

**Christ United Methodist Church  
Snyder, New York**

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

**UPDATE September 11, 2013**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP AT CHRIST CHURCH**

**9:00 – Praise Celebration Worship**

**10:00 FaithXPress/Soul Strength/Youth Group 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.drjthoughts.blogspot.com](http://www.drjthoughts.blogspot.com)**

Hi Everyone:

Today is the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the United States. I’m sure most of us can easily remember where we were and what we were doing when we heard the news. I remember watching the news of the first tower being hit and, while watching the report, seeing the second plane hit the second tower. It is an indelible image in my mind. Life has these “unforgettable” moments. These moments are often spaced out generationally: remembering the Challenger explosion, the fall of the Berlin wall, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the end of the World War II, D-day, etc. These are moments in history when something was lost (or gained) and where we often feel like something has fundamentally shifted in the world around us. The 9/11 moments are unsettling because they challenge our sense of safety and security. What we often conclude, rightly or wrongly, is that our sense of security is an illusion. This conclusion often leads us to “knee jerk” responses to situations and frequently leads us to surrender, illusionary or not, some freedom for an increased sense of security. Unfortunately, politicians play with these illusions and fears to further entrench their positions and control. We live in a dangerous world. Ideologies, philosophies, theologies, religious and political extremists are constantly at war with one another for control and power. Somewhere in the midst of the craziness and fervor is a higher calling and a deeper life. Jesus calls to a life that is not power over but power with. Jesus calls us to a life that seeks to serve rather than be served. Jesus calls us to a life that understands that peacemakers are blessed (even when all the world says otherwise) and where losing one’s life in the service of others is gaining life, indeed. Today, we honor those who “ran to the noise” and those who went into a burning building because there were people inside in need of their help. I also honor my Uncle Jerry, today. 10 years ago today it was my privilege (along with my wife Karen) to preside and my Uncle Jerry’s funeral. Jerry was a small town police officer (and chief) who understood what it meant to “run to the noise.” The question when we are confronted with the reality of the gospel is unchanged: Christ is risen! Now, what will you do about it?

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Sunday’s attendance was just short of 150: special appreciation to Sally Pollard and the Education team for an excellent “Sunday Funday” registration event. We celebrated our nearly 50 year relationship with the Amherst Cooperative Nursery School and their 75 years of service to our community. Thank you to Amy and the co chairs of the ACNS who were present for the celebration!

It was great to have the choir back – thank you, Elizabeth Holt Curtis for your leadership and to Mac Sabol for the solo in the offertory piece.

2. This Sunday I will be continuing my series through the 10 Commandments. This week is commandment 9: “Don’t bear false witness!” or, as my sermon is titled “Tell the Truth!” What constitutes “bearing false witness”. Clearly it would apply in legal situations. Is gossip a form of “false witness?” When I misrepresent myself or others is this false witness? In a culture of liars how do we tell the truth?

3. Staff Announcement #1: We announced on Sunday (and through last week’s e-mail communication) the retirement of Elizabeth Holt Curtis effective October 13, 2013. Elizabeth has been on staff at Christ Church for 19 years. A celebration of her time with us is being planned for the 13<sup>th</sup> of October following worship. Watch for information on how you can help. We will be taking a collection for a “thank you” to Elizabeth and her many years of service – again, watch for information.

4. Staff Announcement #2: We have hired a new office manager. Her name is Michelle (Vinci) Panasiewicz (pronounced “Pana sevitch”). Michelle grew up on Harlem Road (between Main and Sheridan). She is married to Kent and they have a daughter named Kara. Michelle has extensive experience in management as a Laboratory Technician and, later, Manager for Roswell Park Cancer Institute. Michelle is a graduate of the University at Buffalo (2002). She will begin her duties as our office manager on September 30 and we will publically introduce her this Sunday, September 15 at worship. Michelle and her husband Kent became members of Christ Church in August of this year. WELCOME Michelle we are excited to have you join our staff!

5. Staff Announcement #3: We have begun the search for a new Organist/Choir Director. A search team is being formed and advertising in the appropriate places will be in place by the end of the week. If you, or someone you know, has the requisite skills and aptitude for this position please have them contact Pastor BJ through the Church or send resume’ to us through [cumc350@gmail.com](mailto:cumc350@gmail.com).

**It is our goal** at Christ Church to provide two distinct worship experiences. Our commitment is to provide an excellent “Praise Celebration” at 9:00 and to provide the very best “Traditional Style” worship gathering at 11:00 we possibly can.

6. In our prayers: Glen Hurst; Bim Rowlands, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Carl and Jean Ericson, Art Gundlach, Alice Schmidt, Diane Lovejoy, Family and friends of Doris Steinmetz, those in harm’s way, those looking for work, families in crisis, our staff transitions, the 4040 property acquisition.

