

**Christ United Methodist Church**

**Harlem at Saratoga**

**Amherst, New York**

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

**EVERYONE is WELCOME**

**May 20, 2014 UPDATE**

**EVERY SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH**

**9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship**

**10:00 – FaithXpress/Soul Strength/AOL (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](http://www.Christchurchamherst.org)

**716-839-2460**

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

**Like us on Facebook!**

Hi Everyone:

It was an excellent ministry weekend here at Christ Church! The highlights were three:

1. We had an OUTSTANDING Make a Difference Day! Even with a few little glitches including our own version of ‘Where in Buffalo is Carmen San Diego?’ (except in our case it was not Carmen San Diego but John Miller), we had a great day of service. We helped a food pantry get organized and cleaned up; we landscaped the entry to the Family Justice Center; we cleaned and did some landscaping for Hope Lodge; we worked on the vegetable garden for Central City Café; we cut patterns and made clothes; we worked on a quilt; we froze assets; we made lunch; we served lunch at the City Mission; we shredded a lot of documents; we collected clothes and household items for Clara’s Closet; we collected some electronics for Habitat for Humanity; we collected an additional 40 bags of shoes (nearly 200 bags!!!); and in a multitude of small ways and fresh encounters and “divine appointments”; we visited some of our shut-ins; we were Christ’s hands and feet extended into Buffalo. I am very proud of the Christ Church Community for its exceptional effort. Special appreciation to all of our team leaders (Lisa

Lawson, Herb Townsend, Beth Reilly Brown, Sally Pollard/Peggy Bermudez, Bill Bauza, Peggy Nye, Guy Castellino, Rosemary Kochan, Tom and Kathy Weaver, Marcia Snyder, Marie Miller, John Miller: Finally, special thanks to Sally Pollard (wounded foot and all): to Janelle Martin who helped pull it all together; and to the over 100 Christ Church folks who participated in this great event! Well done everyone!

2. We had a great time with the UMW on Friday night. The Variety Show raised over \$1400 for Habitat for Humanity and UMW Mission projects. We had dancers and piano players and comedy. We had choirs and quartets and a trio and some soloists. We were entertained and all for a great cause. Well done to the UMW leadership and their coordinating team.

3. Several of us joined hands in the human chain across Buffalo on Saturday as well. We stood against poverty and for diversity and made some new friends in the process.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. This Sunday I will be speaking about the promised Holy Spirit from John 14. This Saturday, May 24, is Aldersgate Day, a day we remember when our founder, John Wesley, experienced the promised Holy Spirit for himself. Aldersgate Day marks the beginning of the Wesleyan Revivals in England in 1738. Worship returns to our regular 9:00 and 11:00 schedule.

2. **SARAH MUDGE, young adult missionary**, will be speaking at Christ Church this Friday May 23 at 6:30pm in the café. Sarah is serving a 2 year term as a domestic missionary through the Board of Global Ministries. She is working in a Women's shelter and ministry in Seattle, Washington. Sarah is a 2013 graduate of Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester. This event is sponsored by Mission Youth and is open to everyone.

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 directly to the YouTube link by clicking here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pwlk9G1g7M>.

4. This Week at Christ Church:

Tuesday, May 20 – Choir Rehearsal at 7:30

Thursday, May 22 – 9:30 Caller Team; 10:00 Bible Study

Friday, May 23 – Sarah Mudge, Young Adult Missionary at 6:30

Tuesday, May 27 – Church Council at 7:00

Wednesday, May 28 – Identify Theft Workshop at 7:00

Thursday, May 29 through Saturday May 31 – Upper New York Annual Conference in Syracuse

5. In our Prayers: 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.

6. This week for the food pantry: Soap/Shampoo/Toothpaste

7. May 28 – Identity Theft Workshop at Christ Church- how to recognize and prevent identify theft. The workshop is free and open to the public. Call the Church office at 839-2460 to reserve a place.

8. COMING JUNE 1 – Ron Corsaro Quartet is performing from 7 to 9. The concert is a fundraiser for Mission Youth.

9. **GRADUATES** – We are compiling a list of our College and High School Graduates for a Graduation Celebration in June. If we are missing your college or high school graduate please contact the Church office with the information.

Here is what I have so far:

College (so far)

Taylor Ramsey – St. John Fisher College

Meaghan Ramsey – SUNY Empire State College

Sean Johnson – Canisius College

Kelsey Reed – Nazareth College

High School (so far)

Molly Reed – Cleveland Hill

Nicole Sciolino – Williamsville East

Let us know so we can honor all of our graduates this coming June!

