

# **Christ United Methodist Church**

*Harlem Road at Saratoga Road  
Amherst, New York*

## **UPDATE**

### **September 16, 2014**

*“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](http://www.Christchurchamherst.org)

**Or call us at: 716-839-2460**

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

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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Christ-United-Methodist-Church-Amherst/294709713921168?ref=hl>

Hi Everyone:

Joe Fort and I are less than 3 weeks from our departure to Uganda and Kenya and a number of you have asked how you can help us on this journey. Here are the three things that will help the most:

1. Please keep us in your prayers. We will be travelling (a lot) in our 19 days away. We have several long road trips in Uganda plus the journey to Mombasa in Kenya on our schedule. These trips can be quite tiring. Your prayers will help keep us fresh and ready to do the work God has called us to do.

2. **Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction** is on September 26 (Friday) from 5 to 7. Tickets are \$10. Come and eat spaghetti and bid on the over 30 baskets and items that

Patti and Barb have complied and assembled. We expect to raise the balance of the needed funds at this event (with your support and God's help!).

3. We could use some help with set up and clean up on the 26<sup>th</sup> – if you can help please let me know asap.

4. Instead of taking direct contributions to support Joe and I beyond the **Dinner/Auction**, I am asking a small favor. Our friend Rev. Davis Matovu is building a church in an area called Seta (near his home north of Kampala). The first worship hall was built 18 months ago and they have already outgrown it. The second hall is nearing completion but is short of funds for the roof. If you are willing to support Davis, see me, and I will take contributions directly to him to support this construction project from his friends at Christ Church to the congregation at Seta.

5. Did I mention prayer?

A number of you noted the article in the Wall Street Journal (and other places) of Terrorist activity in Uganda and a State Department warning to US citizens traveling in Uganda. What the papers didn't report is that the next day Ugandan authorities arrested the alleged terrorists and confiscated their "bomb making equipment". The US State Department continues to urge caution but has lifted the alert. Thank you for bringing this to my attention. I am grateful that you care for my safety!

Here is what is happening at church:

1. Worship Sunday was in the 140's. It was great to have the Church Choir back in full voice. We blessed book bags and bibles and saw the children re-engage in FaithXpress.

2. On Saturday Mission Youth had their first fall gathering. This group is open to any who are 12/7<sup>th</sup> grade and older. We learned about facing giants and began to make some plans for the future.

3. This Sunday is Part 3 of the series "Take Five for a new Life". This series is about five essential elements of a growing spiritual life. We have discussed and experienced Prayer and Bible study. This week we will encounter Worship. What is worship? What does it mean to worship? Is there a right way to worship? Worship is not a schedule or program. Worship is loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

We are doing "Guy" Church this week. With a few dozen women on retreat at Camp Asbury the guys will be running the Café, FaithXPress and other morning elements. There is a "Stomp" band rehearsal during FaithXPress.

**Adult Baptism** – This Friday, September 19 at 5:00p.m. at Barb and Dave Mitchell’s home, 112 Mount Vernon, **Randy Beron** will be baptized. Randy has been a part of Christ Church for the past 3 years and has reached the point of his journey where he is ready to be baptized.

**New Members** – Randy will become a member of Christ Church on Sunday, September 21. If you are not yet a member of Christ Church and would like to be, please contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss what it entails.

**DID YOU KNOW . . .** that every Sunday message (By Pastor BJ or others) is recorded and is available for listening through our church web site? Go to <http://www.christchurchamherst.org> at the top right of the home page is the word “Worship” move the cursor there and a drop screen labeled “Sermons” will appear. Click on “sermons” and a screen will appear that lists every sermon of this year by date and title and preacher. Click and listen to any and all.

4. **TREASURER ANNOUNCEMENT:** We are pleased to announce that Chris Smith and Peter Zaleski have stepped up to fill the Treasurer position at Christ Church! Chris will be taking the lead position and Peter will be assisting from his wealth of banking experience. Transition is in process. Welcome! Thank you for stepping up.

**Thank you to Eric Dokken** who has done an excellent job as our treasurer this year. We wish Eric and his wife Christine well as they complete their move to Charlotte, North Carolina.

5. **ROOF PROJECT** – Just a reminder that in the next week or so the roof (from the Sanctuary to the parking lot) will be removed and replaced. The Trustees are paying the slightly over \$50,000 for this project from accumulated funds. Sometime in the next year or two the Sanctuary roof will also need replacing (and will cost about \$25,000). If you would like to help with funding for the Sanctuary roof please see Tom Weaver or me.

