

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Worship 10 am

Education Hour –11 am

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP: PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, AND SERVICE

Pastor

Rev. Daven Oskvig

Office Administrator

Julie LoTempio

Minister of Music

Paul Staley

Financial Secretary

Doris Schanzlin

Custodian

Michael Andolina

350 Saratoga Road, Amherst, NY 14226

Phone: 839-2460

Fax: 839-2166

www.christchurchamherst.org E-mail: Cumc350@gmail.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 9am –2pm

Office closed December 24, 27, January 3, 17



February—March 2022
Caller Deadline:
Thursday, January 13, 2022
to
caller350@yahoo.com or
bbmitch@verizon.net
Questions? Contact Barb Mitchell
839-2435 or bbmitch@verizon.net



The Caller



*Christmas Eve '20
Photo by Tom Weaver*

December 2021/January 2022



In my house there is no absence of holiday music as soon as is reasonable (which is a highly debated topic!) I've come to begrudgingly accept this premature Yuletide assault to the point that I now fully indulge in the habit. The issue remains, however, how this all evaporates and disappears almost directly following December 25.

Clergy are encouraged to hold communities in Advent by focusing on those hymns and themes of the promised coming. In other words, in the focus of worship, we are to avoid the pressure of leaning ahead toward those hymns and themes that proclaim birth and arrival (Christmas Carols) until on and after December 25th. We like to move quickly into the next thing, so recognizing Christmas as a season of only 12 days and remaining in this short time festivity following the 25th with all its specific music runs counter to our human condition. Moreover, the popular presence of these songs played around the clock since the beginning of November creates a scenario where to hear them and sing them for even a single day following December 25th feels like one too many.

Perhaps as we approach this year having not been able to meet in-person last year, we can actually and may want to carry these through the full season. Even more, if we can't tolerate the sound of them any longer following the 25th, perhaps we can at least focus on the message embedded in their poetry. Then Christmas might be more than a day and even a season ... for we will be a Christmas people!

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 Let earth receive her king;
 let every heart prepare him room
 and heaven and nature sing.

*Yours in Christ,
 Pastor Daven*

ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

Our All Church Conference meeting will be held in the sanctuary on Tuesday, **December 7 at 7 pm**. Rev. Dr. David Kofahl will preside at the meeting.
 Everyone is welcome!

December Birthdays



January Birthdays

Robert Paddock.....	3 *	Marie Miller	1
Mary Parsons	4	Phyllis Nicholson.....	1
Jean Ericson.....	3	Barbara Critoph	2
Diane Klenk	6	Tom Weaver	4
Michael Keller	8	Guy Ferrelli	5
Dave Wolf.....	11	Mary Jane Shanley.....	7
Geoff Hill	11	Jonathan Swist.....	7
Carol Ann Maltbie	12	Pam Lopez	9
Betty Kreib.....	13	Lindsey Darling.....	10
Marilyn Morris	13	Bob Loesch.....	10
Chris Smith	14	Matt Thormahlen.....	12
Amy Thormahlen.....	22	Millie Staley	16
Lois Lewis	23	Carol Teresi.....	17
Laurie Hannon.....	27	Lucille Mooney.....	18
Paula Kreib	29	Nicole Sciolino Ast	20
		Robert Lovell.....	23
		Elvira Gonzalez.....	25



December Anniversaries



Clem & Karen Arrison.....	December 02, 2000
Michael & Patty Keller.....	December 05, 1987
Thomas & Evalis Swist.....	December 13, 2009
Peter & Patricia Zaleski	December 23, 1960
Tom & Kathy Brunner	December 27, ????

January Anniversaries None

If you would like to add your birthday and/or anniversary to the list, please contact the church office (839-2460) or Barb Mitchell (839-2435.)

We wish to extend our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Dr. Mary Jo Evans upon her death on September 26, 2021.
 We also extend our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Joe Day upon his death on October 3, 2021.



YOU Can Make a Difference!

TIGER'S DEN Juice and paper towels.
Food Pantry

Christ Church Little Free Food Pantry

Non-perishable Food items

Collection bins for Tiger's Den and Little Food Pantry are located in the office hallway.



Clothing, shoes, blankets
Collection bin in church parking lot

A REMINDER

Remember to save your Campbell's Labels for Education and Dash's register tapes. Place them in the labeled boxes on top of the microwave in the kitchen. Thank you!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to do snow removal on the sidewalks and entry ways on Sunday mornings. If you would be willing to help, please contact Tom Weaver or church office.



