

# 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*

**Sarah Wachowski**

*Minister of Music*

**Nicholas Steltzer (as of March 1)**

*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, Friday 9 am-2 pm**

**Office Closed Monday 2/20**



**April—May 2023**

**Caller Deadline:**

**Monday, March 13**

**to**

**caller350@yahoo.com or**

**bbmitch@verizon.net**

**Questions? Contact Barb Mitchell**

**(716) 839-2435 or bbmitch@verizon.net**

# The Caller



Office Entrance Christmas Eve  
2022

Photo by Scott Smith

# February/March 2023



I rarely complain about the weather at any given time, finding joy and beauty in nearly all of it. But among all the different weather phenomena, it is neither cold temperatures, nor snow, nor driving rain, nor even hazy hot and humid that rouse me to complaint, but rather the ever-present strong winds. These seemingly endless breezes arrest me within the comfy confines of home and office. How Chicago was able to be crowned 'The Windy City' over Buffalo, I will always wonder . . . .

As the winds so howl, I try to remember that the wind is often a sign of God's presence in the Biblical narrative. In the account of the seven days of creation from the beginning of Genesis, it is wind that sweeps over the face of the waters that leads to change. At Jesus' baptism, it is the descending of the Spirit which ignites his public ministry. Spirit, in Greek, means breath or wind, both which have implications of life, movement, and change. It is this same Spirit (wind) which then leads Jesus into the wilderness and eventually back out to Galilee, forever changing his life and the lives of all those who claim his name. Is it not wind that we ourselves now experience as a source of energy with many windmills now present on our own hillsides and lakeshores? Or for those many years ago that used it to pump water giving a means for the maintenance of life itself? It is a blowing reality of change and has long also been the representation for the active presence of God. Sometimes it drives us back and sometimes it compels us forward.

Let us not simply avoid where God may be driving us back to be or compelling us forward to go by retreating into the walls of comfort and complacency, we build around ourselves. It is not a question of if the winds will blow, but whether we will allow the winds of God's grace to move and transform our lives. So let us embrace these winds as Spirit-filled possibilities as we seek 'To Make Connections and Offer Opportunities for Faith, Love, and Service.'

*Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Daven*

## February Birthdays



Barbara Burr .....	3
Marion Rowlands .....	3
Olivia Smith .....	14
Donna Yungbluth .....	15
Marilyn Welker .....	17
Laura June Merrill.....	11
Ben Bermudez .....	20
Abigail Johnson.....	23
John Glenn.....	23
Viki Smith .....	25
Linda Parete .....	26
Michele Sciolino .....	27
Herb Wilber .....	28

## March Birthdays

Marcia Snyder .....	1
Gregory Yungbluth .....	2
Michael Farley .....	4
Clem Arrison .....	5
Gregory Watson .....	7
Brad Bermudez.....	8
Andrew Lopez.....	12
Joanne Gilbert .....	15
Marshall Rhinehart.....	17
Toni Neidel .....	18
Karen Arrison.....	19
Marjory Gibson.....	19
Pat Noyes.....	24
Ashley Miller.....	26
Jordan Maliken .....	29
Jan Rhinehart.....	31
Warren Hammond.....	31

## February & March Anniversaries NONE



If you would like to add your birthday and/or anniversary to the list, please contact the church office at (716) 839-2460 or Barb Mitchell at (716) 839-2435.



Thank you for all the cards and well wishes I received for my 90th birthday ! I am truly blessed to have such thoughtful and caring friends at Christ Church!

With Deepest Gratitude,  
Phyllis Nicholson

**We wish to express our sympathy and prayers to the families and friends of:**

- Mary Landel , who passed on November 16, 2022**
- Corienne Gettum, a former member of CUMC, who passed on November 17, 2022**
- Richard (Dick) Miller, who passed on December 8, 2022 and Robert Hoak, who passed on December 23, 2022**



Tiger's Den food pantry is running very low on inventory. The number of families relying on the pantry has been increasing each month and we could really use your help restocking our shelves! **Requests for February and March** include **cereal, soup, oil, coffee, and tomato products.**



**Little Food Pantry**  
**Canned protein: tuna, chicken, ham**  
**Peanut Butter**  
**Oatmeal Canisters**  
**Canned Soups**  
**Canned Veggies**  
**Canned fruit**  
**Pasta**  
**Toothpaste**

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

**CARDS FOR CARING**

Check out our free greeting card display in the café. The **VALENTINES** are in the display and ready for your loved ones.



**Amherst Lion's Club Pancake Breakfast**  
**Saturday, March 11**  
**8a-1p**  
**Adults \$8**  
**Children 12 and under \$5**



**Books We Have Loved**



If you are looking for the warmth of good conversation this winter, come to a meeting of CUMC's book club! **Books We Have Loved** meets at 11:00am the first Friday of every month in the Wesley Room at church. Come, hear what others are reading and tell us about one of your favorite books. Newcomers are always welcome!

