



CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*"Making connections and offering opportunities for
faith, love, and service"*

Worship 10am

Education Hour 11am

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP: PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, AND SERVICE

Pastor

Rev. Daven Oskvig

Minister for Christian Education & Community Life

Sally J. Pollard

Office Manager/Ministry Assistant

Janelle Martin

Minister of Music

Paul Staley

Financial Secretary

Doris Schanzlin

Custodian

David Wolf



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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9-5 Tuesday & Thursday 9-Noon



April Caller Deadline:

Wednesday, March 13

to

caller350@yahoo.com or

bbmitch@verizon.net

Questions? Contact

Barb Mitchell 839-2435 or

bbmitch@verizon.net



Our New Church Logo

The Caller March 2019



We spend this entire month in the darkened season of Lent. As our natural surrounding begins its spring awakening, we are called spiritually to remain in a subdued penitential spirit. To keep ourselves in Lent is a great challenge as the rhythms of our souls often match these natural cycles. And yet this lies at the very heart of our decision to take up the cross and follow.

When all is bright and warm, will we still walk this challenging path of discipleship? When the world (both its natural realities and those human created ones) sings its siren song to walk a different path, will we remain committed? Stories and poems abound concerning divergent paths and the great difference in life that comes by choosing one over another. If we choose nature’s model, then it would be the path of least resistance. This is what raindrops and rivers follow. If we choose the world’s path, then it would be the path of self-centered existence. If we choose Jesus’ model, then it would be the path of resistance. It would be the path that swims against the current and a life that is led for others. Lent is . . . tough. It begs us through its disciplines to answer what our lives will ultimately look like when all is bright, easy, and happy, but even more so when all is dark, difficult, and despair.

Let us remain in this season as we walk the path of the cross together. Let us push back and away those things that seek to allure us away from the light, love, and grace of God. Let us journey together that we may ultimately choose the only way that leads to life eternal.

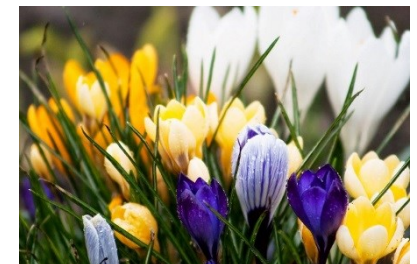
God bless you all,
Pastor Daven

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Marcia Snyder	1
Gregory Yungbluth	2
Graciella Cordero	3
Michael Farley.....	4
Clem Arrison	5
Gregory Watson.....	7
Brad Bermudez 	8
Molly Reed.....	8
Christopher Kraatz	9
Andrew Lopez	12
Joanne Gilbert	15
William Morris.....	16
Marshall Rhinehart.....	17
Toni Neidel	18
Karen Arrison	19
Marjory Gibson	19
Pat Noyes	24
Peggy Bermudez	25
Ashley Miller	26
Sheldon Merritt	28
Jordan Maliken	29
Warren Hammond	31
Jan Rhinehart	31



But Spring will come eventually!



In Sympathy

Our sympathy and prayers are with Rita Arnold and her family on the death of her mother, Diana Santarelli, on February 10.



Reminder

Remember to save your cancelled postage stamps, Campbell’s Labels for Education, General Mills Box Tops for Education, as well as Dash’s register tapes for Gateway-Longview, and put them in the labeled boxes on top of the microwave in the Kitchen. Thank you!

2019 Easter Plant Order Form

Pink Tulips, Yellow Daffodils, and White Lilies

Name

Phone

Please indicate by circling one:

In Memory of

In Honor of

Name of person(s) being remembered/honored
(Please PRINT)

Flower Information

Cost of each pot of blooms is \$9.00 (several blooms in a 6" pot)
Please indicate how many pots.

___ Pink tulips ___ White lilies ___ Yellow Daffodils

Total amount paid \$ _____ Check or Cash
(Circle one)

Make checks payable to Christ United Methodist Church

Distribution Instructions (Check one)

- ___ Will pick up after service
___ Please deliver to Beechwood or other shut ins
___ Please decorate the Sanctuary

A Worship Team member will be collecting orders in the Family Room after services on March 31, April 7 and 14.



With Joy... From Sally

Conflict and polarization are part of our daily experience. Newspapers and TV news bring conflicts right into our homes. Political debates turn into arguments among neighbors and friends... even in church. As Christ followers we

know we're supposed to love one another. Some people interpret love as being in agreement with others rather than acting toward others with the love and compassion of God shown in Jesus' life. What does it mean to love God and our neighbor today? Is love the answer to the conflict that divides us?