Spiritual Formation Team
Thirstaid Thursdays
from 1:00-2:30 on Zoom

Advent Study ~ All Church Read
Miracle on 31st Street: Christmas Cheer
Every Day of the Year, Grinch to Gratitude in 26 days! by Susan Sparks
(Preacher, Lawyer, Standup Comedian)

The engaging and intriguing daily devotions offered in this book are based on a series of sermons that Rev. Sparks delivered at Chautauqua Institution during the 2019 season. Everyone is welcome to take a book and use it for their personal devotions during Advent. The book contains a link for a printable journal and an interactive Advent calendar. There will also be two opportunities to explore the weekly Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy in group conversations.

Thursdays 1:00-2:30 on Zoom
December 2 , 9, 16
AOL : Sundays after worship in the Wesley Room
December 5, 12, 19

Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez



January 13, 20, 27 February 3
Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom by Darryl W. Stephens
(Books are available on Amazon)
Facilitators: Toni Neidel & Peggy Bermudez



AOL (Adult Opportunities for Learning)

January 9, 16, 23, 30 in the Wesley Room after worship.

Join Rev. Oskvig in a conversation about the sermon

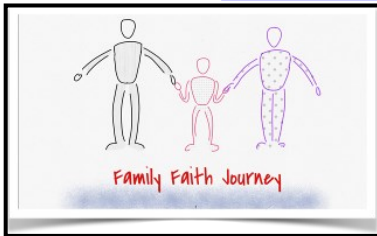
Exploring Sunday Scriptures: Tuesdays at Noon and on YouTube

Join Rev. Oskvig in a conversation about the scriptures which will be explored in the sermon on the following Sunday.

Feasting on the Word with Rev. Oskvig – posted Wednesdays on our website: www.christchurchamherst.org.

Video Series—*Creation Continues* based on the book by Fritz Kunkel— 12 thought provoking and engaging videos created by Dr. David Pliss are available on Facebook. The link can be found in the Weekly Update.

Family Faith Journey



Dec 19th Family Ministry will include Advent crafts, so stop by and join us at 11a in Crafts Hall after worship!



January 2022—TBA but will meet Sunday, January 16 at 11a



Trustees Update

- Parsonage roof replacement complete – cost \$10,130. Funding came from Parsonage Reserve Fund (created by rental set asides) \$1,930 remains in that fund for use on future Parsonage projects
- Outside groups returning to the building – so far without concerns
- Taking bids for sewer replacement project. Meeting with Town of Amherst to make sure we don't have any permit issues.
- Elevator sump pump repaired
- Sanctuary heat control valve needs to be replaced
- Snow plowing contract signed, volunteers needed for Sunday mornings – contact church office



CUMC Book Club (Books We Have Loved) meets in the Wesley Room at 11:00 am the first Friday of every month. During our meetings, each person has an opportunity to talk about a book or books they have enjoyed over the past month. Our next meetings are scheduled for December 3rd and January 7th. Hope to see you then!



Nancy Hess would like her friends at CUMC to know she has moved to Amberleigh. Her new address is: Apt. #322, Amberleigh, 2330 Maple Road, Williamsville, NY 14221.

FINANCE TEAM

The church received a lovely thank-you letter from Beechwood Homes for our contribution from the Golden Cross Sunday special offering. If you do not get envelopes, you can find a list of these special offerings on the church's website. Christ Church has always stepped up for these specials and we co-chairs of the Finance Committee are so thankful to all of you for your exceptional support through these difficult times.

We are now working on the budget for 2022 and we would ask that you return your pledge cards as soon as possible.

We have received \$275 to date for the Turkey Baskets Offering.

CUMC Finance Team

Remembering Your Church

For many people, the ability to make a gift to their church in their will is a source of comfort and great satisfaction. They know that long after they are gone, the ministries of their beloved faith community will still thrive and grow, in part because of their generosity.

Making your church a beneficiary of your will isn't difficult. You'll want to talk to your attorney, of course, and work with him or her to draft a legal document that is well-written and complete. Your gift may be in the form of cash, or you may make the church a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, thus allowing your gift to be far more significant in size than what you might otherwise be able to give. You may also gift the church with appreciated securities, real estate, charitable gift annuities or charitable annuity trusts, or IRA distributions.

As you prepare to set up your will, talk to your loved ones so that they understand your wishes regarding your bequest to your church and the rest of your estate. And, of course, spend time in prayer and contemplation to help you discern how best to use your financial assets.

Missions of the Month

Opportunities to share ourselves, our talents, and our resources with others

Purpose: Focuses on the ministry beyond the walls of the church, vetting, facilitation and providing opportunities for our congregation to participate in the betterment of our local and global communities.

Outreach Team Members

Lee Watson (co-chair) Kathy Weaver (co-chair) Peggy Bermudez
Peg Nye Debbie Laberta Barb Critoph Diane Klenk Toni Neidel

Thank you

Thank you all for making Thanksgiving nicer for area families through your contributions to the Turkey Baskets this year!!!

