friday's despair to an unexpected, unanticipated, and extraordinary announcement that Jesus has returned to life? When we see and experience the despair of Friday we can know the hope of Sunday. I am hoping for all of you that you will find in the Risen Christ the fresh start and new possibility you need for any area of bleakness in your life and world. I look forward to the Easter morning shout: Christ is Risen, Indeed!

I'll see you as we journey through Holy Week,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, coach, missionary (awestruck wonderer at the resurrection!)