6. **Bill and Marg Bauza** have announced their intention to retire from leading the Praise Worship Team by Thanksgiving of this year. Bill and Marg stepped into this position shortly after I arrived as pastor at Christ Church and have helped to steer and lead this group for the past 3 years. I am deeply grateful to them both for their grace, leadership

and faithfulness. The Worship Team will continue and could use a keyboard player (or a drummer – or both). If you would like to be part of the Praise Team please let me know. In the meantime I am sure you will want to join me in expressing your appreciation to the Bauzas for their excellent music and ministry.

7. This week at Christ Church

Tuesday September 16 – 2:00 pm – BJ at Asbury Pointe

7:00 pm - Christian Education Team

7:00pm - Outreach Team

Wednesday September 17 – Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm

Thursday September 18 – 10:00am Bible Study

Friday, September 19 – 10:00am Books Loved

Noon – MYM Board Meeting 12:15

5:00pm – Randy Beron Baptism

Friday through Sunday – Women’s Weekend at Camp Asbury

8. In our Prayers: Glenn Hurst; Edmond Wrycza (Julianna Sabol’s father in a nursing home in Fort Erie) soon to be 97 and not doing well; Remember the Malpica family in your prayers, Rubin’s mother, Asuncion (Susie) died in August; Lois Lewis, Barbara Clinton, Mac Sabol, Dave Mitchell (surgery scheduled for 9/18), Brian Martin (his bone marrow transplant is scheduled for September 17); Donna Hammond, Tom Davis, Caroline Hess, Fred Painton, Guy Castellino, Mitch Mooney, Bim Rowlands, Glenn Hurst, Nicky Sebastiano, Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Shirley Downey, Ed Maker, Alice Schmidt, and Diane Lovejoy. Remember those who are serving in the armed forces (especially Alex Dunbar and Ian Johnson and Lindsey Darling). Pray for the citizens of the Ukraine and Gaza and Israel. Pray for the west African nations that are battling the Ebola virus. Pray for the ongoing situation in Iraq and Syria.

9. **Spaghetti and Meatballs dinner and silent auction September 26** 5 (ish) to 7:00 -- \$10 for spaghetti and meatballs (homemade by Michele Sciolino) salad and bread; desserts available for \$1. Silent auction includes baskets (Thank you Barb and Patti) for children, knitting, dentistry, golf clubs, and an assortment of other things to bid on.

All proceeds support Joe Fort and BJ Norrix’s Uganda/Kenya mission (October 5 through 23)

**Fundraiser Theme Baskets – we have enough items now – thank you for your support! Hold on to the rest for next time. BUT come and bid on these great items.**

10. Our sympathies are with the family and friends of Sue Wise, who died on September 10. Sue was an active part of our community before moving away a few years ago to be closer to her immediate family.

11. Congratulations to Michele Brunner and Jeremiah Cordero who were married by Pastor BJ on Friday, September 12 here at Christ Church. The couple is honeymooning in Bermuda.

12. FINANCIAL WORKSHOPS – Call 839-2460 to reserve your place!

Wednesday, September 24 at 7:00 – 10 Strategies for Securing Your Financial Future

Monday, September 29 at 7:00 – Investment Principles for Today and Beyond

Saturday, October 4 at 10:00 a.m. – Teaching Your Kids About Money

13. FOOD PANTRY is collecting **Pancake Mix** this week.

14. MYM (Mature Years and Ministry) Autumn Days at Chautauqua Lake. This year's event is October 3-5 and Rev. Drew Heitzenrater will be the facilitator. Cost for the weekend is \$80, payable to MY+M and mailed to Phyllis Nicholson at 17 Princess Drive Cheektowaga, NY 14225.

15. NORTHTOWN CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CONNECTION –All women are invited to a salad bar luncheon at Christ Church on Wednesday, September 24 from 11:30 to 1:30. Vintage styles will be featured in a Retro Runway Fashion Show. Our speaker, Marilou Johnson, asks, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, what's the image we want most of all?" Cost is \$7. Please call Grace Markello (836-7064) for reservations.

16. Happy Birthday this week:

September 17 – Glenn Hurst

September 18 – Jim Pollard

September 19 – Jessica Lawson Jonathan Miller, Will Gowen

September 20 – Sandra Paddock, Beth Reilly-Brown, Hildegard Webber, Rob McCray

September 24 – Lisa Malpica

17. Happy Anniversary this week:

September 21 – Herb and Nora Townsend Wilber (24)

September 22 – Greg and Phyllis Maliken (35)

18. Through the bible in a year:

September 16 – Lamentations 3-5

September 17 – Amos 1-3 and John 7

September 18 – Amos 4-6

September 19 – Amos 7-9

September 20 – Ezekiel 1-2 and John 8

September 21 – Ezekiel 3-4 and John 9

September 22 – Ezekiel 5-7

September 23 – Ezekiel 8-10 and John 10

September 24 – Ezekiel 11-13

September 25 – Ezekiel 14-15 and John 11

19. ON THE MISSION FRONT:

1. **UGANDA 2014:** Pastor BJ Norrix and Joe Fort are **19 days** away from their mission journey to Uganda and Kenya (depart October 5 return October 23). Please keep them and our Ugandan partners in your prayers as they prepare. They will be teaching and preaching in multiple sites, presiding at a Nexus Graduation, opening a new teaching location and reconnecting with our friends there. They also will be travelling to Mombasa, Kenya (on the Indian Ocean) to work with a group of Anglicans. **A Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction** in support of this journey will be held **September 26**.

