

Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York

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

UPDATE

November 20, 2012

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH

9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship

10:00 – FaithXpress and Soul Strength and AOL

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

716-839-2460

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

Hi Everyone:

I am very excited to be able to spend the end of this week and weekend with my wife and family. My fondest memories of Thanksgiving have to do with my grandmother Norrix’s kitchen on Walnut Street in Flat Rock, Michigan. We were blessed to have our grandparents only a few streets away while we were growing up. My first night to sleep away from my parent’s and home was at my grandparents’ home. On Thanksgiving we all gathered there. Grandpa would set up long wooden planks in the basement to serve as a banquet table and there was always a small card table to the side for the smaller children. Most of the family would gather midday and live in the steam and aroma of a cooking thanksgiving dinner. Thanksgiving memories are little snap shots – my grandmother’s back (she was always pulling something out of the oven – rolls, the turkey, pumpkin pies, etc). The men sitting in the living room (and my dad on the stairs) chatting, telling stories, watching the Lions get beat on TV. The women were in the kitchen theoretically helping grandma but generally getting in grandma’s way and us kids were floating from place to place or running around outside. At the meal my grandfather would put the first of the food on the kiddie table and then the rest of the adult table. He did this every year. I was nearly an adult when someone (probably my dad) explained that in my grandfather’s childhood the children were often fed last and could only eat after the adults were finished. He made sure that we were served first on Thanksgiving, I suspect in response to his upbringing. The day was filled with laughter and bad jokes and stupid puns and occasional hurt feelings and frequent parental intervention into whatever us

kids were into. The day was filled with family (in all its glory and frustration). Grandma died a little over 20 years ago and Grandpa shortly thereafter. None of us live in Flat Rock anymore. The gathering has moved east to Syracuse and Karen and I will go to the next generation – to my sister’s – and her four children (and significant others) and the grandchild and we will have a day filled with laughter and bad jokes and stupid puns (hopefully not too many hurt feelings) and we will revel in a day of family. I pray you enjoy and rejoice with those you are gathering with this year.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was 168. Thank you to the choir for our special music (and soloist Sheila Manginelli). Thank you to Dennis Scaringi who played the postlude duet with Elizabeth. Thank you to the worship team for the lovely cornucopia display on the altar. Thank you to the over 100 of you who returned or stayed to hear the Uganda Mission team show pictures and tell stories of their recent mission trip. It was great to hear Kathryn and John tell of their experiences on this mission journey.

2. WEDNESDAY NIGHT at 7:00 we have a Special Service of Thanksgiving. I have a homily from Luke 17:11-19 and a message about “Did you remember to say: “Thank You?”. We will be celebrating Holy Communion as well.

3. This Sunday, November 25 Pastor BJ will be away. Our Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee chair, Mr. Roger Johnson, will be our guest speaker. His message is titled “How’s your Thanksgiving list coming” and his message is from Luke 10:38-42.

4. The Church Office will be closed Thursday and Friday this week – in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

5. In our Prayers: Don Munson, Nicky Sebastiano, Barbara McCray, Bim Rowlands, Ed Maker, Marian Steve and Ruth Kitson. Remember the family and friends of Laura Walfrand who died last week. Pray for those who are traveling. Pray for peace in the middle east. Pray for those looking for work and families in crisis.

6. Church Council will gather on Thursday November 29 (next week) at 7:00.

7. “Christmas in Italy ” “Buon Natale” the Mid Years & Ministry Christmas Party will be Friday, December 7. Appetizers and Punch at 5:30 and Dinner at 6:00. Entertainment will be provided by the Amherst Male Glee Club performing Holiday Classics, sing along carols, and original songs. Tickets are now on sale (\$18) in Crafts Hall following worship. Proceeds will benefit the Christ Church youth group.

8. ADVENT BEGINS DECEMBER 2 – the Season of Advent was invented by the Church to create a time of preparation for the great celebration of Christmas.

Advent Study in AOL – Sundays at 10:00 – Study of Michael Slaughter’s book Christmas is not Your Birthday. See Sally for a copy.

9. The dedication of the Habitat for Humanity Women’s Build house is December 2 at 3:30 p.m. at 38 Guifford Street. All are invited.

10. The giving tree made its annual appearance in Crafts Hall this past Sunday. Recipients are from Gateway-Longview, Haven House and Habitat for Humanity. Take a tag, fulfill the wish and bring it back to church unwrapped WITH THE TAG by December 9.

11. Hurricane Sandy Relief – we have raised over \$2000 to help with the rebuild on the East Coast. We sent 7 flood buckets, a dozen empty buckets, and supplies to fill more last Tuesday with our friends at the Harris Hill UMC. We will continue the collection and more Flood Buckets are welcome and needed.