The book of Genesis tells us we're created in the image of God. In ancient times images of God were statues and carvings designed to portray the character of the god (yes, small 'g') and kings and priests represented the interests of these gods (yes, plural.) The author of Genesis 1 uses these ideas in a new way. All human beings portray the character of God and represent God's interests in the world (yes, Big "G" God.) Our character & actions should mirror who God is and what God is doing in the world. John Wesley and his friends met regularly and tried to order their lives according to clear rules. They studied the Bible, shared in Communion, and found practical ways to meet the needs of people on the margins of life, even sacrificing their own possessions as a way of expressing the character of God by imitating Christ in the world. Another way Wesley used to describe the unique role of human beings in God's purpose is the image of a steward – a servant entrusted with the responsibility of the flourishing of the master's property and resources. Our purpose then is partnering in God's purpose that all life should flourish together - each part dependent on the others. John Wesley drew upon biblical descriptions of God in his own sermons & writings about God's nature – "Love existed from eternity, in God, the great ocean of love." In his hymn, "Come, O Thou Weary Traveler Unknown," Charles Wesley uses these words – "Pure Universal Love thou art: ...Thy nature and thy name, is Love." If we understand the central character of God as love, how will it shape how we think about God's actions and commitment to human well-being?

(continued on page 5 "Sally")

FAITH X PRESS

Sunday mornings 11 am Lower Level

For Children & Youth

March 3

David the King



FaithXpress

Photos By Sally Pollard



March 10 — Palm Sunday, April 14

Let Lent Surprise You

From the time of his birth, Jesus' life and his ways were constantly surprising people, turning their ideas and understandings upside down. During these weeks of Lent we'll listen, look, and maybe even stand on our heads?



Community Youth Group

Sunday, March 10—5 Wits located at the Galleria Mall

1-3:30 p.m. Cost will be \$15

All Middle and High school youth and friends are welcome!

RSVP to Sally Pollard at 839-2460 or sjppjoy@christchurchamherst.org

Educational Opportunities

a.o.l. (Adult Opportunities for Learning)

Sundays at 11am March 10-24 in Wesley Room

All-Church read for Lent:

“The Anatomy of Peace: Resolving the Heart of Conflict”

Feasting on the Word

Sunday, March 31 at Noon

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS—JEFF AND COLLEEN LOFTUS



In 1966, Colleen met a boy named Jeff in her home town of Patchin, NY. After moving to Boston, they became next door neighbors and a courtship began which resulted in their first wedding, as five-year olds. Throughout their school years they were playmates, conspirators, and finally good friends. Life took them in different directions, but they always made a point of reconnecting and catching up.

Colleen was briefly married and has two handsome sons. Jeff had never married because of a congenital heart defect, but he finished college at Buff State with a BA in Humanities and a minor in religious studies. In his late twenties and early thirties, he went into heart failure. It became apparent that without aggressive measures, he would not survive. Happily, in 1994 Jeff had a successful heart transplant.

When Colleen's marriage came to a close in 1996, she was leery of getting entangled in a romantic relationship with anyone, let alone someone who had been her friend her entire life. The cost could have been devastating to their friendship, yet in their thirties they embarked on a new adventure as a couple. They became so much more than friends, but are still best friends. They married and have a beautiful daughter who is now a college freshman.

Jeff had worked as a bartender in his youth. He later worked for 10 years at Upstate Transplant Services as a Public Education Specialist. He was uniquely qualified for this position due to his history. Currently he works as Manager of Document Reproduction at Jack W. Hunt & Associates. Colleen spent her younger years as a retail manager, first in convenience stores, then at Walden Books. She was a department head at Target for over a decade. After a knee injury, she went back to school and received an Associate Degree in Health Information. Currently, she works as a Pension Administrative Assistant while studying for her insurance license and does shift work at a friend's store.

OUTREACH MISSION OF THE MONTH - MARCH 2019

**Thank you! Thank you!
Thank you!**



With your help the Souper Bowl Sale was a huge success! We hope you enjoyed your soup or chili! Together we raised \$400 for missions! Thank you so much!



