

**Christ United Methodist Church
Snyder, New York
"Living Christ's ways and exploding with love and service"**

UPDATE February 13, 2013

**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:

We made it safely to Israel (and two of us to Jordan) and back again. Thank you for your prayers and your well wishes. We endured three days of rain in the Galilee but had the weather clear long enough for our boat ride on the sea of Galilee the rest of the journey was pretty clear and dry. One highlight for me was being able to visit the traditional site of Jesus' baptism. This location, on the Jordan river near the Dead Sea is on the Israel/Jordan border and has been closed to nearly all groups for the past 30 plus years. With improving relations between Israel and Jordan the site has been opened and we were able to renew our baptismal vows very near the place where Jesus himself was baptized. This was a great group to travel with and we made many new friends along the way. Barb and Don Critoph, Barb Carier, Marion Rowlands, Ed and Cindy Fisher, Davis Matovu and all the members of the "Brown Bus" thank you for your prayers and support. **I intend to make this journey again in February of 2015.** I am keeping a "I'm interested" list so let me know if you might be interested in taking this journey. It was good to go and really good to be home again.

Today is Ash Wednesday and is the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent was invented by the early church to encourage deep reflection and spiritual renewal in the weeks that lead up to the great celebration of Easter. What is working in your spiritual journey? How can you live this out better? What is not working in your spiritual journey? What can you change, adjust, remove, add that will deepen your walk with God, with yourself and with others? **Ash Wednesday Worship tonight is at 6:30** in the Sanctuary. Come and join us for this solemn beginning of the season.

LENTEN SUPPERS AND STUDY – Begin tonight at 5:00 in the Café. We are walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

Here is what is going on at Church:

1. Attendance last Sunday was 146. We began our “Committed to Christ” series by talking about “Beginning to Pray”. We had guest musicians and some very special music.

FaithXPress concluded their “Hero Quest” unit – thanks to all who helped make this happen.

2. This Sunday is the First Sunday in Lent. I am preaching from James 1:19-25 and the message is titled “People of the Book”.

FaithXPress begins an experience of “Walking in the footsteps of Jesus” – children and youth will be exploring the stories of Jesus, learning about the places where Jesus’ ministry took place, experience some of the culture of Bible times and discover the meaning Jesus’ earthly life has for their lives.

AOL Sunday morning at 10:00 will also be “The Way: Walking in the footsteps of Jesus!” Hear examples from Christ Church travelers to the Holy Land. Who are you following this Lenten season?

3. **DID YOU KNOW?** That Tuesday, February 12 marked Sally Pollard’s 17th anniversary on staff at Christ Church. THANK YOU Sally for your JOY filled years of service to Christ through Christ Church.

4. In our Prayers: Barbara Carier is at Millard Fillmore Suburban with pneumonia; Tom Brunner is now home following his surgery; Jim Luss is having a heart catheterization on Thursday morning; Diane Lovejoy is recovering from rotator cuff surgery; Our prayers are also requested for Don Munson, Nicky Sebastiano, Bim Rowlands- Marian Steve, Ruth Kitson, Jan Beckwith, Mitch Mooney, Jean DiDomenico, Bill Bauza – remember those looking for work, families in crisis, and all in harm’s way.

5. Jean DiDomenico is now at the Greenfield Health and Rehabilitation Center in Lancaster. Room B115-2 5949 Broadway, Lancaster, NY 14086.

6. This past Saturday 6 of us from Christ Church participated in the first of the Laity sessions for **Hand to Plow** training. We gathered with members from 25 other United Methodist Churches and discussed the purpose of the Church and how we can more effectively live out that purpose. The Next **Hand to Plow** gathering will be on April 13 and the subject will be worship. If you would like to join us for this conversation let me know.

