

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Worship 10 am

Education Hour – 11am

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP: PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, AND SERVICE

Pastor

Rev. Daven Oskvig

Office Administrator

Sarah Wachowski

Minister of Music

Nicholas Steltzer

Financial Secretary

Doris Schanzlin

Custodian

Michael Andolina

350 Saratoga Road, Amherst, NY 14226

Phone: (716) 839-2460

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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

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

Office closed: 12/26, January 2 & 16



The Caller



Mission Pin Recipients 2022

Tom Weaver

Sandy Cumming

Scott Smith



February—March 2023

Caller Deadline:

Friday, January 13

to

caller350@yahoo.com or

bbmitch@verizon.net

**Questions? Contact Barb Mitchell
839-2435 or bbmitch@verizon.net**

December 2022/January 2023



Annually after December's decorations have gone back into storage, the calendar has turned, and even the ambitions of resolutions have started to fade as the church shifts to 'ordinary time' the extraordinary begins in earnest. All four gospels agree upon this, Jesus' baptism started something.

However, we tend to overlook it completely seeing the first Sunday of Advent in November, the nativity of Christ in December, or even the arrival of the Magi in early January as beginnings and endings of sorts (and that's not even including a new calendar year!). Participation wanes following these false starts as we retreat inside physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The windchill cools holiday hopes and new year's resolutions just as the real action of the gospel heats up and should fuel ambitions. From the waters of the Jordan flow the teaching, healing, and feeding that dominates the gospels, dances in imaginations, and changes the world.

We are invited to let the same happen in our lives. As we revisit those healing waters of grace and recommit our lives to the promises made through them, something can start. Accepting the invitation to follow, what will flow is the persistent work of the Holy Spirit combating cool breezes of pessimism and frozen realities of inaction. Then the possibilities of reflecting God's love which so captures our imaginations in December can take shape ... and the ordinary will become extraordinary!

*Yours in Christ,
Pastor Daven*



Church Conference

Our Annual Church Conference will be held on December 4, 2022 following worship ~ 11:30 AM. The Rev. Dr. David Kofahl will preside over our meeting and time together. An essential part of our identity is in connecting through Holy Conferencing. Through this we come to understand how, where, to whom, and in what ways the Holy Spirit is calling us. It is so much more than just business but does include essential things such as lifting those who will serve in leadership, a report from the pastor, clergy compensation, lay speaker renewal, and receiving of bequests. Please plan to stay.

December Birthdays



Robert Paddock.....	3 *
Jean Ericson.....	5
Diane Klenk	6
Michael Keller	8
Dave Wolf.....	11
Geoff Hill	11
Carol Ann Maltbie	12
Betty Kreib.....	13
Marilyn Morris	13
Chris Smith	14
Amy Thormahlen.....	22
Paula Kreib	29

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

January Birthdays

Marie Miller.....	1
Phyllis Nicholson.....	90 years!
Barbara Critoph	2
Tom Weaver	4
Guy Ferrelli	5
Mary Jane Shanley.....	7
Jonathan Swist.....	7
Pam Lopez	9
Lindsey Darling	10
Bob Loesch	10
Matt Thormahlen	12
Millie Staley	16
Carol Teresi.....	17
Lucille Mooney	18
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



January 1 is Phyllis Nicholson's 90th birthday!

Phyllis has been a church member for over 60 years. She and her husband Richard joined after he was transferred for his engineering job from their hometown, Brooklyn New York. She has served on many committees over the years including the president of UMW, chair of pastor parish relations, treasurer of Mature Years Ministry to name a few. Phyllis has 4 children, 6 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. She and Richard made great friends and memories over the years at Christ Church.

Submitted by her daughter, Linda Ladowski

we can help

TIGER'S DEN Food Pantry Tiger's Den food pantry is running very low on inventory. The amount of families relying on the pantry has been increasing each month and we could really use your help restocking our shelves! Requests for December and January include: **rice, cereal, oatmeal, granola bars, and soup.** Thank you for your generosity.



Little Food Pantry
 Canned Fruit
 Canned protein: tuna, chicken, ham
 Rice
 Peanut Butter
 Oatmeal Canisters
 Canned Soup
 Cooking Oil
 Toothpaste
 Toilet paper

Drop your items off in the bins in the Church Office Hallway.



Hand made quilt by Peg Nye.

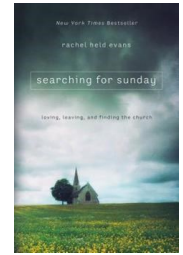
Journey's End volunteers furnishing the apartment for the family from Syria.

