

Christ United Methodist Church

September 30, 2014

UPDATE

**Harlem Road at Saratoga Road
Amherst, New York**

“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.Christchurhamherst.org

Or call us at: 716-839-2460

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

Like us on Facebook!

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

Hi Everyone:

First: a long list of thank yous to all who made Friday’s Uganda Mission fund raiser so successful. Food: Thank you Michelle Sciolino for making sauce and meatballs (with a little help from Kathryn Weaver and Julie Sciolino). Thank you to Michelle Sciolino for organizing and overseeing the bake sale (with help from a lot of bakers and Julie). Thank you Guy Castellino for cooking the pasta and helping us keep it fresh and for helping with the salads. Thank you to all of you who helped set up and serve and clean up (especially Joe, Scott, Tom, Arianna, Viki, Hannah, Brad, Barb and Ben). Thank you Dave Wolf, Christ Church custodian, for putting

everything back where it belonged after we moved it all around!! Thank you to Peggy Bermudez and Janelle Martin for ticket printing, sales and for overseeing the assignment of auction numbers (with help from Ben and Brad). Thank you (HUGE STYLE) to Patti Bechtel and Barb Critoph (and their helpers Don and Dave) for arranging the baskets for auction (they looked spectacular). And for all of you who made baskets and/or donated items for the auction. (THANK YOU AND FORGIVE ME – for anyone I left off this thank you list!) The Dinner netted just over \$1300 (after we sold the left overs) and the Auction netted just over \$1300 as well for a total of just over \$2600 for the event! Thank you, all of you, who donated food and who came to eat and do battle over those choice baskets. The money raised has covered the balance of our on-the-ground expenses and a sizeable gift for several projects in Uganda. I also wanted to thank all of you who answered my invitation to support my friend, Rev. Davis Matovu, and his new church plant in Uganda. Those gifts crossed \$1000 early on and will greatly enhance his faith community's ability to be Christ's hands and feet in Seeta, Uganda. THANK YOU – Christ UMC for your generosity, your support and your encouragement. **Please hold Joe Fort and I in your prayers for the next 3+ weeks as we follow Christ's lead to Uganda.**

Here is what is happening at Church:

1. You've probably noticed (if you drive by) that there are a dozen workers wandering around our roof! The roof (from the main entrance to the parking lot) is being replaced this week. The roof over the Sanctuary will need to be replaced in the not-too-distant future (price tag \$25,000). If you would like to contribute to replacing the Sanctuary roof please see me or Tom Weaver.
2. Attendance last Sunday was in the 120's. We dedicated the new garden sculpture (with deep appreciation to Lisa Lawson and Dave Mitchell). We learned about the importance of having accountable relationships in our spiritual lives.
3. This Sunday is the last in the series on "Take Five for a New Life". Part 5 is titled "Mission and Ministry." I believe that Christianity only comes to us on its way to someone else. If we are the only one who benefited, it was not real. The focus of Jesus' ministry was to bring grace and new life and a new way of living to the entire world – NOT just for a few. The focus of Jesus ministry was not individual salvation but the ushering in of the Kingdom of God. As Christ-followers we are

called and challenged to live life as fully devoted apprentices of Jesus Christ and to be constantly looking to make the world a better place – a just place, a healing place.

This is WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY – we will be celebrating Communion together.

This is **Blessing of the Animals** Sunday – in honor of St. Francis of Assisi's birthday. All creatures, great and small, which are brought to Church (10:00 or Noon), will have a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing said over them.

We will commission (recommission?) a missionary to Uganda this Sunday.

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. Pastor BJ off to Uganda Sunday evening: As you know I will be leaving (flight out of Buffalo is 4:30pm) and will return on October 23. In my absence contact the Church office (839-2460) if you are in need of pastoral care. A nearby Pastor has agreed to cover emergencies in my absence – Janelle and Sally have that phone number. On Sunday, October 12, the UMW and Christian Education Team will be observing "Children's Sabbath" with us all, and on October 19 we will have a guest preacher Jose' Cotto from Primera Iglesia Metodista. Jose' is a candidate for ordained ministry and is a leader in the Primera Iglesia congregation.