10. 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 comparably-aged Ugandan 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.

11. Happy Birthday this week:

May 20 – Mary Landel

May 21 – Rebecca Lopez, Ryan Lopez, Scott Smith, Rachel Vaughan

May 22 – Taylor Deer, Lisa Juergens, Sally Pollard

May 24 – Janet Hider, Sinnathamby Thevanesan

May 26 – Marg Bauza

May 27 – Christopher Maliken, Kent Panasiewicz, Annette Smith

May 28 – Jacob Rhinehart, Alice Schmidt

12. Happy Anniversary this week;

May 21 – John and Pam Lopez (20)

May 26 – BJ Norrix and Karen Bellimer (35)

13. Confirmation Sunday is June 8. Please pray for our Confirmands and their mentors:

Confirmand :	Mentor:
Jonathan Miler	Brad Loliger
Robert Paddock	Lynn Ramsey
Paige Shupe	Laura Smith

14. Through the Bible this week's readings:

May 20 – 1 Kings 19-20 and Matthew 10

May 21 – 1 Kings 21-22; Matthew 11

May 22 – 2 Kings 1-3

May 23 – 2 Kings 4-6 and Matthew 12

May 24 – 2 Kings 7-9

May 25 – 2 Kings 10-12 and Matthew 13

May 26 – 2 Kings 13-14 and Matthew 14

May 27 – 2 Kings 15-16

May 28 – 2 Kings 17-18 and Matthew 15

May 29 – 2 Kings 19-21

15. 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.

16. DRESS OUR PEOPLE: We began cutting and sewing clothing for the Ugandan children on Make a Difference Day, Sunday May 18. **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.

17. Men's pre-work breakfast group is now meeting at the **Sheridan Family Restaurant** on Sheridan near Harlem Road. We will next meet on **June 3 at 7:00** a.m. at the Sheridan Family Restaurant. All men are welcome to join us.

18. Christ Church is blessed with excellent gathering and fellowship space. One of the most popular is the **Café on Sunday morning**. The café provides hot and cold beverages and tasty snacks before and following our Sunday worship gatherings. What makes this work is a lot of volunteers who "Host" the café by preparing coffee/tea, etc. and putting the snacks out and then cleaning up afterwards. Would you like to help in this vital hospitality ministry of our Church? Contact Sally Pollard at 839-2460 or by signing up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Café.

#### 19. COMING EVENTS

**May 23** – US 2 Missionary Sarah Mudge will be with us – gathering at 6:30. Sarah, a 2013 Roberts Wesleyan graduate, is serving a 2 year stint as a Missionary in the United States (US2). She is currently working with a Women's ministry in Seattle, Washington.

May 28 through 31 UPPER NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE – Syracuse

June 7 – Star Wars Night at the Ball Park

June 8 – Confirmation Sunday

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.

21. John Bell is doing a workshop on Saturday, May 31 at the North Presbyterian Church on North Forest in Williamsville. Here is a link to the information:

<http://northchurchwilliamsville.org/get-involved/john-bell/>. The event is free -- there is a fee if you have lunch at the church. John Bell is a resident of Glasgow, Scotland and a member of the Iona Community. He is an internationally known composer of hymns and an active proponent for the propagation of congregational song.

## *Parting Thought*

The vitality, health and growth of any Christian community is dependent on its spiritual depth and its willingness to connect with the wider world. A church grows when individuals and small groups choose to deepen their relationship with God and one another. A church grows when she remembers her primary purpose is outside the confines of her walls. In my nearly three years as pastor at Christ UMC I have seen significant growth and depth in both categories. Through circles, Bible study, short and long term classes and groups, Christ Church is moving deeper in its devotion to Jesus Christ; through our local, national and international missions we are growing deeper and wider in our connections to the wider world. The ultimate consequence of these parallel movements is a broadening and a deepening that will see our influence in the name of Jesus Christ expand. We are growing and we are making a difference in the lives of others in Christ's name. When building any community there are a lot of short cuts that could be taken – if only building the numbers up was our goal. These short cuts do not build people and they do not build depth of faith or relationship. Like anything else in life there is a right way to rebuild the church and that path takes time and patience. We are now beginning to see the fruits of the groundwork we have been laying for the past three years. There was great energy at church around “Make a Difference” Day. There was genuine excitement. One just needed to listen to the stories of encounters and experiences at lunch afterwards to see and hear that excitement. I am reminded of a passage from Isaiah 43:18-19 that says, “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs form, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” God is doing something new around us – the ground has been warmed, the green sprouts are breaking through the soil . . . new life is emerging all around us!

I'll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, coach, missionary