Spiritual Formation Team



AOL: Adult Opportunities for Learning

ADVENT STUDY: The Heart That Grew Three Sizes
*Finding Faith in the Story of **The Grinch*** by Matt Rawle
Sundays, November 27, December 4, 11, 18
 in the Wesley Room after worship
 Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez



ALL CHURCH READ:

searching for sunday by Rachel Held Evans
loving, leaving, and finding the church
 Sundays, January 8, 15, 22, 29, February 5, 12, 19
 in the Wesley Room after worship
 Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez



Exploring Sunday Scriptures: posted on YouTube and an in person opportunity on Tuesdays at Noon

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

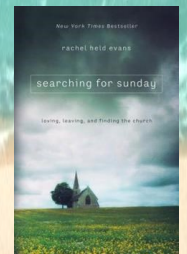
Feasting on the Word with Rev. Oskvig – posted Wednesdays on our website: www.christchurchamherst.org



Thirstaid



ADVENT STUDY: The Heart That Grew Three Sizes
*Finding Faith in the Story of **The Grinch*** by Matt Rawle
Thursdays, December 1, 8, 15, 22
 On Zoom – look for the link in the Weekly Update
 Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez



ALL CHURCH READ:

searching for sunday by Rachel Held Evans
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United Women in Faith



Your 2022 pledges to United Women in Faith supported missions for women, children and youth globally, nationally and locally, including UMCOR, Beechwood, Family Justice Center, Gateway, and Jericho Road. Your pledges also support book studies, guest speakers, special mission recognition pins, and gifts to mission in honor or in memory of those who serve or have served our community so faithfully. Pledges for 2023 are now being accepted. If you have not pledged already, please mail your pledge to Diane Klenk, 227 Enez Dr, Depew, NY 14043. Your pledges make life-changing missions possible!



Congratulations to our Special Mission Pin Recipients for 2022: Tom Weaver, Scott Smith, and Sandy Cumming for their service to the ministries of Christ Church and missions in our community! (see front cover)



Stewardship Team



The Stewardship Team thanks you for your pledges to the ministries of Christ Church for 2023! Your giving is essential to accomplishing our ministry hopes for 2023 and makes it possible for Christ Church to make connections and offer opportunities in faith, love, and service. If you have not yet pledged, pledge cards are available at the back of the sanctuary or by calling the church office.



CIRCLE NEWS

Elizabeth Circle will meet on **Tuesday, December 13** at **1 pm** at the **home of Lynda Painton, 130 Chapel Woods** for our annual Christmas Buffet.

We will meet **Tuesday, January 10 at 1 pm in the Wesley Room** for **Show and Tell**. Bring something meaningful to you and share its story with us.

From Church Council Leader Brad Loliger

Coming in 2023: Meet the Teams!

Christ Church has many active teams, made up of members who dedicate their time and talents to serve our congregation and community. Beginning in January 2023, we will use a moment at the beginning of worship to highlight one of the teams at our Church, so the congregation can get to know these teams, who the members are, and what they do. This will be an opportunity for you to learn more and consider joining a team! Members from each week's featured team will be available for questions in the cafe following worship.

We look forward to sharing more about our Christ Church teams, as listed below, in the coming weeks and months

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Archives Team | Mental Health Team |
| Caller Team | Nominations Team |
| Children's Ministry Team | Outreach Team |
| Church Council | Prayer Team |
| Endowment Team | Spiritual Formation Team |
| Finance Team | Staff-Parish Relations Team |
| Hospitality Team | Stewardship Team |
| Lay Leaders | Trustees |
| Library Team | Visitation Team |
| Membership Team | Worship Team /Altar Guild |
| Memorials Team | |



Books We Have Loved



"It isn't too late!! Did you know: anyone can attend a monthly meeting of Christ Church "Books We Have Loved Book Club"? Our book club is different from other book clubs because those attending get a chance to discuss a book of their own choosing. Or, you can come to just listen and share a cup of coffee. We meet the first Friday of every month at 11am in the Wesley Room at church. Join us!"

Finance Team Update

PLANNED GIVING TO CHRIST CHURCH

Many of us have enjoyed a long and happy association with our church. You may wish to further demonstrate your commitment as the year ends. Have you considered including the church in your will? Do you have a life insurance policy to which you could make the church the beneficiary? Perhaps you would like to lessen your taxes by donating some retirement monies from an IRA or similar account? Planning for your future is a very personal and private decision. We graciously thank the members of the church who have already taken steps to guarantee our future as a vital part of this community, and have made their commitment to continue their generosity to Christ Church beyond their lifetime. Please consider how you would like to recognize your church prior to the end of 2022 or during the coming year. It is simpler than you may think to support the long term future of your church. When you next meet with your tax advisor or attorney, please discuss what would work best for you. The leadership of the Finance Committee and the Endowment Committee are available to meet with you to support your desires for Christ Church. Your support makes the important work of Christ Church possible, not only for today, but for years to come as well.

Second Sunday Second Offering :

October: \$211– Hearts for the Homeless

November: \$297—Turkey Baskets with North Presbyterian Church

December: City Mission

January: Buffalo 10 Scholarship Fund

~CUMC Finance Team~

Crafting for a Cause

We meet the second Saturday of each month in the Wesley Room from 9-11am. Bring your scissors and join us for fellowship and fun **December 10th** to help make a project for the SPCA. January's project is to be determined. Contact Diane Klenk or Lee Watson for further information.