5. LIVING WELL WORKSHOPS: Help Yourself and Others to have less stress, deeper peace and more

"We knew it was working when, instead of staying angry for a couple of days, my wife and I would get over it in a couple of minutes," said Dr. Tom DeLoughry. He was discussing some of the strategies he teaches in **Living Well**, a mind-body-spirit program for seniors, adults and teens. **Christ UMC will be offering this award-winning program, beginning Wednesday, October 8th at 7 PM. If you prefer to participate from the comfort of your home, you can go online** for the Living Well Internet workshops, beginning Thursday, October 9th at 7 PM. The online workshops will be recorded so you can watch at your convenience. You may register for any of these free programs at www.FindingMoreLove.org or by

calling the church office at 839-2460. Later this fall, to **prepare participants to offer practical help and spiritual support to friends, family and co-workers**, I (Pastor BJ) will be co-leading a **Living Well Coach Training program** with Dr. DeLoughry. Living Well has been honored by *AARP's Social Impact Award* as "as simple mind-body-spirit program for grandparents, parents and teens of any faith" "...or no faith." The program is led by a partnership between the Upper New York United Methodist and Lutheran churches, in association with AARP, the Civic Engagement Institute at Niagara University, the Amherst Center for Senior Services and Hearts and Hands. [Click here to download at Living Well flyer](http://findingmorelove.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/LW-Christ-church-flyer-092014.pdf) [link is <http://findingmorelove.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/LW-Christ-church-flyer-092014.pdf>] to share with family, friends or coworkers. Please visit the Living Well website at www.FindinfMoreLove.org to learn more and to register.

6. This week at Christ Church

Tuesday, September 30 – Church Council at 7:00 p.m. in the Parlor

Wednesday, October 1 – Church Choir at 7:30p.m.

Thursday, October 2: Bible Study at 10:00a.m.

Friday, October 3 – Sunday October 5 – Mature Years Ministry Retreat at Chautauqua

Friday, October 3 – Kari Kibler and Thomas Kossler wedding in West Seneca

Saturday, October 4 – Finance Workshop (Teaching your Kids about Money) at 10:00 a.m. in the Café.

Saturday, October 4 – United Methodist Men at 10:00 a.m. in the Wesley room

Saturday, October 4 – Crafting for a Cause 10:00a.m. in the Parlor

7. The food pantry is collecting "Stuffing Mix" this week. (Of course any and all gifts appreciated)

8. IN OUR PRAYERS: In our Prayers: Mark Bechtel (Patti and Dave's son), Rev. Ted Anderson (following a brief hospital stay), Al Wrisley (surgery on Friday), Dave Mitchell as he recovers from surgery last week, Brian Martin (bone marrow transplant was September 17 – pray as he recovers); Glenn Hurst; Edmond Wrycza (Julianna Sabol's father in a nursing home in Fort Erie) soon to be 97 and not doing well; Lois Lewis, Barbara Clinton, Mac Sabol, 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. It looks like we are “at war” again. Please pray for all who are in harm’s way.

9. Mature Years Ministry Autumn Days – October 3-5. See Marcia Snyder (741-6901) for details. They will be in the Methodist House at the Chautauqua Institution.

10. SUNDAY October 12 – Flu Clinic at Christ Church. Contact Geoff Hill (316-1522) to sign up.

11. Happy Birthday this week:

October 2 – Carolyn Day, Todd Evans, Brad Loliger

October 3 – Janelle Martin (Office Manager par excellence)

October 4 – Nicholas Darling

12. Happy Anniversary this week:

Sue and Tom Cataudella (26)

13. COMING SOON – Friday, October 17, UMW’s Harvest Dinner. Chicken ‘N Biscuits (mashed potatoes, carrots, cole slaw, homemade pie!) Adults \$10 and Children (under 10) \$5. Tickets will be on sale in the Café and, of course, at the door.