To make Donations for Davis Matovu's church at Seta, Uganda see Pastor BJ.

2. **Uganda 2015 youth experience** (June 28 through July 10, 2015). Deadline for declaring interest in this journey was extended to **September 15, 2014 – this team is now 11 (maybe 12 or 14) travelers (7 or 8 from Christ Church and 4 – 6 from the Syracuse area)**. Is God calling you to join us? I will cap the group at 15. **The Uganda 2015 Mission Team is meeting together on Saturday, September 27 from 10:00am to 2:00pm at Christ Church. We will begin to get acquainted and begin to outline our mission parameters and plans, discuss fund raising and other related African travel matters.**

20. Coming Soon:

September 19-21 -- UMW Women's Retreat at Camp Asbury

**With many of the women will be away on retreat so we will be having  
“GUY CHURCH” on September 21**

Stomp Band at FaithXpress – bring a pot, pan or trash can to play along!

September 24 and 29 – Financial Workshop Opportunities at 7:00pm

September 26 – Spaghetti Dinner/Silent Auction (over 30 baskets) to support the  
2014 Uganda Mission Team

September 27 – 2015 Uganda Mission Team meeting at 10:00am to 2:00pm at  
Christ Church. There will be at least 11 of us traveling June 28 through July 10, 2015.

October 4 – Children and Money Workshop at 10:00 a.m.

October 5 – Blessing of the Animals at 10:00 a.m. and Worship and following

October 12 – Children’s Sabbath

October 17 – UMW Harvest Dinner

November 2 – 350 Saratoga Concert 3:00 p.m.

November 7 – Ron Corsaro Trio – 7:00 p.m.

21. Advance Notice: We have been working on scheduling a concert that would feature all of the groups who rehearse at Christ Church. The **“350 Saratoga” Concert will be held on the first Sunday of November at 3:00 in the afternoon.** It will feature select groups from the “Red Blazer Chorus”; the Bel Canto choirs; the Ballroom Dance team; the Christ Church Choir and Praise Band and some select surprises. Admission will be a canned or boxed item for the food pantry.

22. Speaking of November – Ron Corsaro’s trio will be doing a concert on Friday November 7 (coffee house format) as a fund raiser for Mission Youth (in particular the 2015 mission team) . . . plan to come and enjoy an evening of excellent jazz!

23. I want to express my appreciation to Dave Wolf and Scott Smith for their work on getting the first of three video monitors installed at Christ Church. It is vitally important for a Christian Community to not only say they are open and welcoming but to actually live that open invitation out in real and tangible ways. These monitors will serve to inform the nearly 1000 people who pass through Christ Church’s doors (and are NOT connected to the worshipping congregation) of what we are doing and to extend that open invitation.

### **Parting Thought:**

I've been reading and thinking and praying a lot about growing into better apprentices to Jesus Christ. The apprentice watches the teacher and learns to do what the teacher does. The apprentice learns the language of the trade and the ways and means of how things are done. As apprentices to Jesus, there are essential practices that help us more effectively do what the master does. There is prayer – this is essential conversation (and I mean conversation). We speak and God hears, God speaks and we hear. There is Bible study – learning the history of our apprenticeship and learning from those who were apprenticed before us. The Bible is a record of God's search and encounter with human beings. There is learning to worship. All too often we get hung up on the details, the elements of a worship **service**. But the elements of a worship gathering are there to serve one purpose – to help us move into the presence of God. Worship is not the singing and the repeating – the forms and rituals. Worship is responding to the love of God poured out into our world and learning to love God with our heart, soul, mind and strength. Worship is fundamentally about relationship. The "Worship Wars" of the past 30 to 40 years have completely missed this point. We seem to have convinced ourselves that worship is about style of music, colors on tables, choirs and/or bands, screens or printed orders. Those elements are simply a means to an end. If the end does not lead us to a deeper love of God – we have failed to worship. The final two elements for an apprentice are accountability and mission/ministry. I have learned that having people in my life to whom I am accountable for my spiritual growth challenges me to keep my promises and helps me to grow. I have also learned that the spiritual life is balanced between contemplation and action. It is not enough to receive grace. I must also learn to give grace. It is not enough to experience forgiveness. I must also extend that forgiveness to others. We are transformed from the inside out.

I'll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, worshipper, apprentice, missionary