Children making fish prints based on the prophet Jonah.

Children's Ministry will complete the unit "Who Is God?" in December. In January, children will learn about the Old and New Testaments and the heroes of faith.



Sunday, December 25—Christmas Day Service



On Sunday, December 25 in-person / livestream worship will not be held. Trying something a little different in recognition that attendance would be extremely limited having gathered the evening prior and in competition with annual family traditions, a **Pastoral Christmas Reflection & Prayer** will be shared via **our Facebook Page and Youtube Channel**. We hope that this may be incorporated into individual and family celebrations during the day with the joy of the season.

Music and Meditation



Christ Church will continue to offer a time during Advent to quietly reflect and prepare. This short, 30-minute, candlelight service on Friday evenings in the Sanctuary beginning at **5:30 pm on December 2, 9 & 16** follows the style of Taizé (pronounced teh-zay') which incorporates song and silence, prayer and scripture leading participants to contemplate and celebrate their relationship with God and with one another. It will also be available on our Youtube channel via Live Stream and archived following the conclusion of the Live Stream.



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 candlelight Christmas Eve service will be held at **8 PM on December 24**. It will also be available on our Youtube Channel via Live Stream and archived following the conclusion of the Live Stream.

Missions of the Month

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

Thank you!

Special thanks to everyone who helped to settle our new neighbors from Syria into their new home in Cheektowaga. Everyone's help, whether through gifts or physical assistance, was a tremendous help and very much appreciated!

Thanksgiving Thank you

With food insecurity on the rise your contribution to the annual Turkey Baskets were needed more than ever! Thank you for your generosity!

Giving Tree

*Our Annual tradition of the Giving Tree has begun. You are welcome to take one or more tags, fulfill the wish(es) and return it **unwrapped** on the **date specified on the tag**. The tree is located in the Narthex. Recipients of the gifts will be from Gateway, Haven House, veterans, the Family Justice center and the SPCA. Thank you for making Christmas brighter for others in our community!*



More Good News...Our Annual Cookie and Candy Sale is coming up!

*The Outreach Team will be hosting their Annual Cookie and Candy Sale on **Sunday December 11**. Leave your holiday baking to us or bring a special treat to a friend! A delicious assortment of confections will be on sale. Contributions of sweet treats and candy are also welcome and should be brought to church before December 10th. All proceeds will benefit the many missions of our church.*



For more information, please see a member of the Outreach Team

Save the Date-February 13

There is nothing like a bowl of hot, homemade soup that you didn't have to make! The Outreach team will be preparing a variety of soups and chilis and selling them after church this day. All proceeds will benefit the many missions of our church.



Human Relations Day-January 15th

On the Sunday before the observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, the United Methodist Church celebrates Human Relations Day. Your offering furthers the development of better human relations by supporting Community Developers Programs, United Methodist Voluntary Services Programs, and Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs.

Thank you for sharing Gods love with others!

Greetings from your Staff Parish Relations Team (SPRT)!

We wanted to share what our role is and a few of our plans for 2023.

Our team's primary task is to support the Pastor and staff so they can work effectively in managing the ministry of our congregation 'To Make Connections and Offer Opportunities for Faith, Love, and Service.' We are the Human Resource team that serves as liaisons between Church staff and the congregation.

SPRT has suggested to Rev. Oskvig that he exercise his benefit as a full-time clergy in full connection of a short-term leave for 4 weeks of continuing education/spiritual growth allowed every 4 years (UMC Book of Discipline Par 350.2). This time away is in addition to vacation time. As Rev. Oskvig will take this additional benefit during the summer of 2023, we will be working with him on pulpit supply and pastoral care.

Part of our mission is to annually develop a covenant between the Pastor and the Congregation. This coming year SPRT decided, in coordination with the Pastor, that the congregation's 2 main goals for disciple making ministries are:

- 1) Working to educate, interpret and live the meaning of being a Reconciling Congregation
- 2) Strengthen our digital ministry and online presence

This has been submitted to the UNY Conference for 2023.



Nicholas J. Steltzer is originally from Geneseo, NY and studied both piano and organ at the Eastman School of Music in a course of study through the Community Education Division. Since then he has lived, worked and studied organ/choral music in Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Washington, New Jersey, England and Virginia. He holds degrees from Duquesne, Cleveland Institute of Music, Temple and earned a Post Graduate Diploma from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. For five years, he served and was named the first Lindauer Endowed Chair for Music and Fine Arts at Monumental United Methodist Church in Portsmouth VA, and is currently the Minister of Music and Worship at Masonic Village Elizabethtown, PA. He is excited to have the opportunity to serve Christ UMC Church and looking forward to moving to the greater Buffalo area.