

Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York

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

UPDATE

November 27, 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.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com

Hi Everyone:

Karen and I just finished a nice 5 days away together. We didn’t do much (which was the point). Mostly we hung out with family and invested some time in us. We enjoyed a great Thanksgiving dinner at my Sister Cheryl’s home with 3 of her 4 children (and, of course, the grandson). I enjoyed spending Friday with my Nephew Michael as we watched football and then joined the rest of the family for an evening together. Karen and I spent Saturday just hanging out and not doing much of anything and we did much the same kind of nothing for Sunday and Monday. I am up and ready to go as we enter the season of Advent. It was good to be away – I feel relaxed and focused and happy to be home.

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was 120 (plus 26 on Thanksgiving Eve). Thank you Roger Johnson for filling the pulpit in my absence and thank you to Elizabeth Holt Curtis who filled the breach on Keyboard on Sunday at 9:00 when our band leader, Bill Bauza, was out sick. I am blessed to know that the church pulls together and does what needs to be done in my absence. Thank you one and all.
2. This Sunday is the First Sunday in Advent. I will be preaching from Luke 21:25-36 and a sermon titled: “it’s the end of the world as we know it!” The theme of the first Sunday in Advent is looking to Christ’s second coming as we prepare to celebrate his first coming at Christmas. We will be lighting the Advent candle and beginning our preparations for Christmas.

3. In our prayers this week: The Kreib family on the death of Betty's brother, Jack Dahl on Friday (November 23); Alice Schmitt whose sister died on Thanksgiving, Don Munson, Nicky Sebastiano, Barbara McCray, Juliana Sabol, Bim Rowlands, Ed Maker, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, those looking for work, families in crisis.

4. AOL – Advent Study Book is available. This study begins December 2 at 10:00 and will be looking at Mike Slaughter's (Senior pastor at the Ginghamburg UMC in Tipp City, Ohio) book titled Christmas is not your Birthday. See Sally for a copy. Experience the joy of living and giving like Jesus is the focus of discussion every Sunday in the Wesley Room.

5. **MYM (Mid Years & Ministry) Christmas Party** – Friday December 7 at 5:30 in Crafts Hall. Dinner is open for **EVERYONE** (not just MYMers). Appetizers and Punch at 5:30 with Dinner at 6:00. It is *Christmas in Italy – "Buon Natale!"* Tickets are \$18 and are on sale in Crafts Hall this Sunday. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Group. Special music will be provided by the Amherst Male Glee Club performing holiday classics, sing along carols and original songs.

6. **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.

7. **TONIGHT FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER** – is looking to build a satellite in the Northtowns to offer services for victims of domestic violence in our community. The next organizational meeting is Tuesday, November 27 at 7:00 at the FJC satellite in Orchard Park (4383 South Buffalo St). Call Peggy Bermudez at 626-4897 to carpool.

8. MISSION REPORTS

A. Disaster Relief: we have collected over \$2000 for Hurricane Sandy relief. If you would like to contribute to the clean up and rebuilding mark your checks "3021787 for Hurricane Sandy Relief" and put it in the collection plate or send to the church office. Questions? Call the church office 839-2460.

B. The Giving Tree has appeared in Crafts Hall. Recipients are from Gateway-Longview, Haven House, Seneca Street UMC and Habitat for Humanity. We will also be providing gifts for the Three Kings Day celebration at Primera Iglesia UMC (in Hispanic cultures the celebration of Epiphany (Three Kings Day) is a greater celebration than Christmas). Take a tag (or more) fulfill the wish and bring it back to church **unwrapped** by December 9.

C. Remember to save Campbell's labels, box tops for education, cancelled stamps (tear off envelop corner from cards) and Dash's register tapes. Put in the containers on top of the microwave in the kitchen – Gateway-Longview benefits from this collection.

D. The Dedication of the **Habitat for Humanity Women Build house** is this Sunday, December 2 at 3:30 p.m. at 38 Guifford Street. All are invited.

9. ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR

Thursday – November 29 – Church Council at 7:00

Friday – November 30

Noon – MYM Board Meeting

7:30 – Game Night in Wesley Room

10. Through the New Testament in 2012. Follow the Pastor BJ's comments at www.drbjthoughts.blogspot.com. This week's readings: November 27 – Luke 4, November 28 – Luke 5; November 29 – Luke 6; November 30 – Luke 7; December 3 – Luke 8; December 4 – Luke 9; December 5 – Luke 10; December 6 – Luke 11

For 2013 I am laying down a greater challenge: I am challenging us to read the entire bible together. This will take 3 to 4 bible chapters a day – 3 in the Old Testament and 1 in the New Testament. The plan we are following is from a devotional tool called the "Life Journal". See the Caller and this Update for the schedule.

11. Happy Birthday this week:

November 27 – Anne Reed

November 28 – Mary Jo Evans; Elaine Fuller; Barbara Weaver

November 29 – Alicia Bermudez, Sean Johnson

December 3 – Amy Johnston, Robert Paddock, Hailey Wilsman

December 4 – Mary Parsons

12. Happy Anniversary this week:

November 28, 1981 – Jim and Sally Pollard

December 2, 2000 – Clem and Karen Arrison

13. **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!

14. Upcoming worship schedule:

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

15. 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, 2013. 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.

16. **Israel Update** – as of now we are still on for our late January 2013 journey to the Holy Land. Obviously, if it becomes unsafe we will postpone our journey but at this time we are good and ready to go. Keep the peace of the middle east in our prayers (and we travelers as well. Making this journey: Ed and Cindy Fisher, Don and Barb Critoph, Barbara Carrier, Marion Rowlands and Pastor BJ from Christ Church, we are being joined by 7 from Syracuse and leave January 28 and return February 6 (except Ed and Cindy who are going on an extension to see Petra in Jordan.

Parting Thought:

Sunday marks the beginning of the season of Advent. The Christmas creep (no that is not a reference to someone’s neighbor) has decorations going up in early November and the “music” of the season beginning right after Halloween. There is big push to have a “Christmas Season” that is often called the “Holiday Season” in deference to the various other dates (Thanksgiving and New Year) and other mid winter observances (Hanukah, Kwanza, Solstice, etc.) that are observed in the month of December. The early Christian practice was to not allow Christmas to creep into the month but to hold off the celebration until the date had arrived. If we are celebrating the birth of Jesus it seems premature to celebrate it before the actual event – Although I would love a 60 build up to my birthday every year it never happens. The Church invented the season of Advent as a season of spiritual preparation. The arrival of the Christ child is the turning point of history. We need to take time to get ready for the momentous occasion. Getting ready may involve more quite time, a day or two of fasting, getting reacquainted with the biblical account of the story of the coming of Christ and considering the impact of the Christ in the world and our lives. With all the push to buy, buy, buy and the giving and receiving of gifts we are often confused as to whose birthday we are celebrating (see AOL study above). Advent is a season of preparation and anticipation. It is a time to not just dress our hearths and homes but to address the state of our hearts and lives. How is it with your soul? Anticipation is expressed in this A. A. Milne quote from Winnie the Pooh: “Well,” said Pooh, “what I like best,” and then he had to stop and think because although Eating Honey was a very good thing to do, there was a moment just before you began to eat it which was better than when you were, but he didn't know what it was called.” Advent is to be that moment . . . just before.

Have a blessed week,

BJ Norrix, lead servant, missionary, anticipator

(this e-mail is a communication ministry of the Christ United Methodist Church, Snyder, New York. If you do not wish to receive this e-mail please reply: remove. Feel free to share any or all of this with your family and friends.)