UMCOR Sunday—March 31

DO YOU KNOW UMCOR? UMCOR stands for United Methodist Committee on Relief and will be the focal point of a Special Sunday Service in March. When watching disaster unfold around the globe, many of us feel the call to help but are at a loss as to what we can actually do to help. UMCOR Sunday is the day for congregations around the globe to help. UMCOR offers aid in Jesus' name to those who suffer: ● When tornadoes ripped through Oklahoma, we responded. ● When children in Zimbabwe lost parents to AIDS, we responded. ● When a massive tsunami devastated lives in Japan, we responded. And when the next crisis occurs, we will be prepared to respond. On this **Special Sunday on March 31, 2019**, our generosity as a church covers the operating budget of UMCOR. This allows them to funnel 100% of other donations received throughout the year directly to relief efforts. UMCOR Sunday is where we come together to help. If you want to learn more about UMCOR, visit: www.umcsgiving.org/UMCOR.



(continued from page 3 "Sally")

From scripture and Wesleyan theology we find four characteristics of God's love: 1. God's love is relational; 2. It's expressed in compassion/justice – love that goes beyond to heal and transform; 3. God's love is revealed on the cross – human willingness to enter into pain and suffering in order to bring healing and transformation; 4. God's love is not opposed to anger – anger at anything that would destroy or prevent the well-being that God intends for us. Love for God doesn't come from a sense of obligation, but out of gratitude for all that God is and has done through connection with humanity. As we enter the season of Lent we see Jesus living God's mission in the world and love is at the heart of that mission. How will love make the difference in your response to conflict and diversity? In what ways will you mirror God's character and purpose?



Music and Meditation

In the season of Lent ~5:30 pm

March 8, 15, 22, 29

April 5, 12



In quiet and candlelight, join in meditative song, prayer, and scripture reading that penetrates the heart and the whole being.



Lent is a season of repentance, fasting, and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or volunteering and giving of themselves for others. The forty days of Lent represent the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation. Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter" celebration of Jesus' victory over sin and death.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

NIAGARA FRONTIER DISTRICT ~ UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



Gift Day

Saturday March 16 - 9:30am-noon
Trinity UMC Grand Island
2100 Whitehaven Rd.
Grand Island, NY 14072

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Gregg Stierheim of Wesley's Place

All are welcome to participate in Gift Day. Lists of needed items can be found on the UMW bulletin board in Crafts Hall. Purchased items may be placed in the bin marked "Gift Day." There is no charge for Gift Day. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to Peggy Bermudez at 626-4897 or bradbermudez@hotmail.com.



Christ Church United Methodist Women

Breakfast Gathering

Saturday, March 30, 10:00 am

Speakers: Jean Bennett and Valerie Day from
Restoration Society, Inc.

Hostesses: Elizabeth Circle Cost \$5

Reservations to Peggy Bermudez

626-4897 or bradbermudez@hotmail.com



CIRCLE NEWS

Elizabeth Circle will meet Thursday, March 7 at 7pm at Barb Mitchell's home, 112 Mt. Vernon (839-2435.) Hostess is Marion Rowlands (688-6987.) Contact Barb or

Marion if you plan to attend.

Rachel Circle will meet Tuesday, March 26 at 12:15pm to work on a service project for Beechwood, supervised by Jan Rhinehart.

Circle of Joy - Plans for March TBD



Spring Forward!! Turn your clocks ahead
1 hour on Sunday, March 10th

Dear members of CUMC,

It wasn't until our involvement with St. Paul's Tiger's Den that we fully realized how generous people are in the town of Amherst. Since the pantry began operating, we've been in awe of the level of caring shown by this community, and by you.

Thank You

Your donations have helped local needy families keep food on their tables. We're not exaggerating when I say that, without you, Tiger's Den could not operate. When we opened in May 2017, 12 families came through our door. Now the pantry serves 54 families a month. Besides food, the pantry offers clothing, school supplies, personal care items, paper products, and books.

So, thank you from the bottom of our hearts, to all of you who've picked up that extra item while grocery shopping. We appreciate your kindness and couldn't do it without you!

Sincerely,

Carolyn Catalano, Co-Manager of St. Paul's Tiger's Den Food Pantry
Mike Belle-Isle, Assistant Superintendent for Student and Staff Services, Amherst School District

FINANCE TEAM—MARCH

Our 2nd Sunday offerings continue to be most generous: January to PATH (*People Against Trafficking Humans*) was \$315 and the February to Hearts for the Homeless was \$322.

Human Relations Sunday: \$115

Blanket Sunday: \$207

We currently have \$196,984 in pledges for the current year.

We welcome a new accountant, Cheryl Zelasko, who started in January. She will be responsible for the church's expenses using a new software program. Cheryl has previously done our Church's audit which is required annually by the Conference.