7. THIS WEEK AT CHRIST CHURCH

Wednesday (Today): 5:00 Lenten Supper and Conversation

6:30 ASH WEDNESDAY Worship

7:30 Choir rehearsal

Friday, February 15 – Books Loved at 10:00

Sunday, February 17 – Youth Group Pancake Brunch

Monday, February 18 – Office closed for President's Day observance

8. Through the Bible in a Year: This week's readings

February 13 Leviticus 20-22 and Acts 20

February 14 Leviticus 23-24; Psalm 24 and Acts 21

February 15 Leviticus 25; Psalm 25-26 and Acts 22

February 16 Leviticus 26-27 and Acts 23

February 17 Numbers 1-2 and Acts 24

February 18 Numbers 3-4 and Acts 25

February 19 Numbers 5-6; Psalm 22 and Acts 26

February 20 Numbers 7; Psalm 23 and Acts 27

February 21 Numbers 8-9 and Acts 28

9. Happy Birthday this week:

February 13 Diane Lovejoy

February 14 Peter Shanley and Olivia Smith

February 15 Donna Yungbluth

February 17 Marilyn Welker

February 20 Ben Bermudez

10. Happy Anniversary this week:

February 14 Gregg and Julie Jackson Janecek

11. The MYM had a good crowd for the "Magic with Michael" Soup and Sandwich event on Sunday.

12. Trustees wish list: Here are some things the Christ Church Board of Trustees is wishing for in 2013. If you can help with one of these see Tom Weaver:

1. New Lawn Tractor – Commercial Grade with bagger **cared for**

2. New Flowering Trees for the Celebration Garden **cared for**

3. Gas Powered Edge Trimmer

4. Multi-Ladder (currently borrowing Dave Wolf's ladder)

5. Parking Lot Repaving

6. Sanctuary Wing Hot Water Tank

7. Refurbish Sanctuary wing restrooms

And for the parsonage:

1. Gas stove/range

2. Back Yard Deck

3. Re-Wallpaper Guest Bedroom (now a TV room) **cared for**

4. Lawn mower (so Pastor can mow the lawn)

Again, contact Tom Weaver if you would like to make any of these wishes come true.

13. There is a Habitat for Humanity Buffalo information meeting this Saturday, February 16 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at ReStore South at 1675 South Park.

14. MISSION NEWS AND NOTES

A. Hands4NY – This week’s food collection is Pasta and Sauce

B. Kathryn Weaver is raising support to have a proper bore hole well dug in a village in the Gombe district of Uganda. . . kdweaver23@verizon.net or 839- 5918.

C. Dress our People “Sewing Bee” drew a good crowd on February 3 – see Molly Butler (kwmgbutler@gmail.com) or 531-4209 for how you can help

15. UMW Morning apart is February 23 at Faith UMC in Lancaster see Peggy Bermudez or Beth Sweet for more information.

16. COMING SOON

March 4, 11, 18, 25 – Women, Money, and Power Workshops – see Sally for more information

March 17 – is Consecration Sunday

March 24 – is Palm Sunday

March 28 – is Holy Thursday

March 29 – is Good Friday

March 31 – is Easter

Parting Thoughts

I find Lent to be difficult. Perhaps it is supposed to be so, perhaps not, but the reality is that I find it difficult. What am I supposed to do? Or not do? I am so focused to doing and not doing I get lost in lent. My RC roots tell me I am supposed to “give something up” for Lent. I’ve seen Facebook posts and over heard conversations about giving up Coke or chocolate or meat for the 40 day season. These conversations did not seem, for the most part, to have much spiritual focus to them – they where rather matter of fact and borderline bragging. When I research the origins of the season of Lent I find a much deeper focus and seriousness. I find a church that is desperately seeking ways to help the members of its community to go deeper in their relationship with God – to move from surface religion to transformational faith. Unfortunately, all too often we only engage on the superficial level and are never really touched.

Lent was created for a time of special preparation. While everyone engaged in the Lenten disciplines, those members of the community who had served in the military, or who had

recently confessed and repented of “serious” sins, or who had been separated from the community for a time or season, were given special instructions and were led through an intensive catechism leading up to Easter. Those undergoing this special preparation were not allowed to receive communion until the renewal moment of Easter morning when they were finally allowed to rejoin the community. That sounds like serious business to me.

Even for light hearted people such as myself, this occasional serious refocus on our spiritual journey is beneficial. The challenge is to make it work and to remember to keep the proper focus. If I am giving up chocolate in the hopes of losing a few pounds before spring – then I have missed the point. If, however, I am giving up something I enjoy in order to experience, in some minute way, the sacrifice that Jesus made for me during Holy Week then I may be getting closer to the point. What will I do to make this a holy and transformational Lent? Can you give way? Can you give some time away? Can you make the effort to reconcile to someone with whom you are broken? Can you focus on some besetting sin or attitude? God has drawn near to us . . . will we make the effort to draw near to God?

I’ll see you when the church gathers,

BJ Norrix, pilgrim, missionary, lead servant

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