Giving Tree

One of our traditions at Christ UMC is our Giving Tree where we have the opportunity to share God's love and blessings with others at Christmas. The tree has returned this year with a little twist. When you take a tag from the tree, replace it with a pair of mittens, gloves, socks or a scarf. Then fulfill the wish on the tag and return the unwrapped gift to the tree by the date on the tag. Thank you for making Christmas warmer and brighter for children and families in our community.



Christmas Cookie Fundraiser

Leave your holiday baking to the Outreach team by purchasing a plate of cookies and/or candy. Holiday treats will be safely packaged. Our sale this year will be on Sunday, December 12. All proceeds will go to missions in our community.



Little Food Pantry

Our Little Food Pantry has recently seen an increase in usage. When you are doing your grocery shopping, please consider picking up a non-perishable item to help ease hunger in our community.

Thank you for your continued support of the many missions of our church.



United Methodist Women

As The Caller goes to press, our Christ Church UMW Leadership Team will be meeting to make plans for 2022. If you have ideas you would like to share or would like to join our team, please contact Peggy Bermudez at 626-4897 or bradbermudez@hotmail.com. Watch your e-mail and the Weekly Update for more news.

Our Thirstaid Study which begins on January 13th, is based on one of the UMW Mission U studies from 2021 - *Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom* by Darryl W. Stephens. Please see the Spiritual Formation page for info.

With Thanks from Peggy Bermudez:



I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to our UMW Leadership Team: Mary Ball, Sandy Cumming, Diane Klenk, Paula Kreib, Toni Neidel, Kathy Weaver, and Julie Wrisley. These women have faced the challenges of the past two years with understanding, grace, and humor and have embraced innovative and creative ideas, like learning to use Zoom. They have faithfully stayed connected with our Christ Church family through phone calls, cards & notes, e-mails, Zoom programs and studies, and even a Church-wide Bring Your Own Picnic. It is my joy to be a part of this team!

CIRCLE NEWS



[Elizabeth Circle](#) will meet for lunch on **Tuesday, December 14 at 1p** at Toni Neidel's home, 315 Bernhardt Dr (262-0334.) Contact Toni to sign up for your dish to share.

On **Tuesday, January 11 at 1p** we will meet at church. Our program will be "Show and Tell." Bring an object that has meaning to you to share with the group.

From the **Stewardship Team:**
Journeying Toward the Future with Hope



At Christ Church we remain hopeful about the future and ready to dream big as we discern what God is calling us to do and be. Participation in our giving is a collective decision to work together toward common goals that bring hope and healing to our congregation and our community. Your giving is essential to accomplishing our ministry hopes for 2022. Thank you for the pledges that been received for 2022! If you have not yet made your pledge, it's not too late, and it will help us craft our ministry plan for next year. Your generosity makes a world of difference!

CUMC - Reconciling Congregation Update



A small group has begun the initial steps relative to Christ Church becoming a "Reconciling Congregation," and joining the Reconciling Ministries Network. RMN works to advance justice and inclusion for all LGBTQ people in the United Methodist Church and beyond. Becoming a Reconciling Congregation would enable our Church to outwardly express our love and acceptance of all.

All congregants are welcome to attend one of the following meetings to learn more about what this would mean for our Church, and to answer any questions you may have:

Tuesday, January 4, 2022 - 7:00 pm in the Café

**Sunday, January 9, 2022 Immediately following worship
in the Sanctuary.**

If you have questions, please contact Brad Loliger at bradloliger@gmail.com. We hope you can join us at one of these meetings; we look forward to your participation!



***Friday, December 24
8:00pm***

On this holiest of nights, we gather to be inspired and immersed in song and scripture. Being together to hear the Lessons and sing the Carols is a key facet of celebrating God's gift in Christ. Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be available **in-person** and on our **YouTube Channel via Live Stream**.

Masks will be required in the sanctuary.



Music and Meditation



Christ Church has offered a time during the season of Advent to quietly reflect and prepare. This is a short, 30-minute candlelight service on Friday evenings beginning at **5:30 pm** on **11/26, 12/4, 12/10, and 12/17** following the style of Taizé (pronounced teh-zay'.) A Taizé service is a service of song and silence, prayer, and scripture that hopes to lead participants to contemplate and celebrate their relationship with God and with one another. Music repeats many times. It begins with a simple melody that is sung together and can remain that way, build as it progresses, and/or employs the addition of instruments or a soloist. All fits together, even simply experiencing the music as an observer. Texts are short and reflective. Taizé invites one to feel and interact with the readings and songs. Prayers are invitational and conversational to promote an experience of dialogue with the living present Christ.