Again, we thank you all for your support to Christ Church.

Your Finance Team



Food & Supplies Needed for Local Families

Christ Church serves local families in need. The following items are needed: **cleaning supplies, paper towels, toilet paper, personal hygiene products, deodorant, and soap.**

The Tigers Den

They are collecting **coffee and oatmeal** for March.

Collecting bins are in the office hall and are marked for Tiger's Den Food Pantry and for local families.

Café Volunteers Needed



The Hospitality Team is looking for individuals or groups to host the Café on Sunday mornings in March and May.

Thank you to the many groups that have taken turns hosting this important ministry! If you are interested in

hosting, either alone or with a friend, please sign up for the week(s) in which you are interested. Sign up sheets are located in the Café. If you have never hosted before and would like some training, please contact a member of the Hospitality Team. Please help us to continue to provide a welcoming place to gather with friends, share refreshments, and welcome visitors.

The Hospitality Team:

Michele Sciolino, Peggy Bermudez, Mary Ball, Pam Lopez, Paula Kreib, Barb Critoph



Hearts for the Homeless of Western New York, Inc., a mobile soup kitchen that feeds the poor and homeless on the street, is a program offering nourishing food, winter clothing, as well as pertinent information regarding area services, companionship, and hope for the future. The red bin is now installed at the back of the parking lot at Christ Church for your donations of clothing, shoes, and blankets.



ASH WEDNESDAY EXPLAINED:

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter: we confront our own mortality and confess our sin before God within the community of faith. The form and content of the service focus on the dual themes of sin and death in light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship, and the Imposition of Ashes can be a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. Ashes, the sign of death, are put on the forehead not in some random pattern but in the shape of a cross. This alters the starkness of the message from one of just recognition of mortality, to the immortality possible in Christ. This practice is the historic focus of Ash Wednesday observance and gave the day its name. It is traditional to save the palm branches from the previous Passion/Palm Sunday service and burn them to produce the ashes for this service.

Spiritual Formation Team and Stewardship Team

Our Stewardship theme for 2019 is "What Weighs You Down?" An 11-week study will be offered in the Thirstaid Thursday time slot beginning on March 7th and continuing into May. We'll look at how life experiences challenge us and how God powerfully uses the gifts of prayer, presence, and witness to move us and others through these times to thrive again. "Hope When Your Heart Breaks" by Michael W. Newman will connect with adults of all ages.

Thirstaid Thursdays
 1:00 - 2:30 in the Wesley Room

Hope When Your Heart Breaks
 March 7 - May 23
 (Navigating Grief and Loss)

**Facilitators: Rev. Daven Oskvig,
 Peggy Bermudez,
 Dr. David Pliss**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
 <h1 style="font-size: 4em; margin: 0;">MARCH 2019</h1> 					1 Books We Have Loved 11a	2 Catch the Spirit District Workshop @ Clarence UMC			
3 Worship 10a Education Hour 11a	4 Library Team 10:30a	5 Exploring Sunday Scriptures—Noon Church Council 7p	6  Ash Wednesday Choir 6p Worship Service 7p	7 Thirstaid Thursday 1p Elizabeth Circle 7p	8 Music and Meditation 5:30p	9			
10 Worship 10a Education Hour 11a  Daylight Saving Begins	11 Spiritual Formation Team 10a	12 Exploring Sunday Scriptures—Noon Finance Team 7p Christian Ed Team 7p	13 <div style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> April Caller Deadline </div> Choir 7p	14 Thirstaid Thursday 1p Hospitality Team 7p	15 Music and Meditation 5:30p	16 Niagara Frontier District UMW 9:30a - Gift Day			
17 Worship 10a Education Hour 11a  St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Exploring Sunday Scriptures—Noon Outreach Team 7p Trustees 7:30p	20  The First Day of Spring Choir 7p	21 Thirstaid Thursday 1p SPR Team 7p	22 Music and Meditation 5:30p	23 Amherst Lion's Club Pancake Breakfast & Health Fair 8a-1p			
24 Worship 10a Education Hour 11a	25	26 Exploring Sunday Scriptures—Noon Rachel Circle 12:15p	27 Choir 7p	28 Thirstaid Thursday 1p	29 Music and Meditation 5:30p  Game Night 7p	30 UMW Breakfast Gathering 10a			
31 Worship 10a Education Hour 11a Feasting on the Word 12p	UMW Sugar and Spice Painting Night in February Photos by Peggy Bermudez								
									