14. TWO OPPORTUNITIES TO WALK FOR A GOOD CAUSE

October 18 – Making Strides against Cancer. 10:00 a.m. in Niagara Square. The Christ Church Cupcakes (aka the “C” cups) will again be walking. See the pink bulletin board in the back of the worship center for details.

October 19 – CROP Hunger Walk. 1:00 p.m. from Amherst Community Church. Money raised supports local, national and international hunger projects. See Peggy Bermudez (626-4897) to sign up and details.

15. FAMILY PROMISE – our evening to host is this Friday, October 3. If you would like to help with the meal preparation or serving on Friday, please contact Lee Watson (837-0589).

16. Through the Bible – this week’s reading

September 30 – Ezekiel 24-26

October 1 – Ezekiel 27-29 and John 14

October 2 – Ezekiel 30-32 and John 15

October 3 – Ezekiel 33-34 and John 16

October 4 – Ezekiel 35-36 and John 17

October 5 – Ezekiel 37-39

October 6 – Ezekiel 40-41 and John 18

October 7 – Ezekiel 42-44

October 8 – Ezekiel 45-46 and John 19

17. ON THE MISSION FRONT:

1. **UGANDA 2014:** Pastor BJ Norrix and Joe Fort are **5 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.

Rather than taking “direct contributions” for our journey this year we have decided (since the dinner and auction to covered the balance of the journey) to take a special collection for Rev. Davis Matovu’s new church plant (and build) in Seeta, Uganda. If you would like to make Donations for Davis Matovu’s church at Seeta, Uganda see Pastor BJ.

2. **Uganda 2015 youth experience** (June 28 through July 10, 2015). **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 met on Saturday, September 27. (BJ, Janelle, Viki, Hannah, John, Brandon, Kathryn, Erisawe, Erin, Katey, and Brianna are the team to date). We have room for a few more if you would like to join us LET ME KNOW ASAP!**

18. Coming Soon:

October 4 – Children and Money workshop at 10:00 a.m.
October 3 – Tom Kossler and Kari Kibler wedding in West Seneca
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
October 19 – CROP Walk for hunger (1:00p.m. at Amherst Community Church)
November 2 – 350 Saratoga Concert 3:00 p.m.
November 7 – Ron Corsaro Trio – 7:00p.m.
November 16 – Annual Church Conference

19. 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 Ball Room Dance studio; the Christ Church Choir and praise band and some select surprises. Admission will be a canned or boxed item for the food pantry.

20. 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!

Parting thought

As an apprentice to Jesus Christ I am striving to learn to do what he does and to become who he is – to walk in the steps of the Master. Like any apprenticeship there are times of great success and accomplishment and there are times of failure and frustration. I have come to learn on my journey with Jesus that the failures are more significant learning experiences than the successes. I have joked that I am going to write a book on how to build a congregation that will be titled All the Really Great Growth Ideas that Didn’t Work. In my 30 plus years of ministry experience I have certainly learned more from the projects that didn’t work and I have grown because of it. On the spiritual journey there is no perfect, nor will we attain perfection in this life (there may be perfect moments and perfect experiences . . . but they are fleeting). What we have on this journey are constant opportunities for growth. I have learned as a beginner in prayer and as a student

of the Bible. I have grown through experiences of worship and accountable relationships. I have been transformed every time I choose to get my hands dirty helping others and striving to make this world a better place. It is quite the ride. Mission and Ministry is the final test of growth on the journey. People often make one of two mistakes – 1) they go straight to mission and ministry without doing the apprentice work of prayer, bible study, worship and accountable relationship – this leads to doing social work (as opposed to mission) and a shallow spiritual life; or, 2) they learn to pray, read the bible, worship and work with a small group but never give anything back – this leads to a self-centered spirituality that is not Biblical Christianity. Learning to live into the entire package of following Jesus is the key. Be courageous and begin to add the pieces you need to be a more complete apprentice for Jesus!

I'll see you when the church gathers,

B.J. Norrix, apprentice to Jesus, lead servant, missionary