12. LET’S REMEMBER TOGETHER – Do you have a special Christmas memory from a church gathering or including your church family? Maybe it’s from your childhood? Maybe it was last year? The timing doesn’t matter! The memory does. This year Christ Church is inviting you to remember Christmas past and the joys that your church has brought to your celebrations. Submit your story to Rachel in the church office or to CUMC350@gmail.com.

13. Happy Birthday this week:

November 20 – Jim Beller

November 21 – Evelyn Cole

November 22 – Andrea Kearney

November 23 – Jean Kayser, George Voskerchian

November 24 – Wyatt Hannon

November 26 – Peter Johnston

November 27 – Anne Reed

14. Happy Anniversary this week:

Jim and Laurie Hannon – November 22, 1980

Guy and Sharon Ferrelli – November 24, 1974

Al and Julie Wrisley – November 24, 1962 (Happy and Blessed 50th to Al and Julie!)

15. Through the New Testament in a year (2012) by reading one chapter a day on week days.

November 20 – 2 Corinthians 12; November 21 – 2 Corinthians 3; November 22 – 2 John; November 23 – 3 John; November 26 – Luke 3; November 27 – Luke 4

November 28 – Luke 5; November 29 – Luke 6. Follow Pastor BJ’s comments at

<http://www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com>.

We are coming down the home stretch and will be finishing the New Testament with our reading of Luke that will take us to the 27th of December. My prayer is that all of you have been as deeply blessed in your reading as I have been in reading and providing commentary.

2013 I am putting down a bigger challenge. I am challenging the Christ Church congregation to read the ENTIRE Bible in 2013. We can do this by reading 3 to 4 chapters a day – 2 or 3 in the Old Testament and 1 in the New Testament. The December/January Caller will have the initial schedule and I will be publishing that schedule here in the weekly update. If you want the entire annual schedule contact Rachel in the Church office and she can send you a copy.

16. **Seneca Street Church After-School Program needs YOU!!!** During part of December and during the month of January we are without the college students that help our program survive. In addition, this year we will be without our Director during this time because she will be out on maternity leave enjoying her newborn baby girl!

The After-School Program runs Monday-Thursday from 2:30-5:30. Any help during the week would be greatly appreciated. The dates that we will need help include: Dec. 10-13, Jan 3&4, Jan 7-10, Jan 14-17 and Jan 22-24. If you are interested in any day please contact Cheryl Bird at [716-491-2200](tel:716-491-2200) or cbird@daemen.edu OR Jamie Ryder at [215-219-8765](tel:215-219-8765) or ryder.jamie@gmail.com. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you!

17. Upcoming worship schedule:

Wednesday, November 21 – Thanksgiving Eve Gathering at 7:00

Sunday, November 25 – Roger Johnson and a celebration of Thanksgiving

Sunday, December 2 – 1st Sunday of Advent and Communion

Sunday, December 9 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 16 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 23 – 4th Sunday of Advent and Annual Children's Christmas Program

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve – Worship Celebrations at 9:00 (with choir and special music) and 11:00 with carols and communion

18. A number of you have asked already so here is my answer: **YES I am planning to return to Uganda in 2013**. At this point I am planning to travel in the first 2+ weeks of November. If you feel the pull and call of God to travel with us you would be more than welcome – come see me and we'll talk and pray and see what God has in mind. The work that my team does has to do with who is on the team. We had nurses this year so we did medicine. In previous years I have traveled with teachers (who worked with schools) musicians who worked with musicians and others. If God is calling you to serve in this way I want to help you realize that calling.

Parting Thought

Thanksgiving marks the “official” beginning of the “holiday season”. I’m not sure who made it official (though I suspect the merchants). One of the things that makes December so hectic and confusing is that we face the annual battle of the competing celebrations. Christmas as the birth of Jesus is an arbitrary date – there is no definitive internal biblical evidence that suggests what time of year Jesus was born. The date was selected because there was a Roman pagan holiday related to the winter solstice already scheduled on that date and the powers that be wanted to eliminate the older event. Clearly this approach didn’t work too well and so the celebration of the birth of Jesus finds itself competing with Yule tide, and trees and St. Nicholas and wild drunken revelry that was the feature of some of these older observances. Frankly, the parties are fun the gift giving is fun the competing elements are fun and, for the most part, innocuous. The danger for we Christians is twofold: 1) we forget this older history and get upset when people are celebrating one of the competing traditions (the whole keep Christ in Christmas argument). It really doesn’t matter what others are doing, what matters is we celebrate the Feast of the Incarnation (the original title for the December 25 Christian celebration); 2) we get so caught up in the competing traditions that we forget Jesus, and relegate the celebration of his coming to an afterthought or no thought or as something that strikes a jarring note in our parties. Remember to walk slowly through the next 6 weeks and remember Jesus, above all else, remember Jesus. . .

Have a great week and I’ll see you when the Church gathers,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, celebrant, missionary