7. The Uganda Mission Team (BJ Norrix, Kathryn Weaver, Joe Fort, Clair Mosher) is 2 months from their mission journey. Here’s how you can help:

A. Spaghetti Dinner fund raiser and silent auction **Friday September 27 from 5 – 7 (auction 4-7)**

1) tickets for the dinner at \$10 for adults \$8 for Seniors and students; 5 & under are free: spaghetti, salad and garlic bread. Desserts will be available for purchase.

2) make a basket for the auction (see Barb Critoph and Patty Bechtel)

3) make a donation for the auction (see Barb or Patty)

B. Direct Support can be made by writing a check to Christ Church labeled “Uganda 2013”

C. Pastor BJ is raising an addition \$1000 for a “Bible Scholar’s Summit\*” he will be teaching in two places –Kampala and Mbale -- in November

If you can help with this see him directly.

\*Bible Scholar's Summit – I'll be taking the basics of Biblical Interpretation (called Hermeneutics) and applying them to a specific passage of the Bible over a two day period. Day one – the basics of hermeneutics (review) followed by a day and a half of application. This will be interspersed with worship and other activity.

8. DRESS OUR PEOPLE – Update from Molly Butler

The final bags of cut out dresses and shorts are in the Dress Our People mailbox. Please take some and help us finish up this project. We are on our way to the 300 pieces of clothing to send with the team in November.

If you purchased t-shirts for this project, please turn them in as soon as possible. We still need a few more t-shirts, so if you would like to purchase some please contact Molly Butler (716-204-8993 or [kwmgbutler@gmail.com](mailto:kwmgbutler@gmail.com)).

We are also looking for children's stickers to send in the packages this year. If you have any you would like to donate, please put them in the Dress Our People mailbox.

9. Food Pantry Collections: September 15 – Canned fruit and vegetables; September 22 – Peanut butter and Jelly; September 29 – Mac and Cheese and boxed dinners; October 6 – Cereal and Breakfast bars.

10. United Methodist Men – A day at Letchworth State Park is Saturday, September 14. Carpool leaves at 10:00 a.m., travel to parking area, do some hiking, and have lunch at the Glen Iris Inn. Bring cameras, hiking shoes, hats, money for lunch etc. Call Tom Nye 648-1850 or Bill Bauza 837-2421 for reservations!

11. This week at Christ Church:

Wednesday, September 11 – 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, September 12 10:00 a.m. – Bible Study

7:00 p.m. – Stewardship and Finance Team

Friday, September 13 – CALLER DEADLINE

Saturday, September 14 – UMM to Letchworth 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, September 15 – Going Deeper Group at 6:00

Thursday, September 19 – Trustees at 7:30 p.m.

12. Happy Birthday this week:

September 11 – Patti Bechtel; Darcie Beyer, Emma Reagan

September 14 – Barbara Brayman

September 17 – Glenn Hurst

September 18 – Kevin Johnston, Jim Pollard

13. Happy Anniversary this week:

September 15 – Edwin and Marie Maker (62 years!)

14. Christ Church Fall 2013 Financial Education Workshops

Wednesdays from 7 to 9 p.m.

September 18 – Protecting your Family through Financial Planning

September 25 – Cash Flow, household budgeting and building wealth

October 2 – Saving and paying for education funding, college and financing

15. CELEBRATION OF THE MINISTRY AND SERVICE of Office Manager RACHEL VAUGHAN

Sunday, September 29 at 12 Noon in Crafts hall at Christ Church

Join us for food, fun and an opportunity to extend blessings and best wishes to Rachel

As she moves forward on life's journey.

16. FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER UPDATE – from Kathy Weaver

The Northtowns satellite of the Family Justice Center is making great progress. We now have a lease for the North Forest house that will be the home of the satellite location. We also have our building permit and remodeling has begun. We are hoping for the grand opening of the center to be in early November. If you are interested in volunteering in the new center once it has opened please contact Kathy Weaver for details on the training process. We would like to thank Scott Smith and Dave Mitchell for all their efforts in remodeling the bathroom of the new center. It is looking great and is ready to be cleaned and painted. The Family Justice Center has a fundraising event coming up on Thursday October 17th from 5:30-8:30pm. It is called Mosaic, A celebration of everything Buffalo. See the poster on the outreach board in Crafts Hall for details. Any questions please contact Kathy Weaver, Peggy Bermudez or Dede Johnson.

17. DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY to be offered. Disciple 1 is a Junior College Level Bible Survey Course. It takes 34 weeks to complete. Disciple combines Bible Study with building covenantal relationships with a group who take the adventure together. Are you ready to take this deeper step in your walk with Christ, community and deeper understanding of the Bible contact Pastor BJ (or respond to this e-mail). **I have 5 people who have expressed interest. Who else is in?**

18. Through the Bible in a year: this week's readings:

- September 11 – Daniel 1-2 and Revelation 16
- September 12 – Daniel 3-4, Psalm 81 and Revelation 17
- September 13 – Ezekiel 33-35 and Revelation 18
- September 14 – Ezekiel 36-37, Psalm 110 and Revelation 19
- September 15 – Ezekiel 38-39, Psalm 145 and Revelation 20
- September 16 – Ezekiel 40-41, Psalm 128 and Revelation 21
- September 17 – Ezekiel 42-44 and Revelation 22
- September 18 – Ezekiel 45-46 and Luke 1
- September 19 – Ezekiel 47-48 and Luke 2

19. 4040 Harlem Road property (borders the church to the North) update: **There is nothing new to report: here is current update:**

- the sale of the property will likely be in late October the executor is working with us, exclusively, on the purchase

- there will be a Church Conference in **October** (watch for announcements this will be after worship on a Sunday and there will be at least 2 weeks' notice)

Purpose of the church conference will be three things: 1) do we make the purchase? 2) if yes to 1) will we assign the Trustees as our "building team"? And 3) if yes to 1) and 2) will we approve the necessary financing to see it through. All Christ Church members will have voice and vote at this meeting.

- short term financing – a member of the congregation has agreed to provide a "Bridge Loan" until a conventional mortgage can be obtained. This loan will allow us to purchase the property in the window available to us.

- The short term plan: is to rent the house until we can finish a capital campaign to pay for the installation of a new parking lot and, perhaps, reduce the mortgage

- The long term plan is to tear the buildings down and put in a new parking lot with sufficient green space.

**As of Council Meeting last week:** we are waiting to be able to inspect the property – we cannot hold our church conference until we have had the facility inspected by a professional inspector and the District

Committee on buildings. Our inspection will not happen until after an impending “estate sale”. Watch for more details as they become available to us.

## 20. Coming Soon to Christ Church

Sunday September 15 – Going Deeper group meets at 6:00

September 26, 27, 28 – 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Directory Photographs – call church office (839-2460) or sign up on line [christchurchamherst.org](http://christchurchamherst.org)

Friday, September 27 – **Uganda Mission Fundraiser** – 4-8 p.m.

Sunday, September 29 – Farewell gathering for **Rachel Vaughan** following worship

Wednesday October 2 – Bishop Mark Webb on Niagara Frontier District (watch for more)

Friday October 4 – Sunday October 6 – MYM at Chautauqua

Sunday, October 13 – Farewell gathering for **Elizabeth Holt Curtis** – details pending

Flu clinic sponsored by Health and Wellness Team – contact Geoff Hill (316-1522) or Barb Mitchell (839-2435)

Postponed from 9/29 – in library from 10 to 1

Friday October 18 – UMW Fall Harvest Dinner

Saturday, October 19 – Making Strides against Breast Cancer – 10:00 a.m. Niagara Square in Downtown Buffalo

Tuesday October 29 – Church Council

Sunday November 3 – Uganda Mission Team leaves (returns November 22)

Monday, December 2 – Annual Charge Conference

### ***Parting Thought:***

I am reminded that change is the only constant in the universe. Everything around us is in a state of change. Everything within us is in the state of change. Some of this change is cyclical – the seasons, the replacement process of the cells in our bodies, the ebb and flow of history. Some of this change is thrust upon us – responses to 9/11; October surprises, etc. One of my early mentors taught me that change can be either grief or growth. If we only focus on what is lost we will live our lives in grief bordering on despair. Yes we need to thoroughly grieve what is lost and, where appropriate, say all of the proper good bye and farewells. But that is only half the equation. We also need to see the change and, at the very least, embrace the new challenges in front of us. Christ Church is in a season of changing faces. Saying good bye to our 19 year music director and our 2+ year Office manager has many elements of grief and the blessing of long (and not so long) memories. On the other side of saying good bye is the blessing of embracing new faces and new possibilities. We get to welcome a new Office Manager and embrace the changes she will bring. We will get to embrace a new lead musician and live into the blessing and change that he/she may bring. What makes it growth is what we choose to do. I think these are exciting times for our church community and I am convinced that God has great things in store for us as we move forward. Please join me in praying blessings upon Rachel and Elizabeth as they begin the next phases of their lives. Please join me in praying for our church community and for good discernment and understanding as we bring in new staff members to help lead us to the next stage of the life of our community as we seek to “Live Christ’s ways and explode in love and service!”

I’ll see you when the ecclesia assembles . . .

BJ Norrix, lead servant, coach, missionary

This e-mail is a communication ministry of the Christ United Methodist Church. If you do not wish to receive this email please let us know.