**Spiritual Formation Team**

**AOL: Adult Opportunities for Learning**

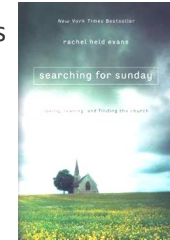
**searching for sunday** by Rachel Held Evans

*loving, leaving, and finding the church*

**Sundays, February 5, 12, 19**

in the Wesley Room after worship

Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez

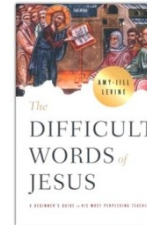


**Difficult Words of Jesus** by Amy Jill Levine

**Sundays during Lent in the Wesley Room after worship**

Sometimes Jesus taught things that we find confusing and contrary. Levine examines how instructions about hating your parents, selling what you own, referring to "your father the devil," and more would have sounded to those who first heard them, have been understood over time, and can be interpreted within the context of the gospel.

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](http://www.christchurchamherst.org)

*Thirstaid Thursday*

**searching for sunday** by Rachel Held Evans

*loving, leaving and finding the church*

**Thursdays, February 2, 9, 16 1:00—2:30 on Zoom**

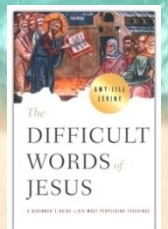
Facilitator: Diane Klenk



**Difficult Words of Jesus** by Amy Jill Levine

**Thursdays, February 23 – March 30, 1:00 – 2:30 on Zoom**

Facilitator: Diane Klenk



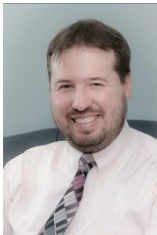
Thank  
You



February 26 will mark the final worship that Jeff Crane will be behind the organ and Millie Staley will direct the choir. They have provided invaluable and inspirational guidance and stability through a very challenging time. This has assisted us to discern the future of music at Christ Church advertising, interviewing, and ultimately hiring our next Minister of Music. The strength of our current music program and our ability to take the time needed in prayerful discernment for the future would not have been possible without them.

**Join us in celebrating them, the gifts they have brought to the ministry of Christ Church, and our deepest appreciation for their leadership in the cafe following worship on the 26th.**

Welcome



On March 1, **Nicholas Steltzer** will officially begin as the Minister of Music at Christ Church. Nic is relocating from Elizabethtown, PA to the greater Buffalo area. He will begin his leadership with choir on March 2, Music & Meditation on March 3, and then in worship on **March 5** where **we will officially welcome him in the café following worship.**

*(Bio is in Dec 2022/Jan 2023 Caller )*

Thank You!

We, the staff of Christ Church, are absolutely overwhelmed by the expressions of generosity from all of you at Christmas. Please accept our heartfelt gratitude and our personal delight to work for and alongside all of you. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

## Sabbatical Leave

The Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program is a grant which provides an uninterrupted, extended leave for a period of renewal and reflection to the pastor and congregation for regaining enthusiasm and creativity in ministry. After applying twice before, we have decided on one final attempt at the grant. As before, the framework and proposal will be largely unchanged from the prior years. There are some tweaks and changes we will make relative to changes between years and encouragement that this should represent, particularly for the pastor, a renewing leave undertaking activities which bring joy to help restore vitality and energy for ministry. We will post on the website a description of the program including the proposal of the nature and scope of that program which would take place largely during the summer of 2024. Questions, feedback, support, and concerns are encouraged and can be shared with Peggy Bermudez or Pastor Daven as congregational support is paramount to grant awarding.



## The Future of the United Methodist Church

As headlines continue to highlight churches leaving the United Methodist Church, this has brought to mind where Christ Church is as a faith community. While some of those leaving are aligning with the Global Methodist Church, a new and theologically more conservative expression of Methodism, many are also choosing the path of complete autonomy and independence. Christ Church through its many conversations and meetings over these past years has been steadfast in commitment to remaining in the United Methodist denomination. Moreover, becoming a Reconciling Congregation was a clear statement regarding the position of Christ Church as a welcoming and affirming faith community. Christ Church remains committed to work within the United Methodist Church for the changes to reflect the sacred value of all people. For more information, particularly on the questions/differences between the United Methodist Church and the Global Methodist Church, a series of videos was produced by Adam Hamilton and can be found by either searching #ProudToBeUMC or here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeWcKpNlyxd2pnig7loR2Jg>

## FINANCE TEAM

The Christmas Offering of \$1925 and the January 2023 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday offering of \$209 (totaling \$2134) will go to the Buffalo 10 Scholarship Fund.

The December 2022 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday offering was \$226 for the Buffalo City Mission.

Those who used our facilities in 2022 paid a total of \$14,898 for their use, this included the Nursery School.

Thank you all so much for a successful 2023 Pledge Campaign and for your 2022 pledge payments.

*UMC Finance Team*



Easter Flower (lilies, daffodils, and tulips) orders will be taken on March 12, 19, 26, and April 2 after church. Price TBA.



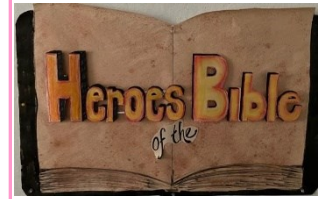
## From Your Stewardship Team

We would like to say "Thank You" to the entire Church family for fully supporting our budget for 2023! This will allow us to continue providing all the programs you are used to having throughout the year. And although this process is important, it is not the only thing that constitutes Stewardship. We are also intent on focusing on the caring of God's world and all its inhabitants.

So . . . as we journey through this New Year, we hope you will look for opportunities to engage in this process by donating to or volunteering with local environmental groups or engaging your family and/or friends to improve the environment in this city we call home. It can be something as simple as conserving water in your home, planting a tree or native plants which attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies, or avoiding the use of pesticides on your lawns. On our own, saving the planet seems unattainable but if we all do our part, we can realize a better, more robust world for those coming after us.



**Old Testament Heroes** introduced for Jan/Feb/March: Joseph and Asenath, Miriam and Moses, Deborah, Elijah, and Isaiah.



**Illuminated Letters** from the Yeary family based on early versions of the Bible.



United Women in Faith

## PLEDGES TO UWF

Your pledges to United Women in Faith support 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!



## CHRIST CHURCH UWF 2023 MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Sunday, April 2 – UWF Easter Treats Fundraiser  
Friday, May 19, 7:00 pm – Sugar & Spice Family History Night  
Sunday, July 16 – All Church Picnic (Rain Date: July 23)  
Saturday, October 21, 2:00 pm - UWF Tea



## CIRCLE NEWS

**Elizabeth Circle** will meet on Tuesday, **February 14** at 1p for a book discussion of *Sweetness of Forgetting* by Kristen Harmel and *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michel Richardson.

We will meet Tuesday, **March 14** at 1p for **Game Day**. Bring your favorite game to share.

## Missions of the Month—February

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



Thank you so much for your generous Christmas gifts. Although the storm altered some Christmas celebrations, together, we were able to make Christmas nicer and share God's love with the people at Gateway, Haven House, Veterans Hospital, the Family Justice Center, and the SPCA. Code Blue was happy to receive the gifts of hats and gloves for the unhousted of Buffalo.

Thank you also for your support of our Annual Cookie and Baked Goods sale. We hope that they sweetened your Christmas. Together we raised \$600 for the outreach ministries of our church.

### ***Souper Bowl Sunday***

The Outreach Team will be busy in the kitchen again. This time we will be making a variety of hot, comforting homemade soups and selling it on **Sunday, February 12** after church in Crafts Hall. All the proceeds will benefit the outreach ministries of the church.



### **Blanket Sunday**



When difficult times happen, a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the CWS Blankets program was created—to give a kind, loving, and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone.

Through the generosity of CWS partner organizations, congregations, and individual supporters, our most vulnerable neighbors around the world can feel safe and keep warm with fresh linens and clean sleeping quarters.

When our neighbors are in need, even \$10 for a single blanket goes a long way.

**This year Blanket Sunday is Sunday, February 12**

### **Crafting for a Cause**

You are invited to join us for a cup of tea, some friendly conversation and making a project to benefit others on the second Saturday of the month (February 11 & March 11) from 9:00-11:00am. For more information or to let us know you are coming, please see Lee Watson or Diane Klenk.

## Missions of the Month—March

**UMCOR** Sunday  
United Methodist Committee on Relief

This special Sunday will be **March 19, 2023**. Through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) we are able to make a difference in the lives of communities and individuals whose lives have been upset by storms, wars, fires, displacement, and climate change. This offering understates UMCOR's "cost of doing business," allowing UMCOR to keep the promise that 100% of any gift to a specific UMCOR project will go towards that project and not administrative costs.

### *Music & Meditation*

Christ Church has offered a time during the seasons of Advent and Lent to quietly reflect and prepare. Currently this is a short, 30-minute, candlelight service on Friday evenings beginning **at 5:30p on March 3-April 7** following the style of Taizé (pronounced teh-zay'.) A Taize 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, builds as it progresses, and/or employs the addition of instruments or soloist. All fit together, even if simply experiencing the music as an observer.

### *Ash Wednesday February 22 at 7p*

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 focuses 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 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.

**All services will also be available via Live Stream through our YouTube channel and archived following the conclusion of that Live Stream.**